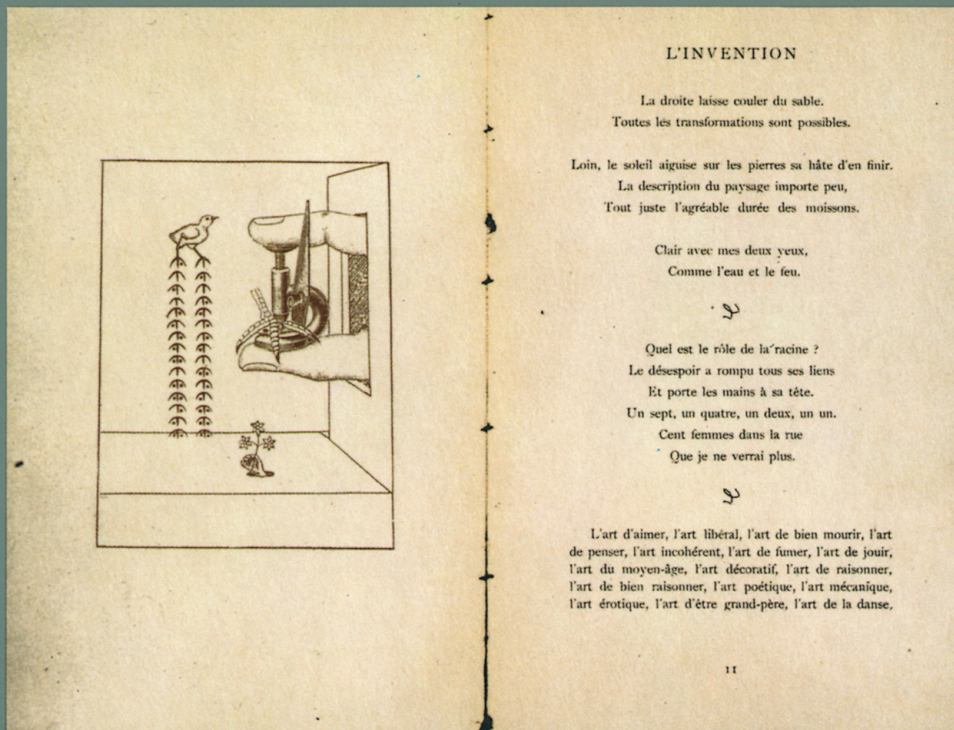


LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS



Proceedings of the
Twelveth International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis
Freiburg ♦ June ♦ 1995

Edited by Frederico Pereira

Published by Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada, Lisbon

Cover plate: Paul Eluard / Max Ernst, *L' invention*, 1922

Photocomposed by *Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada* – Lisboa

Printed by *Guide - Artes Gráficas, Lda* – Póvoa de Santo Adrião

Depósito Legal n.º 101079/96

ISBN 972-96682-5-6

1996

TWELVETH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Edited by FREDERICO PEREIRA

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

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

Contents

The hidden meaning and its hiding place: The postmodern semantics of Freud	3
Antal Bókay	
Freudian text – Historical text	11
László Halász	
Existencial psychoanalysis and <i>FamilienRoman</i> in Jean-Paul Sartre <i>Les Mots</i>	19
Jacques Benzakein	
<i>The Ego and the Id</i> and Lacan's schema L	25
Robert Silhol	
<i>Alice au pays des merveilles</i>: Métaphore ou modèle psychanalytique de la lecture? ...	35
Jean-Marc Talpin	
The psychoanalytical approach to lyrical poetry	39
Kees C. P. Nuijten	
Transference as the result of texts and belief	45
Patrick Vandermeersch	
The problem with psychological readings of <i>Ceremony</i>	51
John Peacock	
L'enfance à retrouver: Le dialogue mystique de Fénelon et madame Guyon	59
Henk Hillenaar	
The alchemist's Love Story. The creation of the Homunculus – Growth and birth of the self	65
Oskar N. Sahlberg	
Hamlet's desire and the rules for lacanian reading	69
Tamise Van Pelt	
Psychoanalytic speculation about Hamlet's «Mousetrap»	73
Marvin B. Krims	
In the name of the dead father	79
Joseph Wagner	
Un conte de Hawthorne: <i>Young Goodman Brown</i>. Une métaphore du retour du refoulé	87
Pierre Met	
What is expressed by the Lawrentian characters?	95
Roland A. Pierlout	
Unconventional personalities in early 20th century american literature: Theodore Dreiser and Thomas Wolfe	103
Seymour Rosenberg	
La dépersonnalisation	107
Gabriele Koch	
«Anne, Anne, / Fuis sur ton âne»: Image and psychotic experience in the poetry of Anne Sexton	111
Nancy Blake	

Katherine Anne Porter's «The Jilting of Granny Weatherall»: A modern tragedy?	117
Robert Sprich	
«The secrets of the sea are washed ashore». Deprivation as renunciation in the Works of Georgios Seferis	123
Olga Nessler / Thomas Nessler	
Betrayl, guilt and «unreality» in Southern Civil Rights novels	133
Ineke Bockting	
Repressed anger in a family context: Dickens's <i>Hard Times</i> as psychological text ...	145
Richard A. Currie	
Robinson pervert? – Tournier, Deleuze, and «no others»	153
Ulrike Kistner	
Abjections <i>In Our Time</i>	159
Donald Vanouse	
France-Ville et Stahlstadt. Hygiénisme et analité dans un roman de Jules Verne	165
Solange Leibovici	
8½ and Me	173
Norman N. Holland	
Misselwitz's spielfilm about disorder: Herzsprung a real place	185
Stephanie G. Ortega	
The Beautiful American: Sincere Fictions of the White Messiah in the American Cinema	189
Andrew Gordon / Hernán Vera	
Night Watch in Amsterdam's Red Light District: Prostitutes/Dutch Windows/ /Utopian and Dystopian Gazes	199
Marleen Barr	
Zhu Guangqian and Freud: A case of comparative aesthetic studies	205
Wang Ning	
Sprechakttheorie und Psychoanalytische Literaturwissenschaft	215
Walter Schönau	
«Wir Geschiedene. Wir Rücken an Rücken Vereinte. Wir Wiederkehrende.» Von den Qualen der Ambivalenz in Botho Strauß' <i>Trilogie des Wiedersehens</i>	221
Carl Pietzcker	
Der blinde Fleck: Kritik der normativen Heterosexualität in Dramen von Else Lasker-Schüler und Gerlind Reinshagen	227
Helga Kraft	
Der verschlingende und der verschleierte Blick: Das Schau-Spiel der Macht in Klaus Manns <i>Mephisto</i>	237
Carlotta von Maltzan	
Annette von Droste-Hülshoff <i>Des Arztes Vermächtnis</i> und Franz Kafka <i>Ein Landarzt</i>	245
Astrid Lange-Kirchheim	
Goethes Knabenmärchen: <i>Der Neue Paris</i>	257
Irmgard Roebeling	
Claire Goll: Perverse weibliche Verhaltensstrategien als Symptom und Konsequenz der Sozialisation	267
Anna Hausdorf	
Hermeneutische psychotherapie	275
Rainer Holm-Hadulla	
Eichendorffs Gedicht <i>Sehnsucht</i> (1834): Versuch einer jungianischen deutung	285
Maria Kardaun	

P A P E R S

The hidden meaning and its hiding place: The postmodern semantics of Freud

ANTAL BÓKAY (*)

FREUD AND POSTMODERN

The modernity and/or postmodernity of Freud's psychoanalysis is more than a question of the philosophy of the humanities: the different readings of Freud's ideas open up the original text into diverse directions and create new aspects that were unavailable earlier. The official development of psychoanalysis (through ego-psychology and self-psychology) backed by the institutional power of the «International» was a typical example of modernity. But even in Freud's lifetime internal dissidents like Ferenczi proposed ideas that today can be judged as postmodern. It is important to note that Ferenczi had no intention to depart from the «original» Freudian ideas, but wanted to defend them, wanted to state their «real» meanings and draw the consequences of these disclosed «real» meanings. The program of another later dissident, Jacques Lacan, was also a «return» to the «real Freud», the «original Freud». I propose that the target of these very different «returns» is just that component of Freud's psychoanalysis that today can be generally termed as postmodern. To state this seriously, however, much more is needed than just a short paper, a new, a second (or third¹) volume of Freud's *On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement* (1914). My aim here is, of course, much more modest. I would like to show a few interesting ideas in Freud's works that allow me to suggest that a trend, at that time invisible, had already appeared in them that later was called postmodern.

Freud formed his radically new discourse that was called psychoanalysis in an extremely interesting intellectual context. He lived and worked in the period of rapid change between early and late modernist discourse. Early modernism was still inside the metaphysical, more traditional conception of Cartesian rationality. In psychology this meant a social phenomenology (a *Bildung*-based idea of education) connected with the values of the society in question. Late modernism translated Cartesian thought into linguistic terms and questioned the meaningfulness of tradition and of positivist social phenomenology. Late modernism asserted the importance of the self (the

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¹Ferenczi and Rank in their 1923 book *The Development of Psychoanalysis* (the German title of it could be translated more accurately as *The Developmental Aims of Psychoanalysis*) stated that their book is a continuation of «On the History of the Psychoanalytic Movement» (1924, 1).

essential, coherent, structured individual subject) and realized the general function of language (as the essential, coherent, structured subjectivity). Vienna was one of the main terrains of this fundamental change of discourse (Janik-Toulmin, 1973); it is no accident that besides Freud we find in Vienna around the same time Ludwig Wittgenstein, the Vienna Circle of philosophy of language (Carnap, Schlick), and other influential philosophers like Franz Brentano, Fritz Mauthner, etc.

It is not easy, however, to place Freud into the category of late modernism: in spite of the many similarities, the differences also abound. To demonstrate this, let me refer to an interesting parallel with Ludwig Wittgenstein. Wittgenstein was the premier, most refined representative of late modernist philosophy. His *Tractatus*, published in 1921, proposed three basic ideas. First, he stated that the world is «the totality of facts» represented by pictures in the «logical space». Second, he complemented the description of the world by defining the rational conditions of the ordering of the facts, stating that the structure of language and the structure of reality were homogeneous. Third, he declared that besides the sayable there existed the unsayable. The first two ideas were most clear definitions of how the world can be opened up and how it is disclosed by its nature. Wittgenstein presented the essence of modern metaphysics, that the world was basically unconcealed: through its articulation by the human mind it opened up, became revealed, and the hidden, the concealed was only a temporary limit in the success of the rational cogito. But this is only valid for the sayable and «there are, indeed, things that cannot be put into words. They make themselves manifest. They are what is mystical» (Wittgenstein, 1921, 1973). This is a strange turn: Wittgenstein admitted the existence of the hidden not as a special case of the revealed and the unconcealed, but as a separate ontological entity that cannot be reduced to the rational. It is no surprise that a more dogmatic representative of the modern, Bertrand Russell, expressed in his 1924 introduction to Wittgenstein's book that this idea «leaves me with a certain sense of intellectual discomfort» (Russell, 1922, p. XXI). Wittgenstein himself did not go too far and this allowed his modernist interpreters to totally forget the idea of unsayable. The last sentence of his book as well as a sentence in its preface stated that «what cannot be talked about we must pass over in silence» (Wittgenstein, 1921, p. 74). With this, Wittgenstein admitted and at the same time bracketed the unsayable. In a sense, he permits only negative features of it: it is non-linguistic, beyond the boundaries, and hidden.

Freud worked at the same time in Vienna as Wittgenstein did (one of the sisters of Wittgenstein, Margarete Stonborough Wittgenstein, was a close friend of Freud and of Marie Bonaparte). Two decades before Wittgenstein, he had stated in psychology the two opposing aspects of human mind and meaning. The sayable and unsayable, according to Freud, closely correlated with the conscious and unconscious. Freud, however, was not much interested in the sayable, but turned his attention toward the unsayable. Freud never thought of the unsayable as something that can be said. He knew: the unconscious can never be told. But he suggested that we can talk about it, we can share its effects, we can – in a hermeneutical sense – understand and (allegorically) reconstruct it. Instead of silence, Freud proposed a special kind of talk, the «talking cure», that is: psychoanalytic therapy. With this turn, however, Freud placed the existence of the hidden, the concealed, into the center in a positive way, and took everything else derived from it. The turn itself was paradoxical: the positive foundation of the subject is based on the ontologically negative, the unsayable. The turn, moreover, was a radical refusal of modernism, of Cartesian clarity and reliability, a stepping over the «boundary», the «limit», and a move beyond the linguistic. The hidden was named as the «wish» and talk in therapy was aimed at the clarification of the types and directions of individual wish formations. The radicality of this change comes from that fact that if somebody puts the hidden in the center, he also proposes that the world is built on an infinite, an unordered and temporal receptive flow of poetic meaning. This constant production of meaning refuses the correspondence theory of truth, the universal validity of logic and the possibility of grammar.

While talking about the radically new, postmodern understanding of meaning by Freud it is impossible to avoid another philosopher: Friedrich Nietzsche. Freud elaborated his basic system before Wittgenstein's but after Nietzsche's. The philosophical interpretations of the Nietzsche/Freud relation all mention the close similarity and Freud's to discuss this similarity (Mazlish, 1968; Holmes, 1983). The interpretations usually go no further than stating the superficial similarities and comparing the similar terms used by the two authors. P. Rudnytsky (1987, pp. 198-223) offers a fine interpretation of the more personal level of Freud's contradictory relation to Nietzsche in his *Freud and Oedipus*, showing the personal similarities and differences in a dead father and brother situation.

The understanding of the theoretical-philosophical relation of Freud and Nietzsche is still not complete. In the late seventies and in the eighties a new understanding of Nietzsche took place (see the collections by Allison/ed./, 1985; Rickels /ed./ 1990) in which Nietzsche was taken as the forefather of postmodern philosophy and particularly of the postmodern philosophy of language.

Several of the neo-Nietzschean thinkers concentrated on his ideas about language and suggested that a hidden conception of language is available in Nietzsche's philosophy (Schrift, 1990). This linguistic philosophy was based on the idea of essential and ontological hiddenness of meaning. In Nietzsche, the hidden, the concealed is the original nature of existence and the disclosed, the unconcealed should be understood as a secondary schematization. For Nietzsche there is no direct reference, but every relation to the world is rhetorical: «What then is truth? A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies and anthropomorphisms – in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically enhanced, transposed, and embellished, and which after long use seem fixed, canonical and binding to a people: truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; metaphors which are worn out and without sensuous power, coins which have lost their picture and now matter only as metal, no longer as coin.» (quoted by Schrift, 1990, p. 127). The representative truth relation to the world is language, a hiding of the hidden. And «language is rhetoric» (quoted by Schrift, 1990, p. 130), that is, not rhetorical, but itself a rhetoric. It does not show something in a special (rhetorical) way, but only presents a way of showing. The *abyss* of language is just this: it is a pure rhetoric without any base, a metaphor that owns only its *vehicle* without ever having a *tenor*, a signifier with the lack of the signified.

How can the forgetting of this ontological given be avoided? And what do we gain by that? A mature look at the human situation in the world is *nihilism* that admits the existential nature of hiddenness. Nihilism «represents a pathological transitional stage (what is pathological is the tremendous generalization, the inference that there is no meaning at all (...) that there is no truth» (Nietzsche, 1967, p. 14). But on the other side, «nihilism, as the denial of a truthful world, of being, might be a divine way of thinking» (Nietzsche, 1967, p. 15). In a limited sense we may say that nihilism is the word for existential, absolute rhetoricity. And rhetoricity is tricky: it does not say anything about the world; it is not the signifier of reality. It signifies, however, the user of the world, the special, existential strategy of relating to the world. While it speaks about how we cheat, the technique of cheating speaks about ourselves. It is possible to tell the truth according to the order of reality but we tell a lie according to our own intentions. Nothing is said about the world through existential rhetoric. Its function is more to try out ways of re-acting, repeating of articulations that occurred as the effects of the unsayable. These repetitions are analogies, but in Nietzsche's system they are rhetorical, formal analogies of earlier analogies (they are metaphors of metaphors). With our actions we try to reach out toward the unsayable, but the results do not hit the unsayable itself but form only its rhetorical halo.

The discourse of *genealogy* provides a systematic understanding of the subjective use of the world. It is not about truth, about reality, but about the modalities of lying. Genealogy is an inner history of the rhetorical existence of the individual, a history of how we produce ourselves to the others. And, of course, through this production, this rhetorization, we use certain techniques that serve articulation. These techniques are forms of the «life-text», the rather typical tricks we use in

typical situations. This technique, or its understanding, was called *philology* by Nietzsche. Philology was the «art of reading well» (Schrift, 1990, p. 160). The term «well» (*gut*) did not refer to the right, or proper reading. The good reading is a rhetorically rich reading.

Parallels between Freud and Nietzsche can be systematically interpreted through explicating the similarity in the foundational postmodern discourse of subjectivity and meaning. These similarities were not, however, direct effects of certain ideas of Nietzsche on Freud, but were due to Freud's unintentional insight into the secrets of the human subject, secrets that have become sayable only recently. According to this the unconscious is the will to power, therapy is a practical genealogy, and the techniques of the dream work (and the parallel dream interpretation) form the philological level. Freud's basic discovery is the preeminent, existential role of the hidden, the unsayable in the human individual.

There are two important differences between Nietzsche and Freud. One is that Freud's system begins at the opposite end. In spite of Nietzsche he was first faced with the practical level of rhetoricity (the rhetoricity of symptoms and dream). Only after sensing this rhetoricity did he develop a therapy which can be termed practical genealogy. And only the last step, the most hypothetical idea is the metapsychological component that is the statement of the possible existence of the essentially hidden, the unconscious. Besides the difference in the logic of unfolding of the postmodern concept of subjectivity, another important divergence can also be shown, which is connected with the nature of postmodern subject. While Nietzsche, in a certain, important sense, attributes a formal nature to subjectivity, Freud – while including these formal components – relies more on the idea of thematic nature. Let me give a simple example to explain this complicated difference. In his 1873 *On Truth and Lie in an Extramoral Sense*, Nietzsche spoke about the «instinct of metaphorization» as «a fundamental human drive». Metaphor, a rhetorical form, was taken as the final component of subjectivity. In Freud's language the sentence would sound similar but the sex drive or the death drive would replace the drive to create metaphor. Freud would name an instinct that governs metaphorization. The instinct, however, was never defined in an essentialist manner in Freud, but always understood as a «mythology», an ever temporary statement of inner gods. While Nietzsche understood that there are vehicles that have no tenors, Freud suggested taking vehicles as tenors existing temporarily to enable hermeneutic understanding.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF POSTMODERN SEMANTICS IN FREUD

The essentially postmodern idea of Freud was that he discovered that the concept of rational behavior is not sufficient to explain the sense and meaning formation of the individual. The self according to Freud is not only complex but also contradictory: the rational structure of individual meaning grows out of an inevitably irrational background. Of course it had always been known that humans often behave irrationally, but this fact was understood only as the error ratio of an otherwise rational behavior. Freud's discourse is radical in stating that *the lack of rationality* is the inevitable (existential, ontological) component of the self. Moreover, he maintained that rationality is only secondary, only an act of defence in human behavior, while the irrational has a primary, foundational existence.

The irrational was defined by Freud as wish, desire, instinct, and the repressed. He claimed that the chaotic, irrational inner meaning – through an existential-hermeneutical process – is dressed in an ordered, rational disguise. This is what people self-consciously (as a personal affirmation of their *cogito*) assume as their own self, their individuality. Theoretically it can be presumed that the chaotic inner world is totally absorbed into the ordered system of meaning, and with this it would be possible to elaborate a theory of the self that brackets the non-ordered nature of the inner reality. It is well known, however, that we humans, are blessed and cursed with meaningful processes like dreams, phantasy, and symptoms that compel us to sense something non-rational in the background of our very private existence.

In a more concrete form: the first and foremost postmodern thesis of the Freudian hermeneutics is, that the mind (the «soul» Freud would say) is a *mystical process of name giving*, the essence of which lies in that connecting and mediating process that operates between the rational and non-rational and is a constant manifestation of the hidden. This idea is opposed to the modern for two reasons. First, a typical modern position would suppose that psychic illnesses are caused by organic (brain) injuries which can cause organic symptoms and symptomatic behavior. A Cartesian understanding of the individual is unable to comprehend the idea of an inherently psychic illness. Freud, however, could not accept the physicalist view which depended on the cause-and-effect model of injury and symptom. He also refused Charcot's idea, which blamed the general neurological structure (a biological structure) of the individual for his psychic symptoms, and with this he rejected the cognitive solution as well. According to Freud, the symptom had a special, unique semantic nature.

This idea was first developed in Freud's *Studies on Hysteria*, in which the most important sentence stated that «hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences» (Breuer-Freud, 1895, p. 58). The memories are present in the psyche as the signified and the symptoms are their signifiers. This understanding, however, is a typical late modern theory: it defines the person as a hidden, complicated complex of meaning. Just as normal language articulates signifiers to represent the signified in relation to the outside world, the human psyche produces signifiers to represent the inner signifieds. The most important task is to elaborate the secrets of these inner grammatical-semantic mechanisms. In the last decades of the 19th century, Freud tried to develop this inner semantics.

Despite its successes in this pre-analytic period (the 1880s), the model became more and more problematic. Freud realized that behind certain signifiers there are no signified originals, but the signifieds are really signifiers. A symptom turned out to be a signifier of an earlier event, and that event, in turn, signifies an even earlier act. Instead of the fixed structural relation of the signifier-signified, an open and limitless chain was formed, where every member of it is potentially a signifier. The relation between the signifier-like position and the signified-like position is more like the relation between the tenor and vehicle of an allegory. It turns out that the human soul is unsayable and unreadable. Its nature is not grammatical but rhetorical, not ordered but chaotic, not descriptive but hermeneutic. This is the source of the anti-Cartesian psychoanalytical conception.

THE HIDDEN AND THE HIDING PLACE: ELEMENTS OF POSTMODERN SEMANTICS IN FREUD

One way to elaborate Freud's concept of the hidden would be a philosophical interpretation of his ideas that follows the line of the new Nietzsche interpretation. Instead of this long process, which would require an accurate analysis of many Freudians text, I will follow here a more fragmentary method: I pick a few typical terms of Freud. All these terms refer to the existential nature of hiddenness. The first of these, the term «substitute» (*Ersatz*), refers to the vehicle that is the first articulated product that has an analogical relation to the unsayable. The second concerns the interpretation and the nature of this substitute (this will be the term of the «disclosure of the hidden»). And the last will be the quality of hiddenness.

The element of the dream is defined by Freud as a «substitute», or in German the «*Ersatz*». The term is crucial because its scope defines the basic semantic unit in Freud's theory. In the general theory of signs it is often stated that a sign is something that can stand as a substitute for something else. In case of Freud, however, this *Ersatz* function has important differences from the signifying function of the sign. This substitute is something like a loose brick in the wall where the treasure was hidden. The aim is that nothing should betray the existence of the treasure, the *Ersatz* should not have any signifying function. However, the *Ersatz* clearly has some pressure, some unavoidable existence or direction for its owner. The whole relation in this strange semantics moves from the collective, epistemological, and simple toward the individual, existential-ontological, and complex.

This is again a postmodern hermeneutics, because the fixed signifying relation is dissolved, and the temporal slip of meaning-articulation comes into the center. It is clear that the *Ersatz* itself, its own objective character, is indifferent, its face value is more misleading than revealing. In the case of a very clear meaning, we must be suspicious that something hidden is in the background. Accordingly, the central problem in understanding is not the form or content of the *Ersatz* but the form or content of that process that produces the *Ersatz*. The center of this semantics falls upon the preconditions of the sign, the metaposition of the substitute. The two participants in therapy always find something in the background of the *Ersatz*. The meaning-productive nature of every dialogue turns against the negative, the lack of meaning, and fills it in with meaning: «Our technique lies in employing free association to these elements in order to bring about the emergence of other substitutive structures, which will enable us to arrive at what is concealed from view.» (Freud, 1916/17, p. 92). It seems that Freud refused here the postmodern understanding of language: the secret meaning seems too available.

For Freud, however, it was clear that the meaning of a substitute is again a substitute, and in this infinite process an allegory-chain is produced. *The Interpretation of Dreams* was a crucial work because it introduced a rhetorical-hermeneutical model in place of the grammatical-semantic theory. According to Freud, the human psyche is not a signifier of an inner signified but a reading of the *Ersatz* (that is, a reading of an earlier reading). The crucial act produces the production, the reading, the signifying relation itself. Therefore, instead of the substitute itself, instead of the objective-descriptive (linguistic) relation, *the process, the act of substitution* would be primary. The rhetorical understanding of language – at least for Freud – always leads to a narrative (the narrative not in the text but the narrative of the text production) and to the central position of the metatextual-intertextual (that is, to narrative again). This narrative, which behaves meta- and intertextually in the process of text production, is *the psychoanalytic therapy*.

It is well known that the word «interpretation» in the English translation of Freud's work can lead to a serious hermeneutic misunderstanding (see Bettelheim, 1982). Freud used the German word *Deutung*, which does not equal the term *Interpretation*, which also exists in German. *Deutung* is much more mystical. The understanding of the secrets of the starry sky is *Deutung*, it is *Sterndeutung*. The person called der Deuter is the seer, the prophet. Freud's *Deutung* is much more rhetorical and poetical than Strachey's *interpretation*, which hints at a possible systematic description, a reliable approach, a kind of translation of the inner word into an outer concept. For Freud, however, interpretation was always a kind of art.

I found a short, simple sentence in the 5th lecture of the *Introductory Lectures* which can be connected with this *Deutung* problem. Its English translation is the following: «Interpreting means finding a hidden sense» (Freud, 1916/17, p. 115). I would like to clarify Strachey's translation of this sentence with two comments. As early as the Fraulein Elisabeth von R. case, Freud had already used the *differentia specifica* part (the term of «hidden meaning») of the definition. But there he quoted not some theories of interpretation but Goethe's Faust «*Das Mäskchen da weissagt verborgnen Sinn*» («Her mask reveals a hidden sense» – Freud, 1895, p. 206.). Freud did not want to find sense in general, but he emphasized a very special type: he was looking for the hidden sense. The hidden is like a mask; its aim is that the one masked should not be recognized. The German word *verborgen* has among its synonyms an important word from Freud's vocabulary, that is *heimlich*.

Moreover, the mask is not only *Ersatz*, but more of a «masking». What is crucial in the hidden is the act of hiding itself because the hidden as an object is not available; possibly it does not exist. *Deuten* is an act where the hidden-ness of meaning is realized. *Deuten* itself is an act of allegorization and the possible aim of therapy is to realize the quality, the meaning of this act. Freud defines this principle very clearly: «This work of interpretation seeks to undo the dream-work» (Freud, 1916/17, p. 204). In the German original Freud talked about the *Traumarbeit* (dream-work) and the *Deutungsarbeit* (the interpretation-work), a usage that emphasized that the interpretation aims not so much at the substitute but more at the act of substitution. It is a hermeneutics of the hiding-disclosing primary hermeneutics.

My final and the final question (if any finality is possible at all) is whether we can know anything about that empire that is referred to by the purely negative terms of substitute, hidden, and repression. The answer, the postmodern answer of Freud, would probably be that we cannot know anything about this, but we cannot avoid being constantly preoccupied by the hidden. As soon as the hidden becomes revealed, another hidden is also uncovered. The hidden constantly announces itself.

The term that referred to this very complex field is, of course, the *unconscious*. Its nature is clearly paradoxical: the productive-creative themes (the hidden) can be sensed only in case they are problematic in an essential sense. These problems cannot be handled rationally but always refer to the irrational-incoherent core of the individual. The unconscious and the repressed are available for us in so far as they are not successfully integrated into the rational, Cartesian ego. This is a strange, irrational hermeneutics that leads to the pre-linguistic layer of the personal, which has a wish-quality. That is, it is built on the *transcendence of the body*. With my own body, with my birth, a wish-formation was created that throughout my life receives an absolutely individual hermeneutic creation. That is, it meets the order of the objects, first of all the order of language, and these orders force this personal transcendence into collective patterns (into allegories) that can be compared to the allegories of our fellow human beings. My self-knowledge has a boundless abundance; its unknowable background is this personal-bodily wish.

The bodily is inexhaustible and extremely complex. Freud referred to it with an interesting allegory. In the *Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud returns twice to the term «navel»:

There is at least one spot at every dream at which it is unplumbable – a navel, as it were, that is its point of contact with the unknown (Freud, 1900, p. 186)

There is often a passage in even the most thoroughly interpreted dream which has to be left obscure; (...) This is the dream's navel, the spot where it reaches down into the unknown (Freud, 1900, p. 671)

The navel connects and separates (Felman, 1985). It is interesting that the first quotation refers to the connection to, while the second to the separation from the unknown.

The navel or the navel string is the clearest example of the bodily connection between two persons. It is prior to the other bodily connection of sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse is – from the point of view of the body – temporary, the participants are different (of two different sexes, or of two different sexual functions, the penetrator and the one who is penetrated), and absolute unity is only symbolically (more exactly: allegorically) produced in the phantasy of the two participants. The navel is more primary because here the unity is the original one and the separation is secondary and arbitrary: the navel string must be cut. It is driven from unity toward separation, while sexual intercourse tries to bring separation toward unity. In case of the navel, sexual difference is unimportant, and the bodily field is connected purely with the non-social, the absolute. The navel is non-allegorical, it is an empty memory, a place without meaning, a piece of body that is cut. The blind spot of the eye comes to mind: the absolute density of information together with the absolute impossibility of picturing it. Everything is included and nothing, no-thing is available.

PERSONAL POSTSCRIPT

When I was meditating on the idea of the navel, I happened to read Joyce's *Finnegan's Wake*. I noticed two short texts in the book. One was simply the following: «Immi ammi Semmi» (258.11). I thought that this text, this essentially dream text, this absolute Ersatz has a message. The words are Hebrew: «emi, ami, semi» means: «my mother, my nation, my name», that is, everything that with rational logic, with our most precious allegories, can refer to the navel. What was strange was that the third word – according to an annotation (McHugh, 1980, p. 258) – was also a Hungarian one: Semmi – exactly like Joyce used it, with a double «m» – means «nothing». The

other Joyce text was a single two word expression: the «hole affair». It is hard to decide whether the «hole affair» is the «whole affair», whether it is everything or just nothing. This play of the opposites is even more clear in a Joycean word «wallhole» that can be cut as w(all)hole composing three words: «all», «whole» and «hole». The unconscious of this absolute *mise et abyme*, the unsayable affluence, the depth of the inmost, the navel is a «wholeness» and a «holeness», the total presence and the complete void at the same time.

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Freudian text – Historical text

LÁSZLÓ HALÁSZ (*)

At first glimpse the above title may well suggest that the theme of this paper will be psychohistory. «The past, individual or collective, is not a patient. Clio on the couch does not respond the interpretations, does not develop transferences on her analyst. She just lies there» (Gay, 1985, p.182). Nevertheless, Freud extended his approach to history beyond the analytical couch by such a psychobiography as his study entitled *Leonardo*, and by such social anthropological and psychological studies as *Totem and Taboo*, *Moses and the Monotheism*, *Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego*.

Psychoanalysis and historiography have several common traits. Both are primarily interested in temporality, and both study the antecedents and consequences of human actions. Both try to reconstruct the past, with the success of reconstruction depending on the extent to which they can discover the events which are not easily accessible events, which are concealed. But in usual historiography, interpretation is subordinated to informative and narrative material whereas in psychohistory it is the other way round. A psychohistorian emphasizes the role of emotions and imagination in a way which is unacceptable for a historian pure and simple (Lawton, 1988).

It is beyond doubt that the works of Freud mentioned above are not based on reliable facts at all. This is why historians reject them, and even psychologists who appreciate Freud highly are rather ambivalent in their attitude towards them. For instance Jahoda (1977) states firmly that Freud did not intend to write history, and that these studies are only documents showing how Freud tried to check the validity of his psychoanalytical ideas clarifying totally different phenomena.

It would be easy to contradict this assertion by pointing out that Freud entitled the first draft of his Moses book *The Man Moses, a Historical Novel*. In my earlier paper: *Freud: between Fiction and Non-Fiction* (Halász, 1992) I dealt with this, but placed the emphasis on the word «novel» as a literary form.

My present endeavour is somewhat paradoxical. I am going to start from Freud's most detailed interpretation of a literary work, namely his *Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's Gradiva* which nobody regards as even a precursor of psychohistory. My aim is to point out that here Freud's work is indeed that of a historian. His essay is paradoxical from another point of view as well. Wilhelm Jensen published his novella in 1903 and we can safely assert that today nobody would ever have heard of him if Freud had not written his related work three years later. Incidentally, Freud more or less realized this; in his autobiography (Freud, 1963, p. 3) he remarked that this book by Jensen «has no particular merit in itself».

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Consequently, there must have been some strikingly relevant component in the novella which caught Freud's attention and insured him to write an essay longer than the piece itself. Originally it was Jung who drew Freud's attention to Jensen's fiction, since he had found that the dreams described by the author «looked at him with familiar faces and invited him to apply to them the method of *The Interpretation of Dreams*» (Freud, 1985, p. 36).

The protagonist of the Jensen piece in question is a young German archaeologist, Norbert Hanold, who has bought a copy of an antique relief showing a fully-grown girl stepping along. His imagination is fired by with the girl, to whom he gives the name Gradiva, and he regretfully admits that her manner of walking could not be encountered in reality. But he has a dream in which he was in Pompeii when Vesuvius erupted and saw Gradiva there. Awakening, he leans out of the window and in the street sees a form like Gradiva. He hurries into the street to catch up with her, but without result. He decides on a journey to Italy, with no fix aim. In the end he finds himself in Pompeii and at the hot and holy midday hour he suddenly sees Gradiva. He realized that he came to find her traces (footprints) in the ashes, to see her, especially her peculiar gait. Our hero supposes that the girl is Greek or Roman, but with a smile on her lips she says: «If you want to speak to me, you must do it in German» (Jensen, in Freud, 1985, p. 44). The following day when he sees her between the columns in Pompeii he thinks that she is a trick of his phantasy and exclaims: «Oh, if you still existed and lived». To his greatest admiration Gradiva is ready to demonstrate her gait and tells him her real name, Zoe, which means life.

Gradiva disappears again and our hero has further delusions and dreams full of wishes and jealousy. When he again goes to the place in Pompeii where Gradiva has appeared, she suggests to that he shares her picnic meal with her, saying: «I feel as though we had shared a meal like this once before two thousand years ago, can't you remember?» (Jensen, in Freud, 1985, p. 52). Eventually, Norbert sees that Zoe-Gradiva is not a midday ghost but a living person. With the aid of the author's intervention in the interest of ending, the girl, whom Norbert avoided by fleeing to Pompeii is also transported there. And Gradiva tells him that he did not need to come to Pompeii to meet her, because «A hundred miles nearer, diagonally across the street from where you live (...) my father lives in that house: The Professor of Zoology, Richard Bertgang» (Jensen, in Freud, 1985, p. 55). Bertgang means the same as Gradiva, someone who steps along brilliantly. In this way realizes that Zoe was his childhood friend.

«The unintelligible question suddenly seems to have a sense, if we once more replace the historical past by the personal one – childhood – of which the girl still had lively memories but which the young man appeared to have forgotten» (Freud, 1985:56). His phantasies «may have been an echo of his forgotten childhood memories», these were repressed memories, in fact. The delusion was replaced by «a beautiful reality», «the childhood friend was dug out of the ruins» – says Jensen (Freud, 1985, p. 65) in such a way that «the hero's delusion made use in disguising his repressed memory. There is, in fact, no better analogue for repression, by which something in the mind is at once inaccessible and preserved, than burial of the sort to which Pompeii fell a victim and from which it could emerge once more through the work of spades» (Freud, 1985, p. 65).

Freud does not deny that he treats Norbert and Zoe «as though they were real people and not the author's creations», because he finds that «we should not object if Gradiva were described not as a phantasy but as a psychiatric study» (Freud, 1985, p. 66). « (...) The poetic treatment of a psychiatric theme can turn out to be correct without any sacrifice of its beauty» (Freud, 1985, p. 69). The archaeologist – protagonist's interest moved away from living women to women of marble or bronze. From a given day, however, one particular sculpture laid claim to the whole of this interest and finally the interest displaced back from the marble to a living woman. He cannot avoid tracing his interest in women's feet and their way of walking back to the memory of a childhood playmate which had remained unconscious, owing to his related repressed erotic feelings toward Zoe. Even the name which he gave the relief was a transformation and distortion of his memories of his youthful love. «Once he had made his own childhood coincide with the classical past (which it was so easy for him to do), there was a perfect similarity between the burial of Pompeii – the

disappearance of the past combined with preservation – and repression, of which he possessed a knowledge through what might be described as “endopsychic perception”» (Freud, 1985, p. 76). So behind his phantasies and actions there was a double motivation: the scientific (archaeological) which was a pretext for the unconscious erotic one.

According to Freud’s interpretation in Norbert’s first dream «the dreamer’s erotic longings were stirred up during the night and made a powerful effort to make conscious his memory of the girl he loved and so to tear him out of his delusion, but that those longings met with a fresh repudiation and were transformed into anxiety, which in its turn introduced into the content of the dream the terrifying pictures from the memories of his schooldays. In this manner the true unconscious content of the dream, his passionate longing for Zoe he had once known, became transformed into its manifest content of the destruction of Pompeii and the loss of Gradiva» (Freud, 1985, p. 86).

I shall not follow in detail how Freud shows in Norbert’s other delusions and dreams the substitution of the historical past for childhood and the effects to awaken the memory of the latter. In his final conclusion Freud sees a decisive similarity between «the procedure which the author makes his Zoe adopt for curing her childhood friend’s delusion» (Freud, 1985, p. 111) and his psychoanalytical method. But Gradiva «could carry out her task more easily than a doctor (...) who has no pre-existing knowledge of his patient and possesses no conscious memory of what is unconsciously at work in him» (Freud, 1985, p. 112).

It is known when Jung asked Jensen directly whether he knew anything of Freud’s theories, he replied in the negative, emphasizing that he had been inspired by his imagination (Freud, 1985, p. 114, Dickson, in Freud, 1985, p. 30). Jensen described his work as a «Pompeian phantasy» (Freud, 1985, p. 36). Since Jensen refused his co-operation in a psychoanalytical investigation, we know nothing of the personal background of the scene of his fiction. It is, however, more than understandable that an archaeologist would wish to be present as an eyewitness of this catastrophe. At the same time, it is well-known that the site was attractive for Freud. He visited Pompeii in 1902, but had written about his deep interest in it several times to Fliess. Freud’s only expensive hobby was to collect antiquities.

In the second edition of his Gradiva essay Freud (1985) tells us that the relief to which Jensen gave the name Gradiva can be found in the Museo Chiaramonti in the Vatican (Freud, 1985:118) and Freud – like the archaeologist-hero in Jensen’s book – had a copy of the relief, which he placed in his consulting-room (Jones, 1961). We also know from Freud’s letters to Fliess how much he enjoyed seeing «prehistoric elements» in every human manifestation (Jones, 1961).

It is doubtless that he «was fascinated by the analogy between the historical fate of Pompeii (its burial and subsequent excavation) and the mental events with which he was so familiar – burial by repression and excavation by analysis» (Dickson, in Freud, 1985, p. 30). Freud thought that Gradiva showed us a precise resemblance between an episode in an individual’s psychological life and an isolated event in the history of mankind. This has two implications.

Freud sees his work as that of an archaeologist, which includes that of the protagonist-archaeologist created by the writer-artist. Furthermore, an organic part of Freud’s work is that of a historian. The «epoch» in which he specialized was the remote past, and concerned the determining role of the «archaic heritage». To Freud history was a series of regressions, fixations and repetitions. The rebellion of sons against the father, sexual rivalry for the mother and patricide are the prototype of the Oedipus complex, and at the same time human encounters between father and son as well as between ruler and ruled replay that primal event (Lifton, 1976).

«(...) I had no choice but to follow the example of those discoverers whose goodfortune it is to bring to the light of day after their long burial the priceless though mutilated relics of antiquity. I have restored what is missing...» – wrote Freud even in 1905, that is, a year earlier his essay about Gradiva (in Spence, 1982, p. 160). Spence is, of course, right when he stresses that the difference between a fragment of a building or a piece of art and fragments of memories from the associations and from the behaviour of the subject, are not mute either, but that does not change Freud’s experience. In one of his last papers he says that his construction in the analysis about a patient is

«a piece of his early history that he has forgotten, (...) our construction is only effective because it recovers a fragment of lost experience» (in Spence, 1982, p. 161).

The strongest argument against this that «The construction not only shapes the past – it becomes the past in many cases (...) (the analyst can influence) the treatment with his own fantasies and preconceptions» (Spence, 1982, pp. 175-176). «Once we assume that meanings are multiple, we can hardly assume that one we discover is necessarily the most significant. To discover a meaning is different from discovering a lost fragment» (Spence, 1982, p. 267). That is, Spence thinks that in accordance with the narrative tradition Freud paid great attention to creating a good story which was coherent, continuous and which had a clear ending. Thus, the narration, the commitment to narrative truth was more decisive for him than that of history, historical truth.

It is worth recalling that even at the end of the nineteenth century Münsterberg, professor of psychology at Harvard University devoted his presidential address to the American Psychological Association, precisely to clarification of the relationship between psychology and history. He emphasized that science – and history is no exception – «considers the simple facts in their relations to other facts, works towards connection, towards generalities» (Münsterberg, 1899/1994, p. 232), while the simple fact, the «isolation» belongs to art. The world of objects is transformed by full isolation into an ideal space in paintings and sculpture, the world of subjective acts is transformed similarly remoulded in poetry. «The incomplete connections of life are severed by art (...) made complete by science.» The science of individual objects is psychology, the science of individual will-acts is history. Even a historical biography «shows in the individual the attitudes towards the demands and suggestions which make the history of mankind (...) the will-attitudes which constitute his personality connected with the whole universe of will-acts» (Münsterberg, 1899/1994, p. 234).

If life is told as someone feeling it as a personal experience then it is poetry and not history. At the same time, if we concentrate on the perceptions, ideas and emotions which Socrates might have when he was in prison, it is a psychological description. If we say that Socrates remained in prison because he decided to be obedient to the laws of Athens, we give a historical interpretation and appreciation of a will-attitude.

The language of the historian is similar to that of the poet because the materials themselves, the subjective acts are common. «Where the psychologist encourages the reader to take the attitude of the objectively perceiving observer, the poet and the historian speak of facts which can be understood only by interpretation and inner limitation (...) the poet and historian may use the same methods of suggestion to reinforce in the reader the subjectifying attitude which is the presupposition for the understanding of the isolated will-acts in the work of poetry and the connected will-acts in the work of history, while the psychologist has to adopt even his style and his presentation to the service of his objectifying aim» (Münsterberg, 1899/1994, p. 235). So from that point of view the fundamental question is whether such a sharp and rigid line of demarcation between narration and history, or between poetry and history concerning their relationship to psychology can be maintained.

Before attempting to give an answer to this, I should point out that if the way Freud analyzed his patients' (and mankind's) distant past has seemed strange to the historian, the main finding concerning the fundamental motives in human nature has been totally unacceptable. «I know that man's essential nature is unchanging through time and space» – wrote Febvre sarcastically in 1925 – «I know that old tune. But that is an assumption, and I might add, a worthless assumption for a historian. For him, as far the geographer... man does not exist, only men» (in Gay, 1985, p. 88). And this standpoint was rather tolerant compared to that of Taylor who asked: «How did anyone ever manage to take Freud seriously?» (in Gay, 1985, p. 93)

But we cannot forget that «human nature has its own history; change is a set of subtle variations that the world plays on persistent, often elusive themes (...) Like the game of chess, human nature constructs dramatic and inexhaustible variety from a few elements and a handful of rules (...) life histories retain their capacity to generate the new and strange. But they move along familiar paths, occur at more or less anticipated moments. That is, why history – like psychoanalysis – is partly predictable yet invariably fascinating. Human nature make much of little» (Gay, 1985, p. 88).

From our point of view it is of primary importance that Freud clearly redefined how (auto)biography should be written as a life history. When a historian works on a biography or utilizes some biographical passages he has to deal with the findings about place and time rather cautiously, and he cannot refer to unfathomable drives instead of relying upon firm data. But the pathways constructed by Freud link biography to history. Freud always went beyond biography, as Trilling points out. Freud wrote his case histories because he thought all the analyzands «worth writing about were at once recognizably themselves and representative of widely shared experiences» (in Gay, 1985, p. 176). And understanding these shared experiences, shared beliefs, in part shared illusions and phantasies, contributes to the study of the so-called *mentalités*; the collective states of mind which were in the focus of the *Annales*, the famous French historical school.

I would suggest, however, that such connections come from not only the fact that both psychoanalysis and history are sciences of memory, but from the similarly constructed nature of their texts. Nowadays we are willing to emphasize that all kinds of knowledge are the result of social interaction and communication. The basis of our knowledge is consensual understanding, mutually shared meaning, concerning the historical and cultural context into which the observer's personal experience is embedded.

As art, history or any other picture and text are formed by similar operations of construction, so the (hermeneutical) principles of interpretation are basically also similar, whether they be fiction or non-fiction. This shows the relativity of distinction, in accordance with the way genres are blurred – as Geertz (1983) points out. Philosophical analyses remind us of criticisms of art, scientific explanations appear as short literary texts, stories are full of equations and tables, documents give the impression of confessions, theoretical works are fashioned as travellers' guide books, and metodological problems are presented as personal memoirs.

In fact, the spring of the past is also deep here. One remembers from the Greek mythology that narrative literature and history (or if you prefer, historiography) are the children of identical sex of memory, but poetry, tragedy, dance, music, even science are also relatives of similar degree. And it is well-known that Herodotos's or Tacitus's works were as far as their eloquence and literary devices concerned quite close to narrative literature. Let take a great jump in time. The situation was similar with Michelet and Burckhardt.

Even in the XIXth century there was a narrow connection between history, art, science and philosophy. «Men like Michelet and Tocqueville are properly designated as historians only by their subject matter, not by their methods. Insofar as their method alone is concerned, they are just as easily designated as scientists, artists, or philosophers. The same can be said of "historians" like Ranke or Niebuhr, of "novelists" like Stendhal and Balzac, of "philosophers" like Hegel or Marx, and of "poets" like Heine and Lamartine» (White, 1978, p. 42).

We know of the psychoanalytical idea which regards historical research as «a search for the self, an introspection» (in Gossman, 1990, p. 247) to a certain degree because of the significance of the historian's constructive activity. The final result is not the uniform or total knowledge of the past, but a text. The unity of history is in the texts written by the great historians. We are very far from Ranke's (1874) concept of the «purely historical facts». And from the historian observing the facts by «extinguishing his own self» and thus being able to discover «the past as it really happened».

Man is a story-telling animal. As a child or an adult, alone or in society, waking and dreaming we speak narratives (cf. Hillis Miller, 1990). In this way we learn to organize and reorganize our everyday experiences. From this point of view the extent to which the story is fictive is of no importance.

White extends Frye's (1957) ideas that literary fiction can be traced back to archetypical forms of stories, «pregeneric plot structures», or in other words, romance, tragedy, comedy and satire. These offer a plausible way of describing the world and they have an explanatory effect. Before a historian approaches «the data of a historical field», he or she «prefigures» it. To all intents and purposes, the act is poetic as far as «it is precognitive and practical in the household of the historian's consciousness».

This thesis in itself is not revolutionary either; it coincides with the ideas of a number of historians. For example Trevelyan (1973) says that imagination lies at the bottom of the challenge of history. History helps us to experience the past in as real a way as the present. The criterion of historical study is truth, but the drive is poetical. White, however, goes beyond this. Where others thought of «only» drives and effect, he sees a cognitive pattern, a frame of cognition. Thus, historical narratives are «verbal fictions, the contents of which are as much *invented* as *found* and the forms of which have more in common with their counterparts in literature than they have with those in the sciences» (White, 1978, p. 82). A theory which forms its frame in a given linguistic-poetic way will be rejected by the audience the members of which are committed to different ways of prefiguration.

The precognitive activity is, of course, never unlimited. One cannot as a historian perform a construction in which Napoleon won the Battle of Waterloo, says Hampson (1989). Data possess connections independent of the historian's view; the relations between events are given (Mandelbaum, 1984). But this does not refute White's thesis that «in a purely way, a historical narrative is not only a *reproduction* of the events reported in it, but also a *complex of symbols* which gives us directions for finding an *icon* of the structure of those events in our literary tradition» (White, 1978, p. 88).

When we stress that psychoanalytical accounts are a kind of biography and autobiography, the history of which is based on the Greek, Celtic and Germanic oral epic traditions (Ricoeur, 1977), when we point out as Freud (1955, pp. 160-161) himself did, that the Freudian case studies can be read as short stories, we simultaneously consider Freudian texts as much literary as historical. History and phantasy are «the two poles of the narrative spectrum» (Scholes & Kellogg, 1969, p. 87), and we have to take into account the abundance of transitional conditions. It depends on our view to whether we concentrate on history (non-fictional narrative) as a figure against a background of phantasy (fictional narrative) or phantasy against a background of history.

In a Freudian text, as in a historical one, the author perceives the possible story form that given elements may feature and emplots his account as a story of a particular kind. Our understanding of it is based on the elements of a familiar kind of configuration. In White's (1978, pp. 86-87) words, the data conform to «an icon of the structure of the events», «a plot structure with which he is familiar as a part of his cultural endowment». That is the case, anyway, with the patient who knows the events in question very well; he has overemplotted them. He «has charged with a meaning so intense (...) that they continue to shape both his perceptions and his responses to the world long after they should have become "past history"(...) The problem is to get the patient to "reemplot" his whole life history in such a way as to change the *meaning* of the whole events for him and their *significance* (...) the therapeutic process is an exercise in the refamiliarization of events that have been defamiliarized, rendered alienated from the patient's life story (...)

Historians seek to refamiliarize us with events in the histories of their cultures which are «traumatic» in nature and the meaning of which is either problematical or overdetermined in the significance» (revolutions, wars, industrialization etc) «historians refamiliarize them not only by providing more information about them, but also by showing how their developments conformed to one or another story types that we conventionally invoke to make sense of our own life histories».

Understanding how to construct such kinds of texts as the Freudian narratives and historical pieces enriches our self-understanding. We also describe our self in the frame of the pregeneric plot structures mentioned above (Gergen & Gergen, 1988). We try to find a coherent connection between the events of our lives in order to understand our acts. Thus, we produce a new relationship between past and present. This does not mean arbitrariness, or independence of our life events. They cannot be replaced as we would wish. The interpretation of them takes into account the full context. However much Freud was sensitive, or biased we might say, in prefiguring the historical field in the form of a (family) romance, he could not have achieved this in the case of Gradiva if the context of the whole material – that is the presented delusions and dreams and the outcome of the events had not invited him to do so, based on his former experiences with living persons' memories and imageries.

But as much as we return to the past to write history, so much do we rewrite the past itself, by eliminating some fictive elements and by introducing recent ones. A new and important development

in contemporary history is traditional «dead» documents are complemented by experiential ones, by integrating vivid memories. But as Le Goff (1987) warns us the path from memory to history is narrow and difficult to follow. And another outstanding contemporary historian, Duby says (Duby & Landreau, 1980) that the historian's text depending on distance from the present is a product of a dream which is, however, not free in any respect. I think Freud would have had no difficulty in agreeing with them.

The study has been financially supported by the National Research Foundation (T 018198).

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Existential psychoanalysis and *FamilienRoman* in Jean-Paul Sartre *Les Mots*

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«Tout homme a son lieu naturel; ni l'orgueil ni la valeur n'en fixent l'altitude: *l'enfance décide.*»

(Jean-Paul Sartre, *Les Mots*, 51)¹

In *Search for a Method* (61), Sartre defines Existential Psychoanalysis as a method primarily concerned with the way in which the child lives his/her family relationships within a given society. Unless we understand a person's childhood, we cannot understand the path of his or her socialization or of his or her «personalization» i.e. what the environment brings and what the person adds. This is so because it is childhood which «*sets up unsurpassable prejudices, it is childhood which, in the violence of training and the frenzy of the tamed beast, makes us experience the fact of our belonging to our environment as a unique event*» (SM 60)². It is this unique event which the Sartrean dialectic attempts to discover. (Cannon 168-169).

«This method», says Sartre, «attempts to discover the point of insertion of man and his class – that is, the particular family, as a mediation between the universal class and the individual.» (SM 62) It analyzes the results of the concrete relationships between the conscious of the individual and the world – i.e. the individual in society, as a child **and** as an adult. All choices afterall, are not made solely in function of childhood. They are also the results of the consequences of the lived experience in *Society* of the individual who copes with reality in ways which may result in inner cleavage and lead to the fantasies of the *FamilienRoman*³.

In her insightful work *Sartre & Psychoanalysis, An Existentialist Challenge to Clinical Metatheory*, Betty Cannon shows how starting in *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre's theory developed and progressed over the years in his other works like *Search for a Method*, *Critique of Dialectical*

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¹ «Every man has his natural place; its altitude is determined by neither pride nor value: childhood decides.» (*The Words* 60).

² All underlining and bold mine.

³ Albeit an existentialist *FamilienRoman* in this case, as we will see later.

Reason and especially Flaubert's biography *L'Idiot de la famille*, (which he called a continuation of *Critique of Dialectical Reason*). *L'Idiot de la famille* is a *psychobiography* as were three of his other works on Genet, Baudelaire and his own: *Les mots*⁴.

Cannon says «that the chief difference between Freud's psychobiological metatheory and Sartre's ontological metatheory is that, although both initially rely on phenomenological analysis and description, Sartre attempts to discover the ontological structures of human existence which manifest themselves *in* experience, whereas Freud attempts to discover the metabiological (or metaphysical) forces which lie *behind* human experience (52). In other words, according to Sartre, human development relies on *relational needs* rather than *drives* (119) and Sartre will substitute lived experience, originated in infancy which he calls *Le Vécu* for the Freudian *Unconscious* (10).

In a what is a major revision of Freudian metatheory, Sartre's method is based on apprehending the moment of choice – what he calls the «psychological instant» upon which significant or major life changes occur (58). He maintains that the *creation of value* is the primary human focus and aim and, what interests him is the fact that conscious experience, including bodily experience, is lived as a connection with the world through which we attempt to create this value or meaning. One attempts to use the world to get a sense of self (42). This becomes a desire, a desire for *Being*, rather than a desire for pleasure or cessation of tension. As an ontological desire, it is not a desire which consciousness *has* but a desire or lack which consciousness *is* (consciousness in Sartrean terms is always consciousness of *objects* in the world). If consciousness discovers itself in the world, it can do so in art or philosophy as well as in sexual fulfillment. *However, art and philosophy need not be explained as a sublimation of sexual fulfillment as Freud believes.* This desire then is a desire for a future fullness, a desire to *be* a substantial self and yet to remain a free consciousness. It becomes the *fundamental project* (where project is *pro-ject*, *a throwing of oneself forward from the past to the future on the part of an intentional consciousness*) of the individual i.e. the choice of one's way of being.

Consciousness, says Sartre, experiences the «Look» (*le Regard* – notice or attention as well as physical gaze) of the *Other* (*l'Autre*) which he defines as «the first person who sees and names me». (19) It is through this experience that the individual becomes aware of the Other, not as another object in the world, but as a consciousness like his/her own. The Other's Look reveals another subject because it reveals to me my own object status beneath the gaze of that subject (49). Since we cannot incorporate the Other into our consciousness, we may attempt to mimic the Other's view of us. If the individual is a child, and the Other is a parent, s/he will inevitably engage in this mimicry. To the extent that the parent refuses to see and name him/her accurately, s/he will carry this reflective distortion as part of his/her fundamental project.

Whereas early Sartre spoke primarily of dyadic relationships, his later philosophy introduces a third dimension – the *sociomaterial world* containing exigencies from the past which affect and shape the individual project. Human relations are therefore not only *dyadic* but also *ternary* – the individual as part of a group. Fundamental in his later philosophy, is this idea that human relations, linked in a world of humanized matter, are always ternary.

The first third party may well be the father (or his representative) who intrudes into the mother-child dyad. But the importance of the ternary relationship in Sartre's philosophy is ultimately that it makes group relations including relations within the family as a group, possible – The family, then, as a little unit organizing itself in the larger practico-inert field, becomes the transmitter of one's sociocultural heritage. *One's mode of insertion into the family will therefore have great bearing on one's way of inserting oneself into later groups or into one's society as a whole.* For Sartre, it is not just the father but the family group as a shifting complex of dyadic and ternary relations which shapes the mode of an individual's insertion into the practico-inert world of language and culture.

⁴ *The Words*.

Where the traditional patriarchal family resembles the institutionalized or authoritarian group, the father (or mother) will, of course, assume more importance as each of the family members becomes serialized into patriarch or matriarch.

Both the family situation (including its class, social milieu, character of the parents, birth order, etc) which Sartre calls *prehistory* and the early childhood – i.e earliest events – which he calls *protohistory* must be taken into account when analyzing the insertion of the individual into the group- in particular, the connection between the dyadic relations of the earliest infancy and his/her insertion into the ternary relations of the *family* group. Protohistory can be divided into what Sartre calls *constitution* and *personalization*. Where, according to Hazel Barnes, «*constitution* refers to the fundamental patterns of affectivity which Sartre believes are set by the infant's relations with its mother. *Personalization*, beginning in protohistory but extending beyond it, refers to the way that the child internalizes and unifies its lived situation in the family.» (H. E. Barnes, *Sartre's Concept of the Self* 54). To be investigated also are the experiences with early and later peer groups.

At the core then of Sartre's developmental theory, is the all important moment of insertion into the sociomaterial world, in the group, into language and culture. The moment of objectification when «*individual need-oriented praxis inscribes itself in the sociomaterial world as a means to negating the possibility that it might fail to survive as an organism.*» (Cannon 169) *In the Critique such objectifying, goaldirected activity is referred to as «praxis to emphasize the active nature of the for-itself as it lives its project in the sociomaterial world. Its opposite is hexis, or simple re-creation of the status quo at the expense of genuine transcendence.»* (170) It is as I get to know myself through the world that I develop my *Self* (le Soi).

It is fair play at this point to turn the tables on Sartre in order to see how his theory can be applied to analyze him as he describes the first ten years of his own childhood in *Les mots*. How Jean-Paul the adult «quinquagénaire»⁵ in 1963 sees himself as the product of «Poulou»⁶ the child. How he carried out his own fundamental project.

This analysis of *Les mots* will be divided into two parts:

- 1- The parts of the work to be analyzed by applying the principles stated above or by juxtaposing them to Sartre's other psychobiographies (especially Flaubert's) where he applied his theory of Existential Psychoanalysis.
- 2- Those passages where Sartre conducts his own self-analysis and uncovers what he as an adult became as a result of certain «psychological instants» in his childhood.

Les mots, in a very Proustian way, is childhood re-visited and seen somewhat cynically but delightfully by an adult in the latter part of life who wishes to explain who he is in order to demonstrate a theory he developed.

The work begins with Poulou's *prehistory* as we are introduced to the Schweitzer family: from the teacher turned grocer great grandfather's projects for his brood to the rebellion of grandfather Karl (*Charles*) who refused to be anointed as the one to become a Lutheran minister and went chasing instead after a circus rider he never caught. So, he became a teacher of German because, says Sartre, «He wished to devote himself to an attenuated form of spirituality, to a priesthood that would allow him circus riders.» (*The Words* 10) He married Louise Guillemin, daughter of a Catholic lawyer, who hated her marriage from the very start, «became Voltairian out of defiance without having read Voltaire» (11) and withdrew to live in the semi-darkness of her room, in her chair and her bed where she read «spicy novels». This did not prevent Charles from fathering «four children upon her by surprise – a girl, who died in infancy, two boys, and another girl» whom he allowed to be brought up as Catholics. The two boys quickly fell out with their

⁵ Fiftyish.

⁶ Sartre's family given nickname. What's in a name you ask...

father and the girl, Anne-Marie «spent her childhood in a chair... was taught to be bored, to sit up straight, to sew.» (14) She would become Sartre's mother.

On the other side, grandfather Sartre, a physician, outraged by the deception of a father-in-law he believed wealthy, «did not speak a word to his wife for forty years» (15) expressing himself by signs, sharing her bed from time to time to produce two sons and a daughter. Jean Baptiste, the oldest, became a naval officer and already sick with the fever of Cochin-China «made the acquaintance of Anne Marie Schweitzer, took possession of the big forlorn girl, married her, begot a child in quick time, me, and sought refuge in death.» (15)

Because her stress caused her to milk to dry, Anne Marie was forced to wean her son very early and as a result, Sartre felt that there were no early mother-son bond between them.

«Upon the death of my father, Anne Marie and I awoke from a common nightmare. I got better. But we were victims of a misunderstanding: she returned lovingly to a child she had never really left; *I regained consciousness in the lap of a stranger.*» (16-17)

Having nursed both her moribund husband and a dying son, exhausted, widowed and penniless, the twenty year old Anne Marie was forced to go back to live with her parents who saw Jean Baptiste's death as a sort of repudiation and deemed Anne Marie guilty for not having chosen a strong husband. Especially since this meant that grandfather Charles who had retired, now had to go back to work to feed the two additional mouths. But he did it «without a word of reproach. My grandmother herself was discreet in her triumph. But Anne Marie, *chilled* with gratitude, sensed the reproach beneath the correct behavior.» (17) It did not take long «for the young widow to become a minor again, a stainless virgin» (18) who was given a ten o'clock curfew, no pocket money and soon, had no social life. This then is the family in which Sartre's protohistory unfolds for the first ten years: no father, in a French bourgeois family of the early 1900s, adored and seen as a «child of miracle»; between two women who doted on him: his mother whom he saw purely as a giant, a virginal older sister (hence, according to him, no oedipal situation) and his grandmother, Louise, whom he quickly amalgamated into the two in one omnipresent, omnipotent *Karlémami*.⁷

My mother would repeat to me a hundred times a day, not without a purpose: «Karlémami are waiting for us; Karlémami will be pleased; Karlémami ...», conjuring up, by the intimate union of those four syllables, the perfect harmony of the persons. I was only half taken in, but I managed to seem to be entirely: first of all, to myself. The word cast its shadow on the thing; through Karlémami I could maintain the flawless unity of the family and transfer a good part of Charles' merits to Louise. (30)

The Karl of Karlemami was by then an old man, himself an oppressing father (who figuratively «gorged himself on the blood of his sons») turned indulgent but still authoritarian grandfather/Patriarch, whose white beard made him look like God and who ruled the household as if he were:⁸

I was particularly impressed by the play of his forefinger: he would be careful not to point, but would move it vaguely in the air, half bent, so that the designation remained imprecise and the two servants had to guess at his orders. At times, in exasperation, my grandmother would make a mistake and hand him the fruit-bowl when he asked for wine. I would lay the blame on my grandmother. I deferred to these royal desires that wished to be anticipated more than to be satisfied. (158)

⁷ From Karl et Mami.

⁸ Sartre tells of an incident in a church where Charles in the fullness of his height and white beard suddenly appeared in front of the faithful just as the priest was admonishing them that God was there and saw their every move. «They fled» says Sartre (22).

As Sartre describes it: an ongoing family *comedy* of falsehood, double life and imposture where, always on stage, everyone acted a part, the adults as spectators/actors, and the child as the central character, on the theme of: «*I am adored, hence I am adorable*» (28):

I had been convinced that we were created for the purpose of laughing at the act we put on for each other. I accepted the act, but I required that I be the main character. But when lightning struck and left me blasted, I realized that I had a «false major role», that though I had lines to speak and was often on stage, I had no scene «of my own», in short, that I was giving the grown-ups their cues. Charles made much of me, in order to cajole his death; Louise found in my liveliness a justification for her sulkiness, as Anne Marie did for her humility. ... I reflected back to them the unity of the family and its ancient conflicts; they were using my divine childhood to become what they were. (86)

Leading the adult Sartre to say:

The reader may think I was very bumptious. No, I was a fatherless orphan. Being nobody's son, I was my own cause and was filled with both pride and wretchedness. I had been brought into the world by the momentum that impelled me toward Good. The tie-up seems clear: feminized by maternal tenderness, dulled by the absence of the stern Moses who had begotten me, puffed with pride by my grandfather's adoration, I was a pure *object*, doomed par excellence to masochism if only I could have believed in the family play-acting. (112)

This objectification made him feel superfluous (*de trop*), split and a fake. Under the constant adoring gaze of the adults and facing his reflection in mirrors which revealed how plainly natural he was, he felt as if he were double.

Jean Paul chose to escape this reality in bad faith, creating his own version of the *FamilienRoman* by creating and becoming several imaginary heroes. First Music, then the silent movies his mother took him to and, especially the discovery of books, supplied him readily with models for the persona and the plots from which he could exclude Anne Marie and Karlémami. He discovered Michel Strogoff, Pardaillan and Chantecler, those mythical heroes of French folklore. He became all of them, an equal with the kings of France who awaited his orders. He purged the world of monsters and rescued his heroins: «*Il y a quelqu'un qui manque ici: c'est Sartre*»⁹, he would shout. Needed and indispensable, his presence on earth was now justified.

The death of his father gave him his freedom, said Sartre and he believes that there are no good fathers:

There is no good father, that's the rule. Don't lay the blame on men but on the bond of paternity, which is rotten. To beget children, nothing better; to have them, what iniquity! Had my father lived, he would have lain on me at full length and would have crushed me. (19)

As a result, he states categorically: «*je n'ai pas de Sur-moi*.»¹⁰

A most erroneous statement it seems, when one considers the overpowering influence of his grandfather who certainly was the single most influential Other-shaping agent of personalization gazing at the young Jean Paul and to whose artifices he directly attributes the final script of his vocation as an obsessive writer:

If Charles had flung his arms wide open and cried out from afar: «Here comes the new Hugo, here's a budding Shakespeare!», I would now be an industrial draughtsman or a teacher of literature. He was careful not to. For the first time, I was dealing with the

⁹ «Someone is missing here... It's Sartre» (95).

¹⁰ «I have no Super Ego».

patriarch. He seemed forbidding and all the more venerable in that he had forgotten to adore me. He was Moses dictating the new law. My law. He had mentioned my vocation only in order to point out its disadvantages. I concluded that he took it for granted.... The craft of writing appeared to me as an adult activity. (158-159).

My commandments were sewn into my skin; if I go a day without writing, the scar burns me; if I write too easily, it also burns me.... I conclude from this that we're all alike in our profession: we're all galley-slaves, we're all tattooed. *Besides, the reader has realized that I loathe my childhood and whatever has survived of it.* I wouldn't listen to my grandfather's voice, that recorded voice which wakes me with a start and drives me to my table, if it were not my own, if, between the ages of eight and ten, I had not arrogantly assumed responsibility, for the supposedly imperative mandate that I had received in all humility. (164-165)

Contrary to the Flaubert Sartre presents to us in *L'Idiot de la famille*, who was never able to overcome the **hexis** resulting from the passivity and isolation he derived in infancy from his original negative relations with his mother and his father, Jean Paul's situation in the Schweitzer household was overwhelmingly positive. Adored, adulated and very much encouraged, the child Sartre delighted in exploring and seeking refuge in his imagination. Its constructs became his **praxis** and afforded him every escape he needed. Like Genet, who **adopted the look of the Other into his consciousness** and became a thief because others said he was a thief, Sartre, cheered on by his circle of adults, transformed himself into a fake child whose playacting and fantasies became the adult Sartre and his writings:

... that old crumbling structure, my imposture, is also my character: one gets rid of a neurosis, one doesn't get cured of one's self. Though they are worn out, blurred, humiliated, thrust aside, ignored, all of the child's traits are still to be found in the quinquagenarian. Most of the time they lie low, they bide their time; at the first moment of inattention, they rise up and emerge, disguised ... Griselda's not dead. Pardaillan still inhabits me. So does Strogoff. I'm answerable only to them, who are answerable only to God, and I don't believe in God. So try to figure it out. (254)

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The Ego and the Id and Lacan's schema L (*)

ROBERT SILHOL (**)

The first sentence of *The Ego and the Id* (1923)¹ mentions *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) and insists on the continuity between the two works. As we read on, however, we realize that another work was also present in Freud's mind when he wrote *The Ego and the Id*. Indeed, a continuity can also be felt between the long paper written in 1923 and *On Narcissism: an Introduction* (1914), as if some of the questions raised earlier were given an answer in *The Ego and the Id*. Freud's second model, his second «topography», can be read as an epistemological attempt to strengthen and deepen his initial discovery, which I would like to summarize as the discovery of a splitting between what is conscious and what is unconscious in us.

The opening paragraph of *The Ego and the Id* is quite clear about this: the following discussions, Freud writes, are more «psychoanalytical» even than *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. The concept will have to be defined, of course, but the sentence reveals a wish to give the new science a specific status, a status somewhat different from those of previous models which may now be judged too biological. Those discussions, Freud adds, «are more in the nature of a synthesis than of a speculation» and «In these pages, things are touched on which have not yet been the subject of psycho-analytical consideration».²

Without ever forgetting – the precaution is interesting – that in the end «the division of the psychical into what is conscious and what is unconscious is the fundamental premiss and it alone makes it possible for psycho-analysis to understand the pathological processes in mental life» (XIX, 13), Freud pursues his interrogation and his search, and defines the ego³ (*das Ich*) as «a coherent organization of mental processes». But the problem, as he pronounces the word «coherent», linking it with consciousness, is that he finds in the ego «something (...) which is also unconscious», so that he comes to the conclusion that this ego, too, is split.

(*) I am grateful to Ruth Morse for helping me revise the final version of this paper.

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¹ «*Nachstehende Erörterungen setzen Gedankengänge fort, die in meiner Schrift "Jenseits des Lustprinzips" 1920 begonnen wurden (...)»* (GW, VI, 351)

² I am quoting from *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*. Ed. and trans. James Strachey. 24 vols. London: Hogarth, 1953-74. *The Ego and the Id* is in vol. XIX; further references will mention this volume followed by the page number.

³ Already, the translation of *Ich* by «ego» or «moi» indicates a choice of signification which may not quite correspond to the concept Freud was elaborating. In distinguishing «moi» from «le sujet» or «je», Lacan, as we shall see, keeps clear of such a difficulty.

I think we can interpret Freud's attempt thus: his search for coherence, for a solid and yet objective basis for the split subject, is on the side of the resistance and amounts to a momentary denial of the splitting in us. Freud does return to his initial discovery, of course, and it is interesting to note that he concludes this first part of his essay with what we may consider a (wise) warning:

(...) the property of being conscious or not is in the last resort our one beacon-light in the darkness of depth-psychology. (XIX, 18)

In fact, Freud may have felt he needed another concept besides that of the «Unconscious». Because he was confronted with the difficulty of handling as radically new an idea as that of the «unconscious», he starts looking for a representation that will be less evanescent, less invisible even, a representation less fraught with absence, *something*, in other words, which may be found less impossible to conceive, something more concrete that he could «show». Thus he ends up with *an image*. In *The Ego and the Id* Freud's search is primarily a search for a tangible object, hence the somewhat more «concrete» nature of the ego, a representation more «solid» indeed than id and superego with which he is to wrangle later.

But this reassuring «solidity», or «visibility», draws him away from what precisely characterised his discovery: its radicality and its unacceptability. Hence the contradictory movement that constitutes one of the main features of *The Ego and the Id*: two steps forward, one might say, and then one step backward; analytical advance, and then resistance to such an advance. But advance all the same, and on each page a reminder that only «splitting» and «unconscious» form the core of the new science.

I

In the beginning, then – in the beginning of psychoanalysis –, there was Cs/Ucs, «conscious» and «unconscious». The formula represents Freud's initial, and most radical, discovery. He will always return to it and stresses that the formula is the one structure which should be kept in mind.

As we have just seen, though, the problem with such a model is its paradoxical nature. For indeed, how can «something» that is unconscious ever be known? How can we even speak of what is unconscious?

I believe this was the question Freud was trying to solve in *The Ego and the Id*. This is in any case the problem with which he started out and which impelled his search. (We may note in passing that the same interrogation, some forty years later, seems to have prompted W. R. Bion to undertake his *Learning from Experience* (1962)).

Now, the first answer Freud comes up with is the *Preconscious*, an awkward concept if ever there was one, and perhaps not worthy of the qualification. For indeed, if we are to preserve the original structure with which psychoanalysis began, if we are to remain faithful to the early model, this new notion does not help and may even be considered as contradictory. For at this point we are reminded that the «bar» between Cs and Ucs is probably what best represents Freud's discovery. Hence our difficulty in situating the Preconscious. What place does «it» occupy in the original structure? If it is «above» the bar, above the «line», it belongs to the realm of the conscious, and if it is not, that is if we place it «below», we are confronted with the very problem we had at the beginning. For if Freud's discovery makes sense, between conscious and unconscious there shouldn't be anything, anything, that is, but the bar, which is a representation of what opposes and radically separates Cs and Ucs. In fact, the notion of Preconscious simply begs the question and does not seem to help in any way.

What Freud, on the other hand, is about to find (and he says so in the next part of his paper, the second) is *language*: memory, mnesic traces and «word representation». But he does not draw all the conclusions he could from this, and although he comes very near to solving the problem he started out with, he chooses another answer. Instead, at this precise point in his paper, he gives up the line of thinking he has been following so far (language) and shifts to perception:

These word-presentations are residues of memories; they were at one time perceptions.
(XIX, 20)

The question was well put though: «*Was heisst: etwas bewusst machen? Wie kann das vor sich gehen?*» «What does it mean when we say “making something conscious”? How can that come about?» Speaking of «internal processes», he was thinking in terms of communication, in terms of representation (words):

But what about those internal processes which we may – roughly and inexactly – sum up under the name of thought-processes? (...) do they advance to the surface, which causes consciousness to be generated? Or does consciousness make its way to them?
(XIX, 20)

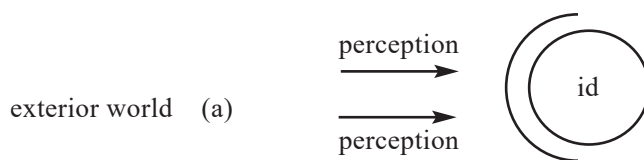
The «bar», the «line», is still there, right in the center of the implicit model; we are still dealing with the original structure: indeed, either thought processes that become conscious come from «below» or from «above», and what «separates» conscious from unconscious remains firmly in place very much like an impassable «barrier».

At this point, as a possible answer to Freud's question, the structure of the metaphor is what one might have expected. Isn't he, in addition, speaking of «connection, with word-presentations» (XIX, 20) (*die Verbindung mit Wortvorstellungen*), and doesn't he use the word(s) «intermediate links» (*Mittelglied*) on the next page? But he seems to have stopped short of the expected – expected, in any case, by a 1995 reader – conclusion, and introduces the Preconscious which, as we saw, only protracts the mystery and solves nothing. He repeats the question: «How does a thing become conscious?» (*Wie wird etwas vorbewusst?*). A new term has been introduced, but no progress has been made. Instead, the newly phrased question (Pcs) leads to three paragraphs where «word representation» and «mnestic traces» give way to perception and lead to the conclusion:

Verbal residues are derived primarily from auditory perceptions, so that the system Pcs has, as it were, a special sensory source. (XIX, 20)⁴

The original track is lost, and the recourse to Groddeck (or to Nietzsche), however welcome, does not help to set things right.

We now have an «Ego» which belongs to the Perception System and is first preconscious, and then, since Groddeck's «Id» has been accepted as the original archaic core of the person, the ego becomes «that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world through the medium of the *Pcpt-Cs*; in a sense it is an extension of the surface differentiation.» (XIX, 25)



But our initial problem: how does «it» become «manifest», seems to have been eluded.

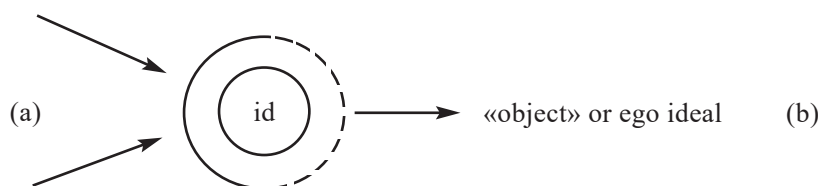
The part played by word-presentations now becomes perfectly clear. By their interposition internal thought processes are made into perceptions. (XIX, 23)

What we end up with is a «surface». Freud uses the term several times (*Oberflächen system*). But it is an awkward surface, and soon he acknowledges the fact:

⁴ It is permitted to see in these «auditive memory traces» a first distant relative of what will become the Lacanian «signifier».

If the ego were merely the part of the id modified by the influence of the perceptual system, the representative in the mind of the real external world, we would have a simple state of things to deal with. But there is a further complication.

Indeed, «*allein es kommt etwas anderes hinzu*»: the surface cannot be reduced to a representation of the exterior world; another fact, something else, «a further complication» has to be taken into consideration. This «new fact/something else» is our relationship to our first object, not simply the world out there, but that part of the world with which, as infants, we identified. We are reminded of *On Narcissism: an Introduction* here, and the notion of *beziehung* (cathexis, investment) can also clearly be seen at work. No doubt, Lacan's mirror stage stems from remarks such as these. The «something» which has introduced a differentiation within the ego has now a name. The second topography is taking shape: ego ideal and super ego have now appeared and complete the picture. Our model thus becomes:



The new factor does come from «outside» but is the result of an identification.

(...) The character of the ego is a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes and (...) it contains the history of these object choices. (XIX, 29)

Clearly, this adumbrates Lacan's Other. And the idea seems so important to Freud that he returns to it. The «history of those object-choices» (XIX, 29) can fruitfully be compared to what we now call the inscription of the desire of the Other in us. It is, Freud says, a «transformation of object libido into narcissistic libido», and again I read this phrase as a prefiguration of «*jouissance*».

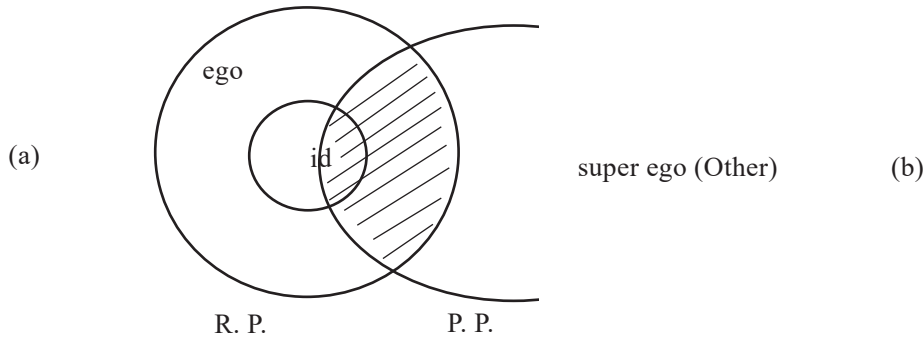
Naturally, this inquiry into the constitution of our psyche does not go without hesitations or digressions; we have no time to study them at length, but what must be clear is that what I call «digressions» can nonetheless be considered as Freud's first answer to the question he has formulated and amounts to a partial solution of the problem he has set out to solve. We notice, for example, how Oedipal triangulation – which constitutes in fact the major «digression» – enables him to form a first, valid idea of the way the super ego functions; in the case of the little boy, indeed, the presence of the father as «interdictory instance» is also a perfect *representation* of the super ego which is in fact a larger and more general concept.

But what seems more essential, however, is Freud's insistence on the dualistic nature of the new psychic force he is bringing to light. Thus does he speak of the «double aspect of the ego ideal» (XIX, 34). The parent is a model – and again we recall «On Narcissism» – but a law-giver *also*.

If we agree to lay aside Freud's ambiguous reasoning (in which we notice a few apparent contradictions)⁶ and concentrate on the duality mentioned above, we will find this helps us to advance. Thus we can write:

⁵ The difference between Freudian and Lacanian thinking will only appear when Lacan identifies the difference between the sexes as the matrix of language. (For a critical appreciation of this view, see R. Silhol, «On the signification of the phallus», *Literature and Psychology*, Eleventh International Conference on Literature and Psychology, Sandbjerg (Denmark), Lisbon, ISPA, 1995.)

⁶ As when the super ego – which was given as a part of the ego at first – becomes the «defending counsel of the id».



where the Other takes over part of the ego and part of the id as well - which may help us, in passing, to understand the ambiguity mentioned. (Of course, it is not accurate to divide the page with the Reality Principle on one side and the Pleasure Principle on the other, as if this division corresponded to Cs/Ucs. The Reality Principle should also be given some room on the right of this representation, the right side of the «bar», since the «object» – on the extreme right, here – is in fact never to be attained. This schema is meant to stress duality and also clearly represents, I hope, the division between outer world (a) and inner world (b).)

What I am mainly trying to illustrate here is the passage from ego ideal to super ego in a way that does not contradict in the least the splitting between Cs and Ucs. For the «object» has a double function which can now easily be summed up by a set of phrases we all know: «I want you», says the infant, or «love me», *but also* «tell me how to be loved by you», «tell me what I must do». It sounds quite simple, obvious even, and yet, as we shall see, this second part of the proposition is never easily acknowledged.

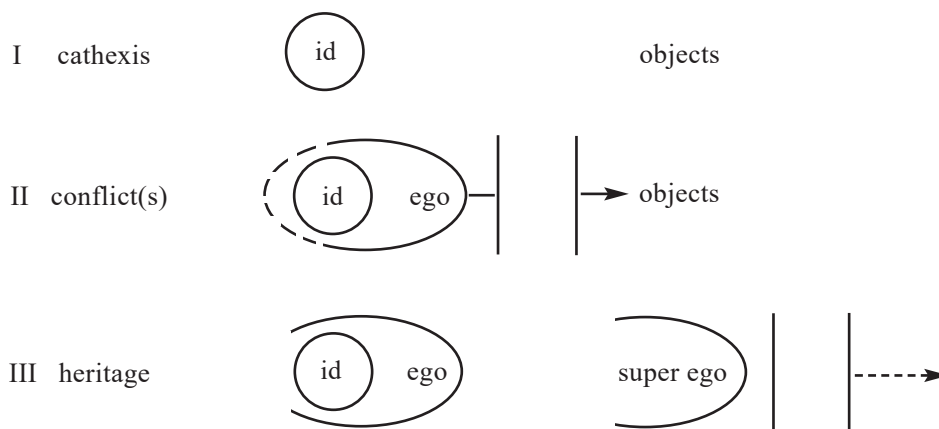
Whether one accepts «Eros» and «Thanatos» as fully fledged concepts or thinks the two terms still need some clarification, the way Freud opposes them to one another in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* certainly fits in the general picture of a split subject and does not contradict the duality ego ideal/super ego.⁷ The pattern is in keeping with the fact that parents are love objects and masters of the law at the same time. This last model (love me/tell me), Freud's new topography, may not explain to us «how something becomes conscious» (*Was heisst: etwas bewusst machen?*) but it at least throws some light on the way castration anxiety – Freud's terms – originates in the subject.⁸ The whole passage is an interrogation on the nature of guilt, of repression – on the nature of the repressed, rather –, in short on what Freud calls our «moral conscience». And this is not another digression, as one may be tempted to think. Perhaps the debate on morality and on socio-historical factors, however founded, is of a digressive nature here, but today's reader will not miss the opportunity to recognize the logical link there is between Freud's reflexion on the «law» and the fear of castration. For Freud, like an archeologist, was proceeding from the «surface» of reality to its deepest «layers», some of which only appear after a long search has been carried out. The model, in any case, is now complete, with an «inbuilt» fear of castration, which we can easily relate to such concepts as superego, the death instinct, and even masochism.

⁷ And it also helps us to more or less combine into a single model the three previous structures Freud had been working on: Cs/Ucs, RP/PP, Eros/Thanatos. «A single model» is only an approximation on my part, of course, but this helps to point out there is no contradiction among the three patterns.

⁸ The original question was: «How does something become conscious?» We have gone from a question on the crossing of the bar (the metaphor) to an hypothesis on castration. This should not surprise us: the bar is also a representation of «castration».

The way in which the super-ego came into being explains how it is that the early conflicts of the ego with the object-cathexes of the id can be continued in conflicts with their heir, the super-ego. (XIX, 38)

Yet, Freud's explanation leaves many questions unanswered. What are those «early conflicts of the ego with the object-cathexes of the id»? The «history» of the apparition of the super ego is not altogether clear. Indeed, «the way in which the super-ego came into being» (I shall return to the notion of history in a moment) can be summarized in the following fashion:



One may object(!) to the way in which I have tried to illustrate «conflict» in II, but one will no doubt agree that the idea is germane to «contradiction», «prohibition», «refusal».

Now, I understand «cathexis» (I), but what is not explained here is why «conflict» should arise between cathexis and, say, the ego (II). The way to make sense of this, I find, is to interpret «conflicts» as Freud's representation of the «bar». The representation may remain imprecise and unclear, it may even have been unconsciously produced, but it has the merit of showing how the new model remains coherent, in harmony with the original psychoanalytical structure.

A second reading of «conflicts», besides, seems possible, and it does not contradict the one above. Indeed, Freud has already explained how the ego ideal gave way to the super ego, and I interpreted this as referring to the fact that the object has a double function: as love object *and* as law giver. This was in fact already inscribed in the very title of the third part of Freud's essay: *Das Ich und das Über-Ich (IchIdeal)*, a model in itself.

The idea of a conflict between id and ego can then be understood as the over-determined representation of the «bar» between Cs and Ucs *and* of the way the ego ideal gave birth to the super ego. The two are strongly related, of course, but we shall not confuse them: on one hand the impossibility of ever attaining «the object» or the object as «something» that can only be represented; on the other, the law that comes from this object: discourse/desire of the Other.

The «history», the «heritage» (III) which brings about the super ego, can then be understood as a reference to the «history» of the subject, since Freud himself insists on this very term. First, there was the id, then the encounter with the world – an exterior world, something in keeping with the «Reality Principle» and which I shall consider neutral – and then, *or rather concurrently*, the encounter with our first love object, a love object that was also a law giver. Read thus, Freud's second topography not only is not in contradiction with his first, radical, model, but enables us to advance towards a better understanding of what is unconscious in us.

This second model, however, is not without some ambiguity and my first impression was that either ego (II) or super ego (III) was not necessary to the completion of the model, since III does not seem to add anything that is not already in II (in my own representation at least). On second thoughts, though, remembering that Freud had to cope with two aspects of the exterior world: the «world» as generally revealed by perception⁹, and that particular part of the world we have called the «love object», one can understand his wish to distinguish super ego (III) from ego (II), as a direct – although not clearly felt – consequence of the dual nature of the «world».

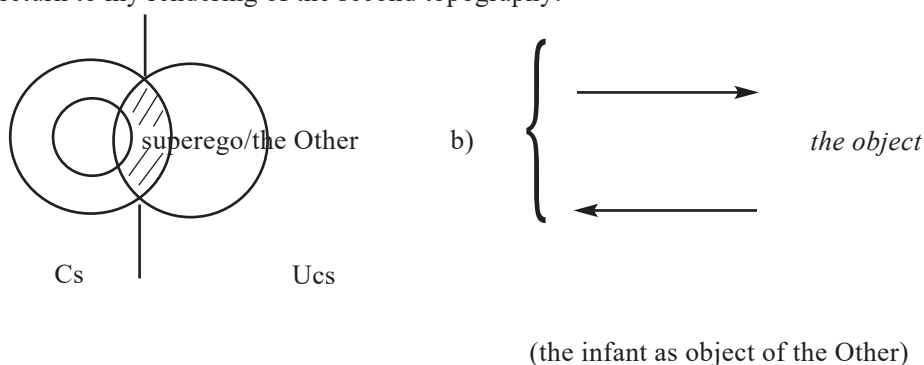
The ego can therefore be read as referring to the domain of perception, as representing – it is a concept, we must not forget this – our relationship with a (comparatively) neutral reality, whereas the superego belongs to the domain of the love object turned master of the law. Read in this manner, the need for a third stage – as in my diagram – makes sense; between the two there is a difference. But it only makes sense if we realize that the ego refers to that part of the world which has no influence on the subject beyond that expressed by Freud in his «Reality Principle». In fact, this ego is nothing but a surface, a reflecting surface perhaps, but a surface, an image which we cannot confuse with that active anxiety-producing agency Freud called the super ego, the seat of the law and of unconscious desire in each of us.

If we do not make such a distinction, we end up with two terms – ego and super ego – for one solitary concept, the more or less «neutral» ego I have tried to depict being over-estimated at the cost of the super ego which Freud has just so carefully described as the seat of unconscious guilt.¹⁰ Freud was quite conscious such a misreading was tempting, for twice, at least, he insists on the weakness of the ego, on its lack of real power, and entitles his Fifth part «The ego's dependent relations» (*Die Abhängigkeiten des Ichs*). You may remember the metaphors: in one instance, the ego is «the horseman who has to hold in check the strength of the horse; with this difference, that the rider tries to do so with its own strength, while the ego uses borrowed forces», and in the other the ego is compared to «a constitutional monarch» that is to say a monarch with little or no power.

II

This is where Lacan comes in, giving on many occasions an interpretation of Freud's second model that warns us of the possible pitfalls it may lead to.

If we return to my rendering of the second topography:



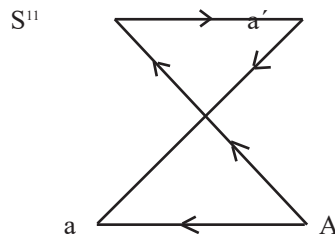
⁹ Obviously, there is no such thing, and parental unconscious desire influences the baby's perception from the very beginning (See for instance Winnicott), but the distinction between world and love object can still be maintained.

¹⁰ ...among other things... for it is not too difficult to pursue Freud's reasoning further and to arrive at a conception of the super ego as the real centre of unconscious desire.

we may recall that a distinction has to be made between a) the «world» that comes to us through perception (only theoretically of course and for the sake of clarity, perception being here considered as free from any other influence than that represented by the Reality Principle, which, since the Other intervenes concurrently is impossible), and b) that part of the world, and we can say the object, which in the case of humans has an active part in the making, in the «construction» of the person as «subject». So far, I have tried to point out how a lack of distinction between these two aspects of the «world» could lead us into giving to Freud's initial model (Cs/Ucs) a reading deprived of meaning, a reading, in any case, which erases the «bar» or sets it aside as unimportant.

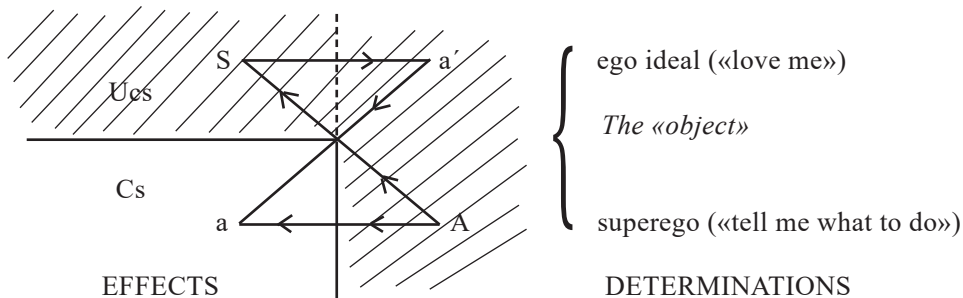
Lacan's own model seems to help us avoid such an epistemological danger. First, with Freud, Lacan repeats that the object is not simply what we wish to have, possess, or acquire, but also the seat of the Law. Giving a critical interpretation of object-relation theory, he reintroduces Freud's super ego as an active agent, calling it the Other and showing how the desire of the subject is the desire of the Other only.

Secondly, he clearly insists on the fact that the ego is only an image. He illustrates this with his schema L in his *Séminaire II* (published 1995), page 284.



Here is how the schema reads: everything starts from A, *l'Autre*, the Other, which even rules the image in the mirror; this is the desire of the Other. *a* represents Freud's ego, and is the result of an identification with *a'*, the parent, a person other than «me», a person «out there» and which the infant needs in order to construct itself as «me». This corresponds to Freud's first object¹², and is Lacan's image in the mirror (symetry, identification).

The subject, in *S*, is clearly distinct from this ego. It is also shown as directly created by the Other but kept in darkness as it were, out of reach of consciousness, «something» than can only be represented or imagined, something that can only be discussed and understood because of its effects. Perhaps the following diagram will make this clear:



¹¹ Lacan first calls this «Es» (Freud's id), but he will also use *S* elsewhere (same pronunciation!), which stands for «subject».

¹² And, when considering the Oedipal triangle, as Freud does in *The Ego and the Id*, to the father of the boy; which is of course a restrictive view.

Lacan's comments in 1995 can be summed up thus:

- between a and a' we have the illusion of communication («He sees himself in a ; he may believe that “*me*” is *him*»).
- between A and S we have what determines the subject, and this, for Lacan, is done through language.¹³

The advantages of such an implicit reading of *The Ego and the Id* are numerous.

- 1) Freud's original model, Cs/Ucs, is preserved.
- 2) The «Ego» remains distinct from the «subject» and is given the status of an image, an object only.
- 3) The «object» appears in its *double function* of aim, or target, or wish to be loved, *and* of determinant.
- 4) A , the «Other», which proceeds from the first love object appears as the ultimate or very first determinant, at work even in the mirror stage.

Which leaves us with one important question, particularly in such a Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: what is the relevance of all this to literary studies?

The relevance is that, in the same way as the Other is the master of my destiny (at least until I have concluded a long analytical process which, as we all know is endless...) «it» is the master/mistress of my discourse.

As literary critics, or rather literary anthropologists, it seems we might realize that the subject in us, the «writing subject», cannot be reduced to the ego, $a \dots a'$. There are two sides to the metaphor indeed: it carries *and* it hides unconscious desire. If we only pay attention to the «mask», overlooking the subject behind, we end up with an analysis of day residues only, which, as Freud taught us, is not the «dream».

¹³ He also speaks of the «wall of language», which I interpret as: what reaches the subject does so through «language», but is never conscious communication. This points to Lacan's view on the relationship between the sexes, the phallus and language. See Note 5.

Alice au pays des merveilles: Métaphore ou modèle psychanalytique de la lecture?

JEAN-MARC TALPIN (*)

«Assise à côté de sa sœur sur le talus, Alice commençait à être fatiguée de n'avoir rien à faire. Une fois ou deux, elle avait jeté un coup d'œil sur le livre que lisait sa sœur; mais il n'y avait dans ce livre ni images ni dialogues: "Et, pensait Alice, à quoi peut bien servir un livre sans images ni dialogues?"»

Elle était en train de se demander (dans la mesure du possible car la chaleur qui y régnait ce jour là lui engourdissait quelque peu l'esprit) si le plaisir de tresser une guirlande de pâquerettes valait la peine de se lever pour aller cueillir les pâquerettes, quand soudain un lapin blanc aux yeux roses vint à passer auprès d'elle en courant.

Il n'y avait rien de particulièrement remarquable; et Alice ne trouva pas non plus très extraordinaire d'entendre le lapin dire entre ses dents: «Oh là là! Oh là là! Je vais être en retard.»

Ainsi commencent *Alice au pays des merveilles* et *Alice sous terre*. Emboitant le pas à la fillette, qui elle-même suit le lapin, nous allons pénétrer dans un univers où les niveaux logiques (les «mondes» d'Umberto Eco, 1979) non seulement sont bousculés mais où, dans le rêve, ils se confondent. Rarement dans un texte (l'aspect fantastique, merveilleux n'y est certes pas étranger) la métaphore de la lecture aura été aussi évidente, au point que le lecteur, lisant Alice (je désigne ainsi l'ensemble des récits dont cette enfant est l'héroïne), lit, figuré par des personnages, ce qu'il est en train de vivre: ainsi du Lapin, double actif, maniaque, d'Alice, qui représente aussi l'emballement de la lecture dans le tourbillon des aventures; ainsi du Chat du Cheshire qui s'efface pour ne réapparaître qu'en yeux et bouche flottant au-dessus d'Alice et formant ainsi un double en objets partiels (le regard et la voix) du lecteur. Ainsi du Roi, de la Reine, des Valets, ces cartes-personnages à l'existence de papier... Ainsi d'Alice, personnage auquel se condense par moment le lecteur inscrit, ce qui renforce l'étrangeté née des aventures elles-mêmes.

D'emblée, les aventures d'Alice se situent sous le signe du double: Alice/sa sœur, le monde d'en haut/le monde d'en bas..., Alice étant à chaque fois le vecteur entre les deux. Dans *De l'autre côté du miroir et de ce qu'Alice y trouva* le rapport au double, au double spéculaire de soi et du monde est particulièrement évident.

L'affirmation: «le conte offre cette particularité de représenter le groupe du rêveur profond au rêveur éveillé qui est le conté» (R. Kaës, 1984) peut s'étendre du conte dit au conte lu: le lecteur est conteur et conté tout à la fois, reliés qu'ils sont par la voix interne qui se module sur celle, inscrite, du narrateur. Aussi ferai-je à partir d'Alice une double hypothèse, réversible comme le livre à partir duquel elle s'élabore.

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- Alice rêve le livre, celui, sans images ni dialogues, que sa sœur lit; le livre *Alice au pays des merveilles* est donc le récit du rêve par lequel Alice figure le livre que sa sœur lit; entre le récit que nous lisons et celui que lit la sœur s'intercale la figuration onirique dont le récit «Alice» est emprunt: le processus primaire y affleure, par exemple dans la réversibilité qui est une manière de rendre, dans le registre des mots et de la syntaxe, le principe de non-contradiction de l'inconscient. Dans le récit *Alice au pays des merveilles* le livre, le récit, la narrabilité sont présents puisqu'Alice, au cours de ses aventures, pense non seulement à les raconter plus tard, mais aussi à les écrire; elle nous introduit à la transmission transgénérationnelle puisqu'elle envisage en songe de raconter son périple à ses enfants. Alice, récit initiatique, intègre dans sa fantaisie le processus élaboratif mutatif du monde du rêve au monde du texte, du monde de l'image au monde des mots.

- la sœur lit un rêve dans un livre. Peut-être ce livre est-il *Alice au pays des merveilles*, récit d'un rêve ainsi que nous invite à le penser la structure du texte et les références répétées d'Alice au futur récit de ses aventures. Cependant, il semble qu'elle lise plutôt autre chose qui fait rêver Alice et lui fournit néanmoins le modèle de son récit ultérieur par le transfert du conteneur écrit et son appropriation; Alice a en effet l'âge où la rencontre avec le monde des signes écrits est conflictuel: le renoncement qu'il implique pour l'enfant n'est pas encore compensé par l'ouverture qu'il permet par ailleurs.

Le livre de la sœur serait donc, d'un point de vue narratologique, l'embrayeur de la rêverie d'Alice ainsi que de sa formalisation en un récit. D'un point de vue psychanalytique, ce livre remplit une fonction intermédiaire: lu (la sœur) ou non (Alice), il introduit au monde interne. Chez Alice, il n'est pas sans susciter quelque envie; elle déploie alors les fastes de son imaginaire pour concurrencer le livre (l'attaquer) et sentir (et faire partager à ses futurs auditeurs ou lecteurs) la vigueur de ses objets internes. Le monde du livre semble mort à Alice puisqu'en sont abolies ces traces de vie que sont les images (qui en appellent au visuel perceptif ou rêvé) et les dialogues (images sonores de voix prises, encore vivantes, dans le texte); à l'opposé, *Alice au pays des merveilles* est plein d'images (dessinées par L. Carroll lui-même sur son manuscrit) et de dialogues; Alice ne peut lire le livre de sa sœur car cela reviendrait pour elle à introjecter des objets qu'elle ressent comme menaçant pour son espace psychique. Dans cette lutte contre le livre, chacun gagne: le livre (comme catégorie et non plus comme objet discret) puisqu'il s'enrichit du récit d'Alice; Alice puisqu'à la fin sa sœur, qui a abandonné sa lecture, fait le même rêve qu'Alice, après que celle-ci lui ait raconté le sien.

Le rêve-livre d'Alice au pays des merveilles travaille au niveau des représentations-mots qu'il traite souvent comme des choses (R. Roussillon, 1989); par des jeux typographiques (par exemple la queue de la souris dont l'image envahit à ce point la pensée d'Alice que les phrases imprimées prennent la forme de l'appendice caudal de cet animal) les représentations de mots forment des images, dans un redoublement des niveaux de représentation; (redoublement, en effet, plutôt qu'écrasement puisque les mots, disposés pour leur image, sont aussi composés selon la syntaxe afin de produire un sens qui coïncide à l'image).

Entre lire le rêve et rêver le livre, le lecteur est pris dans une aporie qui est aussi le point où la séduction s'effectue et où le pacte entre le lecteur et le texte se noue: il sera la sœur qui lit et Alice qui s'aventure, encore qu'il ne s'agisse là que de la figuration dédoublée des deux pôles que la lecture tient unis; il sera aussi le pasteur Dodgson dont il partagera la rêverie-conteneur de fantasmes de séduction pédophilique.

Dès le commencement de *Alice au pays des merveilles* le texte dit quelque chose du pacte dénégatif qu'il propose au lecteur en mentionnant qu'«il n'y avait là rien de particulièrement remarquable»: le simple fait de l'énoncer, au lieu d'annuler l'aspect extraordinaire du lapin blanc aux yeux roses, en souligne l'étrangeté tout en annonçant au lecteur la particularité du monde du livre; le texte, par ce pacte, indique au lecteur le registre dans lequel il devra se tenir afin de faire l'économie du refoulement; mais dans son déroulement, il ne ménage pas ses effets pour surprendre son lecteur en même temps qu'Alice (d'autant que le public interne de L. Carroll comprenait la fillette à laquelle il destinait et adressa le texte).

Outre ce pacte, les ouvertures de *Alice au pays des merveilles* et de *De l'autre côté du miroir* proposent deux modèles de l'entrée dans la lecture, modèles plus complémentaires qu'antagonistes.

Alice au pays des merveilles pose d'emblée la question du plaisir qu'il y a à lire dès lors que l'ouvrage s'éloigne des perceptions immédiates telles que la vue (les images) et l'ouïe (les dialogues). Alice et sa sœur empruntent chacune leur voie, qui se recoupent en plus d'un point; l'une, la sœur, poursuit sa lecture; l'autre, Alice, ne supporte pas l'inhibition requise par cette «activité»: elle s'endort, mais à peine dort-elle qu'elle retrouve le rythme effréné de l'action, d'abord projetée sur le lapin puis vécue en propre par la fillette qui redouble le lapin de vouloir le poursuivre.

Le changement de monde d'Alice, par sa chute qui la fait passer du monde de la réalité à un monde inconnu dont elle ignore les règles et les lois, évoque à l'évidence l'endormissement, la chute dans le sommeil, ce moment où les repères se perdent. Mais n'est-ce pas ce qui se passe aussi (ce basculement de la réalité externe, perçue multisensoriellement, à la réalité du livre, reconstruite) non au début du livre mais au moment de la séduction qui précipite le lecteur dans le texte et le texte dans le lecteur? La réalité du livre devient imaginée sur le mode d'une rêverie qui peut aller jusqu'à la limite de l'hallucination. L'intuition de L. Carroll qui rapproche lire et dormir-rêver est bien proche de celle développée par P. Fédida dans son article «Le conte et la zone d'endormissement».

Durant sa chute et au début de ses aventures au pays des merveilles, Alice fait l'expérience conjointe de la déréalisation et de la dépersonnalisation. La première se manifeste essentiellement au cours de la chute; mais très vite, comme au cours de la lecture, la perte de la réalité externe est compensée par une autre réalité, certes teintée d'étrangeté, celle de la fiction. Alice, même si elle ne les connaît pas, pressent que le monde dans lequel elle est tombée (au sens propre comme au sens populaire figuré) a des règles qui sont proches des processus primaires; ceci est encore plus explicite dans *De l'autre côté du miroir*.

La quasi-dépersonnalisation d'Alice se manifeste par ses variations de taille et par sa crainte d'être devenue une autre enfant. Alice, comme le lecteur, doit s'adapter à son nouveau monde (de fiction), y trouver sa mesure et sa place pour accéder à la réalisation du désir: le petit jardin; mais il faut en avoir la clé et être d'une taille proportionnelle. Pour Alice, le changement de taille se fait d'abord passivement (par hasard) puis activement à partir du moment où elle maîtrise sa croissance et sa décroissance, en particulier par l'incorporation d'un champignon. Cette alternance entre passivité et activité, sur le plan intra-psychique et non plus sur celui de l'action, caractérise la lecture, du moins la lecture séduite de textes littéraires. Lisant le texte le lecteur pénètre son univers tout en s'en pénétrant comme Alice qui doit incorporer un objet du pays des merveilles afin de pouvoir s'y mouvoir, afin de pénétrer dans le merveilleux petit jardin d'où la violence, certes verbale, est loin d'être exclue, ainsi qu'elle en fera l'expérience; l'objet du désir, dont la réalisation toujours reportée, en suspens, participe au suspense, se déplace alors du jardin à un ailleurs, un autrement, toujours renouvelé.

Alice au pays des merveilles rapproche donc la lecture du sommeil et du rêve dans une perte inaugurale des frontières du Moi. Dans une conclusion circulaire ce livre relance cette perte des frontières du Moi puisque la sœur d'Alice, après sa propre lecture et le récit que vient de lui faire Alice, rêve à son tour les mêmes aventures; il lui faut ainsi, par un redoublement de l'enveloppe onirique, tout à la fois recharger le récit en affects et élaborer secondairement les contenus les plus dangereux (les récits d'Alice en regorgent), n'était l'humour qui constitue une distance protectrice: dans le travail psychique onirique de la sœur se reconnaît celui du lecteur qui, à la différence d'Alice, n'est pas héros-narrateur-scripteur mais récepteur; le dédoublement du lecteur sur les deux fillettes, relevé précédemment, se renforce donc.

Le mode d'entrée dans l'univers fictionnel de *De l'autre côté du miroir* est plus élaboré que la chute au pays des merveilles, puisqu'il comprend un double embrayeur ludique et fictionnel; il est d'abord précisé qu'Alice commence beaucoup de ses phrases par «faisons semblant», puis qu'elle raconte au chat ce qu'elle imagine qu'il se passe de l'autre côté du miroir; le lecteur comme Alice est donc bien, dès le début du livre, sous le signe du jeu et de l'imaginaire, même s'il comprend à

la fin qu'il s'agissait d'un rêve: comme si Alice s'endormait en racontant au chat (comme la mère à l'enfant, mais là dans une auto-référencialité beaucoup plus forte, le chat étant un double «passif») et continuait à traiter, à élaborer en rêve les vécus psychiques archaïques non traités par le récit; sans doute faut-il même aller plus loin: elle s'endort parce que son récit (au chat) a suffisamment traité, détaché des angoisses pour que ces noyaux archaïques puissent être réutilisés sans danger dans le rêve: le récit préalable les a rendus «fréquentables»; jamais l'autre côté du miroir n'est un cauchemar. Mais, dans un retournement, il est aussi possible de soutenir qu'Alice ne peut raconter son récit que parce qu'elle en a déjà repris certains éléments par les processus du rêve.

Le miroir franchi, Alice se retrouve (et se perd) dans un monde où, du moins au début, les personnages ne peuvent ni la voir ni l'entendre, ce dont elle est fort affectée, c'est-à-dire que les affects naissent en elle de ces représentations froides, qui n'ont pas plus d'épaisseurs qu'une carte à jouer ou une page imprimée. Cet écart représente bien l'hétérogénéité basale du lecteur et du texte, le premier se sentant sans prise sur le second et sans existence au regard du livre, avant que ne se constitue en lui la mémoire commune minimum nécessaire aux interactions imaginaires (aux fantasmes) et surtout avant qu'ait lieu cette séduction qui modifiera l'ensemble du rapport du lecteur au texte. Puis le lecteur saisit comment se mouvoir dans le monde du texte, tel Alice qui apprend à se mouvoir dans un monde à l'envers.

Certains textes font une place de choix ou une place facile au lecteur; d'autres ne lui laissent que peu de place, le sadisent, le maltraitent: ainsi des récits des aventures d'Alice qui font vivre au lecteur les mêmes effrois, les mêmes impasses logiques, les mêmes renversements de sens (qui s'apparentent aux processus primaires de la pensée) que ceux que vivent l'héroïne; ce n'est pas pour étonner puisque le destinataire premier du livre était la petite fille (Alice Liddell) dont L. Carroll avait repris le prénom pour baptiser son héroïne. Les mises en abîme, particulièrement fréquentes, sont de ces figures qui destabilisent totalement le lecteur, ouvrant autant de chausse-trappes sous ses pas: sa pensée, comme celle d'Alice, est prise dans une spirale sans fond, sans fin; Alice, se faisant la remarque qu'elle vit ce qu'elle a lu dans des contes (elle sait donc lire, même si elle ne goûte guère encore ce loisir sans doute encore trop emprunt d'apprentissage), renverse pour le lecteur la logique.

Franchissant le miroir, Alice se dédouble: elle se défait de son unité imaginaire pour la confronter aux représentants de son monde interne archaïque antérieur à l'expérience du miroir et en éprouver ainsi la force de résistance unifiante; de même le lecteur, au seuil du livre (seuil imaginaire de la séduction et non seuil réel de la première page; G. Genette, 1987) se déprend-il partiellement de son enveloppe identitaire en la redoublant au dehors par le dispositif et au dedans par l'enveloppe textuelle.

Au miroir du texte le lecteur, tel une enfant à séduire (et à violenter) en pensée, ne se reconnaît qu'à le franchir; il va au cœur de lui-même en traversant son image en reflet. Mais ne se voyant plus, il ne se reconnaît pas d'être trop lui-même, fors dans la fulgurance jubilatoire de se trouver écrit.

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The psychoanalytical approach to lyrical poetry

KEES C. P. NUIJTEN ()*

«I dwell in Possibility –
A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows –
Superior – for Doors –»

Emily Dickinson

The subject of this article is the psychoanalytical approach to lyrical poetry. To be more precise: I shall deal almost entirely with what is being written by scholars working in the field of psychoanalysis and literature on some topics, that are of crucial importance for lyrical poetry.

I. The first – and main – part of this article consist of a description of the way most psychoanalytic orientated scholars connect in their studies one or more aspects of poetry with the pre-oedipal world and the primary process¹. I therefore conceive of poetry as a genre, mixing primary and secondary process-related aspects in a very special way. Namely: the influence of the primary process on poetry is relatively strong, in comparison with novels or drama.

II. After this I shall make some comments on the striking similarity between the psychoanalytical approach to poetry and the results of some cognitive investigations on this subject.

I

Among the first followers of Freud, Hanns Sachs, Karl Weiss, Siegfried Bernfeld and Victor Tausk have dealt quite thoroughly with rhythm and rhyme. They did so in several articles, most of them based on their lectures and discussions at the Wednesday-meetings at Freud's. Both aspects, rhythm and rhyme, are of considerable importance for lyrical poetry, especially for the more

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¹ Due to my research, on behalf of my forthcoming book on literary genres, this part will have a bit of a historical overview, especially the first part of it.

conventional kind. Let's say, poetry up to the dominance of the period-code of Modernism and the Avant-garde. Rhyme in their view works by the saving, or economy of psychic energy, just as all kinds of repetitions in daily life do. The recognition of something familiar is easier than placing something new. Rhythm is related by them to the pre-oedipal experience of sucking the breast of the mother; to the pleasant experience of loving care, warmth and - most important of all – getting food. Tausk goes a little further back in time, suggesting that rhythm in poetry «nichts anderes sei, als eine Art funktionalen Phänomens des organischen Rhythmus (Blut, Herz), der sich im Kosmos wiederfinde» (Nunberg & Federn 1976-1981, Band III: 160). He means the beating of the heart of the mother, which the unborn child in the womb hears, feels and indeed lives by. Karl Weiss shows in his well known article, «Von Reim und Refrain» (Weiss 1913), that both formal aspects rhyme and refrain do soften or disguise the unconscious intentions of the poet. Many critics, influenced by psychoanalysis, including Simon Lesser and Norman Holland, have stressed this phenomenon also, although rhyme does generate significance at least as much as it veils. A famous Dutch poet, Jacques Bloem, has written most cleverly about this latter phenomenon (Bloem 1938, 1941). Weiss and many critics after him wrote of rhyme as a compromise formation. Sachs and some of the others I mentioned already connect the content of the poems they analysed with conflicts characteristic for the pre-oedipal phase.

So, in all these early reflections on poetry, formal aspects, as well as elements of the content, are connected with the pre-oedipal state of development. These studies therefore form a prelude to many modern books and articles on this subject. It strikes me that they concentrate so plainly on the pre-oedipal phase, in a period when most psychoanalytic theorists are fully occupied with the oedipal conflicts and their consequences for the grown-up individual, artist or not. More recent studies deal with this subject much in the same way.

Norman Holland, for instance, interprets, in his *Poems in Persons* (Holland 1973), the whole lyrical oeuvre of H. D. as an attempt to undo the separation from her mother. Many critics, influenced by modern psychoanalytic theory, have pointed at the importance of the issue of the separation and individuation in relation to the content of poetry. The separation and individuation are of unmistakable importance for all human beings, of course. But it's indeed remarkable in what quantity you could find this subject, or to this subject related items in poetry. I have dealt with this in an article, which was published in 1994; unfortunately it's in Dutch (Nuijten 1994).

Brisman & Brisman (Brisman & Brisman 1980), Fritz Gesing (Gesing 1989), Walter Schönau (Schönau 1990) and others have argued that many lyrical poets sing about the lost paradise of their early youth. This first period in someone's life is seen, by these critics, as a comfortable symbiosis with the mother, who feeds her child, loves it and pampers it well. In the psyche of the adult there still exists unconsciously something like a remembrance of these first lovely, happy and warm experiences, originating from the time before the separation took place. Much of the thinking of these critics is based on the assumption, that the first period in someone's life exists almost entirely in such happy experiences. To put it in a very friendly way: this assumption is not in complete accordance with modern theory. Since the work of Melanie Klein it is well known that the very young infant is torn between feelings of love for his caring, nursing mother when he feels well and feelings and fantasies of violent destructive hatred when he is hungry, in pain or not comforted when he needs it. Nevertheless, these literary critics take most poetry as the result of the unconscious wish to be in the position to enter the lost paradise, whenever needed. Or to recall the fantasy of this happy world of the infant. So poetry is seen by them as fed by regressive fantasies and feelings.

Gesing and Schönau have written most interestingly about the way language is used in lyrical poetry. The language of much poetry resembles, in many respects, the impression speech has made on the very young infant at the time he wasn't able to catch the full meaning of it. The people surrounding the newly born produce sounds that have something magical. It's obvious to the little one that these sounds are important, because they generate action and so on. But the child lacks the ability to understand the real meaning of what it's hearing, while it perceives the importance of these sounds. Later on it starts imitating and repeating these sounds. According to Schönau some

lyrics have much left from this early playfulness, especially the experimental poems of DaDa, some other avant-garde poetry, and some lightverse as well. Gesing writes about the way recipients deal with the language of poetry: «Wie das kleine Kind der Sprache der Erwachsenen gegenübersteht, so stehen wir dem Gedicht gegenüber. Wir fühlen uns beruhigt, aber auch provoziert, wir rätseln am Sinn und verstehen doch das Wichtigste. Der Dichter versetzt sich in das Kind, das er einmal war, und er versetzt auch seinen Leser wieder in die Zeit der Kindheit» (Gesing 1989: 30). Gesing stresses in this article the impossibility of a complete regression by poet and reader. Most poetry is too well structured and implicates therefore the working of a conscious mind in control of the matter it exploits, or explores. And sound aspects, like the use of rhythm and rhyme, also need the poet's conscious and mastering mind. Gesing uses the next striking words to make this clear: «Das Lyrisches Sprechen ist ein Hinabtauchen in die Sprach-, Gefühls- und Wahrnehmungswelt der Kindheit bei gleichzeitig hellwachem Erwachsenenbewusstsein» (Gesing 1989: 29).

Gesing, Schönau and the others take the language used in most poetry as a mixture of primary process-related elements on the one hand and aspects, which are closely related to the secondary process, on the other. It's obvious that the language used in poetry is secondary process-related as long as it is directed at communication, because this implies the correct use of the semantic rules and other laws, that help generate everyday language. The language I'm aiming at, using the term «everyday language», could be found in news-papers, informal speech and even in most narrative prose. Gesing, Schönau and others believe that the deviations from these laws and rules, when they occur in poetry, are influenced by the language experience of the infantile psyche, that is under the command of the primary process. Most of the time these deviations are, as Julia Kristeva has described in *La révolution du langage poétique* (Kristeva 1974), more than just a simple putting aside of conventions. It's a liberation from linear and logical thinking as well. This liberation gives freedom to the world of the primary process, which is emotional, timeless, non-linear and not logical at all. Sound aspects and emotional aspects become relatively more important here, and it gives way to the experimental use of language. Take for instance the poet using neologisms. He is coining new words, or new word-combinations, but the process that leads to these new words is almost as old as the poet himself.

A good example of metaphorical language, often used in lyrical poetry and closely related to the primary process, is synaesthesia. Synaesthesia, as we all know, is the joining of sensations derived from two different sensory domains. The use of synaesthetic metaphors is of course not restricted to poetry, not even to literature. You will find it in everyday language as well, but most of the time it's used there to show some «literariness»: soft sound, warm sound, soft voice, loud colours, warm colours are some evident examples. Although synaesthesia occurs in other contexts as well, it's more or less typical of poetic language and it's very often explored in Romantic and Symbolist poetry. A well known example is Arthur Rimbaud's poem «Voyelles». In my forthcoming book I use another well known poem, the «Correspondances» of Baudelaire, to illustrate my view.

I do believe that synaesthetical experiences are quite unusual in the everydaylife of a normal adult, without the help of drugs. But I do think they are more or less usual in the existence of the newly born individual. The developing psyche of the small baby is exposed to many impressions and the perception is not clearly related to the different senses. I mean: it's not clear for the infant itself, which senses are stimulated when impressions are entering the brain, via the nervous system; especially not, when more senses are stimulated at the same time. In my view synaesthesia therefore is the representation in literature, and in common language as well, of this experience of mixed up sensations, which are quite normal for the period, during which the psyche is wholly under the command of the primary process.

The cognitive approach to this phenomenon by Reuven Tsur is heading in another direction. In his book *Toward a Theory of Cognitive Poetics* (Tsur 1992) Tsur makes a distinction between the joining of sense impressions, derived from the various sensory domains, and the joining of terms derived from the vocabularies, or semantic fields that correspond to the various sensory domains. The former is synaesthesia as an observable entity or experience, while the latter is the metaphor.

This metaphor could be the representation in words of such an experience, otherwise it is a concoction, or fiction of it. Tsur tries to explain why some synaesthetic metaphors are interpreted as genuine by the recipient and why others look like phoney inventions, or at least as too artificial to be true for the reader. Psychoanalytical theory doesn't deal with the distinction between true or false synaesthetic metaphors. But it gives us a good opportunity to explain why readers recognize these metaphors as the representation of something that could exist. We all have had these experiences in our first developmental stage and in our psyche there still remain traces that help us understand them.

Another trope, which is of great importance for lyrical poetry, is the apostrophe. We speak of apostrophe when the lyrical I directs his words to lifeless objects, to the moon for instance, or to animals, or persons, who are already dead, or far-away. So apostrophe means that a fictive person is speaking to entities that are not in a position to answer, because they don't understand the meaning of the words, or because they can't hear them at all. Jonathan Culler identifies apostrophe, in his essay with the same title (Culler 1981), with lyrical poetry itself. He makes a clear-cut distinction between the narrative force in poetry on the one hand, and the apostrophic on the other. In his words: «the lyric is characteristically the triumph of the apostrophic» (Culler 1981: 149). Culler, after Northrop Frye (Frye 1957), deals with this trope as the essence of lyrical poetry, while most other critics deal with it as a simple genre convention.

Most of the time apostrophe occurs when the lyrical I is feeling lonely, sad or desperate. Talking to objects is not of great help when you are in such a state of mind. It won't be a pleasant chat with the moon, or a tree. They don't understand the sorrow that's been expressed to them and they won't give much feedback, normally. With the help of psychoanalytical theory we are able to solve the problem that apostrophe poses. This psychoanalytical solution leads us again to the pre-oedipal world. Apostrophe is the verbal representation of a way of dealing with the surrounding world, that is in complete accordance with the way children deal with it in the so called animistic phase. This pre-oedipal animism is the usual manner in which a psyche, under the command of the primary process, deals with objects that surround it. So, in poetry with the apostrophic trope we observe now a lyrical I with strong regressive tendencies. Regressive tendencies towards the period before the separation and individuation took place. In this period the infant believes that lifeless objects and animals are able to understand him. This regression towards the life-time in which someone was taking complete care of him is not strange, when you are feeling blue or lonely. Although this early period in one's life is not the perfect paradise some critics take for granted, in the psyche of the adult there are still some very attractive features of it left.

Moreover, this regression, expressed in some poetry, becomes even more understandable, if we keep in mind that it's taking place in a context full of primary process-related aspects. I suppose that all these aspects are unconsciously interrelated with each other. If one of these elements is generated, others, associated with it, will become actified or even conscious as well.

Overlooking the psychoanalytical books and articles on one or more elements of lyrical poetry, we could draw one conclusion safely. It's the conclusion that poetry is the unique mixture of primary and secondary process related elements. A unique mixture in the sense that most poems show far more aspects, that are connected with the world of the primary process than the texts of any other literary kind regularly do. This statement is also valid if you compare lyrical poetry with non-literary texts. In my view poetry seems to be pervaded by «echo's» of the conflicts from the pre-oedipal period and by the way of «thinking», that is quite common during the period when all mental activity is dominated by the primary process.

Of course, you have to be careful with this kind of conclusions. When we are speaking of a mixture of primary and secondary process related elements, we do have to keep in mind that language is the building block of poetry, as it is of all literature. And language, as we all know, is of great importance, even constituent for the secondary process. But no other kind of artefact, constructed in words, shows such a strong tendency to digress from the world of logic, linearity, from the awareness of time-relations, from simple or direct reference and the normal or daily use of language as lyrical poetry does.

The more or less cognitive approach to the same group of literary texts, by Reuven Tsur (Tsur 1978, 1990, 1992a, 1992b), forms additional evidence for my assumptions and conclusions.

Tsur makes a distinction between two types of thinking: a more convergent way of thinking and a more divergent one. The convergent way of thinking is characterized by words like logical, rational, non-emotional, highly organized and less creative. One is trying to achieve one right answer to a question. Tsur writes: «There is a straightforward mental activity with a specific direction. The mental powers mobilized in this direction converge; the rest are excluded» (Tsur 1978: 173). The divergent way of thinking is the opposite. It's less rational, far more emotional, creative, spontaneous and open minded. Many more possibilities are included when one is dealing with a question or trying to solve a problem.

Tsur shows that in accordance with this distinction, there are two types of language as well.

– First: «in the everyday use of language and in the scientific use of language even more so, the relevant aspects of language converge to a specific goal: clear, unambiguous communication. Many aspects of language are excluded as irrelevant to this goal» (Tsur 1978: 173).

– The second type of language, or the poetic use of language, deviates from the everyday and scientific use with respect to the fact that many more aspects are included in it. This creative, divergent language is full of sound and semantic playfulness, jests and so on.

The two types of mental activities Tsur is aiming at correspond with the two worlds of mental activities that are customary for psychoanalysis. I allude to the distinction between primary and secondary process, of course. Tsur shows, in his books and articles, that poetry is a very complex speech-act. All kinds of divergent and convergent aspects are working in one poem, at the same time. Sometimes they are working in the same direction, sometimes they work against each other. So, Tsur deals with lyrical poetry much in the same way as I do. We both think of poetry as a mixture of elements that have their origin in complete different ways of dealing with the surrounding world and with language. Although Tsur uses different concepts, due to his scientific perspective.

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Transference as the result of texts and belief

PATRICK VANDERMEERSCH ()*

Many things can hide under the cover of psychoanalytical interpretation, although they have nothing to do with psychoanalytical interpretation as it should be performed within the context of psychoanalytical practice. Psychoanalytical explanations are often given from an external point of view, imposed to the texts or the authors one wants to analyze, in an exactly contradictory way it should happen in the course of a psychoanalytical treatment. In the latter case, the patient has to take the active position and find out what's about the hidden part of his or her own wishes and unconscious fantasies, and the analyst's position is only designed to make this process of selfinvestigation possible. In the case of psychoanalytical interpretation of texts, it has happened too often that interpretations were proposed to people who did not at all ask for it.

For this reason, I have always felt uncomfortable with most of the attempts of explaining texts and authors. This discomfort did not result only from the fact that various given interpretations could be so different while dealing with the same material, and that the ultimate criterium, the recognition of the interpretation by the voice of the analyzed person, could not be obtained. Indeed, this divergence of opinions between several attempts of psychoanalytical interpretation of a same text was rather restoring my comfort. It indicated that psychoanalysis was still an operation of the human mind, and not the activity of an inhuman computer programm. What made me really uncomfortable about most of this types of psychoanalytical interpretations was the fact that it was not clear for whose sake the psychoanalytical interpretations were given.

The real core of psychoanalytical insight consists in the recognition that information never enters into a human mind as being mere information, as being a pure stream of data. Information is always received as being a message. This is the essential fact which is so often concealed by so-called psychoanalytical interpretations of texts and authors. For this reason, I felt relieved when the emphasis was lifted from the unreflected question of interpretation and put back on the essential core of psychoanalytical treatment. Especially one of our hosts, prof. Pietzcker, has put the question in the right place where it should be asked: what are we expecting when we are writing down psychoanalytical explanations on texts and authors, or when we are reading such kinds of explanations? Something is going on that can be recognized as belonging to the same types of

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psychical phenomena that we call transference and counter-transference in the psychoanalytical treatment?¹

REVERSING THE PERSPECTIVE: STARTING BY TEXTS TO UNDERSTAND TRANSFERENCE

It is not my purpose to discuss in detail all the questions linked with the application of the categories of transference and counter-transference upon writing and reading. I would like to go a step further. My central question is the following. In what has been published until now, it is mostly assumed as being self-evident that we start with the experience of transference within the analytic treatment, and then proceed to apply the insight gained from this typical phenomenon to the process of writing and reading. In doing so, we do not question why transference arises within the analytic treatment.

Since Freud, we know that transference occurs in every psychoanalytic treatment. Extending our view, our psychoanalytically-informed eye sees transference also outside the typical couch-situation, in other therapies, and even in situations which are not explicitly intended to be therapeutic. From where does this transference arise? We usually accept transference as being a self-evident *Deus ex machina*. Is this true, however? Would transference always arise in the same way, in every place on earth, every culture, every historical period, once we put a patient on the couch and keep silent for a good time, waiting for his or her associations? A still more important question: would transference, in the case it would arise in all those cases, be equally curative as it is supposed to be in psychoanalytic treatments in our Western societies?

I immediately present you my hypothesis while looking for an answer. I am more and more convinced that you cannot understand the emergence of transference in the psychoanalytic treatment without taking into account the fact that psychoanalysis has become part of Western culture. To stress it: there is no transference, at least in an appropriate way for analytic treatment, without psychoanalytical texts and talks in our cultural environment. These texts and talks prepare people to enter the analytical situation, they condition them, they make them confident and curious, they make them believe that something will happen to them so that they get insight in their inner world and that they will gain a sense of inner freedom. The emergence of the expected transference within the psychoanalytic treatment stems from the fact that psychoanalysis has become a part of Western culture.

Let us take one step further. It seems obvious to me that, if psychoanalysis has managed to become a part of Western culture, it did not infiltrate this culture from outside, but it emerged from within, making use of the cultural values of the West, such as the importance of individuality and subjectivity, the importance of personal free will, of specific interactions between feelings of shame versus feelings of guilt. Psychoanalysis rests also upon the specific way the primary attachment to the mother is broken down in Western culture and re-established in «relationship», whereby a specific balance of homoerotic and heterosexual elements is established. We could add a lot on the specificity of the conditioning of the Western psyche. The conclusion is that long before psychoanalysis, there was already a specific Western conception of man, which was much broader and much more intersubjective than the subsequent Cartesian ideology suggests. This conception of man involved very specific conceptions on personal identity, on the value of the free will, on the right relation one should keep up with authority figures and on the meaning of sexual behaviour and of sexual fantasies as expression of personal identity. This conception of man involved also a specific role given to what we still can call «belief», even when it appears in a secularised form.

I do not have the time to enter into the whole problem of the religious origin and the subsequent secularisation of «belief». Neither do I have the opportunity to discuss the terminology

¹ C. Pietzcker, *Lesend Interpretieren. Zur psychoanalytischen Deutung literarischer Texte*, Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 1992.

which differs according to the languages in using or not various words to distinguish «faith» from «belief». The essential element is that as well the religious as the secular Western concern about the beliefs of individuals, have given a peculiar value to the human imagination. We are used to accept that an individual lives his or her life in conformity with his or her «convictions», with some basic representations that he or she holds for true. We respect those representations held in the intimacy of the own mind, and when those representations are too silly or to fantastic, we try to influence them. All this presupposes the recognition of the value of this personal area of faith and belief.²

Here we come to an essential element of the transference phenomenon, which is to easily discarded: its imaginary character. Transference is needed in the psychoanalytic treatment in order to reactivate the psychological mechanisms involved in faith and belief. So we come to the imaginary character of transference, and we will try to see how this imaginary character is supported by the seductive function of texts.

TRANSFERENCE, FICTION AND REPRODUCTION

A detailed overview of the theory of transference in the work of Freud would show us that there is a central unresolved point in it. At one hand, Freud will insist upon the fact that transference is something real. By real, Freud means: «real love». At the other hand, transference is also a peculiar form of imagination, an «intermediate region between illness and real live».

The first time the word «transference» appears in Freud's work, it denotes a disturbing reproduction within the analytic setting of prior relations to one's parents. The unsuccessful Dora-case, where the patient stopped the analysis in december 1900, brought Freud to a frank discussion of this peculiar phenomenon, which appeared to have a very strong impact on the analytic process. Freud quickly recognized that the disturbing process of transference was not to be avoided. If that was the case, you could perhaps take advantage of what seemed to be a hinderance at first sight. The transference was clearly a reproduction, sometimes going as far as reproducing a very small detail, of previous relations to other persons. Precisely this could be very helpful. In this first period of his psychoanalytic investigations, Freud's central concern was to bring repressed memories to consciousness. Transference could be a useful tool. Transference reproduced the pathological elements from the past, and for that reason, transference could disturb or stop the analytic process in the case it was not recognized in the right time. That was the dangerous side, and the failure of Dora's analysis was a testimony of it. But if one succeeded in interpreting the transference, making the patient aware that he or she was reduplicating the past, and showing to him or her the important elements in this reproduction, in that case, transference could become the pivot of psychoanalysis.

I would like to quote Freud's own words concerning this. In 1912, the last sentences of the article *The dynamics of transference* (1912) run as follows:

«It cannot be disputed that controlling the phenomena of transference presents the psycho-analyst with the greatest difficulties. But it should not be forgotten that it is precisely they that do us the inestimable service of making the patient's hidden and forgotten erotic impulses immediate and manifest. For when all is said and done, it is impossible to destroy anyone *in absentia* or *in effigie*.» (GW VIII, p. 374, SE XII, p. 108).

At first sight, the formula is unambiguous. The transference is something very real. Freud will insist upon that characteristic of being real. Three years later, in *Observations on transference-love* (1915), defining transference as being a real form of love, he writes:

² Although the link could be easily made with Winnicott's transitional area, I avoid purposely this term in order not to focus immediately upon one particular psychoanalytic approach.

«We have no right to dispute that the state of being in love which makes its appearance in the course of analytic treatment has the character of a “genuine” love.» («*echten*» *Liebe*). (SE XII, p. 168, GW X, p. 317).

But here we come to a puzzling question. If it is true that transference is real love, how can we then understand that transference contains a curative power? Does a repetition of something pathological become helpful just by the fact of being repeated? Speaking in an all too simplistic way of a second chance given by transference, is passing along the fact that repetition is the very core of pathology according to Freud. So, the fact of the repetition is not enough, something should have been added to the repetition in the transference in order to transform the repetition in something helpful. Freud's answer consisted in saying that the patient should become aware of the fact *that* he or she was repeating. Self-observation was established. For that reason, it was important that psychoanalysis took place in a situation of what the German call «Versagung», abstinence (id., SE XII, p. 165). The love directed by the patient toward the analyst should not be answered. The patient should become aware of the fact that the roots of this love were laying only in his or her own heart, and that there are no other, «real» reasons for loving the analyst. The fact of the «Versagung» is according to Freud the reason that the patient is brought to self-observation and that he or she starts to realize that the real love of transference is despite of all not completely real.

This is the unresolved problem in Freud's theory on the real aspect of transference. I could continue and show how the problem remained puzzling Freud, and how the imaginary aspect contained in transference lead him to his final reflections on religion in his work on Moses and monotheism. Freud's thoughts differ here completely from these of some of his followers, by who «Versagung» became a real frustration of the patient in order to bring him or her to sublimation. Although the shift from «Versagung» as abstinence to «Versagung» as frustration can be inferred from the general tone of some texts like *Remembering, Repeating and Working-through* (1914, SE XII, pp. 145-171), I prefer to reflect further on a particular sentence in that article, where Freud says:

«The transference thus creates an intermediate region between illness and real life through which the transition from the one to the other is made» (p. 154)

For some people of the audience, this will remind them to the transitional area of Winnicott. Without denying that these ideas are interesting, I prefer to stay at Freud's side and insist upon more elaborated and really erotic types of attachment than the pregenital ones put to the fore by Melanie Klein, Winnicott and Bion. So let us go back to the real love as the core of transference, to this peculiar experience of imagination as door of perception of the real, as advocated by Freud as the essence of transference. I would say that the fact that the patient experiences the transference as being real and not real at the same time, that means the fact that the patient introduces in him or her the necessary distance or split to make selfobservation possible, results from the fact that he or she knows he or she is under analysis.

Knowing that this is an analytical situation: from where could this knowledge arise, except from the fact that a specific transference is already induced before the patient makes the first appointment with the analyst. The patient goes to an analyst, driven by what he or she has heard in the culture about psychoanalysis, (that is the more specific induction of transference), and by the fact that there is in our culture a tradition of texts that indicate to potential patients that there is a way to objectivate oneself just like in an autobiography or a novel. In this sense, the founding grandfather of psychoanalysis is, behind Sigmund Freud, Michel de Montaigne, the writer of the famous first essays in Western literature.

Also for the fact of selfobservation requiring a certain type of love, a certain type of real love, Michel de Montaigne would not contradict Freud, having found his sixteenth century Wilhelmn Fliess in Étienne de la Boétie, and writing his central experience down in the famous sentence «Si

on pressait de dire pourquoi je l'aimais, je sens que cela ne se peut exprimer, qu'en répondant: parce que c'était lui, parce que c'était moi».³

A NEW VIEW ON THE FUNCTION OF TEXTS

Love and knowledge: the psychoanalytical movement gives clearly the evidence that it was difficult to keep both elements together and to reflect upon their mutual involvement. I could go on and show how difficult it has been to keep both elements in balanced interaction in psychoanalytical practice. Love should have been given the chance to give birth to this peculiar type of imagination that leads to the discovery of this tiny point in one's psyche we call «I». In the official and orthodox psychoanalysis of the *International Psychoanalytical Association*, the imaginary characteristic of transference has been skipped. As a result, the I was dogmatically assumed to be from the early beginning on. Psychoanalysis became ego-psychology. Transference became a real relationship between the analyst and the patient, it was handled as a tool in the context of a restructuring, reeducation or strengthening of the ego. As a result of this point of view, counter-transference was conceived as the symmetric response of the analyst to the transference of the patient.⁴

Jacques Lacan reacted against this tendency that leads to the evacuation of the concept of interpretation. He stressed the fact that counter-transference can in no way be regarded as being identical with transference. What is equivocally called «counter-transference» consists in fact in the peculiar reaction of the analyst, who allows eroticism play its part in a relation which is arranged by the analysand as a relation with a master, *un sujet supposé savoir*, a master who is supposed however to react in a different way from the way masters and teachers use to react.

Lacan was not able to conceptualize completely his intuitions on the matter. In the published *Séminaires* we know that on one hand he was interested to link psychoanalytic practice with the philosophical traditions about teaching in the West. He spent a time meditating on the Platonic eros.⁵ He also reflected upon the oppositional interrelation of the psychoanalytical discourse with other discourses.⁶ This is the way we have to go further, trying to understand more of the cultural history of the West on the subject matter of relations with authority figures, masters, teachers, leaders, and investigating the way these relations gave such an weight to «belief» as basic element as well in Christianity as well in secularised Western worldview.

We should go back to the imaginary character of transference and investigate where it stems from. Unravelling the hypothesis of the importance given by the West to belief and secularised belief, I would suggest to investigate the way several literary genres appeared in the West. Those

³ M. de Montaigne, *Essais*, Vol. 1, éditions Le Livre de Poche, p. 269.

⁴ The logic conclusion was expressed in the congress by a remark on this part of my paper by an American analyst, who said that love could be considered in general, within or outside therapeutic situation, as the combination of transference and counter-transference. In such a view, the peculiarity of psychoanalytical «knowledge» as a result of transference, disappears. A more radical example is given in self-psychology of H. Kohut. This author says explicitly: «In contrast to those – including James Strachey (1934) – who believe, in harmony with the spirit of the Age of Enlightenment of which Freud was a true child, that it is the power of reason which cures, the self psychologically informed analyst holds that with regard to all forms of analyzable psychopathology the basic therapeutic unit of the psychoanalytic cure does not rest on the expansion of cognition. (It does not rest, for example, on the analysand's becoming aware of the difference between his fantasy and reality, especially with reference to transference distortions involving projective drives.) Rather, it is the accretion of psychic structure via an optimal frustration of the analysand's needs or wishes that is provided for the analysand in the form of correct interpretations that constitutes the essence of the cure.» (H. Kohut, *How does analysis cure*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984, p. 108.)

⁵ See his *Séminaire* on transference: *Le transfert* (1960-61), Paris: Seuil, 1991.

⁶ See his *Séminaire* on the other side of psychoanalytical practice: *L'envers de la psychanalyse* (1969-70), Paris: Seuil, 1991.

genres are the expression of several different types of transference developed by the writer, and they are intended to provoke a particular type of counter-transference in the reader. Epic and drama are quite different from an essay, an autobiography and a novel – not to speak of those authors who radically try to deceive the reader's relation toward a writer like S. Becket⁷ In the analysis of transference and counter-transference with regard to texts, we should have special attention for the specific ways the different genres activate a special sense of reality to make fantasy real. Making a cultural history of the literary genres developed in the West in Modern Times would help us to understand how transference was made ready to be discovered by psychoanalysis.

⁷ P. T'jonk, *Een erfzonde afgelost* (Paying for an original sinn), in *Bij Samuel Beckett*, Groningen, Historische Uitgeverij, 1995, pp. 81-122.

The problem with psychological readings of *Ceremony* (*)

JOHN PEACOCK (**)

In a 1979 special issue of *The American Indian Quarterly* devoted to Leslie Marmon Silko's novel *Ceremony*, her fellow Laguna novelist Paula Gunn Allen contributed an article entitled «The Psychological Landscape of *Ceremony*», in which she wrote that

Psychically, it might be said that [main character] Tayo's illness, experienced as despair in the man and drought in the land, is a result of his repression of his Anima, and that through reunification or integration of his psyche in its male and female aspects, he is healed.

«This Jungian way of expressing the process of Tayo's healing», Gunn Allen continues, «is accurate enough, but it misses an essential point of the story: Tayo's illness is connected to the illness of the larger world, and that illness is affecting the land, who [sic] is also ill» (10).

Three years later, in a 1982 book chapter entitled «Leslie Silko's *Ceremony*: A Laguna Grail Story», Alan Velie wrote

The chief similarity between *Ceremony* and the grail legends – and it is a fundamental one – is that there is a link between Tayo's condition and the drought that has laid waste his land. Tayo plays the role of the wounded king, Betonie [the Navajo medicine man] is the healer, and the Laguna reservation is the wasteland. [111]

The main point of Velie's comparing Silko's novel to the grail legend is that «both are based on the fundamental idea that a man's health and behavior have grave consequences for his land. ... When the king recovers, his land blooms» (108).

There is no question that the grail connection supplies the ecological component that Paula Gunn Allen felt was missing from a Jungian reading and that all subsequent Native and nonnative scholars agree is inseparable from the psychological in Silko's novel and in Native American ceremonialism generally.

The problem, however, with Velie's interpretation, as he himself acknowledges, is that «Silko told me... in a telephone conversation... [she] was not familiar with the grail legend at the time she

(*) This conference paper is part of a larger study in progress.

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wrote *Ceremony*» (155 fn. 7, 108). «[B]ut because Laguna mythology and beliefs are similar in a number of important ways to medieval European beliefs», Velie concludes somewhat tautologically, «Silko's novel is similar to the grail legend» (108). Velie never wonders why Laguna mythology and European beliefs are similar; his only source on the grail legend is *From Ritual to Romance* by Jessie L. Weston, whose assumption (following Sir James Frazer) of a universal basis for different cultures' mythologies Velie apparently never questions.

So while reading Silko's *Ceremony* as a Laguna grail story does supply the necessary ecological component missing from a Jungian reading, it shares with Jungianism the problem of being based on a universalist anthropology.

In Arnold Krupat's 1993 collection *New Voices in Native American Literary Criticism*, Shamoon Zamir, even while noting Silko's denial of direct knowledge of the Grail legend (413), argues that she must have absorbed something about it second hand from T.S. Eliot's *The Wasteland*, which she does acknowledge having read (Zamir 413). Repeating Velie's reading of eleven years previous, Zamir writes:

the overarching plot-form of her own novel, from the dislocations of the «wounded» hero in a drought-ridden land to the inevitable climax of sacrifice, regeneration, and healing, is (as one critic has already pointed out) nothing other than a Grail narrative. (405)

In 1982 such a reading had led Velie to praise Silko as a literary master; in 1993, Zamir criticizes «the politics of Silko's literary practice that emerge from... [a second-hand grail] reading» of *Ceremony* as

deeply nostalgic... not so much [for] traditional sources of Pueblo oral culture as [for] Western high modernism's reactionary appropriation of a global mythology.... In sacrificing its own localism to this kind of mythic regression... *Ceremony*... «articulates a... religious desire for transcendence in the face of power more than an economic analysis of it, or an ideology of political resistance to it.» (400, 409, quoting Gose 309)

Silko has never responded to this, but she did respond in a *Journal of Ethnic Studies* interview to a question about whether she or her characters experienced the «need for escape» often felt by characters in and readers of quest stories. «No, not at all», she replied.

The need for that kind of escape is the need of... a white Anglo, the WASP.... The kinds of things that cause white upper-middle-class women to flee the home for a while to escape or get away from domination and powerlessness and inferior status... those kinds of forces are not operating, they're not operating at all.... It doesn't have anything to do with, «Things are really bad... so I think I'll run off for awhile». That's not what it's about. (reprinted in Barnes 57)

Native Americanists are beginning to recognize that Native American literature does not share white cultural preoccupations with quests. According to William Bevis,

American whites keep leaving home: *Moby Dick*, *Portrait of a Lady*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Sister Carrie*, *The Great Gatsby* – a considerable number of American «classics» tell of leaving home to find one's fate farther and farther away.... [T]he story we tell our children is of lighting out for the territories. A wealth of white tradition is behind these plots, beginning with four centuries of colonial expansion....

Such «leaving» plots... embody quite clearly the basic premise of success in our mobile society....

In marked contrast, most Native American novels are not «eccentric», centrifugal, diverging, expanding, but «incentric», centripetal, converging, contracting. The hero comes home. «Contracting» has negative overtones to us, «expanding» a positive ring.

These are the cultural choices we are considering. In Native American novels, coming home, staying put, contracting, even what we call «regressing» to a place, a past where one has been before, is not only the primary story, it is a primary mode of knowledge and a primary good. (581-2)

Not that there is no movement by characters in Native American novels: in order to return with a renewed sense of place, these characters often must remove or be removed from that place. But the point is coming home, which these characters not only can but must do, whereas in Anglo-American literature people return home either in defeat or in the interest of further trajectory outward.

What Velie has done, then, is to project the western quest emphasis in his reading of *Ceremony*. He never questions that emphasis as universal, and thus it does not occur to Velie to ask why *Ceremony* shares it but only to praise Silko for doing so. Zamir, on the other hand, criticizes and historicizes that emphasis and so criticizes Silko for letting her novel be coopted by it.

Both critics mention Native oral traditions: Velie as corresponding to the universal quest emphasis of the grail legend, Shamir as differing from but again being coopted by it.

Now the Yellow Woman oral tradition that Silko herself says is central to her novel is not about quests or leaving at all. There are many versions of the story, but they all feature a young married woman who is not running away but just wandering down by the river at Laguna, where she meets a handsome and mysterious young man with whom she has a tryst. In the most traditional versions of the story, what he wears and a corn husk he carries associates him with summer, whereas the young woman's husband is associated with winter. The woman's relatives actually encourage her to bring the stranger to the village, which she does for a while. Psychological readings of the story by western feminists make it out to be about a woman's escape from a cold husband, but Paula Gunn Allen has pointed out that the story is really about the balancing of seasons, winter and summer, and that it would be as much a mistake for the young woman to reside permanently in summer as in winter. Both are necessary, and the point of Yellow Woman's summer romance is to be able to be reappraise the necessity of winter (1986: 227).

As Melody Graulich has pointed out, one of Silko's female characters named

Ts'eh is *Ceremony*'s Yellow Woman, and she possesses a healing sexuality; through a sexual relationship with her Tayo «remembers» his relationship to the land and to the old stories and realizes that everything is interconnected. Tayo is healed through recognizing what many of Silko's yellow women know: that through the stories he can understand himself and his place in his culture. (Graulich, «Introduction», 13)

Such a reading is the alternative to psychological readings of *Ceremony* which – whether they praise or criticize the work – privilege western narrative conventions about leaving over the Indian's understanding his place not only in culture but in nature. Reading *Ceremony* as a grail story gets right the general emphasis on land but wrong what that emphasis in particular means: in no oral tradition is Laguna ever the wasteland. If there is one thing that every Pueblo depiction of nature indicates, it is that while many ceremonies do have to do with bringing rain, this does not mean that Pueblo people ever view their environment as a wasteland. That, too, is wholly a western projection that has allowed not only misreadings of native literature but appropriations of native land, for, the colonial reasoning goes, if Indians let it lie waste, then whites are justified in claiming and improving it. One generalization worth risking about the many different Native American cultures, whether desert or swamp dwellers, is that they unanimously reject this justification and the premise it is based on. As one Lakota told Peter Matthiessen, «[t]here [is] no such thing as emptiness in the world. Even in the sky there [are] no vacant places» (10). Because the Florida Miccosukee never regard the everglades as waste, Chairman Buffalo Tiger told Matthiessen, «we do not want to “improve” our land, we just wish to keep it as it is» (45).

Paula Gunn Allen has written that reading «a native text without recourse to ethnographic as well as historical glossing is an exercise in obscurity» (1990: 379). Or worse, as I have attempted

to show here: in projecting Euroamerican assumptions and thus skewing from the outset any psychological reading.

But once we recognize the necessity of ethnographically informed readings, we have to be aware of two problems they entail. According to Jarold Ramsey in a book chapter entitled «Tradition and Individual Talents in Modern Indian Writing», one

danger lies in the way ethnographic literary study tends tacitly to deny the imaginative freedom of the writer. The problem is compounded, of course, by the current political expectations of most American readers... that if you are an Indian you write perforce as a spokesman for your people and their interests.... [Y]oung Indian writers [are] growing impatient... with the role being defined for them by ethnographically slanted teaching and criticism. To quote one of them: «I think of my people's traditions as my most sacred possession as a writer – but dammit, if I want to write a novel about Henry Ford or Haile Selassie, I'll do it...»

European literary materials – French folktales, for example, and Bible narratives – [have sometimes been] assimilated by the native oral imagination, thereby demonstrating [its] vitality and adaptability.... [However,] most collectors and transcribers, to this day, impose a kind of *classicism* on «authentic» Indian literary materials and relegate everything else (assimilations, adaptations, and so on) to the status of impure curiosities, unworthy of serious attention. (pp. 182-3)

It is not, then, that Silko's literary sources could not have included medieval grail romance or Eliot's *The Wasteland*. Nor is it that to the extent that she was influenced by western literature she has therefore been coopted. The authenticity of narratives and authors is determined by *how* rather than *what* sources are made use of and, especially, by how they are combined intertextually. In another interview Silko says:

I'd read Faulkner, I'd read Flannery O'Connor, Henry James, Kate Chopin, Isak Dinesen.... I learned from all the years of reading Thomas Hardy and reading *Julius Caesar*.... Shakespeare has all these clowns and... underlings who have funny... squabbles but have their... moment when they pipe up and say something that makes the bigger story roll around. That experience from reading helped me realize... I'd had a rich oral tradition for quite a long time.... (Coltelli 144-5)

With common sense a balance can be struck between appreciating Silko's originality and reading *Ceremony* in both an ethnographically and literarily informed way. She need not be pigeonholed as an heir to only one of the traditions critics impute to her – Laguna, medieval, or modernist. The possibility that all have influenced her – and as we have seen Silko herself credits, if not all of these in particular, at least as many others equally diverse – may be either a source of enrichment (as she claims) or of derivative co-optation depending on how she has made use of her materials. Conflict between them is inevitable, whether it is an asset or a liability depends on her.

There is, as I said earlier, a second problem with the use of Laguna oral traditions, and this one poses a much more intractable dilemma for Silko and Silko scholars as I discovered the first time I taught *Ceremony* in the context of the oral traditions that she has explicitly acknowledged as central to her novel. A student of mine who identified himself as an Acoma Indian said he was sure some of the Native Americans he knew from near-by Laguna – birthplace of Silko and her protagonist – would approve neither of her writing about nor of my teaching these stories. Indeed, Paula Gunn Allen writes that «to use oral tradition directly is to run afoul of native ethics»; in particular the Thought-Woman oral tradition which Silko intercalates in her novel is «not to be told outside the clan». Allen adds that «[t]he protectiveness of native people, particularly Pueblos, toward their traditions is legendary, but the reasons for that protectiveness are perhaps not so well known» (1990: 379). According to traditional Pueblo beliefs, origin myths and certain other stories

must be told only under ritually prescribed circumstances, lest those stories' important powers be destroyed, or worse, released in unforeseen disasters. Native informants have been threatened with ostracism, loss of land and water rights, physical punishment, or even death – for telling such stories to whites. According to Allen, traditional Pueblo people believe «*tragic consequences ensue*» (380; italics in original) for the community and the land itself.

Psycho-socio-anthropological explanations of this reticence are patronizing and condescending and skirt the issue, which is that ethnographically informed readings lead to ethical problems that need to be and as yet have not been resolved. In her article «Special Problems in Teaching Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony*», Paula Gunn Allen defines the dilemma:

Pedagogically I believe I should give specific information to students, discover and teach what the directions of Tayo's movements mean, what constellations figure in the story, and what their significance at Laguna is, what prayers, rituals and spiritual activities occur at the Pueblo that have bearing on the novel, and how these elements propel the narrative and combine to form its overall significance.... Ethically, as a professor, I see this kind of methodology as necessary, but ethically, as an Indian, I can't do it.... I don't have any solutions or resolutions.... [A] human life isn't a television commercial OR a novel; it seldom structures itself along classical lines of conflict, crisis, and resolution. (385)

A logical question is *why as novelists do Silko and indeed Allen in her own novel, The Woman Who Owned the Shadows, incorporate oral stories in the first place?* Answer: because oral traditions provide alternatives to just the kind of novelistic conflict, crisis, and resolution that Allen finds so inadequate for representing the dilemmas of contemporary Native Americans – including, especially, the ethical dilemma of desacralizing even while attempting to honor traditions.

I end by sketching out three approaches to possible solutions to this ethical dilemma. (1) An impartialist, Rawlsian approach would be, after laying out «all the interests in conflict», to select a «competent» moral judge who could vicariously identify with opposing sides but remain impartial because immune to consequences – positive or negative – of an ethical decision (785). By this standard, Paula Gunn Allen would be the worst kind of judge because she in fact is both a professor and Native American, admittedly sensitive to the rewards of her job and the censure of her conscience and people (1990: 384). Rawls might regard me as only slightly more competent in that, though immune from tribal censure, I stand to gain from the rewards of teaching the oral traditions upon which *Ceremony* is based.

Even in the interests of impartiality, however, it would make sense for Allen or me to act like other judges and recuse ourselves from deciding how to read *Ceremony* if and only if someone else could be found who does *not* gain from understanding (and lose from further desecrating) the sources of contemporary Native American culture. Unable to imagine such a person – citizen, reader, writer, teacher, Native- or nonnative – I turn next to a second possible approach, a nonimpartialist approach to ethical decision making by individuals whose professional and personal (cultural) interests *are* most concerned and most in conflict. An example of this approach is Carol Gilligan's *ethic of care*, a «different voice» with which impartialism ought to enter into dialogue (100).

One thing Gilligan and Rawls would agree on is the necessity in ethical decision making to consider alternative points of view. In this case how do other Native Americans besides Paula Gunn Allen handle ethical conflicts between contemporary and traditional values? A pertinent example from the text of *Ceremony* is the character Betonie, the Navajo medicine man whose mixed contemporary and traditional ceremony is not so much therapeutic as *ethical* in enabling Tayo to make two life-and-death decisions regarding his own and his best friend Harley's welfare. What Tayo learns is that such decisions are both «up to him» (202) and inextricably bound by his concentric circles of beer-drinking, assimilated veterans; traditionalists; and Christianized Indians.

Each tells Tayo a story lacking classic conflict, crisis, resolution, or clear-cut moral, but that spins an alternative ethical possibility – resistance, assimilation, or traditionalism.

This storytelling model of ethical decision-making is a third alternative to impartialism in that it does not aim at a solution to an ethical dilemma in the form of a *consensus* that, for example, the professor in Paula Gunn Allen and the Native American in her could ideally both live with. The Native alternative is to present different ethical points of view in open-ended *dialogue* – such a dialogue between voices of care and justice is actually what Gilligan recommends too, and it is a particularly appealing alternative in view of the fact that, in a multicultural society, there may be no solid moral grounds for a definitive ethical consensus about whether and how to inquire about the pueblo oral traditions upon which Silko based *Ceremony*. *Dialogue* differs from *dialectic* in not necessarily reaching synthesis: the teacher, the writer, the reader, like the elder, is not responsible for *concluding* but for *extending* discussion so as to balance opposing visions and voices whose segregation, wrote John Dewey, is a symptom of «the isolation of social groups and classes». The «struggle against this isolation in order that the various interests may reinforce and play into one another» (Dewey 249) never guarantees a solution to any moral problem; the only guarantee is that without such struggle, such dialogue, the moral problem we are discussing will never be solved. If Kant was wrong that impartialist «moral reasoning can cause its own objects» (Sullivan 170), perhaps Native Americans are right that storytelling helps tellers and listeners solve, if not the ethical problem at hand, then the problem of human isolation that often compounds it. There is no guarantee that Native Americans and Native Americanists are ever going to agree on whether and how to publicize sacred traditions. The only guarantee is that they won't agree as long as they never sit down and discuss it, which to my knowledge has not happened.

I want to end by stressing that I don't know the solution to the ethical problem that I've been led to by trying to correct with sensitive ethnographic information the problem with psychological readings of *Ceremony*. My aim here has been, as Gerald Graff would put it, to «teach a conflict» I don't know how to solve. Perhaps you can help me begin to do so in the discussion that follows. I would like to respond in advance, however, to the suggestion that is often made in Native American studies these days that whites like me ought to leave the field to those raised in and most informed about oral traditions. This seems to me a cop-out for three reasons. First, because some of the same people who make that suggestion would criticize any Americanist for excluding native texts from his or her syllabus – a criticism I do agree with. Second, because extremely knowledgeable Native Americans like Paula Gunn Allen don't know the solution to the ethical problem posed by sacred source materials either. And third because of a principle I was taught by my teacher Edward Said and have tried to apply and practice in my study of Native American literature: namely, that to believe that it is fundamentally comprehensible only to Native Americans presupposes an essential something that is in fact both historically created and the result of interpretation. Instead of defending an abstract essence of Native America, I learned from Said to promote an understanding that when stories are told or written, listeners and readers often sort out the problems of one interpretation only to become entangled, as I have here, in the problems of another. By understanding that neither Native nor nonnative readers of multicultural literature are immune to such entanglements, I hope to avoid demoting some people's legitimate responses and experiences to a lesser status than others' – a hierarchy to be avoided at all costs, since it is precisely upon such hierarchies that the conquest of Native America was and continues to be based (cf. Said 31-32).

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L'enfance à retrouver: Le dialogue mystique de Fénelon et madame Guyon

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Les quelques lignes que voici constituent le résumé – un peu rapide et trop succinct sans doute – d'un projet bien plus vaste: nous essayons, dans l'espace qui est le nôtre ici, celui des rapports entre littérature et psychanalyse, de faire une place à un autre discours, celui des mystiques des temps modernes.

On a souvent remarqué les rapprochements qui peuvent être faits entre la pratique psychanalytique et l'anthropologie dont elle s'inspire d'une part, et, de l'autre, ce qui nous est parvenu de la vie et des dires des grands mystiques (nous disons: «ce qui nous est parvenu», car cette expérience très particulière et le discours qui l'accompagnait ne semblent plus appartenir à notre époque). Jacques Lacan par exemple en a parlé dans un séminaire souvent cité, *Encore*, Julia Kristeva s'y est arrêtée longuement dans *Histoires d'amour*, mais l'auteur qui est allé le plus loin dans cette recherche est sans doute Michel de Certeau, dans son étude *La fable mystique* (Gallimard 1982). Certeau parle, lui aussi, d'une «analogie de fonctionnement entre la mystique et la psychanalyse» (p.17) et «des procédures caractéristiques de part et d'autre qui présentent une étrange similarité» (ibid.). Il en énumère un certain nombre, soulignant notamment comment la mystique détériore, elle aussi, les grands postulats que l'homme moderne s'est forgés depuis la Renaissance: l'unité individuelle, et le privilège de la conscience; et comment elle se réfère, tout comme la psychanalyse, à un espace secret – mystique («caché») ou «inconscient» – en nous, où l'on rencontre un jeu de forces et de résistances qui fait penser à celui dont Freud nous a parlé. Certeau rappelle également le rôle du corps et de la sexualité dans le langage des mystiques, et l'importance de thèmes chers aussi en psychanalyse, comme le désir, l'angoisse, et surtout, bien sûr, la demande de l'Autre – de Dieu, le «Grand Autre» en l'occurrence. Il souligne cependant aussi, malheureusement sans trop les préciser, les «distinctions fondamentales» (p.18) qui dans son optique doivent être maintenues entre ces deux univers qui ont tant en commun. Ces idées-là, très suggestives, n'en font pas moins penser que l'histoire de la psychanalyse, qui est celle d'une nouvelle prise de conscience de soi par l'homme moderne, sécularisé, a l'une de ses sources dans le monde des mystiques. Ce terme du reste ne renvoie pas tant aux mystiques du Moyen-Age: un Eckhart, un Ruusbroec ou une Hildegard von Bingen parlent, eux aussi, un langage spirituel, mystérieux souvent, parfois même considéré comme hérétique, mais qui appartient encore à la grande tradition théologique. Par

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rapport à ces derniers, les mystiques modernes, ceux à qui, en fait, on a appliqué pour la première fois le mot «mystique» au sens où nous l'entendons aujourd'hui – les Thérèse, les Jean de la Croix, les Marie de l'Incarnation – vivent désormais dans un nouvel espace mental: depuis la Réforme et la perte de l'unité chrétienne, depuis qu'un clivage s'est instauré entre la théologie et les autres sciences, les vieux concepts théologiques se sont «psychologisés»: on parle maintenant de l'«expérience» des fidèles, mot qui marque à sa façon la distance qui sépare désormais le langage et la doctrine théologiques, d'un côté, et la vie chrétienne, la vie intérieure des croyants, de l'autre. Dans cette expérience il existe une part secrète, «mystique», qui échappe à la plus grande partie des chrétiens mais aussi à l'enseignement théologique officiel de l'Eglise. La dissidence est au coeur de cette autre scène de la vie de l'Eglise qu'on appelle «mystique», et qui annonce à sa façon les découvertes que feront Freud et ses disciples deux siècles plus tard dans notre psyché.

En fait, la chose n'est pas si étrange que cela. Il fallait bien que, avant d'être sécularisé, le récit du clivage secret qui marque notre for intérieur soit fait une première fois dans le langage qui avait toujours été dominant dans le monde occidental, celui de la théologie. C'est ce qu'on a accoutumé alors d'appeler la théologie mystique qui s'en est chargée. Aux yeux des autorités ecclésiastiques, celle-ci était suspecte à cause de sa «nouveauté». Deux siècles plus tard, le monde scientifique adoptera la même attitude vis-à-vis de la «nouveauté» du discours freudien qui sera considéré, lui aussi, comme marginal et difficilement acceptable. Dans les deux cas il s'agit d'un même refus. Les différences concernent beaucoup moins l'enjeu – l'expérience intérieure, ses pulsions et ses résistances, puis la façon dont celles-ci sont verbalisées – que la pratique, le parloir du médecin remplaçant celui du «directeur de conscience» – et de l'inconscient –, ce qui entraîne une autre distance, et partant un autre langage interprétatif. La science a désormais remplacé la foi, à moins que la science ne soit, elle aussi, une foi...

Pour illustrer ce qui vient d'être dit, nous prenons quelques fragments de textes provenant d'un des épisodes les plus célèbres de l'histoire de la mystique moderne, celui de la rencontre de Fénelon et de Madame Guyon, épisode appelé «l'affaire du Quiétisme» (1696-1699). Si nous choisissons ce chapitre-là dans l'histoire de la mystique moderne, c'est que le Quiétisme constitue un de ces cas limite où l'Eglise a jugé nécessaire d'intervenir et de condamner, celui aussi qui a suscité le plus d'échos. Aux yeux des docteurs parisiens et romains, Fénelon était allé trop loin dans la formulation de sa doctrine de la vie intérieure. Celle-ci s'écartait désormais, pensaient-ils, de façon dangereuse de la théologie officielle, traditionnelle, quod semper, quod ubique... On peut en effet constater que le livre de Fénelon, *Explication des maximes des Saints* – qui, soit dit en passant, fut condamné au moins autant pour des raisons politiques que pour des raisons doctrinales – réfère à une expérience intérieure qui semble plus d'une fois perdre le contact avec les dogmes formulés dans le *Credo*. En d'autres termes, le processus qui s'appellera un jour «sécularisation», semble chez Fénelon, du reste bien malgré lui, plus avancé que par exemple chez les grands mystiques espagnols du XVI^e siècle.

Pour illustrer ce qui vient d'être dit, nous disposons d'une partie importante de la correspondance qu'échangèrent Fénelon et madame Guyon à l'époque, correspondance qui est une mine¹. Le fait que leur «affaire» devint une cause célèbre – comparable à ce que serait l'affaire Dreyfus pour la France et pour l'Europe entière pendant la jeunesse de Freud – en augmente encore l'intérêt. Certes, Fénelon, archevêque de Cambrai et précepteur des petits princes de Versailles, était un des personnages les plus en vue de la Cour et de l'Eglise, mais qu'on fasse tant de bruit, qu'on écrive

¹ Nous nous référons à l'édition critique de la *Correspondance de Fénelon*, par Jean Orcibal, tomes II et III, Klincksieck 1972 (sigle: Orc.), qui ne donne cependant pas les lettres de madame Guyon. Pour ces dernières, voir: *Madame Guyon et Fénelon. La Correspondance secrète*, publiée par Benjamin Sahler, Devry-livres, 1982 (sigle: Sah.). Cette édition reprend le livre de M. Masson, *Fénelon et madame Guyon*, Paris, 1907, mais sans les commentaires ni les notes.

tant de livres et d'articles de gazette pour une histoire de «spiritualité» – sur la vertu d'espérance et le sentiment de désespoir, sur la passivité intérieure et le caractère volontaire ou involontaire de certains mouvements de l'âme – montre que ces choses-là présentaient pour beaucoup de fidèles cultivés de l'époque un intérêt réel, et plus que cela.

Fénelon rencontre Madame Guyon en octobre 1688. Il a 37 ans. C'est un prêtre assez inconnu, mais son nom, qui est celui d'une famille appartenant à la vieille noblesse périgourdine, le destine à l'épiscopat. Il est donc en attente. Madame Guyon, par contre, a déjà toute une vie derrière elle. Agée de 40 ans, elle cueille alors les fruits d'une existence bien plus remplie que celle de l'abbé de Fénelon. Mariée, mère de famille, veuve, grande voyageuse, prêcheuse, auteurs d'ouvrages spirituels condamnés, mise en prison puis réhabilitée: on comprend qu'un tel personnage ait excité la curiosité de ses contemporains. Pas celle de Fénelon, paraît-il. Il fallut bien des détours, toute une mise en scène par des amis complices pour qu'à la fin, selon le mot bien connu de Saint-Simon, «leur sublime s'amalgam[ât]», et que Fénelon découvrit en Madame Guyon une expérience spirituelle authentique qu'il allait essayer de faire sienne.

Or, ce qui frappe le lecteur de cette correspondance, s'il sait lire non seulement dans le texte mais aussi entre les lignes, c'est que ces lettres contiennent déjà presque tous les éléments qui composeront un jour la scène de la psychanalyse freudienne. En effet, la direction spirituelle semble prendre ici une autre allure, véritablement «moderne», dans la mesure où l'expérience individuelle y est désormais prise au sérieux au même titre que l'enseignement doctrinal.

Tout d'abord, nous y voyons, comme dans une psychanalyse, quelqu'un qui souffre, ne sachant pas vivre comme il le voudrait – Fénelon en l'occurrence – face à l'autre qui est supposé savoir, madame Guyon: Vous avez «une grâce éminente avec une lumière d'expérience pour les voies intérieures, lui écrit-il, qui sont extraordinaires» (Orc. II, 138). De son côté, elle essaie de lui communiquer cette expérience. Sa parole n'est cependant pas seulement un enseignement: madame Guyon invite son interlocuteur à observer ce qui se passe en lui et à en parler. «Il ne faut point d'autre maître que l'expérience», ne cesse-t-elle de répéter. Dire – et écrire – cette expérience, c'est ce que Fénelon, malgré certaines réserves, fera en toute confiance: «Si vous veniez à manquer, de qui prendrais-je avis, écrira-t-il un jour, ou bien serais-je à l'avenir sans guide? Vous savez ce que je ne sais point et les états où je puis passer» (Orc. II, 159). Comme plus tard en psychanalyse, l'échange de paroles mène le jeu: la parole et la présence qui l'accompagne, et dont on espère qu'elles seront salutaires.

Ainsi, la relation à l'inconnu est au centre de cette rencontre. L'autre vie, la nouvelle vie que le mystique cherche, et qui coïncide en première et dernière instance avec la vie de Dieu, correspond à un cheminement mystérieux – à des «états inconnus», à «une vie profonde», à un ailleurs. Les voies qui y mènent sont parfois simples et faciles – madame Guyon a même publié un *Moyen court et très facile pour faire oraison* – il n'empêche que la plupart du temps dans ces conversations, il s'agit d'épreuves et de souffrances. Il faut croire, insister du côté de la souffrance comme si la vérité, la vie nouvelle se trouvaient là: «passer par le creuset» (Sah., 145), s'abandonner, continuer à subir et à dire les méandres secrets de son âme... Ce n'est pas, bien sûr, l'analyse du XX^{ème} siècle, mais l'essentiel est déjà là: la guérison de l'âme doit venir de cette relation à l'inconnu, où il s'agit de distinguer les différents «esprits» qui se combattent en nous: Les mystiques reprennent à leur façon la fameuse «distinctio spirituum» des *Exercices Spirituels* d'Ignace de Loyola, livre considéré comme l'une des principales sources de la spiritualité moderne. Cette «distinctio» devra être vécue en compagnie d'un autre qui écoute et qui parle....

On comprendra qu'un tel processus suscite des résistances. Madame Guyon le sait et elle connaît ses effets. «Il est vrai, écrit-elle, que la règle ordinaire de la résistance est de rétrécir, dessécher ou troubler plus ou moins selon que l'on est plus ou moins avancé». Parfois aussi elle s'en plaint. Fénelon lui paraît alors «trop lié en son âme», ou un songe – car les songes et leurs explications reviennent aussi régulièrement – l'avertit que Fénelon «n'a plus assez de foi en elle» (Orc. II, 138). Nous passons ici sur le fait que madame Guyon a parfois un langage qui frise

l'hystérie et qui inquiète son dirigé (cf. *ibid.*). Ce qui nous intéresse, c'est moins les deux protagonistes que le scénario qu'ils construisent ensemble et qui comporte presque tous les éléments dont se composera un jour celui de la thérapie freudienne qui en sera comme la formule sécularisée.

Même la règle fondamentale de l'analyse, le «tout dire» de Freud, flotte déjà dans les airs et est utilisée très lucidement. Fénelon déclare avoir «une facilité ingénue pour montrer d'abord toutes les rêveries qui passent par [s]a tête» (Orc. II, 166). «Je suis ravie, répond madame Guyon, que vous me disiez jusqu'à vos moindres pensées, ou, si vous voulez, rêveries [...] Le moyen est bien au-dessus de celui de dire seulement la vérité lorsque l'on parle» (Orc. III, 262, n.7). Et Fénelon: «Dois-je [...] me laisser comme un enfant à mes premières pensées? Je crains que cela n'aille trop loin». Mais madame Guyon l'exhorte à continuer dans cette voie-là. Tout dire, tout écrire, répéter les mêmes plaintes, les mêmes rêves.

Cette pratique entraîne inmanquablement un mécanisme qui sera appelé plus tard «association libre». L'abandon à ce qui se passe dans l'âme compte plus aux yeux de madame Guyon que tout élément de savoir ou de doctrine. Aussi, interrogée sur ce qu'elle a dit ou écrit, elle doit répondre: «Il ne m'en reste aucune idée, à moins que Notre Seigneur ne me le rappelle» (Sah., 242). Cette liberté intérieure peut également aboutir à un échange de poèmes. Fénelon écrit ainsi, dès 1690, un *Bateau ivre*:

«Mon faible navire entr'ouvert
Reçoit l'onde irritée
Il est le jouet d'une mer
De mille écueils bordée
[...]
sans espérances d'aucun port
Je vogue à pleines voiles» (Sah., 322).

En se laissant voguer ainsi, passivement, au gré de ses pensées, ses désirs, ses rêves, on en arrive, bien sûr tôt ou tard, au corps, à ses «mouvements», à sa sexualité. Nous savons à quel point la mystique traditionnelle a adopté la langange du corps, celui du désir amoureux et de l'amour nuptial. Chez Fénelon et madame Guyon, cette dimension semble avoir changé de place ou de nature. Le corps est surtout vécu comme une «tentation». Fénelon parle même de «la chair qui fait horreur» (Orc. II, 103). Il constate en lui-même «un amollissement à faire frayer pour toutes les passions». «Ce n'est pas», déclare-t-il, «que j'aie des tentations violentes; c'est moi qui suis faible, sans que la tentation soit forte» (Orc. II, 96).

En fait, la sexualité trouve dans le cas de ces «nouveaux mystiques», que la société appelle aussi «quiétistes», deux expressions privilégiées. La première leur est extérieure: Fénelon et madame Guyon, qui parlent beaucoup plus santé et médecine que sexualité, sont néanmoins, à cause de leur doctrine de la passivité, suspects de libertinage sexuel. C'est là même, aux yeux du public, le grand scandale et l'une des causes de la condamnation dont ils sont frappés. Après quelques procès contre des mystiques en France et, surtout, en Italie, être accusé de quiétisme signifie alors: être libertin. L'archevêque de Cambrai et madame Guyon seront, eux aussi, accusés d'avoir partagé le même lit. Bossuet aura le mauvais goût de le suggérer publiquement. Il suffit de lire deux pages de cette longue correspondance pour se convaincre que cela est faux.

La sexualité ne trouve véritablement son compte, mais de façon tout-à-fait inattendue et paradoxale, que dans le grand leitmotiv de la relation entre Fénelon et madame Guyon, celui de l'Enfance, mille fois repris, et de mille façons différentes. Dans ce thème l'on peut reconnaître plus d'un élément qui deviendra essentiel aussi dans l'analyse freudienne: la régression, la sexualité infantine, et, chose sans doute plus importante encore, le transfert: Tout cela s'y trouve, mais à une autre place, et recevant un autre sens. Ainsi, lorsque Fénelon se plaint, comme c'est souvent le cas, de sa «langueur», de sa «sécheresse intérieure» et du «dédain» qu'il ressent vis-à-vis d'autrui, il enchaîne presque automatiquement sur son désir d'être seul pour pouvoir se détendre et de s'amuser «comme un enfant». Il lui arrive alors «de sauter et de rire tout seul comme un enfant» (Orc. II, 102). «Mon air est grave et sec, mais jamais assez à fuir l'enfance» (*ibid.*, 115), écrit-il à madame

Guyon qui, elle, ne peut que l'exhorter à persévérer dans cette voie. L'Enfant Jésus devient le symbole de leur union. Par lui, Dieu les fait participer à «son amour de tendresse maternelle». Et Fénelon de s'écrier: «Enfantez, allaitez, nourrissez, Dieu fait tout en tous, en vous la mère, en moi l'enfant, en vous la sagesse de l'Evangile, en moi la folie aux yeux du monde» (Orc. II, 162).

Dans cet espace analytique avant la lettre, le transfert doit, lui aussi, avoir sa place, puisque ce qui compte dans le contact qui s'affermi entre eux, ce n'est pas tant ce qu'ils disent que ce qu'ils sentent: c'est cette «expérience» propre à laquelle madame Guyon ne cesse de renvoyer son dirigé. Le transfert doit du reste pouvoir s'effectuer également grâce à un autre exercice, plus directement observable, que nos interlocuteurs pratiquent régulièrement et qu'ils appellent «communication». Celle des âmes, bien entendu, mais le corps ne peut pas ne pas y être aussi pour quelque chose. C'est sans doute ce qui, dans le cas de Fénelon, rend cette communication avec madame Guyon si compliquée: «Rien n'égale mon attachement froid et sec pour vous», lui déclarera-t-il à plusieurs reprises. Pour des raisons que nous ne connaissons pas il désire la tendresse maternelle de la dame mais plus encore la compagnie fraternelle d'un ami. Ce rôle est assumé par le secrétaire de son ami Beauvillier, La Marvalière: «Je sens un très grand goût à me taire et à causer avec Marvalière, écrit-il. Nous ne sommes tous deux qu'un avec vous en Dieu. Nous sommes assez souvent comme de petits enfants ensemble, et vous y êtes aussi quoique vous soyez loin de nous» (Orc. II, 164). De telles «scènes» - de transfert, de relation à l'inconnu, de régression - peuvent aujourd'hui nous apparaître comme l'une des faces cachées de la vie turbulente à Versailles sous le Grand Roi...

Comment, dès lors, définir la différence entre ces phénomènes mystiques et la «scène» Freudienne? Faut-il renvoyer à la croyance en Dieu? L'idée de Dieu permet en effet de couvrir – et par conséquent d'ignorer – une bonne part de l'inconnu ou de l'inconscient qui est à l'œuvre ici. Mais il ne semble pas que ce soit là l'essentiel. La véritable différence serait plutôt à chercher dans le sentiment négatif dont on entoure en cette fin de siècle la notion du «moi», sentiment que l'époque précédente – celle de l'humanisme qui était aussi un humanisme chrétien et dévot – ne semble pas avoir connu à ce point.

Car le «moi» que la modernité va porter au pinacle et dont elle fera de plus en plus son principal centre d'intérêt, ce «moi», qui se manifeste ici pour la première fois avec une telle insistance, en s'opposant consciemment ou inconsciemment à la loi et à ses institutions – à celles de l'Eglise en premier lieu – ce «moi» se considère essentiellement comme nature déchue, bancal, bonne à rien et donc coupable. D'où le rôle croissant d'attitudes et de choix psychologiques qui plus tard seront appelées «masochistes». Car pour ces êtres mystiques, qui croient profondément que Dieu désire être «l'âme de leur âme», «la vie de leur vie», le «moi» des modernes, qui est un «moi» sans Dieu, ne devrait aspirer qu'à une seule chose: à son propre «oubli» ou même à son propre «anéantissement». Le philosophe des temps modernes a beau ne s'intéresser qu'à lui, aux yeux du mystique, le «moi» doit s'effacer, «disparaître», «mourir». Fénelon n'hésite même pas à parler d'un «moi» qui doit être «égorgé» (Orc. II, 102).

Aussi tout ce qui concerne ce dernier est désormais suspect: ses «propriétés» – c'est-à-dire tout ce qu'il «est»: qualités et défauts et jusqu'aux vertus dont il s'enorgueillit trop facilement – ses «activités» – c'est-à-dire tout ce qu'il «fait» en s'en attribuant le mérite – et, surtout, ses désirs qui doivent être combattus et remplacés par le désir, ou plutôt la volonté de Dieu. En effet, le deuxième grand thème qu'affectionnent Fénelon et madame Guyon, est le thème de tout un siècle, qui va, lui aussi, être «psychologisé» à l'extrême: celui de la volonté divine. Mener une vie intérieure – ils ne se lasseront pas de le répéter – consiste à remplacer sa propre volonté par celle de Dieu. C'est cela le «pur amour» dont ils ont fait leur idéal spirituel: la chose à la fois la plus simple et la plus difficile qui soit. Le pur amour, c'est «la plus étrange perte» que l'on puisse faire: la «perte du moi»...

Ainsi, dans la rencontre entre le mystique moderne et l'analysant du vingtième siècle, l'expérience du premier nous frappe par sa tendance, apparemment régressive, à tout ramener à un seul pôle, celui de l'Un, de l'unité du commencement, pôle divin - mais d'une divinité maternelle,

«pré-oedipienne» – qui inspire, nourrit et, surtout, reprend. «Je veux tout en rien» (Orc. II, 87), écrira Fénelon à la suite de tant d'autres mystiques. Ce n'est pas tant l'individu humain qui compte ici mais une réalité supra-individuelle où Dieu, en se communiquant à l'homme, permet à ce dernier de relativiser sa propre existence et ses malheurs. Ce n'est pas si mal après tout, mais, si l'on oublie la contradiction qu'il contient, le prix à payer – le refus et l'anéantissement du «moi» – paraîtra sans doute trop élevé à plus d'une âme désireuse d'amour divin et de perfection.

Freud, lui, ne considère pas les choses de la même façon. Le «moi» est pour lui beaucoup plus le fruit d'une séparation et d'une différenciation par rapport au monde extérieur. L'Oedipe, imposant le renoncement au monde maternel et l'acceptation d'une réalité autre, est pour lui le fait central. Les mystiques, eux, semblent choisir l'Un et le Tout. Dans le désarroi causé par la Réforme et par l'effacement de Dieu qui l'accompagne, ils optent pour une autre voie, qui présente plus d'un trait qui fait penser à l'enseignement du bouddhisme et que l'homme occidental appellerait aujourd'hui «régressif».

Or, si la pratique de la psychanalyse – mais aussi celle de la littérature – nous a appris une leçon ces dernières décades, c'est bien celle qui considère la réalité intérieure de l'homme comme le fruit d'une articulation – très riche en variations possibles – entre ces deux mouvements-là: entre l'oedipien et le pré-oedipien, ou, si l'on veut, entre le monde du père et celui de la mère, ou encore entre le langage adulte et celui de l'enfance. Grâce à son caractère extrême, le phénomène mystique et, plus particulièrement, l'épisode du Quiétisme, jettent une lumière assez suggestive sur cette «dialectique», complexe, mouvante, très peu hégélienne, qui définit la vie de notre âme, de notre psyché.

The alchemist's Love Story

The creation of the Homunculus – Growth and birth of the self

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In Goethe's *Faust* the Homunculus (little man) is an artificial human being of tiny size. Goethe was inspired by the prescription of Paracelsus: Ovum and sperm are mixed in a vessel and heated; after nine months the homunculus is born. Goethe used the homunculus to illustrate his philosophy of evolution; the homunculus represented the «entelechy», the law of human development.

In alchemy the homunculus is the embryo. The alchemical process shows the embryonal phase, the first two months of pregnancy, of gestation. In this phase the growth of the body takes place. At the end of this phase human consciousness starts to awaken. During these two months there are several encounters between the male and the female element. They are opposites which feel attraction as well as repulsion for each other. There is love and hate; they fight and experience death and resurrection until they finally unite in a conjunction of opposites.

This process is shown in the «Rosarium philosophorum», «The Rosegarden of the Sages» (Frankfurt 1550). The book contains Latin prose and twenty pictures accompanied by poems in German. Ovum and sperm are symbolised by moon and sun and also by queen and king. They go through several transformations, metamorphoses. In the alchemist's mind this process has four stages: Mineral, vegetal, animal, spiritual. They equal the steps of creation in the Old Testament. God created heaven and earth, then the plants, then the animals, and at last the human beings. In the alchemical picture series one can distinguish four parts (not corresponding to the four steps of creation): Picture 1-4, 5-10, 11-17, 18-20.

In 1 there are sun and moon above a fountain, the vessel of the alchemist, also called uterus. Sun and moon are sperm and ovum as germ cells in testicle and ovary. In 2 the king stands on the sun, the queen on the moon; they are connected by flowers coming from a dove, the Spirit or Holy Ghost. In 3 the couple is naked. In 4 they dive into the fountain.

5 shows their sexual intercourse. – It is the fertilisation, the fusion of the nuclei of sperm and ovum. 6: A body with two heads. – The fertilised primal cell. 7: A little boy flies to the sky, leaving the body which is dead now, behind him. – The male element is perceived as an enemy by the maternal organism; it has to disappear before the implantation of the blastocyst in the womb is

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possible. The male element dies, its soul flies away. (About 50% of all fertilised ovums die completely at this barrier or test.) 8: Dew rains from the sky. – The womb accepts the all-feminine blastocyst, nourishes it, allows it to implant. 9: The little boy comes back from the sky. – He seems to be the same as before, but he comes back from God, revived by his strength. 10: The dead body with two heads has been resurrected, standing upright. It is a female body with wings. The poem says: «The Empress is born, she is like her daughter.» To the left of the Empress there is a plant or tree with seven segments having leaves which are symbols of the moon. – Implantation has taken place. The embryo is a female androgyn, a moon androgyn, having a small male element hidden in her. The androgyn is a sexual fusion, a sacred marriage of mother and daughter, the lesbian phase of development. The pleasure resulting from their mutual stimulation produces the placenta. – It is the second week: Bilaminar germ disk. Connection with mother's blood circulation.

5-10 contain a second and secret meaning. The process which happens before and during implantation is a repetition. The sperm element had been repulsed before. By fertilising the ovum the sperm triggers the mechanism of self-fertilisation, the primitive non-sexual multiplication by cell division inherent in the ovum, after which the process of fertilisation, of activation by the sperm sets in again, leading to the formation of the blastocyst which then undergoes the drama already described. The poem at 10 is long and explains the mechanisms depicted in 5-10 and the parallel in 11-17: The powers of self-reproduction of Mother Nature.

11: Sexual intercourse of king and queen having wings now. The queen introduces the king's penis into her vagina. – Beginning of third week: Trilaminar germ disk. Celebrialisation: Cells move up through the primitive streak, the spine, to the primitive node, the brain. Heart beat of the embryo starts. – The winged king is the boy of 7 and 9 transformed into a divine father. The winged queen is a divine mother. This couple represents the parents of the mother. The mother has become her own mother, who has intercourse with her husband, mother's father. Mother re-experiences her own conception, in this disguise satisfying her incest wishes for her father: Sacred marriage of daughter and father (in many myths called parthenogenesis or immaculate conception). 12: A winged sun dives into the fountain. – The sperm comes back, in its original form. Mother's father was let in and now he opens the womb for the embryo's father. 13: A winged body with two heads. – Reconception has taken place. 14: A small girl flies to the sky. – 7 is repeated with inversed roles: The two men kill, kick out the female part. 15: Dew rains down. – 8 is repeated. The all-male embryo is nourished. 16: The little girl comes back. – She is also transformed, has become a divine mother, the mother of the embryo's father who satisfies his heterosexual incest wishes just as his wife did. 17: Resurrection of the dead body with two heads, standing upright, having batwings. To the left a tree again, now with sun leaves, a suntree. The Emperor is a male androgyn, a sun androgyn, having a small female element hidden in him. The androgyn is a sexual fusion, a sacred marriage of son and father, the homosexual phase of development. The placenta has become masculine, sun-like, a placentus. – All incest wishes have been satisfied; they are phylogenetic steps which are repeated in the course of human growth. C. G. Jung called this structure the «Incest Archetype». – To the right of the Emperor is a pelican, a mother nourishing her children with her blood: The embryo in its male, active, aggressive form has taken possession of mother. (The Trojan horse seemed harmless, was let in; at night the warriors climbed out and conquered the city.) The Emperor stands on dying snakes; they represent the reptile phase of evolution which is already coming to its end. Behind the Emperor a lion is standing, announcing the mammalian phase.

18: A lion devouring a sun. – The mammalian phase, activated by sperm energy. It is the second month. 19: Son and Father, with Holy Ghost, a dove, above them. They crown the Virgin Mary. – It is the awakening of the embryo in the good womb. End of second month. Strong growth of brain cells, experienced as light and spreading warmth. The womb is stimulated, producing more nourishment. It is the embryo who by the combined male power of his father, – the Holy Ghost –, and his grandfather (or both of them), – God –, activates the mother, makes her feel loved, making her a good mother, a divine mother for her divine child. 20: Jesus Christ steps out of the tomb or womb, the vessel of the alchemist. – When the embryo awoke in the good womb he experienced

himself as one with the womb: *Unio mystica*. He was pure spirit without boundaries. About a month later he starts to perceive and acquire his body, in this way gaining boundaries, a first ego or self. It moves in the divine being surrounding him, nourishing him, loving him. Thus the embryo, now called fetus by the biologists, loves himself: Perfect primary narcissism as dual union, a mirroring of love: Origin of complete self-love. It is the birth of the self, a self which is active and divine, born in the kingdom of God. Jung speaks of the archetype of the Self; it is connected with the feeling of eternity and immortality. It is equivalent to the archetype of the androgynous divine primordial man which seems to be the same as the archetype of God.

In 18-20 the alchemist was inspired by the gospel of John. Jesus says: «Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him. How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.» (3, 3-5) The key to this mysterious dialogue is given by John in 1,18: «No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the womb of the father, he has declared him.» The King James Version has «bosom» instead of «womb», but Luther translated the Greek word «*Kolpos*», meaning vagina (cf. medical terms like *colposcope* = *vaginoscope*) by «*Schoß*», «womb», which corresponds to the Hebrew or Aramaic word used by Jesus: «*rahamim*», meaning womb or uterus.

In 20 Jesus Christ carries a staff with a flag; the staff has the form of a cross. The alchemist has replaced crucifixion by baptism – the second and painful birth (the birth of the fetus at the end of the fetal phase) by the first and blissful birth (the birth of the embryo at the end of the embryonal phase). In the depth of the painful birth there can be pleasure hidden: When coming out the child stimulates mother's sexual organs and she can experience the birth orgasm. The sublime, sublimated celestial marriage at the end of the second month is re-experienced on the sexual level. So 18-20 have another layer of meaning: 18 shows the birth struggle, 19 the birth orgasm, 20 the result: Jesus Christ born by the orgasm which he himself has caused, thus repeating his own conception, becoming his own father, as he announced it before crucifixion: «I and my father are one.» (John 10,30). This idea is already alluded to in 19: The Son sits to the right of the Father, which refers to Mark 14. 61-62: The high priest asked Jesus: «Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven.»

The alchemist added Mary to this picture; she is not present in the vision of Christ in the gospel. The addition of Mary implies a second sentence: «I and my mother are one.» The Christ of 20 incarnates father and mother. This truth is made clear in a later version of the «*Rosarium*» printed in 1622: in 19 it is the son who is crowned, by father and mother. In 20 an androgyne is born out of the tomb or womb. Johannes Fabricius, whose book «*Alchemy*» contains this later version, also brings a picture of 1668, showing the alchemist at the end of his work. His body is the globe of the earth, his head is the sun. The globe contains three circles, called mineral, vegetal, animal; they show conception, implantation and an embryo with umbilical cord: the awakening at the end of the second month. The head, the sun, is the symbol of the male spirit (in the original Greek of the gospels: *pneuma*, breath), fertilising the female body, in which the process of gestation takes place. The prenatal unconscious has become conscious. The alchemist is like a yogi who has gained complete knowledge of the creation in himself, and who activates this creation by his breath, creating his self. The alchemist is an androgyne, like Shiva fused with Shakti: the *Ardhanari*. Shiva is also the *Nataraja*, the King of the Dance, performing the cosmic game of eternal return. This idea was incarnated by Nietzsche's Zarathustra, the dancing prophet of an eternal pleasure principle. But he is all-male, a re-incarnation of the orgasmic love between son and father: Crucifixion transformed into dance.

The roots of alchemy are the ancient rebirth rituals by which man was reborn as divine and also as androgynous. Christianity preached a rebirth after the death of the body, in heaven, where the Holy Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Ghost resided. The alchemy of Renaissance added Mary, the female element, to the male Trinity, and brought this Quaternity down on earth, where it

became androgynous man, a being in which the opposites were reconciled, loving each other, forming a self of love.

According to Johannes Fabricius, who interpreted the «Rosarium», the alchemists used hallucinogenic substances for their exploration of the prenatal unconscious, comparable to the method of Stanislav Grof who rediscovered these realms of the human unconscious.

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Hamlet's desire and the rules for lacanian reading

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The phallus plays a structurally complex role in Lacanian reading. The phallus marks the «crossover» between the imaginary and symbolic registers, and it enmeshes a dialectic of desire with a dialectic of signification (Bowie 141). In discourse, castration threatens to reveal that the possession of the phallus is only an illusion produced by the empty speech of the *moi* when its continual demands appear to gain satisfaction. However, the threat of castration is usually dimly perceived, if at all, by a speaking subject since «the signified is sufficiently captured by our discourse for everyday purposes» (Sem III, 155). Most of life's *moi*-driven meanings find their confirmation, and everyday life becomes a dream of potency; everyday interpretation – imaginary interpretation – takes the *moi* at its word. «It's when we want to do a bit better», Lacan notes, «to get to the truth, that we are in total disarray» (155). Then, we are forced into the realm where being and not being meet, where castration snips the sutures holding empty speech together and the contents of the unconscious spill out of the wound left behind. Ultimately, the analyst reads the wound and not the discourse. In order to do so, the Lacanian analyst follows certain rules for reading implicit in Lacan's *Écrits*:

First, *the analyst must refuse to validate the textual moi or ego by participating in its demands*. Lacan repeatedly emphasizes that the analyst must, above all, refuse to engage the *moi*. Just as the analysand wants – expects, even demands – participation in the symptom, text demands the participation of the analyst. Text, like the analysand's discourse, has its own aggressive moments when the *moi* attempts to provoke primary identification and strong reaction, moments of «opposition, negation, ostentation, and lying» (*Écrits*, 14). Just such aggressive ostentation marks Hamlet's first soliloquy, a vivid invitation to respond to Hamlet's suffering:

O that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst [self-] slaughter! (1.2.129-132)

The analyst who refuses to participate in the textual ego refuses to validate the content of these lines – resists the temptation to speculate about whether or not Hamlet is feeling suicidal. Looking past the content, the analyst sees the first suggestion of what Lacan calls the characteristic «[mode] of agency of the ego in dialogue» (*Écrits* 15) – Hamlet's penchant for self-dramatization.

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Second, *the analyst must recognize empty speech for what it is*. The problem of a text, like the problem of a psychoanalysis, is signalled by empty speech. Empty speech – the discourse of the *moi* – attempts to conceal the subject's frustration even as its very utterance frustrates its own imagined coherence. In empty speech, text confronts the limits of being nothing more than a construct in the imaginary (*Écrits* 41), a construct that «disappoints all certainties» (41) even as the text attempts to reconstruct these certainties for the other, the implied reader. No textual imaginary can escape the fundamental alienation imposed by the borrowed constructs which disjoin it from its own desire, the desire it pursues, the desire with which it can never be at one (45). Thus text rambles on, or continually rectifies itself in a floundering attempt to pin down real meaning; thus text reiterates and elaborates to prop up its tottering constructs; thus text fills with gaps and pauses. All these attributes of empty speech come to life as Hamlet's reiteration, chronological rectification, and elaboration afflict his perception of time and allow him to magnify Gertrude's crime and glorify Old Hamlet:

That it should come [to this]!
 But two months dead, nay, not so much, not two.
 So excellent a king, that was to this
 Hyperion to a satyr, so loving to my mother
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth,
 Must I remember? Why, she should hang on him
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on, and yet, within a month –
 Let me not think on't! Frailty, thy name is woman! –
 A little month, or ere those shoes were old
 With which she followed my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears – why, she, [even she] –
 O God, a beast that wants discourse of reason
 Would have mourn'd longer – (1.2.137-115)

To a great degree, the analyst's response to this, Hamlet's first offer to take her into his confidence determines whether the analyst will engage the play from a complicitous acceptance of Hamlet's *moi* demands, his textual imaginary, or whether she will maintain an analytic distance, whether the analyst will be seduced into a condemnation of Gertrude's inappropriately brief period of mourning, or whether she will read the shrinkage of two months to «not two» to «within a month» – and «a little month» at that – from which this condemnation is constructed.

How, then, does the analyst approach the textual imaginary? Lacan offers additional guidelines. *The analyst must remain detached*. The analyst must be patient, must be depersonalized and impassive. The analyst attempts to efface her own *moi* direction by showing no private interest, no sympathy for the positions the text offers, no individualizing reactions, and no personal tastes (*Écrits* 13). This does not mean that the transference, or primary identification, does not take place. This means, instead, that when the transference takes place, the analyst recognizes the engagement and distances herself from it so as not to impose the analyst's own imaginary limits on the textual discourse.

The analyst does not see her position in the text; therefore, she does not identify with the subject of the text in the mirroring imaginary fashion of projecting herself into the text. The analyst sees the text's position as a position – refusing to identify with text in order to identify text *as* text. Textual speech reveals its unconscious only to the extent that the analyst remains the detached, indifferent Other of language. Thus the analyst's position is the position of death, since the analyst «must be dead enough not to be caught up in the imaginary relation, within which [s]he is always solicited to intervene» (Sem III, 162). As an example, the analytic response to Hamlet's demand that others lionize Old Hamlet, condemn Gertrude, and lecherize Claudius, is silence; she refuses complicity. The analyst willing to forego the complicit pleasures of primary identification explores a more complex text via some further rules for Lacanian reading:

The analyst allows the text to reveal its own truth. Text contains truth which could never have been imposed upon it by a set of prescriptive anticipatory meanings. The analyst can note that truth and reply to it only when the text's questions (not the analyst's) assume their form in full speech. The analyst need not supply an answer to the text's questions since «true speech already contains its own reply» (*Écrits* 95). The analyst's role is merely to confer on the textual discourse its «dialectical punctuation» (95) – to note its registers, and to separate the text's truth the false speech of the textual *moi*.

What would constitute textual truth? Lacan himself does not specifically say, though he does insist that literature provides the place in which an analyst can learn the analytic technique via its «concrete realization in poetic texts» (*Écrits* 83). Lacan's frequent references to fantasy in his seminar on desire and in his essay on the dialectic of desire suggest that he would agree with André Green's vision of the literary text as more comparable to fantasy than to dream. The text, like fantasy «will leave behind, due to the very fact that it is a work of fiction – hence governed by desire – scattered traces of the primary processes on which it is constructed» («Unbinding» 18). Green thus sees the analyst's task as «unbinding» rather than «reading», and unbinding suggests the snipping of sutures.

At the level of signification, the scattered traces of primary process arrange themselves as repetitions of specific signifiers. Lacan points out, for example, that the bell chiming one when Hamlet sees the ghost and grasps his fate, albeit unconsciously, finds its echo in Hamlet's last act comment to Horatio («Desire» 27), «A man's life's no more than to say "one"» (5.2.74). This «one» further reverberates in Hamlet's first hit against Laertes when he cries out «One» (280). A far more moving repetition at the narrative level of the play comes when Horatio's fifth act «good night, sweet prince» (5.2.359) answers Hamlet's third act desire «to die, to sleep» (3.1.59).

Beyond reading such webs of signifiers, the analyst also reads the registers. The symbolic register with its mediate, linguistic relations sharply contrasts the imaginary register composed of immediate mirroring relations. Consequently, reading the registers locates the meaning of a discourse in the relationship of a symbolic *je* of speech to the imaginary *moi* of text rather than locating meaning in the content of the discourse (*Écrits* 90). The analyst must be aware of the difference between text that directs its questions to the symbolic Other of language and text that seduces imaginary others, discerning upon whom the discourse makes its demands (140). The analyst must recognize the two separate registers in operation and distinguish between them in order to know the interpretive points of opportunity, those moments for «punctuation». Only then is the analyst certain of how and *why* to intervene in the text (140).

Most of Lacan's practice and much of Lacan's discourse are devoted to keeping analysts continually aware of the discrepancy between the registers that is always at play in any text. In light of the decidedly structural nature of Lacan's theory of the registers, it would be correct to define the symbolic as the structurally more complex construction of any psychoanalytic process at any level under consideration, and to define the imaginary as its structurally simpler correlative.

Using the psychological process of identification as an example, Hamlet both explicitly identifies with Laertes in an immediate imaginary way and further identifies the patterns of symbolic relations that position each of them in webs of social mediation:

But I am very sorry, good Horatio,
That to Laertes I forgot myself,
For by the image of my cause I see
The portraiture of his. (5.2.75-8)

Here, Hamlet's perception of their similar contextual identities indicates the distanced symbolic identification as that accompanies the imagistic mirroring portraiture. Another instance of the enmeshment of the registers comes when Hamlet punningly identifies himself as Laertes' «foil» – as both mirroring rival and symbolic instrument.

The mortal contest itself relies on the interpretive resonances of the registers. On the one hand, the contest is only playing, mock battle, a mere dream of antagonistic passion in which

Hamlet seems most comfortable; he is acting – and he has throughout held actors in the highest esteem. Symbolically, Hamlet plays for honor only, risks himself for trivial trinkets that have no real value to him, enacts his fatal contest even for an eggshell. Claudius's command for Hamlet's mock duel with Laertes seems an innocuous invitation to play out the Ghost's command for Hamlet to slay Claudius. But since nothing in the symbolic stays put, what goes around, comes around; the woodcocks fall to their own springes, and self-slaughter emerges from the divinity that shapes mortality. Hamlet is caught in Claudius's Mousetrap. It remains only to ask what truth has been punctuated by the catching.

To read Hamlet's truth, *the analyst identifies the text's full speech*. The text's own truth has a self-orienting quality allowing its discourse to assume a history related to a future (Écrits 88), a fuller continuity (49). At the moment of truth, text becomes genuinely narrative – becomes process rather than episode. At the moment of truth, text can be seen in the «solitude» of both its immediate and its ultimate outcomes as a unique expression of desires. The extent to which a text's truth lives for its analyst equals the extent to which that text's drive to fulfill itself constitutes a sort of mortal awareness.

The greatest texts fully assume their own «being-for-death», putting the analyst in a role that seems part mentor/part companion since the analyst can only «accompany the [text] to the limit of the *Thou art that* of [its] awareness of [its] mortality and destiny» (Écrits 7). Here, the role of accompanist should be taken in the sense of the musical metaphor that dominates Lacan's work. This willingness to accompany the text clearly distinguishes symbolic from imaginary interpretation. Most significantly, the analyst reads the manner in which the text's full speech «reorders past contingencies by conferring on them the sense of necessities» (48). The final act of *Hamlet* illustrates this symbolic reordering of incidentals into necessary pieces of the puzzle of Hamlet's destiny in a profoundly moving way.

Because *Hamlet* is a tragedy, death is its truth. «Death is in sum the pivot-point of the piece» («Desire» 26). Hamlet's death renders all the play's contingencies necessities. It isn't that Hamlet chanced to see his father's ghost on the castle ramparts. It isn't that the player king happened to speak of Hecuba. It isn't that Hamlet accidentally met Fortinbras. It is that Hamlet *had* to see the ghost, *had* to hear the player king, *had* to encounter Fortinbras in order to die as Hamlet died.

In the end, the whole is symbolic, the whole is temporal. «For Hamlet... there is only one hour, the hour of his destruction. The entire tragedy of *Hamlet* is constituted in the way it shows us the unrelenting movement of the subject toward that hour» («Desire» 25). Aptly, the conclusion emphasizes the symbolic since it is not Hamlet's wounded body but his wounded name (344) that concerns him at the end. Hamlet's final request is as much to the analyst who reads him today as it is to Horatio:

Report me and my cause aright.
Tell my story.
Tell the truth.

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Psychoanalytic speculation about Hamlet's «Mousetrap»

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In a 1931 publication, the critic John Waldo asked: «If Hamlet has a complex, what business is it of ours?» (p. 55) This question has stayed with me throughout the years of my work on analyzing texts, for it raises a crucial issue: to assert that Hamlet has this or that complex does not deepen our understanding of the text any more than asserting that he has white cells as well as red in the blood he spills on the stage¹.

Today I propose to show that Hamlet has a negative (to retain that antiquated and pejorative term) Oedipal complex – that is, he wishes to possess his father and rid himself of his mother and that this important leg affects our understanding of the text.

I shall try to show how consideration of this homoerotic side of his Oedipal complex helps our understanding of his first soliloquy («O, that this too too sullied flesh would melt,/ Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,») and then I shall try to show how this side of the complex might lead him to construct «The Mousetrap».

A focus on Oedipal feelings – of all sorts – at once leads us to consider relationships with parents. So what do we know of his relationship to his parents? I will begin with his thoughts about his mother in the second half of the soliloquy in which he describes his reaction to her remarriage but one short month after his father's death:

... And yet, within a month
Let me not think of 't; frailty thy name is woman!
A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she followed my poor father's body,

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¹ References are to The New Folger Library Shakespeare, Washington Square Press, New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore, 1992.

² Jones (1948) in a brief exploration, points out that «Hamlet's conscious attitude toward his father was a feminine one, as shown by his exaggerated adoration and his adjuring Gertrude to love such a perfect hero instead of his brother». Curiously, he did not pursue this in his 1949 book. Maloney and Rockelein (1949), in an aside, suggest that Hamlet's rage is «homosexually engendered by his attachment to Laertes and Claudius». Karpf (1955) points out that we should «recognize with Jones that the Prince of Denmark has not only incestuous desires as to his mother, but also a homosexual attitude of passive submission to his father...», citing his «dear mother» to Claudius. Eisler (1971) also lightly touches on this, suggesting Yorick is a thinly disguised father image: «...those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft...» Recently Green (1994) focuses on this in depth but one wishes for more textual support.

Like Niobe, all tears – why she even she
 Oh God, a beast that wants reason
 Would have mourned longer!, married with my uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules. Within a month
 Ere the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets!
 (I, ii, l.133 -162)

Here Hamlet roils with feeling: disgust with life, melancholy, contempt for his mother, shock, righteous indignation. How could his mother «a little month, or ere those shoes were old/ With which she followed my poor father's body... post with such dexterity to incestuous sheets?» (l.151-162) Her «most wicked speed» to sate her lust lowers her beneath contempt; hers is pure animal lust, nay worse: «Oh God, a beast that wants discourse of reason/ Would have mourned longer!» (l. 154-155) He seems unable to consider other, less obvious motivations that also might determine her behavior: loneliness, dynastic considerations, perhaps some need within her he simply cannot fathom. But Hamlet, certainly no stranger to complexity and contradiction, seems powerless to use his own «discourse of reason» to understand his mother as another complex human being with motivations not always easily understood. For him – now – his mother is merely a seething mass of female Id.³

And even if we, for a moment, accept this distorted view of her, we also note that he does not realize that she could quietly take lovers to satisfy her lust (for Shakespeare, a well-established precedent for a queen in Early Modern England.) But he is so concerned with her sexuality that it precludes consideration of her as separate person⁴. This preoccupation with her sexuality, and his hyperbolic reaction to it, raises the possibility that her behavior rekindles unconscious conflicts he has within himself and his own sexuality.

To return to the soliloquy, his «frailty thy name is woman» (I, ii, l. 150) condemns his mother's need for a man's love: it is a weakness, a woman's weakness. Women cannot resist their need for a man's love; men of course have no such weakness. This misrepresentation of women's – and men's – sexuality reflects prejudice against women. With this prejudice, Hamlet disowns his need for a man's love by assigning it to women whom he then devalues as weak. His need to disown this reflects anxiety caused by the dual nature of normal sexuality, difficulties which cause him to distance and deny homoerotic feelings. Thus his harsh condemnation of women – «frailty thy name is woman» – is self-referential: Hamlet condemns his own frailty; he fears his name is woman because of his unconscious homoerotic feelings; he fears frailty's name is Hamlet.⁵

And what do we know of his relationship with his father? Not very much, rather striking – it seems to me – in a text devoted to a son's struggle to avenge the murder of his «most dear» father. Although he does make it clear throughout that he loved his father and sorely misses him, he nowhere speaks of King Hamlet's qualities as a father, nothing of their personal relationship. Nor

³ Adelman (1992) suggests that «his disgust at the incestuous union rationalizes a prior disgust at all sexual congress». (p. 33) Adelman focuses on the virgin-whore split as the source of his disgust, a stance shared by Kerrigan (1994).

⁴ Adelman (1992) makes a similar point: Gertrude's «frailty unleashes for Hamlet... fantasies of maternal malevolence... and they seem to reiterate infantile fears and desires rather than an adult apprehension of the mother as a separate person».

⁵ The presence of intrapsychic contributions to gender prejudice, of course, does not deny its historic and cultural roots. I understand gender prejudice to result from a complex interaction of both. Elsewhere, I explore Shakespeare's capacity to simultaneously represent and undermine antifeminine prejudice by revealing its intrapsychic origins. (Krimms, 1994)

does he speak of memories of his father, childhood or more recent, memories inevitably stirred by the recent death of a parent. Instead of these personal references, his thoughts center on the relationship between his parents and what he considers his mother's betrayal by her «o'er hasty marriage».

However, Hamlet tells us something – indirectly –, in the soliloquy, about his covert feelings for his father. He seems to imply that his love for his father is more unselfish than his mother's; his loyalty more constant; his grief more profound. Had he been his father's wife, he would have been faithful! These feelings, combined with the absence of direct references to his father reinforces the impression that unconscious loving feelings for his father are a problem for him.

Accepting Hamlet here as troubled about his loving feelings for his father allows a different reading of the opening lines of the soliloquy. But recall first Claudius's offer of love («think of us/ As of a father») (I, ii, l.111-112) a few lines before the soliloquy begins. The soliloquy, therefore, might contain a reaction to the offer:

O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world!
Fie on 't, ah fie! 'Tis an unwieldy garden
That grows to seed. Things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this:
(I, ii, l.133-141)

According to the interpretation I offer, Hamlet's fury with his mother here is a projection of fury with himself for desire for the man who tries to substitute for his father⁶. It is therefore not surprising that he begins the soliloquy with thoughts of suicide («Or that the Everlasting had not fixed/ His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!»). His «Things rank and gross in nature/ Possess it merely» then becomes a reference to a part of his own nature he wishes to destroy: his desire for Claudius. But the wish lives on and threatens to overwhelm him despite his attempt at suppression: «'Tis an unwieldy garden/ That grows to seed.» His disgust with this aspect of himself leads to his wish to melt and revert to an inorganic state («O, that this too, too sullied flesh would melt/ Thaw and resolve itself a dew») - an inorganic state without desire⁷. In this reading then, the soliloquy begins with his despair over the unacceptable aspects of his own sexuality and then moves on to condemn his mother for hers.

Hamlet's struggle with his feminine identification also sheds light on his response to the Player's recitation of the sack of Troy (II, ii). I shall try to show how this response leads to his devising The Mousetrap the play-within-a-play. The recitation describes the Greek warrior Pyrrhus's slaughter of King of Troy, Priam, and the horror of the Queen of Troy, Hecuba. The principal characters present are Hamlet, Polonius, and the Player⁸. Hamlet had heard the recitation before and he tries to start the Player off from memory but makes a mistake in the first line:

«The Rugged Pyrrhus, like th' Hyrcanian beast ->
'tis not so,; it begins with Pyrrhus:
«The rugged Pyrrhus, he whose sable arms,»
(II, ii, l.475-478)

⁶ Kerrigan points out how the reversal in his «Not this by no means that I bid you do»: (III, iv, l. 203) permits him to relish the phantasy of going to bed with the couple «savoring the very sexual connection that disgusts him».

⁷ I accept here «sullied», meaning «stained» or «defiled» as an alternative reading for the Second Quarto's «sallied».

⁸ Dido killed herself when Aeneas' deserted her, an echo of Ophelia's fate.

Hamlet has a slip of the tongue (the only parapraxis I can recall in represented in Shakespeare). In the slip, he unconsciously substitutes a tiger for Pyrrhus's arms⁹. Perhaps Hamlet prefers the imagery of a tiger to the imagery of Pyrrhus's arms. Pyrrhus's arms may represent a threat to Hamlet: a man's arms might represent an offer of comfort or a loving embrace. Accordingly, this slip in which he substitutes a tiger for Pyrrhus's arms reflects a defense against feminine wishes.

The recitation then moves on to Queen Hecuba's horror on seeing her husband slaughtered:

When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport,
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,
The instant burst of clamor that she made
Unless things mortal move them not at all
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven
And passion in the Gods.
(II, ii, l.539-544)

It is at this point that Polonius interrupts the recitation with: «Look whe'er (whether) he has not turn'd his color and has tears in 's eyes. Prithee, no more.» (II, ii, l.545). Someone has turned color and has tears in his eyes, but we don't know who it is for we have no referent for Polonius's «he», no way of knowing just who turned color and has tears in his eyes. Is it the Player or is it Hamlet¹⁰?

Certainly Polonius's «he» here could refer to the Player – that is the conventional reading. But there is a problem with this reading: Polonius is more inclined to humor Hamlet's whims than to frustrate them. (For example, Polonius «sees» any shape in the clouds Hamlet capriciously pretends to see III, ii, l. 370). It seems unlikely that Polonius would frustrate Hamlet's wish to hear out the Player.

There is another way to read Polonius's «he». It seems possible – to me – that Polonius had tolerated the recitation until now. But now something new happens, something that alarms Polonius: Hamlet's face changes. Hamlet is moved by the Player's recitation of Hecuba's suffering and he has «turned his color and has tears in his eyes». Polonius «he» then refers to Hamlet, the «milch» in «the burning eyes of heaven» reflects in Hamlet's eyes.¹¹

But a Hamlet moved to tears also presents a problem: Hamlet seems to deny feelings in the soliloquy that immediately follows where he calls himself: «a John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause/And can say nothing -no, not for a king.»

The contradiction may be explained by the threat posed to him by his fear of feminine identification. As he listens to the recitation of Hecuba's suffering, he identifies with her: he too lost the man he loves to the murderer's hand. Although he is comfortable with a son's grief for a father, he is threatened by identification with a woman's grief for the man she loves – only women are permitted such frailty. And later in the soliloquy, he tells us about the risk that identification with a woman entails. To identify with a woman is to be: «like a whore, unpack my heart with words/ And fall a-cursing like a very drab,/ A scullion [sometimes appears as «stallion» – a male whore]! Fie on 't! Foh!»

Accordingly, he must defend against his awareness of his sympathetic response to Hecuba even though it is registered on his face for Polonius to read.¹²

⁹ Tannenbaum (1920) also interprets this as a lapsus lingui and he sees it as a defense against the wishes of the son (Pyrrhus-Hamlet) to kill the father.

¹⁰ Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are also present but it is unlikely that they reacted or that Polonius would stop the recitation for them.

¹¹ George Steevens, (1736-1800), as quoted in Furness, gives this reading. Rosenberg (1992) describes productions in which Hamlet cries here.

¹² Hamlet is also surrounded by men he has ample reason to distrust: Polonius, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.

Reading Hamlet as moved to tears here but then threatened so that he must deny awareness of it, sheds light on his device of The Mousetrap.¹³

A few lines after his tearful response to Hecuba's pain here, he asks the Player: «Can you play "The Murder of Gonzago?"» – The Mousetrap. Hamlet has learned something from his own involuntary reaction to Player's performance: a performance can «struck to the soul» and thereby expose what is concealed inside. With this precedent in mind, Hamlet then immediately plans a similar trap for Claudius: another performance wherein he will «catch the conscience of a king». Reading Hamlet then as moved to tears by the tale of Hecuba's suffering despite his wish to conceal this «womanly reaction» allows us to understand how that he comes to conceive The Mousetrap and why it occurs to him at this moment in the text.¹⁴

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¹³ Later Hamlet explicitly focuses attention on «The Mousetrap» as a trope, thus inviting reader speculation. («"The Mousetrap". Marry, how? Tropically.» II, ii, l. 261) Does the trope reflect his phantasied female genital with which he would tempt Claudius and simultaneously destroy him – a variant of the vagina dentatum? Is this why he did not give the device a more phallic name, for example «The Soul-Striker» («... Hum, I have heard/ That guilty creatures sitting at a play/ Have, by the very cunning of the scene,/ Been struck to the soul that presently/ They have proclaimed their malefactions.» II, ii, 618-621.)

¹⁴ According to Levin, Goethe also thought Aeneas's tale planted the idea of The Mousetrap. Is it in Wilhelm Meister?

In the name of the dead father

JOSEPH WAGNER (*)

Fie, 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers (Hamlet, 1.2.101-104).

Thus Claudius hypocritically advises Hamlet that his grief for his dead father is excessive and «unmanly» (1.2.94). Without betraying any awareness of irony, Claudius almost obsessively returns to the concept of «father» in this speech, using the word seven times in just thirty lines. It is not only here, in this play about the *unnatural* death of fathers, but in most of Shakespeare's late plays, this theme of nature is a frequent, multi-faceted concern. In a few of the plays, however, there is an unusual turn: Shakespeare develops significant traits in the personalities of some of his young adult characters by establishing a process of identification with fathers who are already dead when the plays open. This identification involves an assimilation not only of the role model's specific traits but of an entire ethos; it is what one critic calls «a transference of being» (Alcorn 23). Language is crucially important in this identification process because the process is accomplished primarily through speech acts, particularly in the reiteration of well-turned phrases and aphorisms or in succinct summaries of the role model's thoughts and virtues. Such repetition enshrines the dead father in the consciousness of the adult child and allows that person to shape his or her self by imitating the character of the admired parent. Finally, it is worth remembering that this identification process is occurring in a fictional character; as such, it is inextricably bound up with language. The fictional self is inevitably a text.

When applied to the work of Shakespeare, or of any playwright, these observations about identification might prove useful. If the playwright intends to establish a dynamic relationship between a young adult character and an older role model, an important device for replicating the process of identification will be in the younger character's reiteration of such memorable speech acts as the sayings, aphorisms and encomia that place the older generation in the best possible light. Also, if constraints such as economy of plot dictate that the older figure be deceased before the opening curtain, the playwright will have to rely almost entirely on the living characters' ability to remember the deceased and to rehearse his wisdom and virtue. Thus, for instance, Hamlet

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identifies with the ego ideal of his dead father by reiterating language that describes the older man's virtues and that enshrine him as a model of morality. For Hamlet, the Ghost becomes «a figure of the ideal father as conceived in infancy and childhood» (Barber & Wheeler 242). Whether such canonization realistically corresponds to the old King's actual character is irrelevant. What is relevant is the rhetorical power of the language that accomplishes this canonization. As it establishes a painful contrast between Hamlet the elder and Claudius, it simultaneously gives expression to Prince Hamlet's efforts to identify with his father.

The complex character of that dead father is basically established in the first ninety-one lines of Act 1, scene 5, when the Ghost tells Hamlet its horrific story of betrayal and murder. Like Julius Caesar's ghost, this one is a powerful *sine qua non* in the play, and it seems, directly or indirectly, to be omni-present. As J. Dover Wilson suggested, it is «the linchpin in *Hamlet*; remove it and the play falls to pieces» (52). But it actually appears in only four scenes and speaks in just two: in 1.1. and 1.4 the Ghost refuses to speak, and in 3.4 it briefly reminds Hamlet of his «almost blunted purpose» and then urges him to speak to his mother. Since it speaks just slightly more than 2% of the words in the play, and since most of those words are in 1.5, the Ghost's powerful impact is certainly not a function of its having a large number of lines. How, then, does Shakespeare manage to maintain for his audience an awareness of the Ghost's clearly delineated, controlling personality throughout the play but also give that Ghost such a relatively slender opportunity to speak (no more, say, than that of Rosencrantz)?¹ In part, he does so by taking the imagery, diction, and values that are present in the Ghost's brief speeches of 1.5 (especially in lines 41-91) and by re-using them in the thoughts and speeches of Prince Hamlet. As Hamlet describes his father's virtues and imitates his speech patterns, he continually invokes his father's ethos and maintains the Ghost's dynamic presence when it is not onstage. Hamlet not only invokes and recalls his father's virtues by forcing his mother to «Look here, upon this picture, and on this;/ The counterfeit presentment of two brothers» (3.4.53-4), but he also forces himself and the audience never to forget the nature of that father's personality and its tragic contrast with Claudius'. Both father and son are obsessed with «that incestuous... adulterate beast» Claudius and the lust of Gertrude which «though to a radiant angel link'd,/ Will sate itself in a celestial bed,/ And prey on garbage» (1.5.42,55-7). They see Hamlet the elder as «Hyperion» and Claudius as a satyr. Indeed, the Ghost's haunting «Adieu, adieu! Hamlet, remember me» (1.5.92) becomes a tortured, consuming refrain for Hamlet:

Remember thee!
Ay, thou poor ghost, whiles memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
.....
Now to my word:
It is «Adieu, adieu! remember me» (1.5.95-111)

In suggesting that Shakespeare transfers the Ghost's ethos to Hamlet, I assume that Hamlet would have absorbed his father's attitudes and language over the course of his life, and thus the diction he chooses even before the Ghost's first speaking appearance should anticipate the language that the audience eventually hears from the Ghost. In his first appearance (1.2.129-159) Hamlet does, in fact, echo his father's penchant for speaking in alliterative repetitions, for being dismayed by the hypocrisy of others, for being disgusted by sexuality, and for expressing those reactions in language so similar that it frequently involves precisely the same words. For instance, «Seems madam? ... I know not "seems"» (1.2.76) is later echoed by the Ghost's complaining about his «most seeming virtuous queen» (1.5.46). Hamlet dwells on the «incestuous sheets» (1.2.157) of his mother's new marriage and her «increase of appetite» (1.2.144); he compares her unfavorably to «a

¹ According to Marvin Spevack's *Concordance to the Works of Shakespeare*, the Ghost speaks 679 words, or 2.29% of the words in the play, whereas Rosencratz has 701 words, or 2.37%.

beast that wants discourse of reason» (1.2.150). This is all language that he learned from his father, who chooses almost exactly parallel diction: «Ay, that incestuous, that adulterate beast» Claudius (1.5.42), «won [Gertrude] to his shameful lust» (1.5.45). It is a lust that «will sate itself in a celestial bed/ And prey on garbage» (56-57). Both Hamlet and the Ghost regularly depict Claudius not only as a beast, but as «a satyr» (Hamlet, 1.2.140), «a wretch whose natural gifts were poor/ To those of mine!» (Ghost, 1.5.51-52), a «mildewed ear» (Hamlet, 3.4.64), and of course «a villain» (used by Hamlet eleven times throughout the play). They see Claudius and Gertrude's now «enseamed bed» (Hamlet, 3.4.92) as «A couch for luxury and damned incest» (Ghost, 1.5.83). In stark contrast, they both depict Hamlet the elder as «Hyperion» (Hamlet, 1.2.140; 3.4.56) and as personifying a loving «dignity/ That... went hand in hand even with the vow/ I made to her in marriage» (Ghost, 1.5.48-50). These parallels in speech, laden with their obvious judgements and obsessions are used overwhelmingly by Hamlet and the Ghost, but rarely, if at all, by the other characters in the play.² No one else in the play provides a verbal model for Hamlet's vivid imagery of repulsion when he thinks about physicality or for such haunting triplets as «Adieu, Adieu, Adieu! remember me... Remember thee!... Remember thee!» (1.5.91, 95, 97). The Ghost's few words are echoed throughout the play by the son who cannot help remembering. In one sense, he will do nothing but remember and identify with his father:

Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past
That youth and observation copied there,
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain,
Unmix'd with baser matter (1.5.98-104).

Hamlet carries out this promise almost literally. As he tells Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, «I have of late... lost all my mirth» (2.2.295-296). The visit by his father's spirit informs the rest of the play, and the character and ethos of the dead King have taken over the younger man's personality.

As I noted, this is accomplished through a very limited role in the play, but the father's spirit is at least allowed to represent itself in its own formidable speeches and appearances. In two other plays, *The Merchant of Venice* and *All's Well That Ends Well*,³ Shakespeare gives his audience a complex knowledge of the personalities of fathers who do not appear on stage in any form, either ghostly or corporeal. They are dead before the plays open. They do not speak, not even as ghosts. Yet their words are echoed, their actions are described, and their personas are invoked by other characters. They are unmistakably influential, and the process of their adult children's identification with them, despite their absence, develops into a very complex parent-child relationship. Portia (in *The Merchant of Venice*) and Helena (in *All's Well*) recall and benefit by the characterological legacies of their dead fathers as they make decisions about their own lives. Their own personalities are not as fully controlled by their fathers as Hamlet's is, but once again Shakespeare uses the language and characteristics of the dead father in shaping the personality of the adult child.

² For instance, Spevack records thirteen uses of either «damned» or «damnable» in the play, twelve by Hamlet and one by the Ghost; «incest», or a form of it, is used five times, thrice by Hamlet and twice by the Ghost; «remember» is used twelve times, nine times by Hamlet, once by the Ghost, and twice by other characters; «wicked» appears six times, three of them are Hamlet's, and one is the Ghost's; and «number» is used nineteen times, twelve of which are spoken by Hamlet and two by the Ghost.

³ *Love's Labor's Lost*, *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* also employ this strategy, but only marginally. The dead fathers are not nearly so important to the plots of these plays, and although their adult children are clearly proud of their ancestry, the audience is not continually reminded of the older generation's posthumous impact on their children.

In *The Merchant of Venice*, the will of Portia's father stipulates that she marry the winner of a strange lottery. She complains that as a result, «the will of a living daughter [is] curb'd by the will of a dead father», and she asks her waiting woman, «Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one nor refuse none?» (1.2.24-26). In her response, Nerissa reveals a very interesting aspect of the character of the dead father:

Your father was ever virtuous, and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore the lott'ry that he hath devis'd in these three chests of gold, silver, and lead, whereof who chooses his meaning chooses you, will no doubt never be chosen by any rightly but one who you shall rightly love (1.2.27-33).

Thus, the father's holiness and deathbed inspiration have been invoked to extend into death his paternal prerogative of choosing his daughter's spouse. The narcissistic nature of his dying decree is immediately apparent: he is controlling his daughter from the grave. But there is a reciprocal process of identification on the part of the daughter, and (just as he does in *Hamlet*) Shakespeare creates her personality by making it resemble her father's. Portia chooses language that clearly echoes her father's in its cleverness, inscrutability, even perhaps its equivocation; and, like her father, she uses that language to control other characters in the play.

Notice, for instance, that the legends the old Master of Belmont had placed on the caskets guide Bassanio and mislead the greedy or arrogant suitors with exactly the kind of thinking and language that Portia herself uses to help her beloved choose the right casket, or to arrange the lesson that he must learn via the ring trick, or even to ensnare Shylock in the courtroom. On the gold casket suitors read «Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire». On the silver they find, «Who chooseth me shall get as much as he deserves», and on the lead, «Who chooseth me must give and hazard all he hath» (2.7.5-9). Aragon, Morocco, and the other unsuccessful suitors are meant to misinterpret these enigmas and to receive the ironic rewards of their vanity (a death's head or an idiot's head instead of the beautiful Portia). The dead father has devised a clever lottery that traps the unworthy and rewards only the man who understands that love requires one to «give and hazard all he hath». The gold casket promised «gain», the silver promised «get», but the lead promised only that the suitor would have to «give» and risk all. Portia, then, provides precisely the right hints to help Bassanio decode the legends while still remaining faithful to the will of her dead father. She does this by identifying with the style and values of her father. She simply uses language and double entendres in the way that he did: e.g., she tells Bassanio, «I stand for sacrifice» (3.2.57), a fairly clear sign of what she wants him to choose and of what she, herself, represents. It can even suggest that «she has sacrificed her own will to that of her father» and that «the man who wins her must “give and hazard all he hath”» (Andrews 106). Portia also imitates her father's skill in devising coded messages when the first three lines of the music she provides for Bassanio all rhyme with the word «lead»:

Tell me where is fancy bred,
Or in the heart, or in the head.
How begot, how nourished? (3.2.63-65)

In the courtroom, too, Portia continues to demonstrate the skill at verbal equivocation which echoes the kind of language her father had put on the three caskets. When her famous but straightforward plea for mercy («The quality of mercy is not strain'd») is rejected by Shylock, she turns the tables on him, bit by bit, and she does so by turning to the riddles and equivocation that characterize her father's cast of mind. First, she points out that the bond he insisted on «doth give thee here no jot of blood» (4.1.306) and «as thou urgest justice, be assured/ Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desir'st» (313-314). This cryptic but non-specific promise that one will suffer by getting too much of exactly what he wished for may well be an imitation of the dead father who had inscribed on the gold casket: «Who chooseth me shall gain what many men desire.» Besides the unmistakable echo in language and its general meaning, the ironic result is the same. As we

come to know something of the mind of this dead father through the nearly inscrutable legends that he left on the caskets, we also come to know the thinking of his fascinating daughter who can earlier tell her maid that her «little body is a-weary of this great world» (1.2.1-2) or who can make the eloquent plea about the quality of mercy, but who can also imitate the wily and combative cast of mind of the father with whom she identifies. When she finally concludes Shylock's courtroom defeat, she gives her husband (who, of course, does not recognize her) the puzzling advice to «know me when we meet again» (4.1.419), and then she tests his love with the ring trick. Still disguised as Balthazar, she tells him that his wife would be «a mad woman» if she knew «how well I have deserv'd this ring» (4.1.445-446) and still objected to his giving it away. But when she confronts Bassanio as his wife, she uses very similar cadences, images, and arguments to berate his apparent falsehood:

If you had known the virtue of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honor to contain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring (5.1.199-202).

And of course she has imposed on him a seemingly impossible demand with this riddle: «By heaven, I will ne'er come in your bed/ Until I see the ring!» (5.1.190-1). Again, she is like her father, cryptic, inscrutable, and very much in control. Whether we admire these traits in her or not (and I do), surely Portia's control of the courtroom and of the final scene in the play can serve as a good illustration of the processes through which a younger character can identify with the language, the thinking, and the values of an older role model. In one sense, it is not Portia but her father whose traits and values are still in control of the play's action even though he himself never appears, and to me, it is a bit stunning to see how Shakespeare developed such a complicated family relationship within the confines of a play that does not even have room for the father as a living character on its stage.

In the later comedy, *All's Well That Ends Well*, Shakespeare seems to be even more fascinated by this phenomenon of the dead father who is given no actual role on stage but who still exerts a profound influence on the development of his adult children. In the first scene of the play, the audience is told much about two dead fathers, the old Count Rossillion and Gerard de Narbon, who had been a physician in the Count's home. Half of that first scene is spent in a lengthy discussion of the virtues of these now deceased men and the hopes and expectations that the world has for their children. Young Bertram, the new Count, is repeatedly told by his mother and other older characters that the world hopes he will «succeed thy father/ In manners as in shape!» (1.1.61-2). Bertram will hear much more about his father's virtues in many later appearances, but he will never respond to them with much joy or reverence; meanwhile, the early attention to dead fathers is more focused on Gerard de Narbon, whose daughter Helena is a ward of the Countess and deeply in love with the insensitive, oblivious Bertram. This old physician was so honest and so skillful that he nearly «made nature immortal» (1.1.20). In other words, he was something of a magus who died on the very brink of supernatural knowledge. This point is quite important for two reasons: first, if he were still living, his skills could be used to save the life of the country's dying King, and, second, his daughter now identifies with his personality, so as she assimilates his goodness and knowledge (his ethos) into her own inexperienced (indeed, virginal) spirit. She even knows that with her father's legacy she can transcend the boundaries of mortal medicine and miraculously cure the doomed King. She says as much in this exchange with the Countess:

But think you, Helen,
If you should tender your supposed aid,
He would receive it? He and his physicians
Are of a mind; he, that they cannot help him,
They, that they cannot help. How shall they credit
A poor unlearned virgin ...?
Hel. There's something in't

More than my father's skill, which was the great'st
Of his profession, that his good receipt
Shall for my legacy be sanctified
By th' luckiest stars in heaven, and would your honor
But give me leave to try success, I'd venture
The well-lost life of mine on his Grace's cure
By such a day, an hour (1.3.235-249).

Helena is thus absolutely certain that she can use her father's skills, «sanctified» in herself as her legacy, her inherited ethos, to cure the King of the fistula that has brought him to his death bed and his physicians to despair. At court, she tells the King that when her father was on *his* death bed, he gave her the prescriptions for many remedies, but «chiefly one,/ Which»:

He bade me store up, as a triple eye,
Safer than my own two, more dear. I have so,
And hearing your high Majesty is touch'd
With that malignant cause wherein the honor
Of my dear father's gift stands chief in power,
I come to tender it, and my appliance,
With all bound humbleness (2.1.105-114).

She is so certain of her success that she is willing to stake her own life not only on its being accomplished but by a specific day, even (as she had told the Countess) at an appointed hour. She knows she will perform a miracle, and this miracle will be possible only through the assimilation of all her father's knowledge and virtue into her own «sanctified» ethos. At this point of the play, then, she is rather like Hamlet in that her own identity has been subsumed by her father's.

When she accomplishes her miracle and asks for Bertram as her reward, the King grants her wish, but Bertram, who has been very unwilling to live up to the expectations of his own paternal model, runs away from the pact, rejecting both wife and family standards. In 1.2, he had already refused to participate in the King's praise of his father:

His good remembrance, sir,
Lies richer in your thoughts than on his tomb.
So in approval lives not his epitaph
As in your royal speech (1.2.48-51).

Now he turns instead to Parolles for identification. As an ego ideal, Parolles is absurd: the play's most corrupt figure, he is held in universal contempt by all other characters save Bertram. Claude Lévi-Strauss describes marriage as «an arbitration between two loves, parental and conjugal... [and] to intercross they must at least momentarily be joined» (489). But Bertram is unable to participate in the inevitable process of generativity. He is not yet willing to acknowledge the wisdom of either his parental or his conjugal love, and as Lavatch explains Bertram's dilemma: «The danger is in standing to't; that's the loss of men, though it be the getting of children» (3.2.41-42).

As *All's Well* progresses, this conflict between the accomplishments of one adult child who has identified with her father and the profligacy of another who is dismissive of his father will be at the crux of the play. Bertram must ultimately see the worthlessness of Parolles, turn to his true patriarchal identification, and ask the pardon of both Helena and the King. He will find that when he is not misled into empty exploits, he will be able to follow Helena and identify with the name of his father.

In each of these plays, then, Shakespeare creates a very strong bond between father and child; it shapes the child's character and behavior, and it is enacted on the stage even though the father is already dead before the play begins.

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Un conte de Hawthorne: *Young Goodman Brown*

Une métaphore du retour du refoulé

PIERRE MET (*)

Cet article est une tentative d'interprétation psychanalytique du conte de Hawthorne *Young Goodman Brown*¹ publié en 1835. L'intrigue, dont tout laisse à penser qu'il s'agit d'une réminiscence d'un fait historique, se déroule à Salem, capitale de l'Amérique puritaine au 17^{ème} siècle. Brown, poussé par une force mystérieuse, abandonne sa jeune épouse pour entreprendre un voyage nocturne dans la forêt. En compagnie du Diable, présenté par Hawthorne sous les traits d'une figure paternelle, il assiste au sabbath des sorcières en présence des notables de la ville. Le lendemain matin, c'est un homme différent qui revient à Salem. Ayant perdu la foi dans l'humanité et ne croyant plus à son propre salut, Brown s'éloigne de Faith, la femme qu'il aime. Présenté par Hawthorne comme pouvant être le récit d'un rêve, ce conte révèle comment le refoulé se manifeste dans le texte, comme dans le rêve, sans une forme voilée qui cache et révèle en même temps.

Had Good man Brown fallen asleep in the forest and only dreamed a wild dream of a witch meeting?

(...) A stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate, man did he become from the night of that fearful dream. (75)

I

Le départ de Brown, signifiant par quoi est rejetée une situation présente, jugée non satisfaisante, permet au héros de manifester des tendances sadiques envers son épouse.

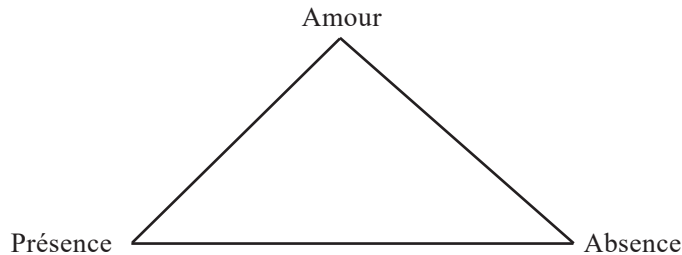
«My love and my Faith,» replied Young Goodman Brown, «of all nights of the year, this one night must I tarry away from thee.» (65)

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¹ *Young Goodman Brown*, publié pour la première fois dans le New England Magazine en Avril 1835. Dans cet article, les chiffres entre parenthèses suivant les citations, ou les références au texte, de *Young Goodman Brown*, indiquent les numéros des pages de l'édition des Contes de N. Hawthorne (pp. 65-75), New York, W. W. Norton and Company, 1987.

Marié depuis peu à une femme présentée sous les traits d'une instance interdictrice,² Brown quitte probablement le domicile familial afin de se libérer d'une emprise de type oedipien. Tout en reconnaissant qu'il peut être dangereux pour la mère d'être abandonnée par le père, Hawthorne, en plaçant ce dernier en position de «refuseur», imagine une situation d'absence d'amour, destinée à sauver le sujet.

A lone woman is troubled with such dreams and such thoughts that she's afraid of herself sometimes. (65)



Le narrateur, identifié à l'enfant, organise le départ du père afin de rester seul avec la mère. Les sentiments de haine pour le père, considéré comme un rival, produisent dans le récit une image de père infernal.³

«What if the devil himself should be at my very elbow!» (66)

L'auteur prend plaisir à porter atteinte aux figures paternelles. Le père persécuteur est montré diminué; il est assis au pied d'un arbre, le bâton qui est destiné à soutenir sa démarche manque de rigidité.(66) Les ancêtres paternels sont dénigrés, et les notables de la ville prennent la forme de créatures méprisables.

Among them, quivering to and fro between gloom and splendor, appeared faces that would be seen next day at the council board of the province, and other which, Sabbath after Sabbath, looked devoutly heavenward, and benignantly over the crowded pews, from the holiest pulpits in the land. (72)

A la fin du conte, dans un ultime rejet de l'autorité, Hawthorne fait mourir le père, essayant par ce moyen de lutter contre un sentiment de culpabilité. Métaphore de l'échec de la relation amoureuse, le discours représente une relation de couple frustrante. Incapable d'accepter les réalités du mariage, le sujet prend la fuite afin d'échapper aux conséquences d'une sexualité coupable. En cours de route, il manifeste le souhait de rebrousser chemin.

«Too far! too far!» exclaimed the good man, unconsciously resuming his walk. «My father never went into the woods on such an errand, nor his father before him.» (67)

Le lendemain de son aventure, prenant conscience, que la sexualité est aussi dangereuse pour les hommes que pour les femmes qu'il rencontre, (65) Brown refoule un désir qu'il ne reconnaît plus comme étant le sien et sublime ses pulsions, honteux d'avoir été tenté par son appétit sensuel, inacceptable.

Often, awaking suddenly at midnight, he shrank from the bosom of Faith; (75)

² Faith ne veut pas entendre le désir et est décrite par Hawthorne comme une métaphore de la résistance.

³ Hawthorne présente les pères sous la forme de démons et les mères sous la forme de sorcières.

La représentation négative de la ville des Puritains, conséquence d'une conscience frustrée par la répression de son épanouissement, devient le signifiant du manque dont souffre le sujet. En guise de défense, Hawthorne lui oppose son contraire, la forêt, un territoire neutre, de nature plutôt féminine, au sein duquel le désir pourra s'exprimer librement. Le monde fantasmatique imaginé par Hawthorne est d'une grande violence Faith s'oppose au départ de son mari en le menaçant.

«Methought as she spoke there was trouble in her face, as if a dream had warned her what work is to be done to-night. But no, no. 'twould kill her to think it.» (65)

Incapable de résister, Brown entreprend alors une descente en lui-même, recherchant dans la forêt, métaphore de sa psyché, le bonheur de son enfance représenté ici par Hawthorne sous la forme d'une scène primitive où la femme (mère) est initiée à l'amour. Il quitte sa femme, sa maison, ses amis, et se trouvant dans un état de conscience atténué, donne libre cours à des désirs interdits parce que considérés comme honteux. Hawthorne ramène Brown comme en un rêve, à une époque où le désir était satisfait, et ce trajet régressif, passage obligé d'un monde dans un autre, s'accompagne d'angoisse.

II

Brown se met en route à la tombée de la nuit, bravant la volonté de sa femme.⁴ Il souhaite rejoindre un autre monde. Le désir du sujet ayant pris un objet impossible, son départ passe pour la transgression d'un interdit présenté par Hawthorne comme source de jouissance. Il s'enfonce dans les profondeurs de la forêt, métaphore de l'inconscient, et part à la recherche du temps perdu. La rencontre de Brown avec ses valeureux ancêtres, figures paternelles ayant persécuté ce monde, peut être prise comme un signifiant du désir de l'auteur de voir les morts encore vivants. L'enfant rencontrant sur le chemin le père symbolique, support de la loi, adopte une attitude de soumission, dans l'espoir d'en tirer un bénéfice secondaire.

As nearly as could be discerned, the second traveller was about fifty years old, apparently in the same rank of life as Goodman Brown, and bearing a considerable resemblance to him, though perhaps more in expression than features. Still they might have been taken for father and son. (66)

Hawthorne organise la rencontre de l'enfant et de la mère, Goody Cloyse, à l'endroit où le chemin bifurque: favorisant ainsi sa pénétration solitaire au coeur de la forêt.

«Be it so,» said his fellow traveller. «Betake you the woods, and let me keep the path.» (68)

Par cette image, l'auteur montre que le secret de la vie réside dans la coexistence de deux mondes antagonistes, organisés selon les principes de plaisir et de réalité. Brown tente de satisfaire ses désirs érotiques d'une manière hallucinatoire, et le rêve est constitué de nombreux symboles sexuels. Le père est représenté sous les traits d'un démon, métaphore d'un homme en état d'excitation; tous les personnages sont en mouvement, métaphore du coit. Hawthorne met en place une situation montrant l'initiation de l'enfant par le père. Par son intermédiaire, Brown imagine que les membres les plus loyaux de l'église de sa ville, en compagnie du diacre et du pasteur, deviennent les principaux acteurs du sabbath des sorcières tel qu'il était décrit dans l'ancien temps. (72)

Le héros, découvre que tous les gens honorables qu'il a connus sont des pécheurs, que sa femme Faith porte des rubans roses, et que lors de la réunion des sorcières, elle va être initiée, et

⁴ Hawthorne prend plaisir à séparer deux jeunes mariés.

devenir un membre de la troupe du diable. Se sentant menacé, ne pouvant plus longtemps supporter ce rêve de «péché», Brown se réveille, et Hawthorne le représente errant au milieu de la nuit dans la forêt. Le lendemain matin, un homme différent se promène dans la ville. Brown est devenu sombre, mélancolique, incapable d'échapper aux conséquences de son sentiment de culpabilité fondé sur le renoncement à ses fantasmes incestueux.⁵ Utilisant le motif du double, l'auteur oppose la personnalité durant l'état de veille à la personnalité «onirique», expression du désir. Le moi social apparaît comme un masque, et Brown semble être victime du clivage. Le nom même du héros peut être interprété comme le signifiant d'un sujet divisé. Alors que Young renvoie à un monde révolu fondé sur l'innocence de l'enfance du sujet, Goodman Brown (ni noir, ni blanc) est une tentative destinée à masquer l'aliénation et la castration.

Le regard, mode d'échange, de pénétration, permet au héros de passer d'un monde à l'autre. En se substituant à Brown, à la fois témoin et acteur d'un désir, Hawthorne prend la place du voyeur agressif. Osant enfin regarder en face la sexualité parentale, l'enfant enfreindra la règle sacrée du tabou. Grâce à cet artifice, il pourra admettre un fantasme qu'il nie depuis toujours, comme étant insupportable: voir et être vu pendant l'acte sexuel.

This night it shall be granted you to know their secret deeds. (73)

Une foule immense assiste à la cérémonie au cours de laquelle l'enfant passera de l'innocence à l'expérience, sous le regard de son père. Au moyen du rêve, Brown pénètre sa vie intérieure, rencontre des démons: la chair chez les parents. Au sein d'une forêt de couleur verte, qui semble noire à l'observateur, le diable rassemble tous les notables, tous les gens bien pensant de Salem, et les montre comme étant acquis à ses idées. Masquant leur sensualité sous une apparente respectabilité ces personnages représentent la persistance des idées refoulées. La vue devient pour le sujet un moyen de connaître à quel point il était différent de ce qu'il croyait être. Cependant, au fur et à mesure que Brown s'enfonce dans la forêt, l'ombre se fait de plus en plus épaisse et gêne sa perception visuelle. Hawthorne lui substitue la perception auditive. Le son des voix, mêlé au vent; et l'on sait que la scène est souvent vue et entendue.

Aloft in the air, as if from the depths of the cloud, came a confused and doubtful sound of voices. (70)

Dans le rêve, la présence simultanée de la désobéissance de Faith et du mari trompé qui découvre qu'il trompe sa femme, trouve son aboutissement dans le désir de Brown d'assister au sabbath des sorcières. L'enfant désirant savoir ce qui se passe quand on est marié, demande à son père des explications comme il n'a jamais osé le faire dans la réalité.⁶ En guise de réponse, Hawthorne imagine une cérémonie initiatique dont le personnage central, sera une jeune fille inondée de lumière blanche, et coiffée d'un bonnet orné de rubans de couleur rose. L'union rencontre des obstacles; le cri qui accompagne la chute d'un morceau de ruban rose, exprime à la fois la douleur et la joie.

The cry of grief, rage, and terror was yet piercing the night, when the unhappy husband held his breath for a response. (71)

A la fin du conte, le fait pour Hawthorne de se demander si le récit n'est pas un rêve, équivaut à affirmer que le discours produit est en fait une condamnation sous forme de déni.

Had Goodman Brown fallen asleep in the forest and only dreamed a wild dream of a witch meeting? (75)

⁵ Ce voyage, présenté par Hawthorne comme pouvant être un rêve, est une nuit de péché pour Brown.

⁶ Ce passage de l'être au non être, du manifeste au latent, permet au héros d'être initié. Guidé par les mauvais, Brown découvre l'interdit et la sexualité.

Tout en s'appuyant sur l'idée que la famille est à l'origine de l'interdit, Hawthorne rêve d'un personnage qui l'enfreint. Dans la forêt, la tentation est ambiguë; Faith disparaît au moment le plus important de la cérémonie. Le matin, suivant son retour de la forêt, Brown invente des règles nouvelles auxquelles il va s'astreindre, et multipliant les rituels semble vouloir se placer sous la protection de la loi. Grâce à cet artifice, il inhibe toute tentative de transgression et, poussé au renoncement de ses désirs oedipiens, vit désormais dans un autre monde. Sa psyché, champ de bataille conscient de désirs inadmissibles et de leur punition, fait de lui un misanthrope. Se donnant quelques raisons de douter de la vertu de Faith, il vivra cependant auprès d'elle et aura des enfants. Brown considère davantage Faith comme une mère que comme une épouse. Faisant le deuil, dans la réalité, de plaisirs reconnus comme irréalisables, son attitude permettra à Hawthorne de montrer comment son héros satisfait son désir dans la souffrance au lieu de le satisfaire dans le plaisir. L'auteur imagine alors une situation perverse à l'intérieur de laquelle le sujet, préférant un interdit plus sécurisant, recherche la satisfaction par une quête plus idéalisée: le renoncement comme source de jouissance.⁷

III

L'intrigue de ce conte repose sur la glorification par Hawthorne de la non réalisation. Créant artificiellement l'absence et se complaisant dans l'idée d'échec, Brown attend toujours quelque chose qui n'a pas lieu. Quittant la femme qu'il aime pour répondre à l'appel l'invitant à se rendre à un mystérieux rendez-vous dans la forêt, le héros rencontre des personnages dont les comportements sont plutôt agressifs. Aussitôt, le sujet adopte une attitude de soumission auto-destructrice. Hawthorne prive le sujet d'amour en lui faisant quitter une femme qu'il aime, dont le nom est Faith, tout en prenant plaisir à mettre en scène sa propre destruction après «un dialogue avec le sein»: la jouissance, c'est la chute. Afin de lutter contre l'insécurité de sa situation présente, Brown se montre rempli de haine à l'égard de la personne aimée. Refoulant son agressivité, et modifiant son comportement de manière permanente, il punit l'épouse, et à son retour, avoue son désir d'enfant de vivre avec la mère.

«Well, she's a blessed angel on earth; and after this one night I'll cling to her skirts and follow her to heaven.» (65)

Ce désir de fusion rend le sujet, tel un psychotique, incapable du moindre élan affectif. Le Désir ayant choisi un objet interdit, Hawthorne imagine une situation destinée à masquer la virilité du sujet et à lui permettre de connaître le bonheur dans le «mal». Le début du conte montre un personnage en train de s'échapper du lit conjugal, et lors de la cérémonie dans la forêt, Faith disparaît à l'instant précis de l'initiation. Encouragé par un personnage féminin, dont tout laisse à penser qu'il s'agit de la mère (73), le héros, cherchant à éviter la relation à la femme, se sent attiré par un isolement stérile, conduisant au néant. Les personnages sont détruits parce qu'ils ont transgressé la loi. Le souvenir d'avoir péché par pensée, ou par action, interdit à Brown un retour à la normale, chez lui. Souhaitant le punir, en supprimant sa sexualité, Hawthorne fait de lui un patriarche, un père fondateur doté d'une nombreuse descendance qu'il pourra soigner à sa guise. Le sujet masque sa virilité derrière le désir plutôt féminin d'avoir des enfants. D'une manière hallucinatoire, il devient la mère, dont les enfants renouvellent la tendresse dont il a fait lui-même l'objet par le passé. Cette attitude laisse à penser que le moi désire le contraire. En imaginant un personnage qui reste aux côtés de son épouse sans jamais tenter de la séduire, Hawthorne montre qu'il souhaite redevenir le petit enfant d'une mère dont il sera le seul amour. (65) La séduction,

⁷ Le lendemain, de retour dans son monde d'origine, Brown apporte la vie, (il aura des descendants), mais devra payer ce don en offrant sa propre vie. Il vivra de façon austère.

conséquence de la lutte amoureuse est liée à l'abandon. Au début du conte, Faith laisse voltiger au gré du vent les rubans roses ornant son bonnet alors qu'elle parle à son mari. Cette image, marque très féminine, donne à l'épouse une apparente image de pureté tout en représentant le motif de l'angoisse de castration. En remplaçant les cheveux de Faith par des rubans, Hawthorne symbolise par le contraire l'organe féminin qu'il imagine comme signe de la castration, et le transforme en symbole phallique. La castration se voit représentée par son inverse et la perte est compensée par la pluralité. La fuite de Brown est un moyen utilisé par le sujet pour lutter contre la castration symbolique. Lors du sabbath des sorcières, métaphore de l'absence, Hawthorne tentera d'abolir la distance séparant le sujet de l'état de plénitude à l'aide de rites compliqués, tandis que les conditions dans lesquelles Faith perdra un morceau de ruban évoquent «la scène primitive», au cours de laquelle l'enfant imagine que la mère est victime de violence de la part du père.

There was a scream, drowned immediatly in a louder murmur of voices, fading into far-off laughter, as the dark cloud swept away, leaving the clear and silent sky above Goodman Brown. But something fluttered lightly down through the air and caught on the branch of a tree. The young man seized it, and beheld a pink ribbon.

«My Faith is gone!» cried he, after one stupefied moment. «There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name. Come, devil ; for to thee is this world given.» (71)

Cette observation, génératrice d'angoisse, témoigne de sa nostalgie de complétude, et de son impossibilité d'accepter la séparation. Brown fait un cauchemar ambigu. Extériorisant dans la forêt ce qui lui manque il exprime son mépris pour les figures paternelles, et à son réveil, rejetant le rêve, se trouve coupé, par son angoisse, de toute humanité ainsi que du monde dans lequel il vit.⁸

A stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not desperate, man did he become from the night of that fearful dream. (75)

Cette angoisse trouve son fondement exprimé par deux composantes, l'une exprimant l'hostilité du sujet pour le père, l'autre étant le témoignage d'une tendresse filiale. L'angoisse résultant du fait qu'un désir de mort contre le père est un désir scandaleux; plus un désir est considéré par le sujet comme honteux, plus il est réel et par conséquent refoulé. Hawthorne remplace le refoulement par un jugement qui condamne. Le texte met en évidence comment Brown renonce et, tentant de vivre en conformité avec les principes de sa condition d'être aliéné, mène une vie de vieillesse et de chagrin. Sublimant son désir de vengeance en générosité, il masque sa honte et professe d'être dégoûté des choses qui lui procuraient jadis beaucoup de plaisir. Dans ce récit, véritable appel à la perversion, Hawthorne montre comment l'évolution dans le choix d'objet, aboutit à une régression, liée au déni de la castration. Ce mouvement de rentrée en soi, témoin de notre clivage, permet au sujet de faire coexister deux processus de défense, l'un tourné vers la réalité, le déni, l'autre orienté vers la pulsion, le retour du refoulé. Procédés qui aboutiront à la formation de symptômes phobiques, sans que le moi ne puisse trouver un compromis entre ces deux attitudes en présence.

*

Ce conte, écrit à la troisième personne, et dont le titre est aussi le nom du personnage principal possède une intrigue fondée sur l'observation du clivage et de la séparation. Un père parle à son fils et lui donne un ordre; il exige quelque chose de symbolique, signifiant du désir de l'Autre. Nous sommes tous habités par les exigences inconscientes de nos parents. Au moyen de l'écriture, Hawthorne satisfait un désir inconscient et montre la façon dont le sujet doit s'organiser

⁸ Le double qui revient de la forêt, métaphore de la révélation de l'alter ego que l'on porte en soi, est considéré par le moi comme mauvais, donc refoulé.

en temps qu'être désirant. Ce dernier tente de s'identifier au père, présenté comme étant le moi idéal. Le sort de l'enfant est d'être passif face au désir de l'Autre, et être passif équivaut à être aliéné. Le récit montre comment une pulsion dont la satisfaction engendre du plaisir en vient à susciter un déplaisir tel qu'il déclenche l'opération de refoulement. Le texte devient alors un compromis entre les représentations refoulées et refoulantes, signifiant d'une expérience douloureuse. Attribuant à autrui des paroles ou des pensées qui sont les siennes, le sujet se défend de ses propres désirs en imputant les mauvaises actions à son double. Projetant des excitations génératrices de tensions à l'extérieur, Hawthorne veut les fuir pour s'en protéger. L'auteur, écrasé par une identité coupable, écrasé par ses ancêtres, et sans doute déçu dans ses espoirs de paternité, imagine une situation grâce à laquelle son refus de plaisir devient jouissance. Tout en permettant de persécuter le héros, le rêve met en scène la sexualité de la mère, et fait découvrir au lecteur que les mères ont un sexe, et des désirs, que le sujet tente de nier depuis toujours parce que inconcevables par lui. Hawthorne imagine alors une mère qui n'a pas d'amant (on la marie), et dont l'unique objet est de satisfaire le besoin d'amour de ses enfants. Il s'interdit de considérer la mère comme pouvant être aimée par quelqu'un d'autre que l'enfant. Le récit s'achève par la mort du héros⁹: Hawthorne punit la mère en se faisant l'artisan du meurtre du père.

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⁹ Hawthorne sanctionne l'aveu du fantasme par la mort.

What is expressed by the Lawrentian characters?

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Commenting his novel *The Wedding Ring* (which was later named *The Rainbow*) in a letter of 5 June 1914 to Edward Garnett, Lawrence wrote:

«I don't think the psychology is wrong: it is only that I have a different attitude to my characters,... that which is physic – non-human in humanity, is more interesting to me than the old-fashioned human element – which causes one to conceive a character in a certain moral scheme and make him consistent. The certain moral scheme is what I object to... I don't care so much about what the woman *feels* – in the ordinary usage of the word. That presumes an *ego* to feel with. I only care about what the woman *is* – what she is – inhumanly, physiologically, materially – according to the use of the word: but for me, what she is as a phenomenon (or as representing some greater, inhuman will), instead of what she feels according to the human conception... You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognisable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than any we've been used to exercise, to discover are states of the same single radically-unchanged element. (Like as diamond and coal are the same pure single element of carbon. The ordinary novel would trace the history of the diamond – but I say “diamond, what! This is carbon”. And my diamond might be coal or soot, and my theme is carbon.)» (Letters II, pp. 182-184).

Fundamentally this statement implies two issues. First there is the rejection of a «moral scheme» and «the old stable ego» as determinants of a character. Secondly there is the assumption of some element, the «carbon», constituting the essence of a character. After a survey of comments on and interpretations of both these issues by several literary critics, we will try to formulate some conclusions from a psychoanalytic point of view.

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For the interpretation of these rather vague concepts most critics refer to Lawrence's later essay *Democracy*. In this essay the «ego» is defined as «a sort of second self» (p. 710) or an «ideal self masquerading and prancing round, showing off» (p. 711). Though Lawrence did not use this term, «moral scheme» and «old stable ego» have been understood as the *social self*, the playing of social roles prescribed by tradition and society, which should be distinguished from the *individual natural living self*. Some critics find that the minimizing of the expression of the social self in the characters entails some impersonality and lack of differentiation. Hough (1956) thinks that some impersonality of the characters in *The Rainbow* «may even be a bit of special pleading for some of its inconsistencies and failures in realisation... It is for this reason that we so often fail to feel sympathy or identification with Lawrence's personages». Still he minimizes the problem, concluding that, «No doubt Lawrence's speciality is the study of certain obscure states of the human soul. Over large areas of his work, however, he is portraying characters in action in the same way as any other novelist» (p. 14). In his analysis of *Women in Love*, Bersani (1976) also admits that a «central problem for Lawrence is to find a way to identify individuals within a mode of characterization which discards the usual signs of individuality. In part, he relies on the individualizing psychology of realistic fiction» (p. 174). This makes a sufficiently differentiating among characters possible. There is a realistic diversification of characters but they are almost imperceptible variations on a few major themes.

According to Moynahan (1963), Lawrence creates in *The Rainbow* two distinct selves for each character, «the self of ordinary social and familial experience involved in daily events and aiming at limited goals, and the self of essential being involved in mysterious transactions with the "living universe" and aiming at a goal unknown» (p. 42). Salgãdo (1982) also concludes that throughout *The Rainbow*, «Lawrence creates characters who have, so to speak two identities» (p. 117). At one level they are recognizable social human beings. But below this level they acknowledge the connection between themselves and the vast superhuman process which is life. In his comment on *Women in Love*, Schorer (1953) distinguishes «free» and «bound» characters. The «free» characters are limited to the four protagonists who actively seek out their fate through the plot movement; the others are «bound» characters, fixed in their social roles. «These have all taken the way of death, and therefore they exist at the level of the social personality alone, and they are characterized by means of the familiar technique of caricature, maximum selection. But the free characters, the four, are compounded of a double drive... They have their social existence and they have their psychic existence; the first is inevitably an expression of the second, but in the second lies their whole motivation. As two take the way of death, their social role becomes more and more important... And as the two others take the way of life, their social role becomes less important, ceases in fact, to exist» (p. 53).

The disqualifying of traditional social and moral characteristics of the characters involves the absence of a plot resulting from interactions and events related to these particular features of the participants. In a previous letter of 29 January 1914 to Garnett, Lawrence stated that he did not want to «write a story with a plot» and he called his method «exhaustive» (Letters II, p. 143). Daleski (1965) comments on this method. He confirms that *The Rainbow* is not held together by the tight links of a conventionally well-constructed plot and he regrets «that in the novel as a whole there is not a sufficient number of dramatic correlatives; that is to say, too frequently there are sections of descriptive analysis that are not embodied in the sort of corroborative action that is also ultimately revelatory» (pp. 78-79). Salgãdo (1982) also discusses the realization of the exhaustive method in *The Rainbow*. He finds that in this novel the most characteristically vivid passages are ritual scenes (p. 112). For Bersani (1976), *Women in Love* also is «a succession of scenes in which nearly identical points of view antagonistically confront, or rub up against, one another. All the characters repeat, with more or less subtle variations, a few principal themes. But the very blurring of points of view which results from these repetitions is meant to serve the most differentiating activity» (p. 179).

Berthoud (1978) discusses another aspect of the exhaustive method in *The Rainbow*. He conceives it as an exhaustive treatment of a character's feelings, «a complete expression not only of what a character feels consciously, but also of the whole mass of inarticulate instincts, pressures and currents that precedes and underlines conscious feelings» (p. 57). It represents an attempt to express directly the life of the deeper self. This is scarcely accessible to the character himself. Therefore the author must intervene and reveal to us what is going on in the secret recesses of being. Lawrence manages this, not by communicating information to the reader over the head of his character, but by a lyrical representation including the incantatory intensity of the tone, the leap and pulse of the rhythm and the psalmic, almost obsessive repetitions. This forces the reader to relinquish his aloofness and involve himself in the character's experience. This corresponds to Bersani's (1976) view that Lawrence asks us to accept that it is possible to know at once, by an immediate interpretation, an intuition bypassing the mediating and distorting vehicle of language, the underlying impulses of people. Indications can be found in sudden shifts of language «from the prosaic to the extravagant» (p. 164); examples are: «minds go», «people lapsing out», «swooning», «being magnetised».

THE CARBON OF THE CHARACTERS

Lawrence's use of the metaphors diamond, coal and carbon raises many questions. A first problem concerns the individuality of a character. Moynahan (1963) takes the view that, «If the essence of a character is carbon, then the essence of all characters is carbon, and you cannot write a novel about carbon and nothing but carbon» (pp. 41-42). This implies that even if carbon stands for some supraindividual force or substance, this should display some individualized expression in different characters. Drain (1978) thinks that, «His view that we pass through allotropic states, that a man may be, to use his own metaphors, coal, then diamond, may function as an attack upon the notion of human nature as fixed and stable, but it also affirms a consistency of nature, for diamond and coal are both carbon: beneath the appearance of change lies a single element, true to its individual nature» (p. 89). And Mudrick (1959) states that such characters «are not caricatures or even conventional heroes, mere victims or arbiters of manners and morals, they are passions and first principles; and they are all the more human and individual for being so» (p. 39).

Divergent interpretations of the «carbon», underlying the characters are offered by different critics. Commenting the characters in *The White Peacock*, Hough (1956) declares: «The centre is displaced so that the circumference of the book includes, not only the characters and their personal fates, but the whole life of nature which surrounds and flows through them. The characters are only forms into which this universal *mana* transitorily flows, and it is *mana* that is Lawrence's real subject» (pp. 31-32). Tedlock's (1963) evaluation of *The Rainbow* as an attempt to reintegrate man and universe in modern terms, is in agreement with this point of view. But he goes further. He refers to Lawrence's pantheist views. For him the greater, non-human forces alluded to in the letter to Garnett, are related to this religious view and he concludes: «The psychic stages through which his characters are now to pass constitute a search for the absolute in a world of disastrous relativity and irreligiousness» (p. 87).

Daleski (1965) offers another interpretation of the «carbon», the physic-non human elements, expressed by the characters. For him it concerns the «male principle» versus the «female principle» defined by Lawrence in his *Study of Thomas Hardy*, by pairs of opposed qualities. Daleski abstracted from this study a series of twenty eight pairs plus two male characteristics without female counterparts (pp. 30-31). His list includes physical (e.g. Light-Darkness), psychological (e.g. Registers Relationship – Occupied in Self-Feeling), philosophical (e.g. Condition of knowledge-Condition of being), sociological (e.g. Community), and theological (God the Son-God the Father) elements. It is hard to imagine how such heterogeneous collections of mostly abstract characteristics are presented in the actions of characters.

The most exhaustive analysis of the physic elements, determining the Lawrentian characters has been offered by Bersani (1976). He quotes the essay of 1917, *The Reality of Peace*, in which Lawrence declares that there are ultimately only two desires, the desire of life and the desire of death. Conforming to the author's reference to physics in his letter to Garnett, he writes: «The fact which most interests Lawrence about human beings is the extent to which they are being carried along by either currents of life energy or currents of death energy» (p. 164). Limiting his analysis almost exclusively to *Women in Love*, he consistently explores how in this novel the manifestations of life and death energies may be conceived. He admits that life and death energies, breaking through the appearance of character, are beyond the language of fiction. «Now the impulse to live and the impulse to die are not exactly attributes of personality; rather they are attempts to enlarge on or to obliterate the very field in which the anecdotes of personality are possible» (p. 164). This implies the need to look for modes of expression representing these energies in the rendered events and activities of the characters.

Bersani focuses his attention in the first place on the death energy. He refers to Freud (1920) who, in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, describes repetitive behaviour as an expression of the death instinct. Infinitely repeated motion is at the same time attractive and horrifying. It is attractive since it creates an illusion of immortality. It is intrinsically infinite, eternal and non-human. «But since the body changes even if the mind has committed itself to what Lawrence calls indestructible matter, death is the one thing that can happen to someone committed only to "repeating himself"» (p. 160). In *Women in Love* this mixture of attraction and horror is expressed by the characters of Gerald Crich, Loerke and Gudrun. Gerald Crich considers as the incarnation of his power a perfect machine, mechanically and ad infinitum repeating motion; he wants to flee from the organic death which terrifies him but his life becomes a chase after death. The industrial artist Loerke sees beauty in factories and machine-labour, and for him man enjoys only the mechanical motion in his own body. For Gudrun, all life «resolves itself into a tick-tack from which there is no escape... Gudrun's horror is her intuition that one's primary experience of life may be merely one of indefinite repetition...» (pp. 158-159). At the end, however, her loyalty shifts from Gerald to Loerke and she prepares to go off with him to enjoy a frictional relation of witty sensationalism, an illusion in which nothing was possible but death.

For Bersani, the expression of the death energy is not limited to repetitive movement. «The critique of repeated motion extends to all kinds of activity. It is perhaps most interesting – and most surprising – when it is made with respect to sexual activity» (p. 161). It embraces all frictional activity. Bersani clearly conceives the life impulse not as the Freudian Eros but as the pursuing of what he calls «the Lawrentian ideal of stillness». With regard to sexual activity, he finds that, according to Lawrence, «For the heterosexual or genitally active man, the only escape from frictional sex is chastity, or perhaps a kind of nongenital physical intimacy» (p. 171). However, in his letter of 16 July 1916 to Catherine Carswell, Lawrence's formulation is much more nuanced: «So that the act of love, which is a pure thrill, is a kind of friction between opposites, interdestructive, an act of death. There is an extreme *self-realisation*, *self-sensation*, in this friction against the, really hostile, opposite. But there must be an act of love which is a passing of the self into a pure relationship with the other, something new and creative in the coming together of the lovers, in their creative spirit, before a new child can be born, a new flower in us before there can be a new seed of a child» (Letters II, p. 636). And Lawrence conceives motion as well as inertia as a component of life. In *The Study of Thomas Hardy*, he writes that «life consists in the dual form of the Will-to-Motion and the Will-to-Inertia, and everything we see and know and are is the resultant of these two Wills» (p. 447).

Finally, Bersani concedes that Lawrence allows enough psychological complexities in his characters, alongside of their elemental drives towards life and death, to encourage psychological interpretations. If Lawrence attempts to destroy the superstructure of personality in order to redefine human beings in terms of their primary desires to live and to die, a psychoanalytic reading can defeat this enterprise by treating both the conscious personality and the life and death energies as signs of specific repressed fantasies, «a psychoanalytic interpretation of a Lawrentian novel merely suggests that Lawrence has failed to locate his characters' central motivations» (p. 169). But are

these motivations so evident as Bersani wants us to believe? Eventually, a few years later, Lawrence developed his own metapsychological theories without any reference to a death energy.

A PSYCHOANALYTIC POINT OF VIEW

When Lawrence dismisses the importance of social morality as the basis of consistency in his characters, he wants to emphasize that, underlying their social self, other dynamic powers determine the fate of the people represented by his characters. Conflicts between the moral-social and the bio-psychological self are common subjects of literary works. But with Lawrence the conflicts take place on a level, beyond the moral-social world, within the bio-psychological self. As Sanders (1973) remarks, «*The Rainbow* provides little of the data necessary for interpreting the feelings and actions of characters in terms of their social situations» (p. 78). «*The Rainbow* had an unsettling effect on Lawrence's contemporaries, for it described, even celebrated the violent eruption of the unconscious into the tranquil pastures of ordinary life» (p. 70). And Holderness (1982) finds that, «Lawrence saw his more "analytical" technique as a way of penetrating deeper into the lives of people than the realist novel – preoccupied with "external" features of living, social existence and relationships, morals and manners – could ever hope to do» (p. 175). When he writes that he does not care «about what the woman *feels* in the ordinary usage of the word», he means that these feelings are only a result of more fundamental forces. Which are these forces? Where should we look for concepts to elucidate the metaphor «carbon», considered by Lawrence as the essence of his characters? We have seen how many critics refer to the formulation of human nature and functioning, found in the doctrinal works of the author. Of course, «He was an ideologue as well as an artist» (Kermode 1973, p. 27). But is not it one-sided to look for definitions of unconscious forces, symbolized in fictional characters, in doctrinal writings? Surely these theoretical considerations provide interesting information about the preoccupations of the author. In a psychoanalytic approach, however, we look in the first place for unconscious phantasies, symbolized in the attitudes and actions of the fictional characters, and fitting into the framework of the psychoanalytic theories regarding the mechanisms of the unconscious. Therefore every novel should be studied separately. But since the remarks of Lawrence concerned *The Rainbow*, we will focus our analysis on this novel.

One should beware of premature generalizations, but it is interesting to bring to the fore a crucial passage of the first chapter of this novel, which seems to offer a clue to the formulation of some basic pattern of unconscious impulses symbolized in the characters. After the opening pages, constituting a superb description of the immersion in nature of the Brangwen farmers, by their daily contacts with animals, land and weather, we find the significant passage: «But the woman wanted another form of life than this, something that was not blood-intimacy... She faced outwards to where men moved dominant and creative, having turned their back on the pulsing heart of creation...» (p. 9). In this passage, which can be conceived as the program of the whole novel, we find the opposition of a merger with nature versus a separation leading to self-realization. It is the basic conflict determining, in different elaborations, the fate of the characters in *The Rainbow*.

Merger with nature is at the heart of Lawrence's work, his fiction as well as his doctrinal writings. In this perspective we can also understand that, in the letter to Garnett, he defines the essence of his characters as «physic-non human... inhumanly, physiologically, materially». In his *pollyanalytics* (exposed in *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious* and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*), he indicates in a similar way different centres of the cerebro-spinal and vegetative nervous system as the sources of different psychological dynamisms. Given his ignorance of neurophysiology this appears as a pure speculative pseudo-scientific enterprise. Also his much proclaimed concept of «blood-consciousness» is acceptable as a metaphor but it lacks any scientific basis. Of course, Lawrence was not interested in natural sciences. By referring to physiology and physics, he wanted

to emphasize that human beings are an integral part of the natural order. In many of his writings this natural order is even divinized and he attributes many of the qualities to it, traditionally ascribed in Judeo-Christian cultures to God. In a letter of 9 April 1911, after the death of his mother, he writes to his sister Ada: «When we die, like rain-drops falling back again into the sea, we fall back into the big, shimmering sea of unorganised life which we call God. We are lost as individuals, yet we count in the whole» (Letters I, p. 256).

What is the meaning of this persistent preoccupation with man's immersion into nature. It may seem a psychoanalytic bias to conceive nature as mother-nature, a symbolization of the mother figure and to relate the opposition of merger versus separation to unconscious phantasies of union versus aloneness occupying such an important place in the early mother-infant relationship. Still, in a letter of 5 December 1918 to Katherine Mansfield, Lawrence writes, «that at certain periods the man has a desire and a tendency to return unto the woman, make her his goal and end, and find his justification in her. In this way he casts himself as it were into her womb, and she the Magna Mater, receives him with gratification.» But further he continues: «I do think men must go ahead absolutely in front of their women without turning round to ask for permission or approval from their women» (Letters III, pp. 301-302). This dual attitude, he attributes to the adult man, exactly meets the innate and polarized nature of the urge towards union with the mother opposed to the desire for individuation, he described later in his *pollyanautics* as the nucleus of the infantile psychological development. It indicates how he conceived the adult human behaviour as a reactivation of phantasies originating in the early infantile conflicts between the urges of connectedness and separateness.

When we view Lawrence's description of his characters as immersed in, or separated from, nature in the light of this conclusion, we think that it is justified to assume the duality of attachment to the mother figure versus the tendency to individuation as a general scheme in the conceptualizing of unconscious forces symbolized in the characters. Stern (1985) has enunciated how, in the early mother-infant relationship, autonomy and attachment are worked on «in all the domains of relatedness that are available at any given time» (p. 33). Different forms of the same issue develop in succession and are concretized in diversified types of object relations with gratifying as well as frightening aspects. Experiences of incompleteness, dependency, submissiveness, worthlessness, false self, refer to primary needs of attachment, while experiences of integrity, independence, autonomy, valorization, true self and stable identity are expressions of the individuation process. With regard to the symbolization in literary representations, this implies that a multitude of different characters and actions, fitting in this general scheme of the search of individuation versus the need of union with the mother, can be further specified in terms of more differentiated underlying unconscious phantasies. But as a basic scheme of the forces expressed by the Lawrentian characters, the «carbon» to which he alluded in his letter concerning *The Rainbow*, the opposition of union with the mother-figure versus the search of individuation appears as a plausible formulation.

CONCLUSION

In a letter of 5 June 1914 to Edward Garnett, concerning his novel *The Rainbow*, Lawrence wrote that he no longer wanted his characters to be determined by a «certain moral scheme» or an «old stable ego». Instead one should look for a pure single element, passing through allotropic states, as the essence of a character. Fundamentally this statement implies two issues. First there is the rejection of the social self, related to tradition and society, as the basis of a character. Secondly there is the assumption of some underlying forces expressed by the characters. After a survey of comments on, and interpretations of both these issues, we suggested – from a psychoanalytic point of view – a general framework of union with the mother versus tendencies to individuation, as a representation of the forces expressed by the Lawrentian characters.

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Unconventional personalities in early 20th century american literature: Theodore Dreiser and Thomas Wolfe

SEYMOUR ROSENBERG (*)

A number of years ago, a colleague and I did a content analysis of a collection of Theodore Dreiser's (1929) short stories (Rosenberg & Jones, 1972). The focus of our content analysis were the descriptions of the various characters in these stories. Our motivation for focussing on character description in a literary text was to see what we could learn about the underlying categories and dimensions of person perception.

As social psychologists (for whom person perception is one of the core topics in the field), we had been critical of the then dominant research methodology. Social psychologists studying person perception were typically providing their experimental subjects with a list of personality traits with which to describe the characteristics they perceive in others. The chief limitation we saw in this methodology is that such trait lists are most unlikely to encompass the variety of trait categories that different individuals use in their perception of others. We needed a method that would allow a person to use his/her vocabulary to describe people. Hence our interest in the analysis of a literary text where the trait terms are chosen by the author, not the psychologist.

Dreiser's writings seemed particularly promising to us because of his penchant for giving rich character descriptions. We extracted from each story in the collection, all the terms and phrases that referred to the relatively enduring traits and features of the characters in the story. Each such term or phrase was recorded verbatim and identified according to the character to whom Dreiser attributed it.

I want to highlight the fact that our content analysis also conformed to the methodological requirement that it be replicable. By replicable I mean that any of you could do a content analysis of this literary text, using the rules we used, and come up with essentially the same corpus of data that we did. We might differ on interpretation, but not on the explicitly specifiable data on which we based our interpretations.

Our analysis of this sample of Dreiser's writings confirmed for us the value of using a person's own vocabulary to uncover the categories that underlie his views of the personality of

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others. This approach also revealed to us the inextricable link between these categories and the personality of the perceiver. That is, the categories and dimensions underlying Dreiser's character descriptions were also most central to his own personality.

Following the work on Dreiser, I decided to analyze the writings of another literary figure. This time my interest was less in person perception and more in understanding how the personality of an author is projected onto the characters in his/her literary work. I selected Thomas Wolfe's (1929) *Look Homeward, Angel*, in part because Wolfe, like Dreiser, was a leading figure in early 20th century American literature. As such, a comparison of these two personalities might also provide an insight into the creative literary personality of that period.

I want to share with you in this paper the results of the comparisons I made between Wolfe and Dreiser, as revealed in their character descriptions. I should add, of course, that there are other findings particular to each writer that I will not discuss in any detail here.

I should start by describing for you the two literary works. Dreiser's short stories are fictionalized accounts of men and women who were part of his adult life. The significance of these men and women in Dreiser's life are generally not known with any exactness. Nor is Dreiser himself portrayed in these stories. On the other hand, Wolfe's *Look Homeward, Angel* is a fictionalized autobiography that covers Wolfe's life from infancy to his early 20's. All of the significant and most of the peripheral people in this period of his life are described in the novel and are identifiable even with their fictional aliases. There are also ample descriptions in the novel of Wolfe's retrospective perceptions of himself as he was growing up.

I will now take up, in turn, the relevant findings from the studies of Dreiser and of Wolfe. First Dreiser.

The major dimension that emerged from the character descriptions in Dreiser's short stories was a contrast between conventional and unconventional characters. Typical traits that Dreiser used to describe conventional characters include «shrewd», «skillful», «able», «ambitious», «serious». Typical traits for the unconventional include «crazy», «great», «erratic», «dreamer».

Dreiser thought of himself as a highly unconventional person. However, at an early point in his career, he had been very successful as editor of a very conventional magazine for women. Thus, despite what Dreiser thought of himself, both sides of this conventional-unconventional contrast were well elaborated in Dreiser's own personality.

Swanberg (1965), one of Dreiser's biographers, saw this contrast in Dreiser's personality and also saw the contrast in Dreiser's attitudes toward others. Swanberg characterized these attitudes as «Dreiser's Law». According to Swanberg,

«Stripped to its fundamentals, Dreiser's Law reads: Beliefs held by the multitude, the bourgeois and their leaders, are likely to be wrong per se. An important corollary of the Law reads: Beliefs held by unconventionalists which fly in the face of orthodoxy are in all probability right.» (Swanberg, 1965, p. 181).

Dreiser's descriptions of the unconventional characters in his short stories also captured what he saw as the negative consequences for taking their stance: «sadness», «suffering», «loneliness», «fear».

I turn now to the analysis of *Look Homeward, Angel*. Thomas Wolfe wrote this fictionalized autobiography in his mid-twenties, dredging up memories of his childhood with a dedication that one Wolfe scholar likened to a self-administered psychoanalysis – «as if he [Wolfe] were on the psychoanalyst's couch» (Kennedy, 1962, p. 120).

The major contrast that emerged from *Look Homeward, Angel* was a sharp difference between his descriptions of family members, including himself, and everyone else in the book. Typical core family traits included «being alone», «desperate», «having dark fantasies», and «a life of pain». These family traits were never used by Wolfe to describe a nonfamily character. Instead, nonfamily were described with contrasting traits such as «gentle», «soft», «elegant», «polite».

I might add that, to my knowledge, the extensive scholarly literature on *Look Homeward, Angel* contains no discussion of this contrast in Wolfe's perception of family and nonfamily and the

psychological implications of this contrast. Much of this scholarly literature focuses on Wolfe's perception of self, one or another family member, and their relation to his interpersonal life. The discovery in the present study of the sharp family-nonfamily contrast is rooted in its methodology; that is, in the unbiased selection for analysis of all the characteristics of all the people found in the literary corpus.

The significance of Wolfe's family-nonfamily contrast is comparable in magnitude to Dreiser's unconventional-conventional contrast. Wolfe contrast is also interpretable as an unconventional-conventional contrast. For Wolfe, unconventionality was manifested both in the way he saw his own personality and in the way he saw the family into which he had been born. The contrasting conventionality pole was located in people outside the family. While most of the particular traits Wolfe used to express this contrast differ from those of Dreiser, both used the terms «sad», «lonely», and «fearful» to characterize the lot of unconventional people.

However, the conventional side of Wolfe's personality was not nearly as well developed as that of Dreiser. Wolfe's descriptions of nonfamily characters are sparse and superficial, relative to those of the family. The descriptions of nonfamily also contain many references to physical traits – «plump», «small eyes», «thin face», «wagnerian breasts» – whereas personality traits predominate in the descriptions of family. Attention to physical traits in nonfamily, I interpret, as Wolfe's psychological isolation from people outside his family. In contrast, Dreiser's descriptions of the conventional personality are richly psychological.

As leading figures in early 20th century American literature, both writers contended with a cultural milieu that was not exactly congenial to their unconventional personalities. As literary pacesetters they exercised their unconventionality in their literary creativity and, as such, continued to recreate the sad, lonely, and fearful life that they knew so well. Both, however, achieved the fame they sought in the society from which they felt alienated. The public recognition came to Dreiser much later in his career than it did to Wolfe. Dreiser's first novel, *Sister Carrie*, which he wrote at the turn of the century also encountered much opposition from the «bourgeois and their leaders», and undoubtedly contributed to his contempt for the conventional. While Wolfe, in the late 1920's and early 1930's, did not encounter the blatant prudery that Dreiser did, he felt his talent increasingly stifled by the system, personified by his editor, Maxwell Perkins.

I now want to describe a second major contrast that emerged from both Dreiser's and Wolfe's character descriptions; that is, the differences they saw between males and females. In both, this contrast is unrelated to the conventional-unconventional contrast, which is to say that they viewed some males as conventional and some as unconventional – and similarly for females. However, Dreiser and Wolfe differ considerably in this gender contrast. (A male-female contrast is ubiquitous as a dimension in persons' views of people. It is the content of this contrast that differs considerably among persons.)

In Dreiser's short stories, the gender-related traits tend to group into clusters, that is, to form male types and female types. Especially interesting are two distinguishable types of women: a sexual type and an artistic type. The presence of such types of women in Dreiser's short stories mirror the kinds of relationships he had with a number of women.

Wolfe's contrast between men and women appears to be less pronounced than that of Dreiser's, with both male and female «types» much less developed (articulated) than those in Dreiser. The more primitively developed views he had of both men and women in *Look Homeward, Angel* are consistent with the limited nature of his adult relationships; with women, one close relationship with Aline Bernstein and many casual affairs; with men, a close relationship with Maxwell Perkins (unrealistically perceived for a while as the ideal father) and a number of casual male acquaintances.

My final remarks concern the theoretical framework in which these studies are framed. An obvious assumption of this theoretical framework is that an individual's personality is reflected in his/her perceptions of both self and others. This assumption has its roots in the very early formulations of William James and other prominent late 19th, early 20th century thinkers in social

psychology. This assumption is also shared by a number of otherwise diverse personality theorists. The theoretical concept of contrast, which I used in interpreting the character descriptions, is also found in such diverse personality theories as those of Freud, Kelly, Jung, and Sullivan. The contrasts found in the perceptions of Dreiser and Wolfe, as well as the evidence of what side of the contrast was well developed show the validity of these concepts in the organization of personality.

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La dépersonnalisation

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Deux sources ont inspiré mon travail au sujet d'un phénomène qui ne cesse de me fasciner, à savoir le phénomène de la dépersonnalisation: d'un côté, ce sont les descriptions de cas et les patients dans mon travail clinique qui ont recours aux métaphores de rêve, de somnolence, d'isolation, d'irréalité, d'absence de vie et de perte de soi-même pour décrire leur état particulier et d'un autre côté, ce sont les exemples dans la littérature qui évoquent une impression analogue d'étrangeté.

Cela m'a ramené à la question de savoir, ce qui provoque cette impression de ne plus être soi-même ou de se sentir dépourvu d'émotions, anéanti ou psychiquement mort? Quelle est la cause des altérations de l'image du corps et de la perte du sentiment de réalité et de familiarité des perceptions venant du monde extérieur et cela chez quelqu'un qui garde quand même conscience du caractère subjectif – et donc non-délirant – de son trouble? Et enfin: Est-ce que ce processus qui se manifeste indépendamment du trouble de base chez des sujet de structure psychotique, aussi bien que chez des sujet névrosés ou ne présentant aucun trouble psychique, ce processus repose-t-il sur des mécanismes semblables, même à des degrés d'intensité différents?

A cause de son polymorphisme et son occurrence ubiquitaire, la dépersonnalisation s'avère difficile à conceptualiser. Ce qui en résulte, c'est une multitude de perspectives théoriques peu convergentes, dont je vous présente maintenant brièvement les plus marquantes. Schilder, p.ex., place au centre de la dépersonnalisation le désinvestissement libidinal du propre corps, Fenichel par contre, y voit un excès d'intérêt pour le corps, donc un accroissement de libido narcissique. Pour Federn la dépersonnalisation est le résultat d'un retrait de la libido des limites du moi ce qui gêne la différenciation entre l'intérieur et l'extérieur. Selon Nunberg, la libido est «en suspens» et le Moi reste intact en ce qui concerne sa fonction de sens de la réalité mais il est privé du caractère authentique de sa perception subjective ce qui se traduit par ce sentiment spécifique d'étrangeté intense et de manque de familiarité. A la base de sa conception de relation d'objet Maurice Bouvet met les phénomènes de dépersonnalisation en rapport avec une trop grande variation de la distance entre le sujet et son objet narcissique.

Mon projet ici est de proposer de recourir à la littérature comme illustration des mécanismes qui sont en jeu dans le processus de dépersonnalisation. Dans ce but j'ai choisi deux romans: *Si j'étais vous* de Julien Green et *La mort heureuse* d'Albert Camus, qui reflètent constamment un sentiment d'étrangeté qui est lié à un mode particulier de rapport des personnages à eux-mêmes, aux autres et au monde. En m'appuyant sur une analyse du premier roman faite par Melanie Klein et du second faite par René Andrianne, je tente de démontrer que les deux héros Mersault et

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Fabien, étrangers au monde et à eux-mêmes, affirment leur existence par un mouvement de projection hors de soi qui crée un espace vide à l'intérieur du sujet et qui ressemble alors au processus pathologique d'identification projective qu'on trouve dans la dépersonnalisation.

Pour M. Klein, l'identification projective est liée à «*la position paranoïde-schizoïde*», donc à des processus de développement situés pendant les trois ou quatre premiers mois de la vie, où le Moi est encore loin d'être intégré et où l'angoisse de persécution et le mécanisme de clivage prédominent. Dans le développement normal, M. Klein souligne l'importance de *l'intériorisation du bon objet* comme une des conditions préalables à l'existence d'un *moi stable et intégré*, qui est capable de compenser les processus de clivage. Sinon la peur d'être anéanti par les forces destructrices intérieures met en marche le mécanisme de défense primitive de clivage, ce qui entraîne un sentiment de chaos, de désintégration, d'absence d'émotions, sentiments que décrivent également les sujets dépersonnalisés. En revanche, un bon objet sûrement établi permet au moi une projection de bonnes parties de soi dans le monde extérieur, sans qu'apparaisse la sensation de se vider.

Dans cette perspective, les symptômes de dépersonnalisation se comprennent comme une conséquence d'une *identification projective dans une mesure excessive*. Cela revient à dire que la personne a été projetée, en partie ou en totalité, dans des objets extérieurs, un processus que j'illustrerai d'abord à l'aide du roman *Si j'étais vous* de Julien Green. Ce roman raconte l'histoire de Fabien, jeune employé, malheureux et mécontent de lui-même et de sa vie, qui reçoit par un pacte avec le Diable le pouvoir magique de se transformer en d'autres personnes en leur chuchotant à l'oreille une certaine formule. Au cours du roman il entre dans plusieurs corps différents, mais il découvre avec dégoût qu'il ne prend pas seulement leur apparence extérieure mais aussi leur personnalité. Il se sent de plus en plus étranger à son ancien moi et en souhaitant «Je veux être moi-même», il réussit enfin à retrouver et à réintégrer sa personnalité antérieure.

Dans les descriptions de ces métamorphoses on reconnaît concrètement le processus de l'identification projective: *Une partie clivée* de Fabien, comprenant les traits indésirable de son caractère, quitte littéralement son corps et entre dans sa victime, où, étant submergée de sa nouvelle identité, l'ancienne s'évade de plus en plus. *Le Fabien abandonné* doit garder une bonne partie de son moi, des souvenirs et quelques aspects de sa personnalité, lorsque le clivage se produit. Cette partie endormie représente d'après M. Klein la composante du moi que les patients ont le sentiment d'avoir gardée alors que les autres parties du moi ont été projetées dans le monde extérieur et qui ont été perdues.

Ce processus est identique aux expériences que décrivent les sujets dépersonnalisés: ils ont le sentiment que certaines parties de soi ne sont plus disponibles, qu'elles se sont éloignées ou qu'elles ont tout simplement disparues, ce qui est source d'une grande angoisse et d'une sensation d'insécurité.

M. Klein postule que les mécanismes d'introjection et de projection fonctionnent dès le début de la vie postnatale par une action réciproque ils bâtissent le monde intérieur en même temps qu'ils dessinent l'image de la réalité extérieure.

Cette action réciproque est illustrée dans notre roman et cela dans la description du besoin de Fabien de regarder les étoiles, tel que nous le connaissons au début du roman dans sa vraie personnalité.

«... il ouvrit la fenêtre et porta la vue au loin. Par-dessus les toits, un énorme ciel noir ouvrait ses gouffres où palpitaient des étoiles. [...] Chaque fois qu'il regardait ainsi dans les avenues de la nuit, il lui semblait qu'il s'élevait doucement au-dessus du monde. [...] Des minutes passèrent, et plus il regardait, plus il lui semblait qu'il s'éloignait de la fenêtre et de la maison sans que cessât pourtant la sensation de la barre d'appui sous ses coudes. On eût dit qu'à force de promener la vue dans le vide, une sorte d'abîme se creusait en lui-même, répondant à ces vertigineuses profondeurs où l'imagination défailait. [...] En fermant les yeux, Fabien retenait en lui ce monde étrange fait de lumière et d'obscurité, s'y perdait, s'y jetait avec un effroi d'enfant, puis, les paupières rouvertes, lançait à nouveau dans l'espace sa vue qui chavirait d'horreur. Et le sentiment lui venait qu'elle emportait avec elle toute une partie de lui-même, la plus audacieuse, la plus vraie.» (Green, p. 21-22)

Fabien absorbe le ciel et en même temps il projette dans les étoiles ses objets d'amour intérieurs et les bonnes parties de lui-même. M. Klein interprète son ardente contemplation des étoiles comme un effort pour reprendre ses bons objets qu'il sent perdus dans le lointain.

L'analyse de M. Klein montre que le processus d'introjection et de projection répète dans une certaine mesure, au cours de la vie, le modèle des premières expériences. Les traits dominants de la personnalité de Fabien, dérivant de ses relations primitives, à savoir l'avidité, l'envie et la haine, sont les causes premières des fantasmes agressifs et le conduisent irrésistiblement à l'identification projective, donc au besoin de fuir sa propre personnalité.

Passons maintenant au deuxième exemple littéraire et résumons brièvement le contenu de *La mort heureuse* d'Albert Camus. Patrice Mersault, un employé algérien, tue de sang-froid l'ancien amant, très riche et amputé des deux jambes, de son amie Marthe. Ce meurtre, déguisé en suicide, lui permet de s'approprier les biens de sa victime. A la recherche du bonheur, il part en voyage en Europe centrale. La solitude et le désespoir qu'il connaît à Prague l'amènent à retourner à Alger où il vit d'abord en communauté avec trois amies, puis dans une solitude ascétique dans une maison face à la mer, où il conquiert le bonheur et le garde jusqu'à sa mort. Pour Mersault, qui est comme son double ou plutôt son frère Meursault dans *L'Étranger* une «conscience vide», sans intérieur, qui se projette sans cesse hors de soi, pour lui cette mort heureuse signifie la fusion absolue et éternelle avec le bon objet, c'est le retour à l'univers narcissique dont le paradigme est l'état prénatal où, comme dans la mort, la différenciation entre le Moi et le Non-Moi s'efface.

Inspiré par la méthode de la «psychocritique» de Charles Mauron, R. Andrianne dégage deux «mythes personnels» dans l'œuvre de Camus, qui sont aussi caractéristique pour le héros de *La Mort heureuse*, à savoir les mythes personnels de l'imgo de «la mère indifférente et silencieuse» et les signes de dépersonnalisation. L'analyse des images, métaphores et symboles dans le texte démontre une identification de la femme au monde et on observe une forte projection du Moi de Mersault sur l'objet incestueux qui est représenté sous forme d'un monde qui paraît «inhumain» et «endormi». Le héros s'évade vers une nature érotisée ou vers une femme, pour y retrouver la mère afin de la faire parler. Mis à part cette tentative de s'unifier avec le monde, Mersault éprouve un sentiment d'étrangeté et de rupture interne à l'égard de cette nature, sentiment lié au mécanisme de l'identification projective. Il y a une partie du Moi qui tend à récupérer le passé en se rapprochant du monde extérieur et une partie qui souhaite prendre du recul face au monde.

Comme Camus, nié par sa mère indifférente et silencieuse, Mersault s'efface lui-même et en même temps il est nié par le monde.

«A cette heure, ou sa vie lui paraissait si loin, seul, indifférent à tout et à lui-même, il parut à Mersault qu'il avait atteint enfin ce qu'il cherchait et que cette paix qui l'emplissait était née du patient abandon de lui-même qu'il avait poursuivi et atteint avec l'aide de ce monde chaleureux qui le niait sans colère.» (p. 191)

Concluons brièvement: Mersault, étranger au monde et à lui-même, tente d'effacer les limites du Moi dans un processus de fusion, où la dépersonnalisation est un effet de l'identification projective, afin de retrouver son bon objet, pour être rendu au monde.

Dans ces deux romans il ne s'agit pas de dépersonnalisation à caractère clinique mais d'illustration d'un processus que chaque être humain peut être amené à vivre à un moment de son existence. Il s'agit en effet d'un phénomène qui n'est pas seulement à appréhender de façon rationnelle mais il faut aussi pénétrer l'œuvre pour en saisir toutes les dimensions et toutes les implications. J'espère avoir démontré que la littérature étant reflet de la vie humaine, elle est aussi un des chemins praticables qui peuvent contribuer à une meilleure compréhension d'un phénomène comme la dépersonnalisation, qui nous incite à une réflexion fondamentale sur la position du sujet par rapport à lui-même, à son propre corps et au monde extérieur.

«Anne, Anne, / Fuis sur ton âne»: Image and psychotic experience in the poetry of Anne Sexton

NANCY BLAKE (*)

One of Sexton's most enigmatic poems, has, in the poet's own estimation, a literally necessary point of departure in the feeling that the imagery imposed itself on the writer through some unidentified need:

«One day I was reading a quote from Rimbaud that said, "Anne, Anne, flee on your donkey", and I typed it out because it had my name in it and because I wanted to flee. I put it in my wallet, went to see my doctor, and at that point was committed to a hospital for about the seventh or eighth time. In the hospital, I started to write the poem, "Flee on Your Donkey", as though the message had come to me at just the right moment.»¹

In another poem the problem of identifying the self in a world of contradictory messages is evoked through the image of the voyage of discovery: «The place I live in / is a kind of maze / and I keep seeking / the exit or the home» («The Children»)².

In the poetry of Anne Sexton, the obsessive question of personal identity is often buried under layers of hereditary material. The theory of an existentialist alienation of the subject in his/her image to which we tend to identify even despite sense evidence is one of the best known and most often referred to contributions of the psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan. An examination of the artistic production of Anne Sexton however, might prompt the reader to question the relevance, perhaps even the existence, of a mirror stage of development in the presence of such psychotic imagery. If there is no clear mirror in which to found identity, though, the quest for the boundaries of the «I» is all the more urgent. The arduous quality of this enterprise is exemplified by the impossibility of distinguishing between interior and exterior: «the exit or the home». The maternal body, the womb as origin of the

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¹ Steven E. Colburn (Ed.), *No Evil Star*, selected essays, interview, and prose, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1985, p. 96.

² All references to Sexton's poetry are taken from *Anne Sexton: The Complete Poems*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1981.

self, is elusive. Even the body proper is difficult to locate, enshrouded as it is in the wrappings of parental limbs; the skin is no longer an effective barrier between interior and exterior when that organic layer does not necessarily belong to the self:

Oh now I lay me down to love,
how awkwardly her arms undo,
how patiently I untangle her wrists
like knots. Old ornament, old naked fist,
even if I put on seventy coats I could not cover you...
mother, father, I'm made of. («Old Dwarf Heart»)

The passage just cited is revealing in the contradictory movement which it establishes: alternating between the desire to uncover a center, core, truth, on the one hand, and the need to «cover», bury, hide an obscene reality almost simultaneously.

At last year's conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis in Sandbjerg, the question of a link between fragile and oscillating identity themes and the reality of an experience of childhood trauma came up specifically raising the question of the analyst's certainty as to the historical existence of the event evoked. Frederico Pereira proposed that the analyst does know that the traumatic event actually took place thanks, rather paradoxically, to an absence of images, a sudden blank in the discourse of the patient as that discourse approaches the memory of this event.

In the poetry of Anne Sexton, as in any lyrical production, there is no lack of imagery. Yet Frederico Pereira's insight may serve to introduce a theme which we can immediately recognize as signaling the onset of a psychotic episode in the discourse of the subject as the succession of words draws him or her near the theme of childhood trauma. What happens in this case is, in fact, a breakdown of the symbolic order as theorized by Lacan in the relationship of the three registers, imaginary, symbolic and real, which structure human speech. With the breakdown of the symbolic we discover the sort of slippage prevalent in cases of glossolalia. This sort of linguistic instability is familiar to anyone who has experienced psychotic speech patterns: it is marked by a radical divorce between signifier and signified, manifested in the inability to choose between homonyms (soul, sole) or ignorance of the function of parts of speech («imprisoned for crazy») to give only two examples.

In much of Sexton's most widely known poetry the childhood seduction theme is quite overtly present. The poem «Oysters» in the cycle «The Death of the Fathers» is only one particularly striking instance among many. The poem concludes:

Then I laughed and then we laughed
and let me take note –
there was a death,
the death of childhood
there at the Union Oyster House
for I was fifteen
and eating oysters
and the child was defeated.
The woman won.

If this poem is less explicit, it is perhaps even more effective than others in evoking the victim's ambiguous acquiescence to her father's sexual advances. An acceptance followed by guilt, denial, repression, or the blank of Pereira's remarks. When Freud discovered the seduction theory, he was at first appalled by its apparent pervasiveness. His subsequent retreat from his own knowledge has been well documented and does not need to be evoked here. What I would like to concentrate on in the short period we have before us is the effect of trauma on the subject's relationship to language, for it is as though the trauma created a split in both identity and the ability to communicate that identity in words.

Sexton's citing Rimbaud: «*Ma faim, Anne, Anne, / Fuis sur ton âne*», will serve as an example, but it is by no means the only instance of this sort of slippage in the poetry of Anne Sexton³. Rimbaud's poem, «*Fêtes de la faim*», dated August 1872, is itself a document on mental breakdown. The poem opens with the lines chosen by Sexton for her title because they seemed, she says, to call her by name: «*Ma faim, Anne, Anne, / Fuis sur ton âne*». In Rimbaud's French there is an effect similar to an echo between the words «*faim*», «*Anne*», and «*âne*». It is my contention that this phonetic identity motivated Rimbaud's text beyond any semantic considerations, and this echoing effect spoke to Sexton, beyond any recognition of an intellectual content to be conveyed. The French poet's text then continues with an anorexic disavowal of desire:

If I have a taste for anything, it is only
For the earth and the stones.
Dinn! dinn! dinn! dinn! Let's eat air,
Rock, coal and iron. (My translation)

The text goes on to enumerate materials that the speaker enjoins us to eat, all of them marked by their inedibility, even their toxic qualities, which however seem to be suggested in a manner by phonetic slippage rather than by semantic appropriateness.

Norman O. Brown begins his *Life Against Death* with the observation that «There is one word which, if we only understand it, is the key to Freud's thought. That word is "repression".»⁴ Rimbaud's poem, which is at the limits of intelligibility, could be considered the fruit of failed repression. It suggests the themes of anorexia, refusal of desire and slips into Pereira's non-knowledge with something approaching glossolalia. What I am calling glossolalia here is evident in much of Rimbaud's better known poetry. Suffice it to say for the moment that in the poem which served Anne Sexton as a point of departure for her own work, no doubt because, and this is typical of a psychotic reaction, the name Anne, homonym for âne (donkey) seemed to be directed at her, calling her by name, in this poem at least some words seem to impose their presence in the text more for phonetic than for semantic reasons.

What does this have to do with repression? Glossolalia is a phenomenon which has been recognized everywhere and at all times throughout history, usually in a mystical or religious, or in a magical or spiritist context. There is a reference in Saint Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians, chapters 13 and 14 where the saint refers to a time when he spoke «the language of men and of the angels». Speaking in tongues, has been considered a means of direct communication with God, the dead, the angels, etc, issuing directly from feeling rather than from the intellect. It is evidence of a dissatisfaction with ordinary language and the desire for an ideal communication transcending the individual and society.

Yet who is speaking this ideal language? When the followers of Christ, assembled in secret on the occasion commemorated by Pentecost, received the gift of tongues, they said what they knew not, for they were spoken by the Holy Spirit. In Rimbaud's poem the theme of hunger is communicated via a refrain, «*Ma faim, Anne, Anne, / Fuis sur ton âne*» which remains mysterious unless we are aware that, according to scholars, it was suggested by the fairy tale *Bluebeard*. There is however, no further reference to this tale in the text. Yet the lines come back, like an echo, at the

³ See for another instance the «rat's star» in «With Mercy for the Greedy».

My friend, my friend, I was born
doing reference work in sin, and born
confessing it. This is what poems are:
with mercy
for the greedy,
they are the tongue's wrangle,
the world's pottage, the rat's star.

⁴ New York, 1959, 3.

end. The poem seems to relate the experience of an eating disorder, the title «Feast of Hunger» then would be ironic, (another poem of the period is entitled «Comedy of Thirst»). And, it is only if we grasp the allusion to the Bluebeard story that a repressed reference to sexuality becomes apparent.

What the lapse into glossolalia, or the takeover of the signifier, comes to signal is the absence of an agent. Here literally the language is speaking itself.

At this point it will be useful to return to the problem of identity as expressed in Sexton's poetry through the difficulty of separation from the parents and rendered in images of taking off clothes, being wrapped in mother's old fox fur coat, (Sexton put on her mother's fur coat to perform her final, successful suicide attempt) or amputation of body parts and being flayed. This difficult relationship with parents, especially with the mother, is reflected and given an added dimension in instances of the subject's own use of her daughter. In «The Double Image» we read:

I, who was never quite sure
about being a girl, needed another
life, another image to remind me.
And this was my worst guilt; you could not cure
nor soothe it. I made you to find me.

In another poem, the religious reference is an alibi, used once more to address the question of gender identity: O daughters of Jerusalem,

the king has brought me into his chamber.
I am black and I am beautiful.
I've been opened and undressed.
I have no arms or legs.
I'm all one skin like a fish.
I'm no more a woman
than Christ was a man.
(«Consorting with Angels»)

Another poem ostensibly seizes on the religious or mythical to introduce the theme of incest:

Judas had a mother
just as I had a mother.
...
His mother had a dream.
Because of this dream
he was altogether managed by fate
and thus he raped her.
As a crime we hear little of this.
Also he sold his God.
(«The Legend of the One-Eyed Man»)

The title of this poem which concerns Judas, a figure of guilt often called upon by Sexton, is «The Legend of the One-Eyed Man», and begins, «Like Oedipus I am losing my sight». The reference to a mutilation of the body is characteristic of this universe in which there is no available mirror to reassure the subject as to a certain identity. Thus the reference to incest and sexual violence overtakes the theme of the death of Christ, for the absence of an absolute divinity is secondary, even though it is logical, in a world without points of reference. It is noteworthy that the incestuous crime of Judas is a retaliation for being robbed of individual liberty by his mother's premonitions «Because of this dream/ he was altogether managed by fate».

One of the overwhelming originalities of Sexton's vision is her linking of the trauma of abuse in the formative period of childhood to the generalization of an oscillating gender identity. This is not a permanent lack, but rather an unreliable presence/absence. Moreover the basic uncertainty in

relation to gender identity unsettles all other fundamental dichotomies which are now no longer sufficient basis for a reality principle: the difference between the sexes, the difference between generations, the difference between life and death. Sexton's poetry bears witness to an uncertainty, an impossible choice which the poet also expressed in a letter to a friend, who as therapist, was sometimes invested with a knowledge severely lacking to the subject: «When (to me) death takes you and puts you thru the wringer, it's a man. But when you kill yourself it's a woman. And it goes on from there to his (Sexton's psychiatrist) discovery that 1. I don't really think the dead are dead 2. that I certainly don't think I'll die even tho I'm dead 3. that suicides go to a special place... asleep for instance 4. that suicide is a form of masturbation !!!»⁵

Subjective destitution' is closely linked to the key Hegelian-Lacanian motif of the «sacrifice of the sacrifice», or «loss of the loss». Thanks to Diane Middlebrook's biography of the poet, we now know that Sexton's trauma around the theme of the death of her parents was overturned and somehow complicated by the discovery, after her parents' death and the important cycle of mourning poems, that her mother's husband was perhaps not really her father. It is well known that Anne Sexton's poetry is heavily autobiographical. Yet at this point the painful irony of such a stance becomes apparent: What if the story of my life is a fiction?

The powerful poetry of Anne Sexton is evidence of the experience of what Lacan calls the «lack in the Other», the inconsistency and/or non-existence of the big Other – of the fact that there is no Other of the Other, no ultimate guarantee of the field of meaning. Lacan insists that our «being in the world» is already the outcome of a certain choice: the psychotic experience bears witness to the fact that it is quite possible not to choose the world – a psychotic subject is not «in the world», it lacks the clearance (*Lichtung*) that opens up the world. For that reason Lacan establishes a link between Heidegger's *Lichtung* and the Freudian *Bejahung*, the primordial «Yes», the assertion of being, as opposed to the psychotic *Verwerfung*. In short, «subject» designates this primordial impossible forced choice by means of which we choose (or not) to be in the world – that is, to exist as the «there» of being.

⁵ Letter to Anne Wilden dated 2-9-64, Linda Gray Sexton and Lois Ames (Ed.), *Anne Sexton: A Self-Portrait in Letters*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1977, p. 231.

Katherine Anne Porter's «The Jilting of Granny Weatherall»: A modern tragedy?

ROBERT SPRICH (*)

I became acquainted with Katherine Anne Porter's «The Jilting of Granny Weatherall» during my first semester of college teaching in the spring of 1963. It proved to be one of those rare stories which engaged every member of the class. Even the best students did not completely understand it, while the less perceptive still sensed the overall fascination of the story. The difficulties which «Granny Weatherall» presented did not seem to be obstacles intentionally placed in the reader's path, but rather the inevitable result of an attempt to put into words profound aspects of the protagonist's mental life which normally exist only as a configuration of inexpressible feelings.

The external plot of «Granny Weatherall» is quite straightforward. The central character, an eighty year old woman in the throes of a terminal illness, gradually loses contact with the external world and does, in fact, die – but not before her children have gathered at her bedside and she has revealed a great deal about herself.

The real interest of the story for me derives in large measure from three factors: (1) the exploration of Granny's inner life; (2) the development of a richly organic symbolism through Granny's dreams and fantasies; and (3) the particular viewpoint from which the story is told.

Granny has endured a great deal of hardship throughout her adult life. She was widowed at a relatively early age, probably in her 30's, and had to raise her children and run a large farm alone. This is the solid citizen the world knows. But we are gradually introduced to another vital, though long avoided, aspect of Granny's character: the «young woman with the peaked Spanish comb in her hair and the painted fan» who had been wounded to the quick sixty years before when George, the great love of her life, did not show up for their wedding. In the progressive revelation of this narcissistic injury and the continual interplay of primary and secondary process thinking in Granny's mind, Granny moves toward and then away from her pain at being jilted.

The various symbols evoked in the story – the bright, green fields, the engulfing fog, the wedding cake uncut, the blue light from Cornelia's lamps – are both universal, and in their particular configuration, unique to Granny's personality structure.

Although this story centers upon Granny's inner life as she lays dying, it is not, strictly speaking, told to us from the «stream of consciousness» point of view. Instead, the author adopts the limited-omniscient viewpoint. She tells us what Granny is thinking, what Granny perceives and how Granny attempts to understand these perceptions. She further describes Granny's dreams,

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fantasies and delusions, in words Granny herself might use, but these reports are all presented as «objective». The narrator neither comments on nor evaluates the data which passes through Granny's awareness. It is important to stress this point, for, in a nineteenth century novel such as *Middlemarch*, the imposing presence of the omniscient narrator provides the moral center for the entire work. In this story, on the other hand, the central moral issues are presented solely as conflicts within Granny's mind, with the narrator providing no normative comments. I cannot imagine this story being successfully told from any viewpoint other than the idiosyncratic one that Miss Porter has chosen. If, for example, Granny had told us her own story in the manner of Holden Caulfield, I suspect it would have appeared cheaply melodramatic. «Granny Weatherall» was, in fact, dramatized in the Public Television series called «The American Short Story», starring Geraldine Page. But because many of Granny's fleeting memories were converted to fully realized flashbacks, the narrative balance of the story was completely disrupted and, in my opinion, ruined.

«The Jilting of Granny Weatherall» opens with Dr. Harry at Granny's bedside. Granny immediately ridicules him by reminding him that she has known him since he was a small child. The first real hint that there is more to this situation than meets the eye comes when Granny says defensively, «I'm on my feet now, morally speaking». Surely, up to this point, the reader has no reason to suppose that the topic of discussion was anything other than Granny's physical health.

We then learn of the dissociation that is taking place between Granny's mind and her body: «Her bones felt loose and floated around in her skin». She is not so disoriented, however, that she cannot make a sarcastic assessment of Cornelia's character. Cornelia devotes so much effort to being «good and dutiful» that she makes a «nuisance of herself and ought to be spanked». Granny's fantasy of giving Cornelia a spanking provides her with a fleeting moment of satisfaction. It also provides us with a glimpse of what Granny thinks about herself since she has lived the life of a good and dutiful woman.

Immediately thereafter we realize that Granny can no longer be understood by the people around her. Granny says, and with the narrator's help, the reader *can* understand her, that she wants to rest – again, a natural desire. Only later do we learn a major reason for her extreme fatigue: the amount of effort she has expended in trying to avoid the conscious recollection of the central trauma of her life: being deserted on what was to have been her wedding day. Only in the light of later revelations can we perceive the overdetermination of Granny's apparent ramblings.

Tomorrow was far away and there was nothing to trouble about. Things were finished somehow when the time came; thank God there was always a little margin over for peace; then a person could spread out the plan of life and tuck in the edges orderly. It was good to have everything clean and folded away, with the hair brushes and tonic bottles sitting straight on the white embroidered linen: the day started without fuss and the pantry shelves laid out with rows of jelly glasses and brown jugs and white stone-china jars with blue whirligigs and words painted on them... and the bronze clock with the lion on top nicely dusted off. The dust that lion could collect in twenty-four hours! The box in the attic with all those letters tied up, well, she'd have to go through that tomorrow. (p. 184)

The neat rows of spices and the carefully dusted clock are juxtaposed to an aspect of Granny's mental life that was not neat and tidy – her love life, represented by the letters in the attic (like memory, a repository of items from long ago) from George, the great love of her life, and John, the man she married.

In addition to her desire to hide from her children «how silly she had been» about her love affairs, she also wants to deny the possibility of her own death, except on her own terms. Twenty years ago, «she had once for all got over the idea of dying.... Now she couldn't be worried. She hoped she had better sense now.» Granny thinks of returning to her own house, leading her to reflect on her practical achievements and she seems proud that her children have repeatedly called on her for advice.

Sometimes she wanted to see John again and point to them and say, Well, I didn't do so badly, did I? ... She used to think of him as a man, but now all the children were older than their father, and he would be a child beside her if she saw him now. Why, he couldn't possibly recognize her. She had fenced in a hundred acres once, digging the post holes herself and clamping the wires with just a negro boy to help. That changed a woman. John would be looking for a young woman with the peaked Spanish comb in her hair and the painted fan. Digging post holes changed a woman. Riding country roads in the winter when women had their babies was another thing: sitting up nights with sick horses and sick negroes and sick children and hardly ever losing one. John, I hardly ever lost one of them! John would see that in a minute, that would be something he could understand, she wouldn't have to explain anything! (p. 185)

Granny here moves from wishing to see her dead husband to actually addressing him. She implies that her communication with John may not have been very effective.

At this point Granny's vision of her competent, bustling, practical self gives way to another vision which seems to provoke considerable anxiety.

It made her feel like rolling up her sleeves and putting the whole place to rights again... there were a great many things left undone on this place. She would start tomorrow and do them. It was good to be strong enough for everything, even if all you made melted and changed and slipped under your hands, so that by the time you finished you almost forgot what you were working for. What was it I set out to do, she asked herself intently, but she could not remember. A fog rose over the valley, she saw it march across the creek swallowing the trees and moving up the hill like an army of ghosts. (p. 185).

The fog, with its suggestion of annihilation and death, is reminiscent of T. S. Eliot's «Love-song of J. Alfred Prufrock», in which the central character also devotes much of his psychic energy to avoiding a confrontation with the «overwhelming question» of whether his life had had any meaning. Like Prufrock, Granny manages to sidestep the issue temporarily, through her association to «lighting the lamps», a tender memory:

Lighting the lamps had been beautiful. The children huddled up to her and breathed like little calves waiting at the bars in the twilight. Their eyes followed the match and watched the flames rise and settle in a blue curve, then they moved away from her. The lamp was lit, they didn't have to be scared and hang on to mother any more.

But then this excursion culminates in a passionate religious outburst that is clearly overdetermined:

Never, never, never more. God, for all my life I thank Thee. Without Thee, my God, I could never have done it. Hail, Mary, full of grace.

Granny then appears to change the subject. We skip to another point in her life when the children are older and she is lecturing them.

I want you to pick all the fruit this year and see that nothing is wasted. There's always someone who can use it. Don't let good things rot for want of using. You waste life when you waste good food. Don't let things get lost. It's bitter to lose things.

She dwells on the bitterness of loss, then goes on, seemingly back again in the present, to the pain that can result for her if she lets her defenses down and does too much thinking:

Now, don't let me get to thinking, not when I am tired and taking a little nap before supper....

Again in time present, the narrator reports Granny's subjective perception that the «pillow

rose about her shoulders and pressed against her heart and the memory was being squeezed out of it....» Granny is not simply experiencing the fear that she is losing her faculty of memory. She is referring to *a particular memory* which is being squeezed out of her heart and into her conscious awareness. What follows – and this comes at the exact mid-point of the story – is a symbolic narration of the deeply wounding central event of Granny's emotional life, her humiliation at having been left standing in the presence of the priest sixty years ago.

Such a fresh breeze blowing and such a green day with no threats in it. But he had not come, just the same. What does a woman do when she has put on the white veil and set out the white cake for a man and he doesn't come? She tried to remember. No, I swear he never harmed me but in that.... There was the day, the day, but a whirl of dark smoke rose and covered it, crept up and over into the bright field where everything was planted so carefully in orderly rows. That was hell, she knew hell when she saw it. For sixty years she had prayed against remembering him and against losing her soul in the deep pit of hell.... Wounded vanity, Ellen, said a sharp voice in the top of her mind.... Plenty of girls get jilted. You were jilted, weren't you? Then stand up to it. (p. 186)

For the first time we perceive clearly that Granny's emphasis on order and practicality is a defensive adaptation against the chaos she fears will overwhelm her if she thinks too much about her jilting. Obviously the attempted consolation, perhaps offered by a well-meaning friend, or perhaps Granny speaking firmly to herself, on one of only two occasions when her given name is used, that «Plenty of girls get jilted», carries no force for Granny. She has sustained a narcissistic injury that threatened the very life of her soul. We can see now that the story is not concerned merely with physical death, but with spiritual death, with the possibility of being, in her words, lost «in the deep pit of hell».

At this point, Granny's physical deterioration becomes more apparent to those around her. Dr. Harry returns and Father Connolly is summoned to administer the Last Rites. But Granny's mind remains agile and her defenses continue to fall away:

Yes, she had changed her mind after sixty years and she would like to see George. I want you to find George. Find him and be sure to tell him I forgot him. I want him to know I had my husband just the same and my children and my house just like any other woman. A good house too and a good husband that I loved and fine children out of him.... Tell him I was given back everything he took away and more. Oh, no, oh, God, no, there was something else besides the house and the man and the children.... Something not given back.... Her breath crowded down under her ribs and grew into a monstrous frightening shape with cutting edges; it bored up into her head, and the agony was unbelievable: Yes, John, get the doctor now, no more talk, my time has come. When this one was born it should be the last. The last. It should have been born first, for it was the one she had truly wanted. (p. 187)

Granny's present death-agony becomes associated with the remembered pain of childbirth. This rather confusing talk about the child that *was* born last but «should have been born first» appears to refer to Hapsy, a shadowy figure who is *not* present at Granny's deathbed, though her other children, Lydia, Jimmy, and Cornelia, are present, and Lydia says, «Here we are, mother, all of us». We don't know who Hapsy was. She may have died, she may be the fantasy child that Granny would like to have had with George, or she may have been the youngest child, born when she had come truly to love John.

By this point we are vividly aware of Granny's inner conflict. Although she would like to believe that «she has her secret comfortable understanding with a few favorite saints who cleared a straight road to God for her», we know about her lingering bitterness at being jilted. And, although Granny does not dwell on it, John's early death, leaving her with young children to raise and a large farm to manage, could be seen as yet another jilting.

Even as Granny sinks toward death, she has a vivid dream, another representation of her ongoing struggle.

Cornelia's voice staggered and bumped like a cart in a bad road. It rounded corners and turned back again and arrived nowhere. Granny stepped up in the cart very lightly and reached for the reins, but a man sat beside her and she knew him by his hands, driving the cart. She did not look in his face, for she knew without seeing, but looked instead down the road where the trees leaned over and bowed to each other and a thousand birds were singing a Mass.... What if he did run away and leave me to face the priest by myself? I found another a whole world better. I wouldn't have exchanged my husband for anybody except St. Michael himself, and you may tell him that for me with a thank you in the bargain. (p. 189)

Again we have the experience of not knowing. The man who takes the reins of Granny's life could be either Jesus or George. She would recognize them both by their hands. Through the symbolism of birds singing a Mass, she implies that it is Jesus, but this too may be her wish for a sign from God. The ambiguity is carefully maintained.

The story concludes with Granny's experience of her own death. Death catches her by surprise – «so, my dear Lord, this is my death and I wasn't even thinking about it.... I'm taken by surprise. I can't go.»

The blue light from Cornelia's lampshade drew into a tiny point in the center of her brain, it flickered and winked like an eye, quietly it fluttered and dwindled. Granny lay curled down within herself, amazed and watchful, staring at the point of light that was herself; her body was now only a deeper mass of shadow in an endless darkness and this darkness would curl around the light and swallow it up. God, give a sign!

For the second time there was no sign. Again no bridegroom and the priest in the house. She could not remember any other sorrow because this grief wiped them all away. Oh, no, there's nothing more cruel than this – I'll never forgive it. She stretched herself with a deep breath and blew out the light. (p. 190)

This death scene, with the priest in the house, parallels Granny's wedding day – and only now does the full significance of the title emerge. Granny felt she had been jilted not once but three times. First, by George. John tried to make up for her loss, but clearly from Granny's point of view was only partially successful, for the pain of the old injury was always with her: «That was hell, she knew hell when she saw it. For sixty years she had prayed against remembering him and again losing her soul in the deep pit of hell.» It seems likely that Granny lost her religious faith after that initial jilting – though she continued her outward observances, as indicated by her easygoing acquaintance with Father Connolly and Sister Borgia.

Now, at the moment of death, she again asks God for a sign. «God, give a sign! For the *second* time there was no sign.» Until this moment we haven't known that she turned to God at the time of the jilting and received no sign, thus in effect being jilted by God too. Receiving no sign, «She... blew out the light». In willing her own death she has technically committed suicide, a mortal sin. (The fact that she would shortly have died anyway is irrelevant.) Again jilted, «again no bridegroom and the priest in the house», Granny is wounded to the core of her being. «She could not remember any other sorrow because this grief pushed them all away.» She hadn't forgiven George, and vows never to forgive God for not giving her the desired sign. «Oh, no, there's nothing more cruel than this – I'll never forgive it.» With these two mortal sins weighing it down, the prognosis for Granny's soul is poor indeed. According to Catholic doctrine, by refusing to accept God's grace she has committed the ultimate sin of despair and would therefore be condemned to «lose her soul in the deep pit of hell».

There are many definitions of tragedy, but perhaps the real tragedy for Granny is that the narcissistic injuries are never healed, and what she has achieved in her life does not mitigate the

losses. In addition to her real life jilting, she looks for signs from God, thus setting herself up for further rejections. She ultimately dies feeling in control – she blows out the light – but alone and unvalued, protecting her pride but paying a high price even to the very end, for, within her Catholic belief system, she has protected her narcissism, but in so doing she has condemned herself to «lose her soul in the deep pit of hell», so really she has jilted herself.

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«The secrets of the sea are washed ashore»

Deprivation as renunciation in the Works of Georgios Seferis

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THE POET

Georgios Seferis is one of the greatest and most renowned Greek poets. Born in 1900 in Smyrna in Asia Minor, he attended high school in Athens and studied law in Paris in the '20's. He then entered the diplomatic corps. In 1931, he published his first collection of poems, «Strophe», meaning «turning point» or «turnabout» – entirely in the sense intended by Heidegger. Seferis received the Nobel Prize for his complete literary works in 1963. His difficult path to art is depicted with great empathy by his sister Ioanna Tsatsou (1973, 171ff.), who herself is a well-known writer and artist. In her book *My Brother Georgios Seferis*, for which she was given several literary prizes, she describes – in a manner emotionally accessible to the reader – not only personal factors decisive in the life of the poet, but also their roots in the framework of the political situation of his time.

In the following investigation, we attempt to demonstrate how historical events influenced the psychic constitution of the poet, and how this constitution expresses itself in poetic language and images.

THE POETRY

Seferis' poetry is immersed in an inappeasable yearning for his homeland, Smyrna, and its well-known, adjacent summer refuge, Skala, which he lost for familial and political reasons. Both places are but tiny dots on the map, exactly at the point at which Europe and Asia embrace – on the coast of Asia Minor, where Homer and Heraclitus were born. There, in the house his grandfather gave him, Seferis spent the summers of his childhood. In early youth he gained consciousness of his heritage and a sense of his belonging to this place: G.S., the initials on the gate standing for his grandfather Georgios Seferiadis, were also his own. Ionia, Smyrna, and Skala are thus the localities where Seferis won his «psychic and social identity». As does Fetscher (1983, 385ff.), we orient ourselves

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towards a concept of the constitution of the subject in which both interior psychological occurrences and their relation to social processes are described as diverse but interrelated levels in the formation of a stable self.

As decisive for the personality of Seferis and for his poetry as his socialization as the eldest son of a university professor is the historical significance of his birthplace – a thriving international metropolis in which the Greeks were the majority of the population.¹

HISTORY

As we can see by the map, today the Ionian coast belongs to Turkey, not to Greece. What was the Seferiades family doing there? Let us take a brief view of historical events.

From the time of the «Ionian Migration», which is dated from the 11th to the 9th century B.C. (Schuller 1980, 8f.), Asia Minor was *Greek*. With the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Ionian coast and the Anatolian peninsula were also conquered and occupied by the Ottoman Turks. After almost 400 years of Turkish occupation, the Greeks began their struggle for freedom in 1821 (Dobkin 1923, 26ff.). The «New Greece» was born in 1827 and received as a gift a Bavarian prince who was crowned King of Greece (Gyömörey 1970, 89ff.).

After Word War I, which Turkey lost on the side of Germany and Austria, the Treaty of Sèvres of 1919 granted to Greece those areas of Asia Minor with a Greek majority, including Smyrna. As a counselor of Greek Prime Minister Eleftherios Venizelos, Seferis' father was one of the signers of this document. Yet the Turk nationalists under Kemal refused to accept the Treaty of Sèvres and were supported by those great powers which were interested in Iraqi oil; in the end, the Russian Revolution was the decisive factor in their determination to drop the Greeks and assist Atatürk's army². The result was 600,000 dead and 1,500,000 refugees (Gaitanides 1978, 200f.) – Greeks who were driven from the coast of Asia Minor, from a homeland that had been Greek for 3,000 years. Among the homeless were the Seferiades family.

DEPRIVATION

This lost homeland – the gentle Mediterranean coast, where European intellect and Oriental sensuality unite – remains the dreamland of the poet's fantasy. To describe the significance of the catastrophe of September 1922 for Seferis, one can employ Bernfeld's psychoanalytic term, the «social site» of the neurosis (1929, 209ff.), for the drives and drive impulses confronting us repeatedly as repressions and sublimations within the literary work of art are

themselves, together with their attributes and goals [...], the result of historical events, and when inner factors, not reality, are decisive for the destiny of the drives, the superego has taken effect, which itself is but the introjection of a significant part of reality. [...]

To be sure, this is saying nothing new; the social site is one sector of what psychoanalysis calls reality. Whenever this reality is introjected, the social site becomes an aspect of the superego. (Bernfeld 1929, 210)

¹ In Smyrna, before the catastrophe of 1922, there were 165,000 Greeks to only 80,000 Turks. The town also had Jewish, Armenian, Italian, French and English inhabitants. 3,500 sailboats and 2,500 steamboats entered the harbor annually, while only 50 ships a year anchored in the port of Piraius (Kapsis 1962-1966, 16ff.)

² The New York Times had the following headlines in the lead story on September 15, 1922: SMYRNA BURNING, 14 AMERICANS MISSING; 1,000 MASSACRED AS TURKS FIRE CITY; KEMAL THREATENS MARCH ON CAPITAL; OUR CONSULATE DESTROYED; Fire Starting in Armenian and Greek Quarters is Sweeping City; [...] SMYRNA IN RUINS (Dobkin 1923, 6).

The poem Arnisi «Denial»³, published by Seferis in 1931 in his cycle «Strophe», hints – even if indirectly – at this social site of the neurosis, the *traumatization* resulting from the loss of his beloved homeland. It not only recalls to consciousness Seferis' personal yearning; it expresses the longing of an entire people, which Seferis voices in simple and seemingly harmless terms. It is the collective memory of «sacred Grecian soil» of which the Greeks remain deprived and which thereby becomes a surface upon which archaic, primary desires and the deprivation of their fulfillment – in the poet's diction, Denial – are projected.

Στο περιγαλι το κρυφο
κι ασπρο σαν περιστερι
διψασαμε το μεσημερι;
μα το νερο γλυφο

On the secret seashore,
White as a dove,
We thirsted at noontide;
But the water was brackish.⁴

In these poetic words, personal and social history are amalgamated: the «secret seashore» refers to the concealed goal of yearning, shielded from the public eye. It recapitulates the image of the archaic, omnipotent, good mother, innocent and asexual, «white as a dove». The dove is an age-old symbol of peace, employed by Picasso in his painting for the 5th convention of the Communist International (Comintern) in Paris in 1924. Seferis was studying in Paris at the time, where he moved mainly in artistic and intellectual circles. He chooses the political image of the dove and substitutes its character as a symbol of an harmonic relationship, a «unio». Yet, as soon as he revives this early image of union in his fantasy, primary drive impulses reappear – «We thirsted at noontide» –, which are immediately frustrated: «But the water was brackish.» Thirst for life, «soif de vivre», is confronted by disappointment; the image of the primal object is inverted into the image of the bad, depriving mother who lets her child die of thirst.⁵

The second stanza of the poem is parallel to the first and evinces the same structure. The poet clarifies the structure of «Denial» (renunciation), which is based upon a primary experience of deprivation:

Πανω στην αμμο την ξανθη
γραψαμε τ ονομα της;
ωραια που φυσηξεν ο μπατης
και σβηστηκε η γραφη.
On the golden blond sand
We wrote her name;

³ The literal translation, «Denial», can be understood as a transition, as a link between deprivation and renunciation.

⁴ The poem is taken from the first edition of «Strophe» (Seferis 1931, 13). All translations of the Greek texts are by Olga Nesselser and Fredric Kroll.

⁵ On the basis of Melanie Klein's theory of the psychoanalysis of the child (Klein 1932), Marie Langer interprets the genesis of this mother image as the result of intake of nourishment and early differentiation of subject and object: «When a child eats food, be it the mother's milk, porridge, or whatever, the child imagines that he or she is devouring the mother. For the child, this is an ambivalent experience. The child incorporates the mother – out of love. But she is also destroyed by the teeth of the child, who hates and fears the mother and projects its own aggression onto her. This aggression grows with every painful experience of the child, with every frustration induced by the mother. The small child attributes its own hunger to the mother. It experiences hunger as being eaten and destroyed from within: as an arbitrary and aggressive act on the part of the mother, and as a punishment for its own insatiable greed.» (Langer 1988, 95).

Mild blew the south wind
And the inscription vanished.⁶

As in the first stanza, the second presents a fantasy of narcissistic union: by identifying the yearned-for place, the shore, as «golden blond sand», the fantasy image of a woman arises, who is unified with the beach as her name is inscribed in it by the collective poetic ego. Thus the image of the homeland is alloyed with the image of the beloved: when Seferis speaks here in the name of all Greeks, he conjures up the beloved yearned for by the Greeks, «*ελευθερία*», the female personification of freedom, and, with it, the vanished homeland, «*πατριδα*», also female, lost Greece. But as soon as the goal of yearning has become concrete, this time in form of the secondary process of writing, a «natural catastrophe» intervenes: the «south wind», «*μπατης*», erases the inscription; nature annihilates culture. The aesthetic of terror, the natural catastrophe, out of which ambivalent feelings about the experience of narcissistic union speak, reveals itself in an oxymoron: the wind that erases the inscription is «*mild*»; apparent refreshment turns out to be a destructive force.

The sand, the ground, the background for the expression of yearning is as insecure as the soil of Asia Minor was for all Greeks. Freedom disappears without a trace; the beloved goal of all Greek yearning, for which wars were fought even in Homer's time – beautiful Helen is delivered up unto Paris, the Trojan.

RENUNCIATION

While the first two stanzas express primary narcissistic needs which are summarily frustrated by external, natural instances, Seferis presents in the last stanza a defense mechanism against deprivation:

Με τι καρδια, με τι πνοη
τι ποθους και τι παθος
πηραμε τη ζωη μας; λανθος!
κι αλλαξαμε ζωη.

With what heart, what breath,
What yearning and what pathos
We began our lives; False!
And we changed life.

The notion of «heart» and «breath» once again conjure up elementary bodily functions and, with them, existentially vital needs; from them, unquenchable yearning and passion arise, threatening the poet's existence. Yet Seferis confronts these feelings of helpless passivity with the self-assertion of the mind and the will, with activity: «False! And we transformed our lives.»

The *deprivation* of the fulfillment of primary narcissistic needs presented in the first two stanzas is here transformed into *renunciation*, resolving the early experiences of frustration in the sense of Hegel (Hegel 1807, 112). This structure is of great importance for Seferis' poem; in it, the individual biography is superimposed on social, historical, and political events and their effects on the poet. Seeking a way out of a disappointing situation with its concurrent threat of depression, Seferis acknowledges the reality of the political situation: the loss of his beloved homeland, to which he is attached «with heart and breath». This emotional bond to his homeland and its

⁶ In all probability, this is an allusion to the beginning of Wagner's libretto «Tristan und Isolde», also referred to by T. S. Eliot, whom Seferis admired: Frisch weht der Wind / der Heimat zu, / mein Irisch Kind, / wo weilest du? (Waste Land: The Burial of the Dead) Translators footnote.

occupation by the Turks evoke in him the same longing and suffering he had already known in his relationship with the primary object. Frustration was exacerbated into traumatization, which he hoped to escape with his categorical decision: «And we changed life.»

The psychological foundation of such a decision in favour of life is the will to leave the passivity of suffering behind oneself and take on an active position. As far as Seferis' biography can be reconstructed, he was repeatedly forced to subordinate himself without criticism to his father's decisions; his sister (Tsatsou 1973) was the mute witness to this ordeal and a source of consolation in greatest need. In obedience to his father's wish, Seferis has to study law. He can write only in secret. What keeps him alive is his longing for the place of his primary desires: Smyrna and Skala. These places are inseparably associated with his mother, in whose arms he seeks refuge from paternal demands. In this regressive «search for salvation», however, the experience of the bad mother image returns: of the destructive mother who permits her child to die of thirst, as depicted in the first stanza of the poem. Despite the «yearning» experience there, and because of the «pathos» connected with it, with which «we [began] our lives», only one alternative solution remains for the subject: the activity of the will, which, for Seferis, finds its creative path in writing and poetry. By writing, he attains – in his fantasy, at first, and, at last, in reality – his long-sought independence from maternal deprivation and paternal authority.

UTOPIA

In our interpretation of «Arnisi», we have shown so far, how Seferis condenses historical events and individual experience to poetry: he brings them together so skillfully that perception of historical aspects becomes unthinkable in isolation from recognition of individual factors, and vice versa. The entire cycle of poems, *Strophe*, is the literary setting of the *cata-strophe* in Asia Minor, which is treated in his poems. They express the experience of expulsion which the loss of his homeland meant for the poet. Literary work becomes a part of a mourning process which, in Seferis' first poetic attempts, is hinted at only indirectly: in suggestive images, in mythological riddles and allegories. Only at the very end of the cycle do we find, in a poem without a title, a relatively clear statement that strikes the inflection of the subsequent collections of poems:

Το υφος μιας μερας που ζησαμε πριν δεκα χρονια σε ξενον τοπο, [...]
ενα τελος απαρηγορητο,μαρμαρωμενο βασιλεμα καποιου
Σεπτεμβριου.

καινουργια σπιτια, σκονισμενες κλινικες, εξανθηματικα παραθυρα,
φερετροπουα..[...]

Πεθαναν ολοι μεσα στο караβι, μα το караβι ακολουθαει το στοχασμο
του που αρχισε σαν ανοιξε απο το λιμανι.

Πως μεγαλωσαν τα νυχια του καπετανιου [...]
Η θαλασσα φουσκωνει αργα, τ αρμενα καμαρωνουν κι η μερα παει να
γλυκανει.
Τρια δελφινια μαυρολογουν γιαλιζοντας, χαμογελα η γοργονα, κι ενας
ναυτης γνεφει ξεχασμενος στη γαμπια καβαλα.

The mood of a day endured ten years ago in a strange place, [...]
a disconsolate denouement, a sunset in some September
petrified to marble.

New houses, dusty clinics, pustulous windows, carpenters of coffins [...]

Everyone died in the ship, yet the ship
pursues the same thoughts that it contemplated
when it set sail.

How the captain's nails grew... [...]
The sea billows slowly, the rigging strides proudly,
and the day is about to grow mild.
Three dolphins mourn in brilliance, the mermaid smiles,
and a sailor astride the yardarm waves in abandon.
(Seferis 1931, 34)

The day the poet endures «ten years ago in a strange place» is the day on which Smyrna fell back into the hands of the Turks: September 12, 1922 (Dobkin 1923, 155). Seferis himself was in Paris at the time and experienced this event of decisive import for his life and destiny vicariously, through newspapers and letters from home. Every hope the poet may have had of returning after concluding his studies vanished – «a disconsolate denouement» – and the day in September on which the news reaches him ends like May 29, 1453, the day Constantinople was conquered: with the transformation of the last Byzantine king Konstantinos Palaiologos to a marble statue waiting for the liberation of the city by the Greeks, to come alive again. Thus it is narrated by popular tradition, revealing that the loss of the homeland means, for its inhabitants, deanimation by the petrification of the soul.

Seferis experiences flight from the coast of Asia Minor to the new home, the Greek continent, as a journey to the grave: the «new houses, dusty clinics, pustulous window-frames» are «carpenters of coffins». Life in this «new» homeland is, for him, a balancing act between life and death. To depict this existence, he chooses surrealist images: humans are no longer the subjects of action but passive objects. In this context, the world of objects takes the initiative: «The sea billows [...], the rigging strides proudly [...], and, «Three dolphins mourn in brilliance.»

The hope of salvation and the fear of death are condensed into the image of the ship. On the one hand, it makes it possible to flee from the chaos of catastrophe; on the other hand, it bears the seeds of death «when it set sail», and it takes death along on its voyage. Thus the ship, too, attains human traits, in which ambivalent images of the psychical representative of the omnipotent mother figure recur; it stands for the experience of both the destructive and the live-preserving mother. When the mother's womb, the *first psychic homeland* of every human being, is associated in the poem with the belly of the ship, Seferis simultaneously recalls a different place, the *second social homeland*, in which one is born. The ambivalent emotions associated with experiences of both the mother and the homeland are condensed into the image of the ship. Thanks to these double attributes as bringer of death (negative mother image) and bearer of hope (positive mother image), the ship itself becomes the omnipotent object per se, the medium of the one great «thought», the so-called «Great Idea», the «Megali Idea» pursued by all Greeks since the revolution of 1821: to liberate all the conquered territories from the Turkish occupants and unite them into one national state.

For Seferis, mourning and hope go together: unmistakably, he mourns over death and bereavement, «how the captain's nails grew [...]»; yet the crew of the ship, captain and sailors, do not let themselves be guided by the dolphins of brilliant mourning, but by the mermaid who, according to myth, transformed herself after the death of her brother Alexander the Great, in order to deny this death. According to ancient Greek seaman's tradition, she destroys every ship the crew of which dares to bear witness to her brother's death. For this reason, every time the seamen meet her, they must answer her question, whether Alexander lives, with the popular expression: «Alexander the Great lives and rules.»

Thus the ship pursues the goal of the Greeks, the «Great Idea», the consciously utopian hope for the liberation of the homeland. This wish for utopia is underscored by Seferis' allusion to Baudelaire:

O Mort, vieux capitaine, il est temps! levons l'ancre!
Ce pays nous ennuie, ô Mort! Appareillons!
Si le ciel et la mer sont noirs comme de l'encre,
Nos coeurs que tu connais sont remplis de rayons!

Verse-nous ton poison pour qu'il nous réconforte!
Nous voulons, tant ce feu nous brûle le cerveau,
Plonger au fond du gouffre, Enfer ou Ciel, qu'importe?
Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du *nouveau*!

Old captain, Death, it's time! let's raise the anchor!
This land bores us, o Death! Let's set the sails!
Ev'n if sky and sea are black as ink,
Our hearts – you know it – are radiant with light!

Pour out your poison, that it may console us!
We wish – this fire thus fiercely burns our brains –
To plunge to the bottom – be it of Heav'n or Hell –
The depths of the unknown, to find the *new*!
(Baudelaire 1861, 280f.)⁷

While Seferis, in his poem, presents the captain as a dead man, Baudelaire (the quote is taken from his poem «The Voyage» from his cycle «Death» in *Les Fleurs du Mal*) employs a personification of death which he transforms into the captain of his *ship of life*. He is the helmsman of that boredom which, in the end, drives him to creativity. Baudelaire's boredom, or «Spleen», is also the motive that drives Seferis to creativity. In the same poem without a title, he confesses: «Boredom spreads out like a drop of ink in a handkerchief» – «This land bores us, o Death!, [...] ev'n if sky and sea are black as ink [...]» Ink, writing, is both artists' salvation not only from spleen, as both openly admit, but also from fear of death, and it is the medium with which they can express the warmth of their hearts and the glow of their minds. «Our hearts – you know it – are radiant with light! [...] this fire thus fiercely burns our brains.»

«In the Manner of G.S.», another poem Seferis wrote in 1936, again lends lyrical form to the trauma of the loss of the homeland. There, the poet's fantasy takes a trip through Greek history, which is finally revealed as a journey into his own personal biography. This *journey of life* concludes in literary *agony*, in lethal suffering. Consider the significance of the French word «agonie», the ordeal of the dying in the last hours or moments before death. In the course of his poetic voyage through Greece, the land of his longing, Seferis «travels through» the Grecian past: mythology, antiquity, modernity, the Aegean islands, and that painful point, the expulsion of the Greeks from Asia Minor, are united at the end to the utopia of hope and the tormenting consciousness of loss: Seferis' ship of life bears the name «Agonia 937».

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

A Pilion, parmi les oliviers, la tunique du Centaure
glissant parmi les feuilles entourait mon corps
et la mer me suivait pendant que je marchais [...]

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

A Santorin en frôlant les îles englouties
en écoutant jouer une flûte parmi les pierres ponceuses

⁷ Translation into English by Fredric Kroll.

ma main fut clouée à la crête d'une vague
par une flèche subitement jaillie
des confins d'une jeunesse disparue.

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

A Mycènes j'ai soulevé les grandes pierres
et les trésors des Atrides
j'ai dormi à l'hôtel de la «Belle Hélène»
ils ne disparurent qu'à l'aube lorsque chanta Cassandre
un coq suspendu à sa gorge noire.

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

A Spetses, à Poros et à Mykonos
les barcaroles m'ont soulevé le coeur.

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

Que veulent donc ceux
qui se croient à Athènes ou au Pirée?
L'un vient de Salamine et demande l'autre
s'il ne viendrait pas de la Place Omonia.

«Non, je viens de la Place Syntagma» répond-il satisfait
«j'ai rencontré Yannis et il m'a payé une glace».
Pendant ce temps la Grèce voyage
et nous n'en savons rien nous ne savons pas que nous tous, nous sommes
marins sans emploi
et nous ne savons pas combien le port est amer quand
tous les bateaux sont partis.

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

Drôles de gens ils se croient en Attique
et ne sont nulle part;
ils achètent des dragées pour se marier
et ils se font photographier
l'homme que j'ai vu aujourd'hui assis devant un fond de
pigeons et de fleurs
lassait la main du vieux photographe lui lisser
les rides
creusées sur son visage
par les oiseaux du ciel.

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

Pendant ce temps la Grèce voyage, voyage toujours
et si «la mer Egée se fleurit de cadavres»
ce sont les corps de ceux qui voulurent rattraper
à la nage

les grands navires [...]

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

Le Pirée s'obscurcit, les bateaux sifflent,
ils sifflent sans arrêt mais sur le quai nul capiston ne bouge
nulle chaîne mouillée ne scintille dans l'intime
éclat du soleil qui décline [...]

Où que me porte mon voyage, la Grèce me blesse.

Rideaux de montagnes, archipels, granites dénudés...
Le bateau qui s'avance s'appelle AG ONIE [937]

Upon closer scrutiny, one finds in every written version of the poem the word «Agonia» with a space after the first two letters, between the AG and the rest of the word, ONIA. Then there is a double space between this word and the following number, 937. If one makes the bold attempt to «correct» the poet by filling in each of these gaps with an «I», one obtains the following results: AG. IONIA 1937. AG. in Greek is the abbreviation for «Saint» and thus for «sacred». IONIA has been the name of the coast of Asia Minor since antiquity. By the same token, the «I» transforms the incomprehensible number 937 into 1937, the year Seferis has in view while writing the poem. His hope, his future, his poetic utopia is sacred Ionia, his lost, Grecian soil.

Seferis of Smyrna was never again permitted to greet Asia Minor as *his Greek* homeland. Irony of fate: in 1950, he was appointed Greek ambassador to Turkey. As a noble Greek who does not thirst for blood, vengeance, or war, he holds the dove of peace in his hands: as the highest diplomatic representative of his country and as a writer, he continually seeks the flaws in human existence, and his own. In his poetry, Seferis works out his mourning; in diplomacy, as an ambassador, he seeks justice in peace for the peoples. Grief and hope, resignation and optimism guide his pen throughout his life – or, in his own words: «The secrets of the sea are [always] washed ashore» (Seferis 1931, 22).

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Betrayal, guilt and «unreality» in Southern Civil Rights novels

INEKE BOCKTING (*)

Break their hearts, O God
Give them tears
(prayer of a Delta preacher, 1940)

PART I

Introduction

This work is part of a larger project that concerns itself with *suicide in the American South* in the first half of the twentieth century. In that study, I explore the «Southern suicide» as a personal (genetic and psychological) and cultural (social, historical and literary) phenomenon. I propose the idea, there, that suicide is the most extreme way of silencing oneself. In a Southern context, this means that suicide may well be the ultimate form of a taboo on criticism, such as it developed under mounting pressure towards the Civil War, but especially after Reconstruction and into the twentieth century, with regard to the relations between the races.

In the first part of this paper, I will briefly explore the taboo on criticism, and the shame, guilt, betrayal and «unreality» this entails. In the second part, I will take as a starting-point the observation that although various individuals were active in attempting to do so earlier, the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 60s – culminating in what is known as the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964 – was instrumental on a larger scale than before, and involving the whole country, in confronting the taboo on criticism that had stifled the South for so long.

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As many have argued, under the influence of external pressure, Southern society had come to depend, to a very large degree, on internal social cohesion, with an exaggerated demand on its members for loyalty. The writer and social critic Lillian Smith, for instance, begins her work *Killers of the Dream* (1949): «Even its children knew that the South was in trouble. No one had to tell them; no words said aloud. To them, it was a vague thing weaving in and out of their play, like a ghost haunting an old graveyard or whispers after the household sleeps – fleeting mystery, vague menace to which each responded in his own way»; and she adds: «we who were born in the South called this mesh of feeling and memory “loyalty”. We thought of it sometimes as “love”» (1978: 25-26).

For all the gentleness of the passage, such «loyalty» meant strict self-censorship, so much so, in the views of Smith's contemporary the journalist W.J. Cash, that if someone dared to criticize just one little thing in the South, this was taken as a total rejection of all that the South stood for. Even if someone, he argues, just wanted to «stand aloof a little», to keep himself to himself, so to say, this could be taken as «high and aggravated treason» (1969: 139).

Cash speaks of «the savage ideal», which he defines as «that ideal whereunder dissent and variety are completely suppressed and men become, in all their attitudes, professions, and actions, virtual replicas of one another» (1969: 93-94).¹ Thus «the savage ideal» represents, in Richard King's words, «the cultural and intellectual expression of... social and political solidarity among whites»; the loyalty of the average white man with «the region as a whole and its upper-class leaders» (1992: 75). Cash calls this «the Proto-Dorian bond», based on white supremacy.

It is a chilling thought, then, that both Cash and his fellow journalist Clarence Cason effectively silenced themselves by committing suicide – the one five months after, the other just days before they «told about the South» in their works *The Mind of the South* (1941) and *90° in the Shade* (1935) respectively, just as William Faulkner had made his character Quentin Compson take his own life, in *The Sound and the Fury* (1931), roughly five months after he «told about the South» in *Absalom, Absalom!* (1936).

Bertram Wyatt-Brown has argued that Cash was «not terrorized by the thought of critical rejection per se, nor... by justifiable fears of ostracism and rejection, but rather by a psychotic episode that had its origins in a long-standing inclination to melancholia» (1992: 41). Still, moved by the death, in 1935, of Cason, Cash had written in his manuscript:

poor Clarence Cason, who taught journalism at Alabama, felt compelled to commit suicide, in part at least because of his fear of the fiercely hostile attitude which he *knew* that both the school authorities and his fellow faculty members would take towards his criticism of the South in his *90° in the Shade*.² (1969: 334)

From the use of the attributive verb *knew* in Cash's text, which is a factive and in its unmarked form signals that the speaker agrees with the content of the attribution, one can see that Cash believes such fear to be justified.

Cash, surely, was anticipating criticism that he himself would have to endure. His paranoid belief, at the time of his suicide, that Nazi agents were «whispering among themselves nearby to prepare his assassination» (Wyatt-Brown 1992: 39), in any case, sounds very much like a projection

¹ In the handling of themes such as «the savage ideal», Bertram Wyatt-Brown argues, «Cash might seem to exaggerate, to adopt the role of the clownish tall-tale teller... But Cash knew exactly what he wished to say and how to say it» (1992: 58). What he wished to say, however, was sometimes true of the region, sometimes more true of Cash himself (Wyatt-Brown, 1992: 63).

² In what Fred Hobson called a venture only into «mild criticism» (1983: 256), Cason had concluded: «For the sake of the future of the South as a whole, we must in some way make it possible for the Negro to discharge the obligation of dignified citizenship to the limit of his abilities. Before we can enter effectively upon a program designed to establish the black man in this new "place", we shall have to go through the painful process of transferring our present forced reasoning into the more agreeable realm of intuitive acceptance» (1983: 131).

of this fear away from the much more personally threatening Southern context, the more so because Cash explicitly makes the link between fascist totalitarianism and the savage ideal when he writes in *The Mind of the South* that fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia had established the savage ideal as truly as the South had (1969: 137).

A Culture of Engulfment

Exaggerated demands on members on any kind of community for loyalty lead to a culture of engulfment (see Scheff and Retzinger 1991); that is to say, social ties are drawn so tightly that individual members have to give up certain essential aspects of their personalities so as to prevent isolation and alienation. Because this forces individuals to betray parts of themselves – to «castrate» themselves in some way – engulfment always leads to some degree of shame and anger, and further shame over anger.

Sometimes, a distinction is made between the emotions of shame and guilt. Shame, it is argued, is staged in front of an actual «other», through whose condemning eyes one sees oneself, while guilt occurs basically in the absence of such an «other», that is, if behavior fails in one's own eyes. In other words, one may feel shame when one makes an inappropriate remark in public, while one will feel guilt when one entertains a thought that is unacceptable to oneself. In the first case, one tells oneself: «I feel ashamed of having said that»; in the second case, one tells oneself: «I feel guilty about having thought that.» However, in the second case, one might just as easily use «ashamed». On an essential level, then, a clear distinction between shame and guilt does not seem to exist, because both involve an «imagined other», more or less internalized as «conscience».

If a distinction is to be made, it lies more between embarrassment and guilt; embarrassment being more directly related to losing face in public. It would be strange to say to oneself «I feel guilty when I make an inappropriate remark in public», just as it would be to say «I feel embarrassed when I think an unacceptable thought» (the latter posits a rather odd, schizoid, distinction between the self and the «other» within the self). Perhaps, the notions of embarrassment, shame and guilt can be measured along a scale, then, which runs from more to less awareness of a critical «other» as «other».

In addition, embarrassment tends to concern comparatively trivial incidences; that is, unless it covers up more serious shame and guilt underneath. Indeed, the presence of shame and guilt is often denied or trivialized precisely by calling something an embarrassing moment or situation, which clearly involves, in addition to trivializing, the psychological defense of projection of affect onto the outside world; it is not that I am ashamed, but that the situation is embarrassing.

In the context of the South, individuals may feel ashamed at having feelings or opinions society forbids – shame thus amounts to a betrayal of the «other» – and individuals may feel guilty about denying certain aspects of themselves – guilt thus amounts to a betrayal of the «self». We have here, in fact, the double-bind of the shame-guilt configuration that engulfment entails. The individual, in Gregory Bateson's terms, «can't win» (1985: 201); either he fails in his own eyes and feels guilty, or he fails in the eyes of others and feels shame. The anger that this situation inspires, and the further shame that this anger causes, can be directed outward, towards retribution and revenge, or inward, toward depression, alcoholism and suicide.

Unacknowledged, and often unconscious, shame and guilt are the issue here. That is, unless they are made conscious, openly acknowledged and accepted with respect, shame and guilt can easily escalate into the downward spiral of increasing shame and anger of the «feeling trap», which may, as J. Braithwaite writes, «produce a despair which becomes suicidal» (1991: xiii). And in the South, of course, they could not easily be acknowledged openly, let alone be accepted with respect. Therefore, as Smith puts it: some Southerners «learned to screen out all except the soft and the soothing; others denied even as they saw plainly, and heard. But all knew that under quiet words and warmth and laughter, under the slow ease and tender concern about small matters, there was a

heavy burden on all of us and as heavy a refusal to confess it» (1978: 25).³ Indeed, the South learned to avail itself of «peculiar» forms of screening out, denial and conversion of shame and guilt, which I will briefly discuss as «Southern unrealities».

Southern Unrealities

Firstly, Southern confessional religion provided – and still provides perhaps – a successful way of converting such feelings. As Smith argues, the greatest crop that was harvested each summer in the South was not cotton or corn or tobacco, but guilt, when the large religious revival meetings were held (1978: 103). During these meetings, shame and guilt were at once made personal and abstract. They were steered away from the social wrongs of the South, while they at the same time came close enough to acknowledgement and acceptance for catharsis.

Still, by its very nature the whole performance might stimulate additional shame and guilt, by adding to the required loyalty – potentially increasing the betrayal of the «other» – as well as to the «castration» – potentially increasing the betrayal of the «self». Indeed, Smith wonders why there were not more suicides, for «surely enough terror and anxiety were released in unstable personalities to produce a collapse of the will to live», and she concludes: «the revivals probably drove many more than we know into mental hospitals and into less conspicuous, because ambulatory, illnesses» (1978: 107). As Howard Kushner writes, mental health workers often warned against these religious revivals, especially if they were held at night (1994: 36-37).

Secondly, in the South, unacknowledged shame and guilt could find release in their opposites: pride and honor. The Southern system of honor – itself a form of engulfment – prescribed attitudes and behaviors that guarded loyalty and cohesion in a society where the gap between ideals of freedom, liberty and justice, and the practice of everyday life were far apart. Honor can be seen as a system that negotiates between ideal and reality. It exists as a collection of «narratives» that function to «weave a web» between two poles: life as it should be and life as it really is.

These «narratives» are clearly identifiable as psychological defenses such as denial, justification, projection, refusal of responsibility, self-victimization and self-aggrandizement. As long as they are in place, social custom does not change into moral issues. Thus Cason can write: «as respecting slavery, drinking whiskey, and a state of class inequality, the Southerner – left to himself – felt no moral obloquy; these things were included in the social order, for which he had complete respect» (1983: 57).

Honor, of course, is not a specifically Southern issue, but in any society where the two poles were so far apart as in the South, the «narratives» stretched thin, and the «web» of honor was always in danger of snapping. Honor, then, would have to be protected by specific behaviors. Duelling was one of the behaviors serving to guard loyalty within the group. Through the ritualized discharge of shame and anger, in what Steven Stowe calls «the dramatic mingling of decorum and death» (1987: 5), a spiraling into accumulating shame and anger was prevented, or else a form of suicide executed.

When honor is destroyed, unless the underlying shame and guilt are acknowledged, other forms of ritualized or non-ritualized violence – retribution, revenge, lynching, alcoholism, depression and suicide – can be the result. As Wyatt-Brown puts it: «men no longer exchanged fire in the semisuicidal ritual of the duel. Instead, the self-aggrieved took a different... course...: the self-aimed shot to the head» (1992: 57). In the Percy family, extensively studied in Wyatt-Brown's *The House of Percy: Honor, Imagination, and Melancholy in a Southern Family* (1994), one sees the human frailty in the face of the destruction of honor autobiographically displayed in William Alexander Percy's *Lanterns on the Levee: Recollections of a Planter's Son*, and fictionalized in the

³ Precisely because they were not acknowledged, many have argued that feelings of shame and guilt did not exist in the South. Others have granted the enormous powers of unacknowledged shame and guilt, even to the extent of causing the South to lose the War. See for an overview Bockting 1995: 261, Foster 1990.

works of his nephew Walker Percy, especially in *The Moviegoer*, *The Last Gentleman* and *Lancelot* (see also Wyatt-Brown 1994b).

In its communal forms, the Southern system of honor can be seen to have found expression in the «unreality» of some of the «great Southern myths» that Cash mentions as: the «cavalier myth» or «aristocracy myth»; the «myth of the great Southern heart»; the «cult of Southern womanhood» and the «rape complex». Firstly, the «aristocracy myth» holds that the Southern planters class, in its totality, descended directly from English aristocratic backgrounds, and is clearly a set of «narratives» of self-aggrandizement. As Edward A. Pollard put it in his *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (1866): these «cavaliers», early colonists of Virginia and the Carolinas, «were from the first distinguished for their polite manners, their fine sentiments, their attachment to a sort of feudal life, their landed gentry, their love of field-sports and dangerous adventure, and the prodigal and improvident aristocracy that dispensed its stores in constant rounds of hospitality and gaiety» (Inge 1989: 294). «By setting forth the heroic figure of the Southern gentleman, with his heroic ability to bring culture to all he surveyed», David Singal writes, Southerners could «convince themselves and others that the South enjoyed the *most* stable and civilized society in America» (1982: 17-18).

Secondly, the «myth of the great Southern heart» argues that planters had acted with the best of intentions towards their slaves, and felt greatly responsible for them. Indeed, Sergeant S. Prentiss, one of Mississippi's most eloquent orators, expressed it as follows: «People of the State of Mississippi look upon domestic slavery as it exists among them, not as a curse but as a blessing... as authorized both by the laws of God and the dictates of reason and philanthropy» (quoted in Sansing 1986: 3-4). Cash voices the sentiment imaginatively and with heavy irony when he enters the mind of the planter and has him say: «The lash? A lie, sir; it had never existed. The only bonds were those of tender understanding, trust, and loyalty... Hate him? My good friend, we love him dearly-and we alone, for we alone know him» (1969: 131). Cason, finally, focusses the issue, with more subtle irony, directly on his own times: «Southerners of a certain type like to imagine that a special bond exists between them and the Negro descendants of the plantation economy. But this bond, it must be admitted, is largely a sentimental one, for it does not always prove to be effective when the Negro needs it most» (1983: 121). As is clear, the myth combines narratives of self-aggrandizement and justification, if not self-victimization as well.

Thirdly, the «cult of Southern womanhood» argues the purity of the Southern white woman and the need to protect her from all that could «soil» her. Cash again inflates the image through heavy irony, by presenting her as a statue: «the South's Palladium»; and he imaginatively presents the devotion that was her due when he writes: «merely to mention her was to send strong men into tears – or shouts. There was hardly a sermon that did not begin and end with tributes in her honor, hardly a brave speech that did not open and close with the clashing of shields and the flourishing of swords for her glory» (1969: 89). Indeed, one of Mississippi's politicians went so far as to state, as late as 1948: «Now what of the ladies? When God made the Southern woman he summoned His angel messengers and He commanded them to go through all the star-strewn vicissitudes of space and gather all there was of beauty, of brightness and sweetness, of enchantment and glamour, and when they returned and laid the golden harvest at His feet He began in their wondering presence the work of fashioning the Southern girl» (quoted in Smith 1978: 169).

Finally, and closely related to the «cult of Southern womanhood», one must mention the so-called «rape complex», that is, the pernicious fantasy that black males were out to rape white females whenever they got a chance; clearly a case of self-victimization, of justification of violence against blacks, and of projection of the white man's own lust onto the black man (see Smith 1978: 121ff.; Cash 1969: 116ff.). In a sense, this was the most important issue of all; since the white woman was in many ways *the* symbol of the South – as the progenitor and perpetuator of the white race – an assault on her meant, in a deeply psychological way, an assault on the very South itself.

At the heart of all this «unreality», can be seen the «Southern family romance» (see King 1980: 26ff.), a mythic configuration that puts into place the aristocratic, benevolent Southern patriarch, an

honorable Southern gentleman; the pure and perfect lady of the house, put on a pedestal by husband, children and servants alike; and the «good blacks», loyal, patient and enduring, with in the forefront the «mammy», idealized and sentimentalized, Cheryl Thurber has argued, as a way «of praising some blacks while criticizing all the others who did not live up to the ideal» (1992: 102).

These configurations, of course, tell us little about how most people lived in the South, or how a specific individual in the South would think; and various individuals had attacked them at least since the 1850s. But it was not until the Mississippi Freedom Summer of 1964,⁴ which for the first time involved large numbers of young people from all over the country,⁵ that a massive collective force would confront the myths of the Southern family romance. How characters in three novels that deal with this very special summer experience this confronting of the family romance is the topic of the second part of this paper. The links between each of these novels – Rosellen Brown's *Civil Wars* (1984), Marita Golden's *And Do Remember Me* (1992), and Alice Walker's *Meridian* (1976) – and the «real experience» of the Mississippi Freedom Summer – as it is captured in letters, memoirs, historical texts and interviews – are strong. They are bound to be, if only because both concern the same historical facts with great emotional impact on their protagonists.

PART II

Teddy's Guilt

Having been one of the Snick workers in favor of bringing in «the Northern white kids», the white Southerner Teddy Carll from Jackson Mississippi, in Rosellen Brown's *Civil Wars*, is made to feel every failure, every «faux pas», of each of the volunteers as a personal embarrassment: «When the girl from Smith said that “au contraire”, she loved Negro men, they looked at him and smiled as if she were his sister, who had just serviced the regiment» (49).

What is more, his black fellow-workers do not trust what they see as his «apologist» views: «White folks are my people», Teddy would say. «They don't have to come over on our side.» But they would respond: «They do! You crazy, man, they do. They can't abuse us like they do and stay human!» Teddy, however, knows better: «That's what you think», he would reply. «Maybe not human in our terms. But human enough in theirs... they can go right on eating and working and screwing and even going to church Sunday morning» (48). Probing at the basis of the Southern narrative of justification – more for his own benefit than for anybody else's, it seems – Teddy does not get very far with such speeches. «Oh, they would say. Listen to him. Noblesse o-bleeeej» (48), staging, rather, the full-blown aristocracy myth as a weapon against him.⁶

⁴ It was the summer when Snick (SNCC or Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee), an organization of approximately one hundred, mostly black, southerners, invited college students from everywhere to come to Mississippi during their summer break, to help them teach and register prospective black voters. Most of the almost one thousand students who participated came from elite universities in the East. Their families were largely liberal and relatively well-to-do, and most were supportive, if concerned about the safety of their children. As Snick had no money, only those who could support themselves and would not need to work over the summer were able to attend, although some scholarships were provided, for instance by churches. The volunteers were about 90% white, and a little over 40% were women (see McAdam 1988: 40).

⁵ The project was controversial from the beginning. But, as Bob Moses, proposer of the plan, said in an interview: «these students bring the rest of the country with them. They're from good schools and their parents are influential. The interest of the country is awakened and when that happens, the government responds to that issue» (quoted in McAdam 1988: 40).

⁶ The issue, of course, was a serious one. Interviews with prospective volunteers conducted by Snick members had as their most important goal to screen out those with «paternal» tendencies. Even before that, opponents of the project had warned against «the tendency of white students to appropriate leadership roles», which would reinforce «traditional patterns of racial dominance and submission within the movement» (McAdam 1988: 54; 38). And indeed, McAdams writes, «a good many of the volunteers brought a kind of "missionary" attitude to the project that only aggravated existing tensions. Hints of paternalism and insensitivity

Teddy's feelings clearly go further than the embarrassment of losing face in front of his fellow workers, but touch upon the shame and guilt below. «If they knew the racist things he had thought as a child», it goes through his head. But the emerging feeling is immediately suffused with anger: «could he never repudiate them sufficiently, not even if he gave his life?» (49). Feeling sorry for himself, Teddy believes that «the only people who seemed inclined to sympathy these days were the Northern white kids, whose presence he had fought for», although «he'd rather have had an equal number of Southern white kids instead, who would go back to their own hometowns, who knew how shaky it felt, sometimes, to be a new convert, cut away from how many years» (49).

Lonely and hurt, Teddy's discontents spill out one day «like the leeching of a wound», to Jessie Singer, the white volunteer girl from New York. To Jessie, the «confession» obviously signals denial more than anything else: «but look, you know», she tells him, «it's like family, your past. You're made of it. It's there whether you ever acknowledge it or not, or love it or hate it or find it boring or embarrassing, right? It doesn't need your approval, but denying it won't make it go away» (50).

Teddy does go on to deliver «his famous speeches», in churches and in people's homes, and even at the Democratic Convention in Atlanta, breaking through his shame at the betrayal of his family: «*I am one of those who can's go home again, he would say: my mamma is deathly ashamed of me when she ought to be proud I've redeemed the family name*» (25). But even though he seems to believe that he has redeemed himself – even redeemed the whole family by his action – the speech itself, repeated again and again as a set piece, becomes a calculated thing: «canned spontaneity» (25).

Teddy is never really able to acknowledge his shame and guilt, or have it accepted where it counts, and it is because of this, perhaps, that he has never been able to give up the cause, even if he has become estranged from its people. To Jessie, in any case, he has always remained: «the Confederate child growing up to be a moral Yankee with those hard little bullets lodged in his flesh somewhere, surrounded by the scar tissue of his reform» (15).⁷

Jessie and the Cult of Southern Womanhood

After fifteen years of marriage, in 1979, Jessie Singer, now Jessie Carll, remembers that her husband Teddy had always remained essentially a Southern gentleman; «Old Gallant», she thinks, with an «assurance-giving kind of confidence» (24). With the «firmness of his gentlemanly hand at her elbow, so unlike the abruptness of New York boys» (298), he had kept her from really getting involved in the Movement, and she had let him.

For Jessie, the «red-diaper-baby», «mascot of her father's Party cell» (15), and with her experience of «arrest for civil defense drill violation» and «anti-US speeches during the Cuban “troubles”» (40), this has meant a betrayal of parts of her own personality as well as of what her family stood for. Her mother had already been active in literacy work in Alabama in 1935, so that «being in Mississippi was for her a kind of obedience too» (42). But for Jessie, the «cult of Southern womanhood» had stretched too easily to include her as well. After a week she had already realized that «everything she had hoped to do she was smiled out of doing; she would not be the one to walk through the fields wearing a sack across her shoulder, taking names: white girls didn't do that» (298).

show up with great frequency in the volunteers' letters and journals» (1988: 103). An anonymous black volunteer, interviewed by McAdam in 1985, puts it as follows: «a few... just came in and wanted to take over. Their attitude was "okay, we are here, your troubles are over. We are going to put your house in order"» (McAdam 1988: 104).

⁷ Freud argues, in his 1919 essay *A Child is Being Beaten*, that guilt «seems to correspond to a scar-like formation which is similar to the sense of inferiority» (1919: 194). The link between scar-tissue, guilt and feeling of inferiority is explicit in Terry Carll.

This almost automatically included the Southern rape complex. As a matter of fact, the belief that every black man was out to take advantage of her had already suggested itself to Jessie before she even got to Mississippi: «On the long ride down to Mississippi, she had been occupied with a young man named Joe something», who, Jessie believed with her new-found logic, «had appropriated the seat beside her *so that* he could try to blow in her ear all the way from Ohio to Memphis» (299; my emphasis).

Jessie remembers that it had already become «amply clear» in the trainingcamp in Ohio, that «to resist the advances of black suitors was to put yourself in danger of being willfully misunderstood» (299).⁸ Was Jessie Singer really afraid of being called a racist, or is she rationalizing the excitement and curiosity she felt at the time? Perhaps she reveals something about this when she remembers letting Teddy kiss her, «in spite of the fact», as she puts it rather jokingly, «that she'd rather find herself some black stud» (50).⁹

It may well have been the desire to escape a confusing mixture of feelings, then, that led Jessie to let Teddy take charge of her presence in Mississippi and to marry him even before the summer was over.¹⁰ Whatever the case may be, neither the white Northerner Jessie Singer nor the white Southerner Teddy Carll, no matter how dedicated they were to the cause, was really able to confront the «unrealities» of the family romance as they exist within themselves.

Carolyn's Experience – Jessie's Life

Carolyn Seavers from Minnasota, in Marita Golden's *And Do Remember Me*, does what Jessie Singer had only wanted to do: she takes a black lover, the civil rights worker Marlon Jeeter, severely shocking her Southern black roommate Jessie Foster from Mississippi. Golden writes: «there were the nights she crawled into bed late, having just left Marlon Jeeter's arms. So intoxicated was she with the sense of the momentous that on those nights she lay awake beside Jessie, unable to sleep, rousing Jessie to tell all the things Marlon did to her, the places he touched her, how she had never felt the way she felt now» (64-65).

Carolyn, meanwhile, is totally unaware of how offensive this infatuation is to Jessie. It is «the sheer ease with which it altered history», and circumvented the family romance with its «white

⁸ In reality, Snick foreman Bob Moses had asked the volunteers «not to perpetuate the southern past» by using each other «emotionally and sexually» (Rothschild 1982: 56). However, reports of sexual intimidation can easily be found. As one anonymous ex-volunteer told McAdam in an interview in 1985: «It really was your classic "damned-if-you-do, damned-if-you-don't" situation. If you didn't, you could count on being harassed. If you did, you ran the risk of being written off as a "bad girl" and tossed off the project» (1988: 105). One volunteer said at the time: «there is a tremendous amount of conflict between Negro boys who think that white girls owe it to them to sleep with them or to go out with them, and there's a good deal of competition among them» (Rothschild 1982: 141). But if women «were in some way brutalized», Mary Aickin Rothschild writes, they «usually held a clear vision of what would happen to a black man accused of raping a white woman, even if she were a civil rights worker. The horror of the southern lynching tradition kept them silent» (1982: 142). All this is why, Rothschild argues, it was advantageous to attach yourself to a steady boyfriend (1982: 141). As one woman voiced it: «I find it's almost a necessity to associate yourself with one person... if you have a boyfriend, particularly one that's nice and strong, he doesn't want... anybody bothering with his girlfriend, see» (Rothschild 1982: 141-142).

⁹ Indeed, Jessie may have wanted also to «experience», what McAdam has called «the forbidden fruits or stereotypic joys of interracial sex» (1988: 107). In any case, the words that Jessie uses may indicate that she found herself attracted to «the sexually explicit manner», as Snick staff-member Mary King puts it, «of certain black men in the local community» (1987: 464; quoted in McAdam 1988: 107). And, although there is no clear trace of it in Jessie's text, she might, subconsciously, have wanted to prove her commitment to the cause by sleeping with black men, or expiate her guilt about racism this way (see Rothschild 1982: 137).

¹⁰ As Rothschild has argued, married women were left alone, because «nearly everyone seemed to see extra-marital sex negatively... and married women could refuse sexual encounters without fear of being branded racist» (1982: 141). The closeness of Rosellen Brown's fiction to «real life» is clear when one realizes that the marriage of Jessie and Teddy, «in Tolewood in white Mexican wedding shirts and dungarees under a sign that substituted for a wedding canopy: one Man + one woman = two votes» (51), is described by Bill Hodes in a letter home of July 13, 1964 (quoted in McAdam 1988: 195).

women on pedestals and black men swinging from the end of a rope» (65) that is incomprehensible and unacceptable to Jessie. When she finds out that she is pregnant with Marlon's baby, Carolyn does not hesitate to announce to Jessie that she will not keep it or even tell Marlon. Rather, she has already told her mother, who will take care of it as soon as she gets home.

How could Carolyn know about Jessie's history of sexual abuse by her own father, and her certainty that if she ever got pregnant, she could never tell her mother? Jessie feels she would have to jump into the Mississippi river and drown, and it would in a way be a deliverance: «the dark muddy waters lapping around her, sucking her down, filling her lungs, which didn't have to stifle screams anymore, filling her eyes, which would never again have to see his face» (67).

Although she becomes the best worker in the Freedom House, Carolyn betrays her friendship with Jessie out of sheer ignorance and insensitivity. This started already on the day they met and Carolyn told Jessie, in a voice «giddy, glazed with excitement and dread»: «My parents would die if they knew I was here... Can you believe it, Jessie, they dared me to come. They don't let me do anything... They shelter me all the time, from life, from reality... Did your parents do that to you, Jessie, you know, keep you from having experiences?» (23-24).

Thus Jessie discovers the difference between her *life*: «the stuff you had to put up with», «couldn't get away from no matter what», and the white girl's *experience*: «something you decided you wanted and then went out and did» (24). The discovery helps Jessie to confront the family romance and her own people's inscription in it, and deconstruct it, even if she has no «new reality» yet to replace it:

Much of the mythology about white women that was once lodged in Jessie's imagination had been shattered in the few months of her acquaintance with Carolyn. Jessie had cleaned up after and born the withering scorn of white women all her life. She had seen the tattered seams, the sharp edges of their lives, played out in full dress before her as though she wasn't even there. Yet Jessie had imagined that despite the smudged, grubby reality she witnessed... white women's lives were nonetheless a fanciful, jealously guarded dream.

And here we see Jessie confront her own version of the narrative of justification:

For if their lives were indeed perfect, blemish free, if the world denied them nothing, then that would explain how ruthlessly those lives were guarded against intrusion by people who looked like her. (63)

Meridian – Free at Last

It is almost impossible to talk briefly about Alice Walker's character Meridian Hill, in the novel *Meridian*, for the complex person she is and the large amount of sensitive information we, as readers, receive about her. For the purpose of this paper, and to come to a conclusion, I will focus on the moment of epiphany for Meridian, when she herself is «free at last».

Having been one of its workers, the black girl Meridian Hill from Mississippi has never recovered her mental and physical health after the Freedom Summer. Like Teddy Carll, she never gave up on its causes, but unlike him, she has not estranged herself from the people, even if she was in effect left behind by the Movement when she was unable to answer the question if she would be prepared to kill for the cause.¹¹

¹¹ The disappointment and impatience of members of the Movement with King's philosophy of non-violence existed already before the Mississippi Freedom Summer, as is clear from Anne Moody's autobiography *Coming of Age in Mississippi*. During King's famous address at the Washington Memorial, Moody writes, «I sat on the grass and listened to the speakers, to discover we had "dreamears" instead of leaders leading us. Just about every one of them stood up there dreaming. Martin Luther King went on and on talking about his dream. I sat there thinking that in Canton we never had time to sleep, much less dream» (1976: 307).

Having, like Jessie Foster, confronted her own people's inscription within the family romance, with its loyalty and endurance, and pitiful politeness, Meridian has come to despise religion, which she sees as the embodiment of everything that fills her with shame and anger. Meridian is not able to express this anger. Instead she feels claustrophobic, and filled with panic at the inertness of her people.¹²

After the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., however, she finds herself «going, irregularly, to church» (197), choosing a different one each time. One day, she witnesses there something that at first strikes her as the same kind of hopeless endurance: «a humble-looking creature in a snuff brown suit», bringing in from behind the altar a large photograph of a «slain martyr in the Civil Rights struggle», and two «tiny black girls», rising promptly and placing «tall vases of lilies – white and unblemished» next to it. But it strikes Meridian that the music has changed, and she is suddenly aware that the sounds of the «ah-mens» is different as well: «not muttered in resignation, not shouted in despair... Just the “ah-mens”» rising «clearly, unsentimentally, and with a firm tone of “We are fed up”» (200).

Then the father of the slain Civil Rights worker stands up: a man who had «gone temporarily insane» after his son died, and who had come back from the sanitarium «redeyed and heavier and deadly calm-still taking tranquilizers, it was said». On the anniversary of his son's death, each year, he now stands in public before the picture of his son, never looking at it and saying only three words, the only ones he has left: «My son died». After she leaves the church, Meridian considers the young man's face:

A face destroyed by clubs held by men. Now it would be nothing but the cracked bones, falling free as the skin rotted away, coming apart into the bottom of the casket; and the gentle fingers, all broken and crushed under the wheels of cars, would point directions no more. She would always love this young man who had died before she had a chance to know him. But how, she wondered, could she show her love for someone who was already dead?

There was a reason for the ceremony she had witnessed in the church. And, as she pursued this reason in her thoughts, it came to her. The people in the church were saying to the red-eyed man that his son had not died for nothing, and that if his son should come again they would protect his life with their own. «Look», they were saying, «we are slow to awaken to the notion that we are only as other women and men, and even slower to move in anger, but we are gathering ourselves to fight for and protect what your son fought for on behalf of us...»

In comprehending this, there was in Meridian's chest a breaking as if a tight string binding her lungs had given way, allowing her to breath freely... Under a large tree beside the road, crowded now with the cars returning from church, she made a promise to the red-eyed man herself: that yes, indeed she would kill, before she allowed anyone to murder his son again. (203-204)

At this moment, Meridian feels the family romance breaking, as if in her very bones. With it she breaks her own bonds of shame, guilt, anger and «unreality»; and she is able, finally, to create a new reality for herself. Free at last, she can write:

i want to put an end to guilt
i want to put an end to shame
whatever you have done my sister

¹² Moody is better able to voice her anger at her own people: «I felt sick», she writes; «I got so mad with them. How could Negroes be so pitiful? How could they just sit by and take all this shit without any emotion at all. I just didn't understand.» Others have focussed directly on the shame involved. Robert Coles quotes a young black from Mississippi, who says «I feel ashamed every time I think of how long we've had to take it, take it, take it. I almost wish we had all been killed a long time ago, standing up for our rights» (1971: 51).

(my brother)
 know i wish to forgive you
 love you
 it is not the crystal stone
 of our innocence
 that circles us
 not the tooth of our purity
 that bites bloody our hearts.

there is water in the world for us
 brought by our friends
 though the rock of mother and god
 vanishes into sand
 and we, cast out alone
 to heal
 and re-create
 ourselves (219)

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Repressed anger in a family context: Dickens's *Hard Times* as psychological text

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Often read as a social and political text and now frequently criticized as an artistic failure, Dickens's novel *Hard Times* provides readers with a psychological drama that explores how repressed anger affects family relationships. Explored specifically are the psychological dynamics of repressed anger, somatization and self-destructive actions that have their roots in the misguided idea that feeling and emotion must be eradicated from the human personality. Thomas Gradgrind, Sr.'s philosophy that Fact and Reason must govern human action to the exclusion of fancy and that individuals must never wonder drives that denial of feeling, specifically anger, afflicting Mr. Gradgrind's children, Tom and Louisa, and his wife. The novel examines and condemns not only the psychological abuse of children but also the psychological abuse of a wife. From the standpoint of modern psychoanalysis *Hard Times* is both unified and a psychological text.

Critics have noted that the systematic way that Mr. Gradgrind educated his children produces an unhappy daughter who as a woman abandons her husband and considers adultery while the son, in defiance of logic and fact, shamelessly exploits his sister's affection for him and ends up a petty thief.¹ But the novel accomplishes more than identifying the lack of emotional education as the cause of the downfall of the Gradgrind children. Important as this factor is to the psychological dynamics in the Gradgrind family, Dickens also develops the theme of protecting the object from hidden anger in the brother sister relationship between Tom and Louisa. A variation in the technique

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¹ Warrington Winters argues that the emotional difficulty that Tom and Louisa experience originates in the childhood training that Mr. Gradgrind imposes («Dickens's *Hard Times*: The Lost Childhood», *Dickens Studies Annual*, 2, 1972. Daniel Deneau makes the same point («The Brother-Sister Relationship in *Hard Times*», *Dickensian*, 60 (1964). More recently, Katherine Kearns and Martha Nussbaum contend that the Gradgrind reliance upon facts in educational practice retards growth («A Topology of Realism in *Hard Times*», *ELH* 59, 1992; «The Literary Imagination in Public Life», *New Literary History* 22, 1991). Earlier, F. R. Leavis in *Dickens the Novelist* (1970) found the roots of her tragedy in her childhood training. Michael Slater contends that Louisa's portrayal contains more passion than other Dickensian female protagonists, a passion that he attributes to Dickens's developing ability to represent feeling in women (*Dickens and Women*, 1983).

of object protection known as the narcissistic defense that Dickens explored in what Paul Schlicke calls the King Lear novels, Louisa like the female protagonists in *The Old Curiosity Shop*, *Dombey and Son* and *Little Dorrit* protects her brother from his destructive feelings by sacrificing her happiness for his.² When Louisa marries Mr. Bounderby she verbalizes her conscious motive as pleasing Tom, but her decision reveals the motive of repressed anger. Participating in her children's suppression of feeling but also suffering acutely from her husband's idea that expressing feeling is not desirable, Mrs. Gradgrind's words and behavior exhibit signs of repressed rage communicated through the body.

The principal focus in Dickens's text of the Gradgrind suppression of feeling is the character Louisa who exhibits repressed anger in two ways other than the defense of protecting her brother and attacking herself.³ Louisa's anger assumes the form of acting out destructive impulses and her illness contains psychological elements that make it an attack upon the body. The beginnings of that development Dickens presents in scenes with Louisa and her father. Mr. Gradgrind tells her at age eight «Never to wonder», and his remarks to his daughter when he informs her that Mr. Bounderby wants to marry her make it clear that he has also instructed her not to cultivate expression of her feelings. Mr. Gradgrind advises Louisa that love has nothing to do with assessing whether Mr. Bounderby is a suitable husband for her. It is simply a question of fact, and the fact that statistical studies support the idea that older men marry women younger than they in significant numbers recommends, in Mr. Gradgrind's opinion, Mr. Bounderby as a husband. Mr. Gradgrind compliments his daughter (he thinks) by saying that she knows better than «the ignorant and the giddy [who] embarrass such subjects with irrelevant fancies (such as love) and other absurdities that have no existence, properly viewed, really no existence» (75). Louisa's indifference to the idea of marriage and her lack of feeling indicate the emotional damage produced by her father's instruction.

Additional evidence of what ignoring and denying human feeling creates for Louisa and Tom we observe in the scene when they defy their father's orders and look at the circus. Dumbfounded, Mr. Gradgrind thinks it impossible that his children could be interested in anything magical. Louisa says innocently enough that she just «wanted to see what it was like», but Dickens's description of the pair highlights the «air of jaded sullenness in them both... particularly in the girl» (10). Noticeably Louisa suppresses her feelings. «Struggling... [to express itself] through her face [is] dissatisfaction.» The «light» that the narrator indicates has somehow survived in Louisa shows «uncertain, eager, doubtful flashes which had something painful in them» (10). The word «painful» suggests a psychic wounding that in the context of the general repression of feeling Louisa endures reveals the presence of aggression turned against the self. When Mr. Gradgrind exclaims of this incident, «what would Mr. Bounderby say?», Dickens underlines the repressed state of Louisa's feelings in relation to her father. «At the mention of this name: "Louisa stole a look at [her father] remarkable for its intense and searching character" (11). But he saw nothing of it, for, before he looked at her, she had again cast down her eyes!» Louisa, in other words, hides her feelings.

Tom also exhibits signs of repressed feeling. When he and Louisa speak together «in the hair-cutting chamber at twilight» we can see the intense misery that Mr. Gradgrind's suppression of his son's feelings has created. As their conversation proceeds, Tom appears close to acting out the anguish that he, unlike his sister, can at least verbalize. «I am sick of my life, Loo», he begins. «I hate it altogether, and I hate everybody except you» (39). Tom considers himself as «obstinate» as

² Schlicke contends that Dickens's portrayal of suffering women wronged by their fathers or grandfather in Nell's case yet who nevertheless forgive the sinning parental figures in a heroic sacrifice of self was profoundly affected by William Macready's 1838 production of Shakespeare's *King Lear* which restored the death of Cordelia (*Dickens and Popular Entertainment*, 1985).

³ Hyman Spotnitz defines the narcissistic defense as the individual protecting the object or target of his/her anger from that rage by attacking the self (*Modern Psychoanalysis of the Schizophrenic Patient: Theory of the Technique*, 1985). Along with Phyllis Meadow, Spotnitz supports this idea with further clinical examples in *Treatment of the Narcissistic Neurosis* (1995).

a donkey and probably «more stupid» than a donkey. He thinks that he is a mule and his home a «jaundiced jail».

Aside from confiding in each other, perhaps the most important part of Louisa's relationship with her brother is the way Dickens employs it to mirror or reflect the emotional damage Louisa has suffered. Part of the emotional damage is the inability to verbalize anger. In that mirroring process Dickens also presents Louisa's attempt, motivated by love, to protect her brother from the destructive feelings he harbors.

In another part of the conversation cited, Louisa expresses regret that she has not been as helpful to Tom as she would like. She criticizes herself for being unable to please her brother with conversation and music and finds fault with herself for lacking the ability to amuse him or relieve his fatigue.

Such frustrations also include Mrs. Gradgrind, herself a victim of her husband's determination to repress feeling in his home as well as a collaborator in that effort. On several occasions Mrs. Gradgrind reveals that, like her children, she suffers from her husband's idea that only facts have reality. Yet in each instance her suffering is also visited upon Louisa and Tom.⁴

In the first example, Mrs. Gradgrind, following her husband's lead, rebukes Tom and Louisa for looking at the horse circus: «I declare you're enough to make one regret having had a family at all» (13). Her statement is a wish that her children were dead and, indeed, Mrs. Gradgrind confirms that interpretation when she next remarks «I have a great mind to say I wish I hadn't [a family]. Then what would you have done, I should like to know?» (13). While comic, the emotional undertone of the passage does not amuse. Nor does Dickens mock Mrs. Gradgrind when she responds to her husband's impatient frowning at her attempt to impose discipline. Her scolding «as if, with my head in its present throbbing state, you couldn't go and look at the shells and minerals and things provided for you, instead of circuses» shows that while the ideology of Fact has made life miserable for the Gradgrind children, their mother suffers as well (13, 14).

Later Mrs. Gradgrind complains about the pain in the room, which she cannot account for (152). When she catches her daughter wondering, Mrs. Gradgrind attacks Louisa in words that indicate that she both experiences and inflicts pain. «I beg of you, Louisa», declares Mrs. Gradgrind, «to do nothing of that description... or I shall never hear the last of it from your father» (41). She blames Tom for encouraging his sister to wonder, when she knows his father has expressly said that she is not to do it, and scores Louisa for defending her brother «Louisa, don't tell me, in my state of health; for unless you had been encouraged [to wonder], it is morally and physically impossible that you could have done it» (41). Her reply reveals that she fully understands what her husband has attempted to do – drive recognition of feeling out of her children's lives.

Nor is this all. When Louisa indicates that her observation of the fire suggests a short life, her mother says «nonsense» (42). The verbal whipping she then delivers to her daughter shows a wounded Mrs. Gradgrind as well as a punishing one. Mrs. Gradgrind shouts at her daughter not to tell her «such stuff» to her face when she knows «very well that if it was ever to reach your father's ears I should never hear the last of it» (42). Mrs. Gradgrind cannot believe that «after all the trouble has been taken with [Louisa], after the lectures» she has attended and the experiments that she has seen as well as conversations between Louisa and her father about «combustion, calcination and calorification» that Louisa could talk «in this absurd way about sparks and ashes» (42). As for herself, Mrs. Gradgrind's response to the factual onslaught consists of pain and misery: her right side benumbed, and driven to distraction by «every kind of ation», she feels herself an invalid.

In such a total absence of parental love and affection it is no wonder that Louisa and Tom turn to each other for affection. Victims of psychological child abuse sometimes support each other

⁴ Jean Ferguson Carr argues that Dickens understands Mrs. Gradgrind's suffering and cultural dilemma. As a woman, she is wounded by the male who requires obedience but as a mother she is obliged to enforce Mr Gradgrind's dictates about her children. («Writing as A Woman: Dickens, *Hard Times*, and Feminine Discourse» *Dickens Studies Annual* 18 (1989)).

when one senses, as Louisa does, that something is wrong. And something is clearly wrong in the Gradgrind household. The mother and father who should nurture the imagination of their children and help them express their feelings in words devote themselves to the task of stifling imagination («fancy» is Dickens's word) and denying human feeling. Neither is it unusual, as Daniel Deneau suggests, for Tom to exploit his sister, since he merely acts on what the Gradgrind philosophy has taught him: self-interest rules human behavior.

Several scenes in the novel illustrate a mixture of love and repressed anger in Louisa's relationship with her brother as well as her desire to protect him. In one scene Tom visits his sister the night before Mr. Bounderby proposes marriage to Louisa. Tom knows what Mr. Bounderby will ask his sister, but he intends to bind Louisa to him so that he may exploit her affection for him later by manipulating Bounderby through Tom's claims on her. Louisa tells her brother that «Indeed I am» fond of you and that she won't forget how much she loves him (*Hard Times* 72, 73).

Yet note how Louisa stands near the fire in her father's house and stares into it. As Dickens's critics since Garrett Stewart have pointed out, when a female protagonist gazes into a fire in Dickens novel her inner life becomes interesting (*Dickens and the Trials of the Imagination*). More exactly, Dickens employs this device to suggest the repressed nature of Louisa's feelings, especially anger. Fire denotes passion but it also suggests ungovernable rage. And in this scene there are four distinct references to Louisa's steady gaze at the fire concluding with an indication that the fire in the Gradgrind house joins the fires of Coketown. Although Louisa is unaware of the anger that she feels, the four references to the fire that hold her eyes metaphorically expose the anger that rages within her.

Louisa's desire to protect Tom displays itself in other passages in the novel. When she provides him with money gained from selling Mr. Bounderby's gifts to her, when Tom tells James Harthouse that his sister married a man she detested in order to help Tom succeed in the world, and when Louisa tells her father that her motive in marrying Bounderby was to be useful to her brother, hidden rage reveals itself in the effort to protect the object.

In the scene after Tom robs the bank Louisa's protection assumes the form of a martyr. Louisa presses her brother to confide in her «if ever you loved me in your life, and have anything concealed from every one besides...» (145). Tom feigns ignorance, but Louisa, suspicious of her brother, but loving him still, declares that there is «nothing... you can tell me... that will change me» (145). «You may be certain», Louisa says in a passage remarkable for its candid expression of the desire to protect Tom «that I will not reproach you. You may be certain that I will be compassionate and true to you. You may be certain that I will save you at whatever cost» (145).

What Louisa suggests, of course, is that she will take the blame for any wrongs that her brother may have committed. Despite his criminality, loyalty is Louisa's intention. While abnormal, the feeling indicates rage against the self since Louisa, as she tells Sissy Jupe, feels little self regard. In Book one, chapter nine, for example, Louisa says to Sissy, «You are more useful to my mother, and more pleasant with her than I can ever be.... You are pleasanter to yourself, than I am to myself» (Dickens's emphasis 43).

Louisa's desire to protect Tom from danger and the repressed aggression that accompanies it comprise one of the three ways that Dickens presents hidden anger in Louisa and the Gradgrind family. A second technique involves acting out aggressive impulses rather than experiencing or verbalizing them. Louisa abandons her husband and runs away with Jem Harthouse, clearly considering adultery. This self-destructive action stems from two sources: Louisa's lack of emotional development and her repressed anger. Harthouse exploits the former in his attempt to win Louisa's affection while the latter exhibits itself when Louisa abandons Mr. Bounderby and returns to her father's home.

Louisa's comment about how fire in the Coketown chimneys «bursts out» suggests that her repressed feelings are mirrored in the fire. If, as I have suggested, fire denotes anger as well as passion Louisa's repression of anger and passion come to us in her words about how the chimneys appear to her: «There seems to be nothing there but languid and monotonous smoke. Yet when the night comes out, Fire bursts out, Father» (76). These words provide the context in which to view

Mr. Bounderby's marriage proposal and Louisa's acting out of her feelings when she abandons her husband: repression of feeling produces catastrophe.

Louisa's decision to marry Mr. Bounderby, needless to say, is not based on emotional compatibility. Lacking emotional understanding, Louisa accepts her father's explanation that the statistics of England, Wales, India, China support the idea that in marriages where disparity in years exists «rather more than three-fourths of these instances» find the elder party a male. But Louisa's answers to her father's questions tells us why her marriage will end unhappily, and her words, like her response to the Coketown fires contain suppressed feelings of anger and passion.

Louisa begins by saying «almost scornfully What other proposal can have been made to *me*? Whom have I seen? Where have I been? What are my heart's experiences» (77). She continues her list of what she does not know in what Dickens's narrator calls «her quiet manner» (77). But the narrator also points out that as Louisa spoke «she unconsciously closed her hand, as if upon a solid object, and slowly opened it as though she were releasing dust or ash» (77). Louisa's resentment about her emotionally barren childhood, here indicated in indirections, continues to surface in questions that are not meant to be answered. «What do I know... of tastes and fancies; of aspirations and affections; of all that part of my nature in which such light things might have been nourished? What escape have I had from problems that could be demonstrated, and realities that could be grasped?» (77).

Later Louisa's ironic explanation of why affection for Mr. Bounderby is «a strange question to ask *me*» sarcastically reveals rage. She remarks further that dreaming and hearts are things her father's educational training has successfully eliminated from her mind.

«The baby-preference that even I have heard of as common among children, has never had its innocent resting-place in my breast. You have been so careful of me, that I never had a child's heart. You have trained me so well, that I never dreamed a child's dream» (78).

The combination of suppressed rage and passion present in this scene exert themselves when Harthouse attempts to seduce Louisa. Cleverly exploiting her affection for Tom and manipulating her lack of knowledge of human feeling, Louisa finds Harthouse's cynicism, called a «vicious assumption of honesty in dishonesty» by Dickens's narrator, appealing. She struggles with «doubts and resentments» of her childhood training «because of the wrong that had been done to her if it were indeed a whisper of the truth» (127). «Long accustomed to self-suppression» and exhibiting a «scornful self-reliance», Louisa drifts into considering adultery with Harthouse much as she agreed to marry Bounderby because «what did anything matter» (127). When she abandons Bounderby intending a rendezvous with Harthouse, Louisa acts out her feelings of rage and passion.

Louisa's conversation with her father when she abruptly presents herself to him after leaving Bounderby provides further evidence that Louisa's suppression of her angry and passionate feelings is ending. The discussion that they have contrasts to the marriage-scene proposal enacted in that very room. Louisa's anger, repressed there, now receives verbal expression. The scene with Mr. Gradgrind displays an angry and distraught young woman verbalizing some of the anger and misery that her abandonment of Mr. Bounderby has suggested runs deep in her personality.

Among the several revelations Louisa assaults her father with is her hatred of her husband, an angry feeling that astonishes Mr. Gradgrind (165). But Louisa also tells her dumbfounded father that she curses the hour when he began to train her to ignore feeling, fancy, and sentiment. While she says to Mr. Gradgrind, «I don't reproach you» because «what you have never nurtured in me, you have never nurtured in yourself», Louisa nevertheless declares that «I should have been... a much better and much happier creature... if you had only neglected me» (165). Desiring parental neglect seems a way of condemning the parental care that one has received. In any event, Louisa expresses in angry words that she has been unhappy all of her life.

With a hunger and thirst upon me, father, which have never been for a moment appeased, with an ardent impulse towards some region where rules, and figures are not quite absolute; *I have grown up battling every inch of my way* (Emphasis added 165).

Continuing, she describes her life as «strife» (165). Her words bristle with rage, and «feelings long suppressed» which before were only mirrored in the Coketown fires, are now «broke loose». The words «repulsed», «crushed», «despising», «regretting», and «dismal» sharply convey Louisa's anger. Louisa doubts and misbelieves what she has learned, and what she has learned compels her to despise and regret «what she has not learned» (166). She indicates that in some unknown fashion James Harthouse has «read my thoughts», and «understood me» so that «there seemed to be a near affinity between us» (166). This very night he has declared himself to be Louisa's lover and «this minute expects me» (166). Only by agreeing to meet him later could Louisa avoid disgrace and gain «release... [from] his presence», which she feels has made her love him. Finally, Louisa collapses in «an insensible heap at her father's feet after crying "out in a terrible voice I shall die if you hold me!" and castigates Mr. Gradgrind's philosophy in bitter words» (167). She says she does not feel shame nor «know that I am degraded in my own esteem: all I know is, your philosophy will not save me» (167).

The final example Dickens employs to portray repressed anger in the Gradgrind family is the physical manifestation of repressed feelings. Louisa's illness, which shortly follows the outburst of rage just discussed, is the principal example of this kind of repressed aggression. But there are other examples of physically self-destructive actions involving Louisa before that climatic episode, which Fred Kaplan calls «a special form of crucifixion» (157). In addition, the attacks upon the body involve the two other repressed members of the Gradgrind family. Aches in the head and legs continually plague Mrs. Gradgrind while Tom at one point attacks his face.

As previously examined, Mrs. Gradgrind enforces but also suffers from her husband's ideology of Facts. Yet her many complaints about her head communicate the feelings of repressed anger. When, for example, she congratulates Louisa on her decision to marry, Mrs. Gradgrind communicates more of her suppressed and hidden anger than she does joy. Hostility and regret sound when Mrs. Gradgrind hopes that her daughter's «health may be good... for if [Louisa's] head begins to split, which was the case with mine, I cannot consider that you are to be envied» (77). Mrs. Gradgrind offers Louisa «a kiss of congratulation» but warns her «don't touch my right shoulder, for there's something running down it all day long» (77). Strange words to congratulate a daughter upon the announcement of her marriage!

The examples of Louisa attacking her self begin in the chapter entitled «A Loophole». In explaining why she looked at the circus, Louisa tells Mr. Gradgrind, «I was tired, father, I have been tired a long time» (10). Fatigue concerns the mind, but a physical sensation attaches to Louisa's words. When the astonished Mr. Gradgrind, who thinks his children degraded for looking at the circus, persists, Louisa gives more evidence of the fatigue that bothers her. To her father's question «of what are you tired» Louisa says «I don't know of what – of everything I think» (10).

A more vivid indication of a physical sign suggesting Louisa's repressed anger also occurs early in the novel. Although not eager to permit it, Louisa allows Mr. Bounderby to kiss her. Dickens's narrator says Louisa «ungraciously raised her cheek towards him, with her face away» (16). Louisa's «ungracious» way of offering her cheek suggest dislike communicated through a bodily gesture. When Mr. Bounderby leaves Louisa stands «on the same spot, rubbing the cheek he had kissed, with her handkerchief, until it was burning red» (16). To Tom's objection that «You'll rub a hole in your face, Louisa defiantly declares "you may cut the piece out with your penknife if you like, Tom, I wouldn't cry"» (16). A final example of Louisa attacking herself before her illness brings the theme to a conclusion takes place in the marriage-proposal scene. Earlier I suggested that Louisa exhibits repressed anger in this scene. But one of her actions, aside from staring at the smoky Coketown chimneys, reveals that Louisa expresses through her body what she cannot verbalize. Expressing incredulity that her father could think she has entertained other marriage proposals, Louisa «unconsciously closed her hand, as if upon a solid object, and slowly opened it as though she were releasing dust or ash» (77). Here Louisa's action reveals an unconscious hatred of Mr. Bounderby, and it seems as if she desires to crush the man who forced his kisses upon her

when she was a girl. While it is only in fantasy that Louisa can reject Mr. Bounderby, her act reveals the depth of her dislike: she would kill him.

The four examples culminate in Louisa's illness where the self attacks the self in a major way. Fred Kaplan contends that Louisa's illness is the kind that «represents a concentration of all the psychic diseases of the individual's life» (*Dickens and Mesmerism* 157). In Louisa's case it is the lifelong repression of feeling, particularly anger, that figures in her illness. As Tom said of his sister, Louisa is all shut up within herself.

Evoking the metaphor that earlier represented her anger, Dickens characterizes Louisa's rage as one that «smolders within her like an unwholesome fire» (170). «All closely imprisoned forces rend and destroy», Dickens says, and Louisa describes herself to Sissy, who tends her during the illness, as «so proud, and so hardened, so confused and troubled, so resentful, and unjust to every one and to myself, that everything is stormy, dark and wicked to me» (172). Louisa then expresses her misery in bitter words.

«I am so unhappy, and all should have made me otherwise is so laid waste, that if I had been bereft of sense to this hour, and instead of being as learned as you think me, had to begin to acquire the simplest truths, I could not want a guide to peace, contentment, honour, all the good of which I am quite devoid, more abjectly than I do» (172).

Repressed anger in the Gradgrind family is thus the idea that gives Dickens's *Hard Times* a psychological dimension. The novel argues that a failure to educate children to experience feelings of rage and passion produces dire consequences in the adult personality. Tom's suppression of feelings results in petty theft and social disgrace for himself and his family; Louisa's in a tragic ending, rare for a Dickens novel which often falsifies the emotional truth it dramatizes with sugary conclusions. Mrs. Gradgrind, meanwhile, emerges as a parental figure equally wounded as her children by the theory that her husband compels her to enforce.

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Robinson pervert? – Tournier, Deleuze, and «no others»

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Deleuze's ([1969] 1990) interest in Tournier's novel entitled (in translation) *Friday, or the Other Island* (orig. 1967) (1969), hinges on the construal of a «World Without Others». It is by reference to the notion of a «World Without Others» that Deleuze attempts to reconceptualise the notion of perversion. For Deleuze, Tournier's «experimental and inductive novel» (Deleuze, 1990: 304) «rejoins, by very different ways, recent psychoanalytical studies which may renew the status of the concept of perversion and disentangle it from the moralizing uncertainty in which it was maintained by the combined forces of psychiatry and the law» (Deleuze, 1990: 319). The alternative which Deleuze posits and which he sees exemplified in Tournier's novel, is a notion of perversion defined by the absence of a structure-Other, which brings into play «a completely different structure» (Deleuze, 1990: 320) – an «otherwise Other» (Deleuze, 1990: 320) – introducing desire «into an entirely different system» (Deleuze, 1990: 304).

To illustrate this, Deleuze contrasts Tournier's Robinson with Defoe's Robinson. Defoe's Robinson attempts to reconstruct origins progressively through time. Defoe's Robinson therefore remains within what Deleuze calls «good sense» (Deleuze, 1990: 75). Tournier's novel «deviates» from this norm, according to Deleuze, by posing the problem in terms of «ends» (rather than in terms of «origin»), the «ends» being Robinson's «dehumanisation». In the «ends» of «dehumanisation», Robinson becomes elemental, taking the elements as his objects. Robinson's transformed sexuality, to Deleuze, constitutes «a fantastic deviation from our world», as opposed to «the economic reproduction of our world», which Defoe's Robinson demands:

For Defoe it was the same thing to relate Robinson to the origin and have him produce a world consistent with our own; it is the same thing for Tournier to relate him to aims and have him deviate or diverge with respect to aims. Related to origins, Robinson must necessarily reproduce our world, but related to ends, he must deviate. (Deleuze, 1990: 303-304)

This «deviation» in relation to ends and aims rather than to origins (Deleuze, 1990: 303) is one of the aspects that motivates Deleuze to describe Tournier's Robinson in terms of the structure of perversion.

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The definitive criteria of perversion, as Deleuze mobilises them for a reading of Tournier's novel, are summed up in a tribute to Lacan. Lacan is credited with a re-statement of the theory of perversion, wresting it from being viewed simply as an aberration (as being contrary to good morals) or as an atypicality (as derogating from reproductive sexuality) (see Lacan, [1975] 1988: 221):

Lacan and his school insist... on the necessity of understanding perverse behaviour on the basis of a structure, and of defining this *structure* which conditions behaviour. They also insist on the manner in which desire undergoes a sort of *displacement* in this structure, and the manner by which the *cause* of desire is thus detached from the *object*; on the way in which the *difference of sexes* is disavowed by the pervert, in the interest of an androgynous world of *doubles*; on the annulment of the Other inside perversion, on a position of a «beyond-the-Other» or of an «otherwise Other»...; finally, they insist on perverse desubjectivation... (Deleuze, 1990: 320)

It is this list of achievements of «Lacan and his school» which Deleuze wishes to trace, in the form of a programme, as it were, through Tournier's novel. Deleuze describes Tournier's novel as critique. However, this ascription appears problematic in terms of Deleuze's statement of Freud's concept of perversion (which Deleuze does not explicitly differentiate from that of Lacan); and in terms of the relationship posited between «Others» and characters. Deleuze thereby risks leading the definitions of «the perverse» back to precisely their «moralising uncertainty» from which he wishes to disentangle them.

Deleuze would deny that his argument hinges around a content (and specifically character-based reading). He explicitly states that the structure of perversion does not need to be filled in order to be called «perverse» (Deleuze, 1990: 281; see also Deleuze, 1990: 319). Yet in relation to Tournier's Robinson, Deleuze makes a claim which could be understood to be diametrically opposed to his supposed emphasis on structure: namely that the structure-Other disappears «*when Robinson on his island no longer encounters any actual terms or characters to actualise that structure*» (emphasis added -UK) (Deleuze, 1990: 309). This statement makes it appear that the structure-Other is not an *a priori* principle. Inasmuch as Deleuze retains the notion of structure-Other as a vehicle for asserting its disintegration, he pegs it to the notion of characters derived from a content-reading of Tournier's novel.

However, it is worth examining this reading in detail, even if that means remaining with the level of content for a little while. To examine the altru-cidal «transformed sexuality» which (according to Deleuze's outline of the structure of perversion) «introduces desire into a completely different system» (Deleuze, 1990: 304), we would have to look at Freud's theory of instincts or drives and of perversion. This is relevant particularly for the way in which Deleuze charts the transformation which distinguishes Defoe's Robinson from Tournier's Robinson – namely the relation to origin and the relation to ends/goals/aims respectively.

These criteria bring to mind the three aspects which Freud identifies in the dynamic interrelation characteristic of instincts, namely that between source (bodily stimulus), aim (elimination of tension at the instinctual source), and object (in which the instinct achieves its aim) (Freud, [1905] 1986; see also Freud, [1915], 1985: 118-120). The source of the instinct is located in the body, as bodily based need (Freud, [1915] 1985: 119). With respect to the object and aim, however – which are the only conditions by which instinct can feature as drive, and by which the drive can be known (Freud, [1915] 1985: 120) –, we have to posit a transformation from the organic to the psychical: the drive is the (psychical and, in later conceptualisations, non-psychical – see «Editor's Note» on «Instincts and their Vicissitudes», Freud [1915] 1985: 109) representative of the soma within the psyche. The orientation towards a particular aim and object requires a cultural logic for its explanation (namely a theory of zoning to explain the genital aim, and the model of the Oedipus complex to explain the non-incestual mode). Thus, if Deleuze sees in Tournier's novel a re-orientation of Robinson Crusoe towards ends/goals/aims (rather than origins), this is inconsistent with the effect attributed by Deleuze to Tournier's Friday and Robinson, namely the effect of

«separat[ing] desire from its object, from its detour through the body, in order to relate it to a pure cause: the Elements» (Deleuze, 1990: 317).

Moreover, the notion that Tournier's Robinson «deviates» with respect to aims, is open to challenge. In terms of a psychoanalytic definition of perversion, Deleuze's Tournier's Robinson would be perverse not primarily in respect to the «aim», but in respect to the «object». The particular object of desire of Tournier's Robinson does not fall within the range of objects featuring in any ontogenetic explanation of zoning, gendering, enculturation – which does not, however, mean that its status cannot be accounted for. A different type of object-choice is possible only on condition of prior genital organisation. Furthermore, it is only with regard to the «*heterosexual object choice*» that a «deviation» in terms of object (as unified external object) can be said to pertain. Choice of a different type of object therefore does *not* imply «cultural» difference or «Other-ness» (or, for that matter, as Deleuze would have it, the gradual disappearance of the Other) in terms of an unzoned body, or in terms of «regression» to auto-erotism or narcissism. The notion of a «world without Others», in Tournier's Robinson's «perversion», through the progressive disappearance of the Other-as structure is a theoretical impossibility. This impossibility emerges from both a Lacanian account of perversion (see eg Lacan, [1975] 1988: 222), and from Freud's first ontogeny.

According to the first ontogeny of Freud, desire could be said to be without an object only in the auto-erotic stage (when the infant does not yet have a representative of an object, or of a unified body or ego – Freud, [1905], 1986: 144-145), which would preclude the possibility of the choice of a different kind of object. Hence the choice of a different type of object – Tournier's Robinson's «vegetable way» - does not entail a regression to auto-erotism.

For the same reason, referring, as Deleuze does, a distinct order of perversion (in Tournier's Robinson's case, an order of perversion characterised by a different type of object) to a generalised condition of polymorphous perversity or androgyny (Deleuze, 1990: 317, 320) is flawed because it involves the crossing of distinct orders of perversion.¹

All in all, Deleuze's argument would seem to require greater conceptual clarity. The notion of o/Other appears in an undifferentiated manner, as a synonym or attribute of structure, character, category of ontology, object of desire, and object-relation (Deleuze, 1990: 306-315, 317-320). The notion of end(s) features in the sense of aim of instinct, narrative end, and eschatology (Deleuze, 1990: 302-304).

It is these various types of ends, and their interrelation, that I would like to follow up in the last part of this paper.

With respect to the process of «the freeing of the elements, avoiding the detour through the body, separating desire from its object» (Deleuze, 1990: 317), Deleuze states, almost by way of a throw-away comment:

Psychoanalysis might see in this abolition of the detour, in this separation of the cause of desire from its object, and return to the elements – evidence of a death instinct (Deleuze, 1990: 317-318).

This claim, it seems to me, is worthwhile investigating by virtue of the interrelation implied here, namely that between neurosis/repression, perversion/defence-disavowal, and the death drive, and between all of these categories and narrative end(s).

Freud began providing a dynamic account of this interrelation in a posthumously published article entitled «Psychopathic Characters on Stage» ([1942]). Guided by the question as to what it

¹ This conflation is all the more surprising, considering that Deleuze, in another article, cautions against precisely that move, pointing out that

In the sphere of perversions, it is a mistake to confuse the formations, the concrete specific manifestations, with an abstract «grid», as though a common libidinal substance flowed now into one form, now into another. (Deleuze, 1989: 45)

is that creates the condition for the enjoyment of suffering (in tragedy), Freud distinguishes the tragic conflict in Greek tragedy (and Aristotle's account of it, exemplified by reference to *Oedipus Rex*), and modern psychological/psychopathological drama (exemplified by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*) thus:

... psychological drama turns into psychopathological drama when the source of suffering in which we take part and from which we are meant to derive pleasure is no longer a conflict between two almost equally conscious impulses [which was the case for *Oedipus*], but between a conscious impulse and a repressed one. Here the precondition of enjoyment is that the spectator should himself be a neurotic, for it is only such people who can derive pleasure instead of simple aversion from the revelation and the more or less conscious recognition of a repressed impulse. ... in neurotics the repression is on the brink of failing; it is unstable and needs a constant renewal of expenditure, and this expenditure is spared if recognition of the impulse is brought about. (Freud, [1942], 1985: 125)

Presupposing the social or cultural establishment of neurosis, we could postulate that the closure of a modern psychopathological drama brings to an end the expenditure of energy required for an unstable repression. This happens in what Freud terms «psychopathological drama» and in what structuralist analysis defines as narrative, through naming at the level of discourse the «repressed impulse» accumulated and pressing for discharge. Pleasure is gained through the recognition of the conflict, but this recognition must remain unconscious – the spectator's/readers attention must be averted; hence the naming at the level of discourse rather than story. (A conscious recognition would liberate the repressed and thereby increase the level of excitation, producing unpleasure and the inability to continue reading/watching.)

However, this is only one scenario. It is based on the presupposition of the social or cultural establishment of neurosis which commands the form of modern psychopathological drama and of narrative. Freud outlines another possible scenario, which he opposes to that of the neurotic one:

In anyone who is *not* neurotic this recognition will meet only with aversion and will call up a readiness to repeat the act of repression which has earlier been successfully brought to bear on the impulse: for in such people a single expenditure of repression has been enough to hold the repressed impulse completely in check. (Freud [1942], 1985: 125)

In contrast to neurosis, which requires the more or less conscious recognition (and, in narrative, a surreptitious naming) of the repressed impulse, perversion arises out of «a desire which dare not speak its name» (Lacan, [1975] 1988: 221). The «other» scenario («not neurotic») outlined by Freud, I would argue, to some extent and with some modifications required, covers the case of (a generalised notion of) perversion. This emerges from the consideration that the mechanism of repression strictly speaking is absent in perversions. The effects of forms of defence operating in perversion – disavowal of reality, splitting of the ego – differ markedly from those of repression inside neurosis (see Laplanche & Pontalis, [1967] 1973: 309). The splitting of the ego involves the coexistence of two different forms of ego-defence: recognition of a reality, and disavowal of that perception, detaching the ego from reality (see Laplanche & Pontalis, [1967] 1973: 119, 427, 429). This would correspond to Deleuze's contention that perversion entails an art of surface. The two attitudes towards reality involved in defence are maintained separately at the heart of the ego, without the formation of a compromise. The fact that this involves an intra-agency splitting of the ego (rather than a splitting between the agencies), would imply that perversion cannot be analysed symptomatically, and cannot produce a «recognition of the repressed impulse». The function of representation in this case is to double itself, as what presents itself cannot signify itself. The absence of repression, of the symptom, of compromise-formation, and of recognition which I had stipulated for the matrix of perversion, does not amount to the absence of an unconscious, though. Rather, it highlights a fundamental paradox, which can only be explained by the absolute heterogeneity of the death drive which is radicalised by the logic of perversion. As Deleuze observes,

Freud supposes the unconscious to be ignorant of three important things: Death, Time and No. Yet it is a question only of time, death and no in the unconscious. (Deleuze, [1968], 1994: 114)

The unconscious' ignorance of what drives its own system is referred to the question: «Does this mean that [Death, Time and No] are acted without being represented?» (Deleuze, [1968], 1994: 114). For the case of a narrative structured by the logic of perversion, this would entail repetition at the actantial level (rather than at the level of discourse or signification), leaving nothing to interpret (see also Lyotard, 1983: 352).

At the end of Tournier's novel, the possibility of a more or less conscious recognition through naming at the level of discourse is not provided for; on the contrary, discharge occurs directly – on the level of story. Repetition works itself out at the actantial level: Robinson does not leave the island. After 28 years on the island, an off-course schooner arrives near the island to replenish provisions for the crew. Friday secretly leaves the island and embarks on the schooner, bound for England. Out goes Friday, in comes Jan, the galley-boy from the ship, to join Robinson on the island. The novel ends with Crusoe re-naming him Sunday. Thus the end of the novel differs from the type of closure characteristic of realist narrative. Instead of naming at the level of discourse – bringing about recognition under averted attention – we are witnessing a process of actantial splitting. This splitting undermines the unifying and binding function of the ego in a dynamic account of reading.

This would make Tournier's novel a radical one to the extent that it presents «a reiterated affirmation of the laws of the unconscious process, in their heterogeneity in relation to everything that depends on the intervention of reality or of the ego» (Laplanche on the Nirvana principle – Laplanche, 1990: 122). However, I would suggest that, unlike Deleuze, we look for evidence for the laws of the unconscious not in a content-based reading; but in the logic of perversion and its capacity to jeopardise narrative structuration. Otherwise we would simply be treating Tournier's novel as a thesis on perversion, and Deleuze's reading would be a thesis on a thesis of perversion (– a perverse exercise?).

Tournier's novel minimally falls foul of and maximally overthrows the very definition of narrative. If it cannot be called a narrative, it might well be termed, a perverse thesis (rather than a thesis on perversion). And the author of *Friday, or the Other Island* (not Michel Tournier) might be called an-other pervert. As for the reader – a structurally and consistently pervert reader, I would say, is as impossible an object as «the other island»; it takes someone socially and culturally neuroticised to make that pronouncement.

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Abjections *In Our Time*

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«It's hell, isn't it?»

«No. Not exactly,» Nick said.

Ernest Hemingway, «Cross Country Snow»

... the subject of abjection is eminently productive of culture. Its symptom is the rejection and reconstruction of languages.

Julia Kristeva, *The Power of Horror* (45)

Ernest Hemingway's *In Our Time* depicts physical and emotional threats to the boundaries of the self. In addition to depicting encounters with corpses and with death, Hemingway's stories identify love, pregnancy, birth, illness, and wounds as threats to the borders of identity. Julia Kristeva's discussion of «abjection» finds the source of such fears concerning the boundaries of «the clean and proper self» in the first separations from the mother-as object. Kristeva argues that religious taboos and rites of cleansing exemplify the history of the need to reenact this separation, and she asserts that modern writers such as Dostoevski, Proust, Borges and Celine also express the need for separation from such defilement. Their writings exemplify a variety of post-theocratic responses to the abjections which threaten identity. Hemingway's concerns with such boundaries of the self are, then, representative instances of a struggle central to Modernism.

Hemingway's «craft of excluslon» has been frequently noted. In a recent essay, Earl Rovit addresses this issue broadly and with a surprising intensity. Rovit identifies the parallels between Hemingway's «consistent tactic of pushing away, warding off, editing out everything... extraneous» to his writing, and... «his well-chronicled... perigrinations as he breaks one camp after another, leaving behind resentful loved ones, soured friendships, and, ultimately, everyone outside... the [blood-spattered] foyer of his Ketchum ranch» (181). In this essay, I do not wish to enter the debate concerning Hemingway's suicide. Nevertheless, Kristeva's discussion of «abjection» places the «separations» and «breaks» in Hemingway's life and writings at the center of the modern writer's

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attempt to define «a substitute for the role formerly played by the sacred, at the limits of social and subjective identity» (26). The recent publication of *The Garden of Eden* and critical re-readings of his comments on gender (see: Comley & Scholes, for example) suggest that Hemingway was not merely an arrogant and brutal proponent of hairy-chested machismo, denying personal vulnerability and sensitivity. Rather than finding the patterns of «exclusion» in his life and writings as pathological or morally reprehensible, we can, with the aid of Kristeva, appreciate Hemingway's self-consciousness in addressing the recurring struggle to create the boundaries of the self through the exclusion of abjections.

In his memoir of Paris during the 1920's, *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway discusses such a struggle to define the boundaries of the creative self. This was the very period when he was writing *In Our Time*. The memoir describes Hemingway's attempts to achieve creative power through separating himself from defilements encoded in food, intoxicants, money, gambling, sexual desire, and even in geographical places (Vanouse, 27-31).

In Our Time confronts abjections encoded in violence and the responses to violence. The body's vulnerability to wounds and death, and the mind's vulnerability to fear are central, particularly in the battlefield and bullfighting inter-chapters, but also in such stories as «The Battler» and even in «The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife».

In Our Time is, of course, a bold and complex experiment in narrative technique. One of the most important differences from the memoir of Paris is that *In Our Time* does not have a first-person narrative point of view. In addition, this early collection directs little attention toward the struggles of the artist. Only in the rather smugly satiric «Mr. and Mrs. Elliot» does a writer's self-congratulatory assertion of sexual innocence correlate with a blindness to corrupted relationships to all of his emotions, to money, and to creative work

In Our Time exemplifies Hemingway's own desire for «separation» from the abject, however, by employing a journalistic voice of detached objectivity and by various maskings of his personal experiences in the characters of the fictions.

The introductory essay «On The Quai at Smyrna» and a number of the chapter headings present a cataloguing of the thematics of abjection. «On The Quai at Smyrna» was added to the volume as an «Introduction» in 1930, five years after the first Scribner's edition. The essay focuses upon an evacuation of civilians from a pier during the war in Greece, and it displaces the autobiographical Nick Adams story «Indian Camp» from its earlier «primacy» in the volume. «On the Quai at Smyrna» opens with a layering of unnamed and uncertain voices:

«The strange thing was, he said, how they screamed every night at midnight. I do not know why they screamed at that time.... We used to turn the searchlight on them to quiet them» (9).

A speaker is quoted; he asserts his uncertainty about «their» emotions. We never learn his name, and we never learn who frames the direct discourse: «he said». The reader is placed in the midnight darkness with the screaming people. Later, we learn that they are refugees waiting for a boat to take them «away» from the scene of their suffering. The refugees introduce the theme of «separation»: they have come from somewhere as a result of war, and they wait or struggle to be taken somewhere else. The sketch records responses of the refugees and the narrator to threats of defilement at the borders of the self: death, birth, violence, and moral disorder. Hemingway confronts such threats to the self throughout this collection of stories.

Kristeva says, «The corpse seen without God and outside of science is the utmost of abjection» (4). In an essay published in 1932, «A Natural History of the Dead», Hemingway himself was to provide a catalogue of such corpses (*Winner Take Nothing*, 135-53). His concern with the abject corpse also is important to the thematics of *In Our Time*. Such corpses include the jockey in «My Old Man» (172-3) and the Hungarian burglars shot by the bigoted police officer to whom they are simply «wops» (103) as well as the Indian who cuts his throat while his wife is screaming in childbirth (20-1). All of these corpses represent instances of «abjection» displacing human identity. «On The Quai» there is an old woman among the dead and dying who is depicted as precisely the horror beyond understanding

which Kristeva identifies. Hemingway's narrator says, «Just then she died and went absolutely stiff. Her legs drew up and she went quite rigid... I told a medical chap about it and he told me it was impossible» (10). The «impossible» corpse in the fetal position is the abject «thing» without God and outside of science. Executions reported in the inter-chapters *In our Time* are shown as similar abominations: a cabinet minister sick with typhoid is shot while «sitting in [a puddle of] water with his head between his knees» (63) and a man is hung strapped in a chair after losing control of his sphincter muscle» (1934). In *L'Envoi* which concludes *In Our Time*, the Greek king in the garden observes, «The important thing is not to get shot yourself» (213). Executions define the human as an abject thing.

The story «Indian Camp» (15-21) ends with the discovery of the abject, incomprehensible corpse of the suicidal father. The medically «meaningless» screams of a woman in childbirth seem to have been unendurable to her husband lying injured in the bunk bed above hers. Her screams echo the screaming at midnight on the quai, of course, and the caesarean birth itself is one of a series of references to pregnancy and childbirth throughout the volume. Some readers have found Julia Kristeva's discussions of the «abject» in relation to maternal body to be «questionable and often offensive» (Oliver, 7). Kristeva herself argues that «the abject confronts us... with our earliest attempts to release the hold of the maternal entity.... Repelling, rejecting; repelling it self, rejecting itself. Abjecting» (13).

Struggles at the boundaries of the «maternal» are a recurrent issue in Hemingway's *In Our Time*. On the Ouai, for example, it is not simply the women having babies («You just covered them over with something and let them go to it» [11]), but the «worst... were the women with dead babies. They'd have babies dead for six days. Wouldn't give them up. Nothing you could do about it. Had to take them away finally» (10). In this clutching of the dead babies is an ultimate collapsing of the boundaries of life and death, the maternal person and the abject thing. The description of the taking of the dead babies from the mothers appears to be a guarded representation of the «self» as abjected in its separation from the maternal entity.

Near the end of «On the Quai at Smyrna», the Narrator recalls the water of the harbor: «There were plenty of nice things floating around in it. That was the only time time in my life I got so I dreamed about things» (11). The unnamed and haunting flotsam creates a sea of abject and excluded «things». In a report upon a similarly horrific civilian evacuation in the second inter-chapter, the narrator asserts that he was «Scared sick looking at it» (23). This combination of fear and nausea expresses the emotional texture of the encounter with the abject. Jackson K. Benson says that the patterns of «recurring imagery» found in *In Our Time* express a kind of «nightmare» (160). In Kristeva's terms, these recurrent images show the never ending struggle at the boundaries of identity threatened by abjection.

In addition to identifying the *thematics* of abjection with such images of death and birth (as well as with images of «wounds» and «drunkenness»), Hemingway uses characters in *In Our Time* to affirm his personal boundaries and to separate himself from the abject. The experiences of Nick Adams (in «Indian Camp», «The Three Day Blow», «The Battler», «Cross Country Snow» and «Big Two-Hearted River»); Harold Krebs (in «Soldier's Home»), and the unnamed soldier jilted by the nurse in «A Very Short Story», report and transform Hemingway's life experiences, and the fictions create boundaries by which he identifies and excludes the defilements of the abject.

The jilting in «A Very Short Story», for example, clearly parallels Hemingway's own rejection by Agnes Von Kurowski, the nurse with whom he had a love affair being wounded by shrapnel in Italy. When the soldier in the story is getting ready to return to the U.S.A., Hemingway says that the lovers

... quarreled about her not being willing to come home at once.... They kissed goodbye but were not finished with the quarrel. He felt sick about saying goodbye like that (84).

The kiss given in anger expresses the blurred emotional boundaries of the self at the time of this separation. The soldier pollutes the expression of love with fear and resentment. The story includes similar defilements in the mock-marriage (to «make it so they could not lose it»), the «bleak and

rainy» winter weather which contributed to Luz's love affair with an Italian officer, and the gonorrhea which the soldier «contracted... from a sales girl... while riding in a taxicab through Lincoln Park» after Luz breaks off their affair (84-5). In all of these instances, the boundaries of «wants» become uncertain, and the characters are implicated in the dissembling betrayals of abjection (see: Kristeva, 4).

In the story published a few years later, «Fathers and Sons» (1933) Hemingway commented upon the use of his writing to «separate» himself from painful memories concerning his father: «If he wrote it he could get rid of it. He had gotten rid of many things by writing them» (*Short Stories*, 491). In this passage, Hemingway's shift to the third person seems to be a stylistic device for distancing himself from the pain and guilt in such writing. The process of self-creation by excluding the abject also threatens the self with the abjections of exposure and betrayal.

In «A Very Short Story» Hemingway appears to be «ridding» himself of corrupt self-deceptions and self-indulgences in the love affair with Agnes Von Kurowski. «Abjection» is not simply a threat from without, it is a defiling dependency unnameable and within. According to Kristeva, the exclusion of the abject reenacts the «earliest attempts to release the hold of the maternal entity. It is a violent, clumsy breaking away» (13). Hemingway's circling back to such separations exemplifies a struggle with the fluid uncertainties of the abject. His need to re-enact such separations can be glimpsed in his later return to separate himself from the love affair with Agnes by recreating it in *A Farewell to Arms*.

Similar separations are found in the Michigan stories, «The End of Something» and «The Three Day Blow». The stories include accurate portraits of the town and the landscape around Horton Bay, Michigan, and Hemingway identifies two of the characters with the names («Bill» and «Marjorie») of his own best friends during the summer when he was nineteen (Montgomery, 128-40). In the first of these stories, the adolescent Nick Adams is breaking-off a romance with Marjorie. Both his fishing partner and his lover, Marjorie «Knows everything» (39), Nick says, and she threatens his emerging self by occupying the territory which is the very frontier of his identity. But the «breaking away» from Marjorie is blurred and duplicitous, having been planned and arranged with his friend, Bill (41). It is a fresh-start, the creation of a boundary of the self, but it is compromised from the first by bad faith. Abjection, Kristeva asserts, includes the «scheming» and «duplicitous»; the «dissembling of fraudulent righteousness» (4). The sequel story, «The Three Day Blow», takes its title from the storms which end the Michigan summer. In this story, the boys are drinking Bill's father's whiskey and talking about literature, baseball, and the end of Nick's romance with Marjorie. After Bill warns him, that he might become involved with Marjorie again, Hemingway says that Nick

... felt happy... Nothing was finished. Nothing was ever lost. He would go into town on Saturday.... There was always a way out (60).

Nick is drunk, an expression of the abject-self throughout *In Our Time*. In his circling back toward Marjorie, he continues the blurrings of their separation with an unwillingness to accept his ending of their summer of love. As with Luz in the earlier story, his emotional coherence collapses in the emotional desolation of cold wind and rain. Nick's slithering into a blurry self-deception exposes the abject within himself. In *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway identified his own involvement in the drinking scene with Nick and Bill. He notes that he violated his own rule against drinking while he wrote the story: «The boys were drinking», he says, «and this made me thirsty» (5). Hemingway's violation of his training re-enacts the boys' drinking. Both are responses to the blurred emotions concerning the separation from threats to identity in the love affair with Marjorie. The boundaries Hemingway erects against abjection are uncertain and need to be perpetually reconstituted.

The subject-matter of separation in these Michigan stories recurs throughout *In Our Time*. The scene in which Krebs in «Soldier's Home» talks with his mother clearly exemplifies the «violent and clumsy breaking away» from the mother where Kristeva's locates the sources of abjection:

«I'm your mother,» she said. «I held you next to my heart when you were a tiny baby.»

Krebs felt sick and vaguely nauseated.

«I know, Mummy,» he said. «I'll try to be a good boy for you.»

.... He had felt sorry for his mother and she had made him lie.... There would be one more scene maybe before he got away (100-1).

Hemingway's focus upon the thematics of abjection in these stories – and in other stories and inter-chapters of *In Our Time* – shows his concern with the fluidities of identity. Furthermore, the structures of identity are more uncertain in these stories and vignettes than the boundaries of characters presented in a conventional novel. «A deviser of territories, languages, works», Kristeva says, «the deject never stops demarcating his universe whose fluid confines... are constituted of a non-object, the abject» (PH 8). Hemingway's use of several of names for the central characters (such as Nick, Krebs, and unnamed) appear to be a narrative device for the representation of these fluid boundaries of identity.

In the «Big Two-Hearted River» stories which conclude *In Our Time*, Nick Adams is shown «demarcating his universe» by walking through a burned-over landscape to set up a camp and fish for trout. The story parallels an earlier fishing story, «Out Of Season», in which an attempt at trout fishing is blighted by lawlessness and drunken miscommunication (123-36). In «Big Two-Hearted River», Nick is hovering over a trout stream as a mirror of purity, of course, and he appears narcissistic, but Kristeva notes that «Abjection is a *precondition of narcissism*... and causes it to be permanently brittle (13). Hemingway's story seems to be exploring that very brittleness. In the limitations which Nick places upon himself concerning the «tragic» fishing in the swamp (211), and in becoming «a little sick» after losing a big trout (204-5), Hemingway notes the fragility of Nick's identity. Nick's troubled ruminations about bringing canned food on the trip also appear to be acknowledgements of the brittleness and the vulnerability of his separation from the defilements of the world that he has left behind: «I've got a right to eat this stuff if I'm willing to carry it», Nick said. «His voice sounded strange in the darkening woods. He did not speak again» (187). In this brief monologue which he seems to be directing toward his superego, Nick acquiesces to his own abjection.

Hemingway's *In Our Time* seems to be a report upon the resources available for the creation of fragile and urgent boundaries for the self threatened by abjection in a time of violence, confusion, and uncertain access to the sacred: *Our Time*. On the quai, the screams of the refugees were silenced by casting a light onto the midnight of their suffering. It seems appropriate to see Hemingway's vivid narratives and inter-chapters of *In Our Time* as an attempt to cast such a light into the darkness of abjection itself.

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France-Ville et Stahlstadt

Hygiénisme et analité dans un roman de Jules Verne

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Paris au XXème siècle, écrit aux environs de 1863, fut refusé par l'éditeur Pierre-Jules Hetzel. Le livre, qui ne fut publié qu'en 1994, montre bien l'extraordinaire génie anticipateur de Jules Verne. Celui-ci n'est pas seulement limité au domaine de la technologie, ce qui ne saurait étonner car Verne restait toujours très informé des inventions et découvertes récentes: l'auteur y présente une vision cauchemardesque des transformations profondes qui vont avoir lieu dans la vie culturelle et les mentalités. Dans le roman, Verne oppose le monde de l'argent, de la vitesse et des techniques, à l'univers en voie de disparition de la tradition, de la littérature et de l'art. C'est le Paris moderne qui symbolise le premier, le Paris d'Haussmann qui remplace la vieille cité médiévale et qui, bouleversé par le désir d'ordre social du Second Empire, la révolution industrielle et un exode rural accéléré, devient une gigantesque et inhumaine métropole. Le premier roman de Jules Verne est incontestablement aussi le plus pessimiste: la modernité scientifique y a triomphé, supplantant à jamais l'univers pur de l'art et de la poésie.

L'image des deux villes antagonistes, dont l'une représente le Bien et l'autre le Mal, semble n'avoir plus quitté Jules Verne. On la retrouve entre autres dans *Les cinq cents millions de la Bégum* (1879).¹ Le roman exprime à merveille l'attitude ambivalente de Jules Verne et ses contemporains envers la modernisation et les progrès scientifiques et technologiques. L'historien Theodore Zeldin en a souligné le double visage en remarquant que «l'âge de la peur convient aussi bien pour désigner le dix-neuvième siècle que l'âge du progrès; ces deux formules en expriment chacune un aspect différent.»²

Dans *Les cinq cents millions de la Bégum*, l'ambivalence envers le progrès est caractérisée par deux villes, France-Ville et Stahlstadt; la première symbolise les bienfaits de la science, la seconde ses perversions. L'histoire est la suivante. Un paisible savant français, le docteur Sarrasin, se trouve soudain, alors qu'il prend part à un congrès hygiéniste à Londres, à la tête d'un fabuleux

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¹ Des recherches récentes ont révélé qu'il s'agit en fait d'un remaniement demandé à Verne par Hetzel d'un manuscrit existant, provenant d'un certain Pascal Grousset. Ce manuscrit ayant disparu, il n'est pas possible de savoir quelles ont été les modifications apportées par Verne.

² Theodore Zeldin, *Histoire des passions françaises 1848-1945*, Paris, Seuil, 1979, Tome V, «Anxiété et hypocrisie», p. 71.

héritage: les cinq cents millions d'une richissime Bégum qui avait épousé son grand-oncle. Mais l'héritage est également revendiqué par un savant allemand, le professeur de chimie Schultze de l'université d'Iéna. Celui-ci a lu l'incroyable fait-divers dans son journal, alors même qu'il écrivait un mémoire ayant pour titre «Pourquoi tous les Français sont-ils atteints à des degrés différents de dégénérescence héréditaire?», et qu'il s'apprêtait à se mettre à table pour savourer un grand plat de saucisses à la choucroute accompagné d'un gigantesque verre de bière.

Sarrasin et Schultze vont finir par s'entendre et ils partagent l'immense fortune. Tandis que le Français emploie son argent à l'édification d'une cité modèle, France-Ville, symbole de propreté et de pureté, l'Allemand élève Stahlstadt, la cité de l'Acier, lieu où règnent la poussière et la crasse, et où il met au point une arme terrifiante qui devra détruire la ville fondée par son ennemi. Schultze est d'ailleurs connu par ses nombreux travaux comparatifs sur les différentes races humaines, travaux où il est prouvé que la race germanique doit les absorber toutes. Le projet de son rival, qui veut créer une ville française dans des conditions d'hygiène morale et physique propres à développer toutes les qualités de la race et à former de jeunes générations fortes et vaillantes, lui paraît totalement absurde et opposée à la loi de progrès qui décrète l'effondrement de la race latine, voire sa disparition totale de la surface du globe, ce qu'il veut d'ailleurs aider à s'accomplir. Mais, bien sûr, un jeune Alsacien ami du docteur Sarrasin sait s'introduire dans Stahlstadt et il découvre les terribles projets qui y sont ourdis; il réussit à sauver France-Ville et obtiendra pour récompense la main de la fille du docteur Sarrasin.

Ecrit en 1879, et donc à l'apogée de la période appelée Revanche, le roman décrit bien les sentiments de haine qui règnent alors envers l'Allemagne, incarnée par l'image fortement stéréotypée du savant fou. Entre les lignes s'exprime également l'angoisse profonde qui commence à s'emparer des Français, confrontés au spectre de la décadence et à l'idée d'une infériorité raciale ayant ses sources dans le métissage, idée amplement développée par Drumont, Gobineau et Vacher de Lapouge. Cependant l'intérêt du roman ne réside pas là, mais dans le fait qu'il anticipe la révolution pastorienne qui est sur le point d'exploser. *Les cinq cents millions de la Bégum* est un véritable «roman hygiéniste», qui annonce ce qui va devenir l'un des grands concepts métaphorique de la fin du siècle: le microbe. Il illustre en outre une angoisse nouvelle dont j'analyserai rapidement les sources et que j'appellerai «angoisse de pénétration».

Cinq années après la rencontre des deux savants, Stahlstadt et France-Ville existent à peu de distance l'une de l'autre, aux Etats-Unis,³ au sud de l'Oregon, à dix lieues du littoral du Pacifique, dans un district encore vague formé de rochers, de terre et de pins. L'aspect à premier abord champêtre se révèle vite être trompeur: entre deux chaînes de collines s'ouvre un désert rouge, imprégné d'oxyde de fer, aride et désolé. L'air est chargé de fumée et pèse comme un manteau sombre sur la terre. Au milieu de villages aux maisons préfabriquées, où vivent trente mille ouvriers allemands, s'élèvent des bâtiments surmontés d'une forêt de cheminées qui vomissent des torrents continus de vapeurs fuligineuses. C'est Stahlstadt, la ville secrète et impénétrable de Herr Schultze, devenu le plus grand travailleur du fer et fondeur de canons des deux mondes.⁴

Herr Schultze extrait le minerai de fer et la houille de ses propres mines, véritables enfers insalubres et dangereux. Celles-ci sont situées dans les entrailles de la terre; on y pénètre et on en sort par de longs et sinueux boyaux. Sur place, il transforme les minerais en acier fondu et en fait des canons. Marcel, le jeune ami alsacien du docteur Sarrasin qui s'est introduit dans la cité de l'Acier, découvre vite que «Herr Schultze travaillait à l'achèvement d'un engin de guerre terrible,

³ Les Etats-Unis, qui fascinaient Jules Verne et jouent un rôle important dans beaucoup de ses romans, remplacent souvent à cette époque le lieu utopique qu'est l'île dans d'autres romans.

⁴ Jules Verne a pris pour modèle les usines Krupp. Il écrit à Hetzel en 1878: «C'est bien Krupp qui est en jeu, cette usine si défendue aux regards indiscrets.» Jules Verne révèle ici une certaine affinité avec le socialisme utopique. Jean Chesnaux écrit à ce sujet: «Jules Verne affronte ici le caractère inhumain de la grande production industrielle moderne et de la technologie scientifique, la mortalité ouvrière, la surveillance militaire des contre-maîtres, la brutalité des conditions de travail et il n'hésite pas à la condamner en tant que telle, à travers un modèle imaginaire.» (*Une lecture politique de Jules Verne*, Paris, Maspéro, 1971, p. 167.)

d'un effet sans précédent et destiné à assurer bientôt à l'Allemagne la domination universelle».⁵ C'est un énorme obus-fusée chargé d'acide carbonique liquide qui, en explosant, à la fois congèle et asphixie tout être vivant dans un rayon de plus de cent mètres. Comme l'expose lui-même Herr Schultze, alors que les inventeurs de France-Ville cherchent le moyen d'augmenter la vie des hommes, il cherche lui à l'abrèger.

Non loin de là s'élève France-Ville sur la rive embaumée du Pacifique, traversée par une petite rivière dont l'eau fraîche et douce arrive parfaitement pure à la mer. Chacune de ses maisons blanches de deux étages au maximum est isolée dans un terrain planté d'arbres et de fleurs. Jules Verne décrit ici les idées nouvelles sur l'urbanisation et l'habitat: propreté, air et lumière. Il met l'accent sur le fait que deux dangereux agents de contamination, les tapis et les papiers peints, «véritables nids à miasmes et laboratoires de poisons», en sont impitoyablement proscrits. On lave les murs, les vitres et les parquets, pour qu'aucun «germe morbide» ne puisse s'y mettre en embuscade. Notons que Jules Verne se sert encore des termes «miasmes» et «germes»; en cette même année 1879, Pasteur, en évoquant les grandes épidémies, parle d'«êtres microscopiques» capables de communiquer des maladies.⁶ Pourtant une année plus tôt Emile Littré avait déjà inventé le mot «microbe» pour décrire ses découvertes.

Les habitants de France-Ville sont habitués à une propreté si rigoureuse, qu'ils considèrent une tache sur leurs habits comme un déshonneur véritable. La propreté individuelle et collective est la préoccupation capitale des fondateurs de France-Ville: «Nettoyer, nettoyer sans cesse, détruire et annuler aussitôt qu'ils sont formés les miasmes qui émanent constamment d'une agglomération humaine, telle est l'oeuvre principale du gouvernement central.»⁷ Partout l'eau coule à flots, les marchés alimentaires sont sévèrement surveillés par la police sanitaire, et les produits des égoûts sont traités hors de la ville par des procédés qui en permettent la condensation et le transport dans les campagnes, où ils serviront d'engrais. Ce recyclage de l'ordure est l'un des rêves hygiénistes de l'époque. Comme le souligne Alain Corbin, l'anxiété à l'égard du putride et de l'excrémentiel se combine avec l'utilitarisme régnant, la crainte du miasme se double de la hantise de la perte. Dans la vision bourgeoise hygiéniste, l'utilitarisme et la nécessité de l'épargne s'assimilent au souci de salubrité.⁸

France-Ville représente la cité utopique des hygiénistes. Les eaux courantes, les équipements sanitaires, la propreté obsédante sont les éléments essentiels du bonheur par la moralisation.⁹ La propreté avait déjà fait partie des thèmes favoris de Fourier; on la retrouve dans l'Icarie de Cabet (1840) tout autant que dans l'Uranie de Flammarion (1889). Les deux visages du XIX^e siècle sont ici aussi présents. C'est, comme l'écrit Philippe Perrot, le «siècle de la propreté conquérante: rénovations urbaines, révolution pastorienne, hygiénisme expansif». C'est aussi cependant le «siècle de la saleté triomphante: campagnes immobiles, croupies dans un fumier séculaire; villes engorgées, faubourgs sordides, miasmes putrides, sueurs prolétaires».¹⁰

Jusqu'à la fin du siècle, dans les grandes villes les ordures ménagères et les pots de chambre sont vidés dans la rue, les fosses septiques vidangées dans des tombereaux ouverts, et les égouts et caniveaux se déversent dans les rivières.¹¹ Pendant l'été 1880, la mauvaise odeur avait atteint dans Paris une telle intensité que l'opinion publique s'affolait. Les immondices s'accumulaient sur la voie publique, les excréments étaient déversés sur la chaussée, les enfants urinaient dans la rue. La croissance rapide du nombre des chevaux faisait que des cloaques se développaient autour des stations d'omnibus. Les latrines des bâtiments publics atteignaient un degré de puanteur incroyable, alors qu'en même temps le seuil de tolérance aux odeurs avait considérablement baissé.¹²

⁵ Jules Verne, *Les cinq cents millions de la Béguine*, Paris, Le Livre de Poche, p. 102.

⁶ Patrice Debré, *Louis Pasteur*, Paris, Flammarion, 1994, p. 364.

⁷ *Les cinq cents millions de la Béguine*, p. 153.

⁸ Alain Corbin, *Le miasme et la jonquille*, Paris, Flammarion, 1986, p. 136.

⁹ Julia Csergo, *Liberté, égalité, propreté*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1988, p. 90.

¹⁰ Philippe Perrot, *Le corps féminin*, Paris, Seuil, p. 107.

¹¹ Eugen Weber, *Fin de siècle*, Paris, Fayard, 1986, p. 78.

¹² Corbin, 1986, p. 257.

Dans *Paris au XXème siècle*, Jules Verne avait déjà inventé des moyens de transports plus propres: un système de voies ferrées aériennes marchant à l'air comprimé, simple, d'entretien facile, sans fumée ni vapeur. A partir du Second Empire, la ville utopique sera en partie réalisée et sont alors édifiées des cités ouvrières modèles, où sont présents pour satisfaire le goût de la propreté: eau en abondance, ventilation, cuisines équipées, lavoirs, bains, et à chaque étage cabinets de toilette avec des robinets et des cuvettes en fer verni.¹³

A partir de traités de civilité comme celui d'Erasme, Norbert Elias a décrit le long processus qui a modifié la tolérance aux fonctions naturelles, et il évoque «le sans-gêne naïf avec lequel on satisfaisait à cette époque à ses besoins naturels».¹⁴ La restructuration générale des relations entre les hommes déclenche une transformation des besoins humains, qui vont de plus en plus être relégués à la sphère du privé, voire du secret, et pour lesquels sont créés des dispositifs spécialisés. Avec l'installation de l'eau courante à tous les étages, puis celle, tardive en France, du tout-à-l'égout et de la chasse d'eau, s'opère une véritable «domestication de la défécation».¹⁵

La honte des odeurs et des souillures urinaires ou fécales, ainsi que la répulsion de la promiscuité pendant les moments d'évacuation, deviennent les éléments d'une socialisation élémentaire. L'intimité du corps, avec ses excréments, ses odeurs et ses parties «invisibles», s'encadre de dispositifs techniques d'isolation et de séparation. Mais ceci ne va pas sans générer l'angoisse: médiatiser les rapports de l'homme à l'ordure et tendre à les faire disparaître, voire à les nier, ne fait que les dramatiser. Alain Corbin note que l'on ne répètera jamais assez à quel point l'excrétion obsède au XIXème siècle les classes dominantes: «Produit irréfutable de la physiologie que le bourgeois s'efforce de nier, la merde, par un implacable détour, hante l'imaginaire; elle contredit les efforts de décorporéisation, elle permet de renouer avec la vie organique dont elle raconte le passé immédiat.»¹⁶ L'excrément devient d'ailleurs un élément fantasmatique important dans la littérature pornographique et dans certaines perversions.

La musculation des sphincters, à laquelle l'humanité ne s'était pas encore exercée jusqu'alors de façon contraignante, est requise maintenant dès l'enfance, et elle va faire partie des premières règles de l'éducation. L'éducation sphinctérienne pousse l'enfant à désinvestir, voire à mépriser ce qui lui avait d'abord semblé infiniment précieux. On découvre un phénomène similaire dans la fabrication des parfums, auxquels le XVIIIème siècle attribue encore des valeurs thérapeutiques. L'excrément, surtout quand il provient d'êtres sains et vigoureux, est comme les substances animales telles que le musc pourvu d'un «feu vital», et pour cette raison alors utilisé dans la composition de certains parfums aux noms poétiques comme *L'eau des Mille Fleurs*. Mais dès le début du XIXème siècle, la nouvelle méfiance envers la putréfaction va révolutionner l'attitude envers les produits de la défécation.¹⁷

Le développement de la maîtrise musculaire des sphincters a été mise par la psychanalyse en relation avec l'érotisme anal. En décrivant le stade anal, qui fait partie de l'évolution normale de l'enfant, Freud s'est laissé incontestablement inspirer par une évolution similaire dans l'histoire des mentalités, évolution qui doit être reliée au processus de civilisation. On constate en effet dans la mentalité hygiéniste qui imprègne toute la fin du siècle des caractères pouvant être mis en rapport avec ce que Freud appelle le stade sadique-anal.¹⁸ Je pense ici surtout au besoin d'ordre et de maîtrise, à l'entêtement qui se traduit dans la volonté de convaincre et l'insistance pédagogique,

¹³ Csergo, 1988, p. 94.

¹⁴ Norbert Elias, *La civilisation des mœurs*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1973, p. 223.

¹⁵ Perrot, 1984, p. 132.

¹⁶ Corbin, 1986, p. 169.

¹⁷ Alain Corbin situe la date de la «Révolution olfactive» entre 1760 et 1840. (*Le miasme et la jonquille*, p. 71).

¹⁸ L'opposition masculin/féminin est déjà présente en germe dans celle entre actif et passif qui règne alors; dans les activités de cette phase se révèle une tendance à la domination qui dégénère vite en cruauté; le désir de voir et de savoir s'affirme impérieusement. Sigmund Freud, *Introduction à la psychanalyse*, Paris, Payot, 1982, p. 307.

à la valorisation de l'activité, au désir de voir et de savoir qui caractérise l'esprit scientifique, à l'épargne et la parcimonie que l'on retrouve dans l'idée obsessionnelle du recyclage.

L'hygiénisme qui se développe en France à partir de la fin du XVIII^{ème} siècle et va atteindre des proportions inégales à partir de 1850, reflète incontestablement l'ordre – ou plutôt le désordre – social. Comme l'a montré l'anthropologue Mary Douglas, le désir de pureté et de propreté renvoie au niveau social à un désir exacerbé d'ordre, de contrôle et de maîtrise. Dans toutes les cultures, les mesures de purification sont toujours liées à la peur du changement, de l'ambiguïté, de la transgression: «Une structure sociale qui s'appuie sur un haut degré de contrôle conscient [comme celle de la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle] trouvera son style à un haut niveau de formalité, dans une stricte application de la règle de pureté, dans la dénigration du processus organique et la méfiance à l'égard de toute expérience échappant au contrôle conscient.»¹⁹ L'élimination de la souillure, ou de la poussière par la maîtresse de maison, n'est pas un geste négatif, mais un mouvement positif pour réorganiser l'environnement, pour le rendre conforme à l'idée qu'elle s'en fait.

Chez les hygiénistes, le souci de propreté traduit un désir fondamental de contrôle et d'ordre, et c'est en cela qu'il a un caractère anal. La recherche du propre et du pur reflète celle d'un ordre immuable; les rituels purificateurs ont outre leur fonction hygiénique une fonction symbolique. Le corps fonctionne en tant que symbole du corps social, il représente toujours une certaine image de la société. Le grand intérêt que porte l'hygiéniste aux excréments et aux excréments, mais aussi aux ouvertures du corps humain, pores, bouche, anus, vagin, zones où s'atténue la limite entre le corps et son environnement, exprime le désir de restaurer l'unité du corps social menacé par des dangers extérieurs, comme France-Ville l'est par la présence même de Stahlstadt. Comme la haine française qui est projetée dans celle de l'Allemand, l'analité hygiéniste est elle aussi projetée dans la figure sadique du méchant professeur: l'analité est liée à l'activité sadique et à la pulsion de mort. Herr Schultze manie avec plaisir les excréments soutirés au ventre de la terre; ceux-ci lui permettent d'exprimer un rêve mégalomane de puissance absolue. Les habitants de France-Ville au contraire cultivent la propreté et méprisent l'ordure. On pourrait dire également que France-Ville et Stahlstadt représentent deux pôles de l'analité, l'idéalisation de la première étant destinée à masquer et camoufler l'analité de la seconde. Ici, pour reprendre les mots de Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel, «la pulsion, l'excrément, la zone érogène anale sont tout simplement déguisés en leur contraire.»²⁰ Obsédé par le pur, l'hygiéniste l'est davantage encore par l'impur et la souillure.

Pasteur représente sans doute la meilleure illustration de la recherche d'ordre qui caractérise l'analité. Comme le remarque André Pichot, «Pasteur était un homme d'ordre, en tous les sens du terme, même les plus excessifs. C'est là le mot-clé de ses travaux.»²¹ En fait, les travaux de Pasteur ne comportent pas tant d'éléments originaux; mais le plus souvent ils partent d'une situation relativement confuse, où il sait trouver un fil conducteur qu'il suit avec patience. Ce que fait Pasteur, c'est mettre en ordre, «recycler» les résultats déjà obtenus.

La lutte contre la saleté va prendre de plus en plus des connotations morales. Propreté devient synonyme de vertu, et comme la criminalité, la saleté est en premier lieu attribuée aux classes dangereuses. La saleté des uns fait peser de lourdes menaces sur la santé des autres. La lutte contre le microbe va prolonger celle contre la dégénérescence. Au lendemain de la défaite de 1870 se multiplient les études démographiques alarmistes; le ralentissement du rythme de l'accroissement naturel est ressenti comme une véritable catastrophe nationale, annonciatrice de futurs désastres économiques et militaires. Les comportements malthusiens, l'urbanisation anarchique des villes, Paris en particulier, souvent décrit comme un «tombeau de la race», les fléaux sociaux tels que l'alcoolisme, les grandes

¹⁹ Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger. An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, London, Routledge, 1966, p. 67. Dans *La violence et le sacré*, René Girard ne se prononce pas de façon univoque sur ce phénomène, mais il énonce que les différentes critiques ne nous interdisent pas «de comparer les précautions rituelles à une médecine encore tâtonnante, mais déjà partiellement efficace, celle du siècle dernier par exemple.» (p. 49)

²⁰ Janine Chasseguet-Smirgel, *Ethique et esthétique de la perversion*, Paris, Champ Vallon, 1984, p. 173.

²¹ Introduction à *Pasteur. Ecrits scientifiques et médicaux*, Paris, Flammarion, 1994, p. 12.

épidémies de choléra et de typhus et la multiplication des cas de phtisie et de syphilis, tourmentent les classes dirigeantes. A la veille de la Première Guerre mondiale, certains prédiront comme Herr Schultze la disparition quasi-totale de la population française en quatre ou cinq générations.

Et voici qu'apparaît le microbe, qui va révolutionner la science mais aussi les mentalités. Semmelweis avait déjà décrit en 1861 son activité néfaste dans la contagion de la fièvre puerpérale, mais personne ne l'avait cru. Au temps de Pasteur, la mise au point du microscope achromatique dont les lentilles à haut pouvoir de résolution ouvrent la voie à une plongée dans le monde de l'infiniment petit, s'accompagne du développement de la méthode expérimentale qui va battre en brèche le monopole de la spéculation.²² L'extraordinaire et fulgurant succès de Pasteur ne saurait s'expliquer sans la longue campagne que lui ont préparée les hygiénistes. Ceux-ci ne seront pas d'ailleurs immédiatement convaincus; longtemps encore, le rôle de la propreté et des conditions de vie leur semblera au moins aussi important que la contagion microbienne. Mais en s'alliant aux pasteuriers, en plaçant le microbe au cœur même de leurs préoccupations, les hygiénistes redéfinissent le social en y incluant cet être microscopique, invisible et terrifiant: le microbe.²³

Attribué d'abord aux odeurs méphitiques, aux germes néfastes, aux miasmes putrides, le danger se concrétise et sous le regard de l'homme de science avec son microscope et ses colorants, il prend forme et prend corps. Le microbe se socialise et devient le symbole du Mal. Le microbe perturbe un ordre qui n'est jamais définitif et reste toujours à refaire, par le fait qu'il n'est pas visible à l'oeil nu et qu'il ne peut être arrêté par des barrières sociales (on a parlé d'un égalitarisme de la contagion) ou physiques.

Les «monstres invisibles», qui «pénètrent notre corps par milliards», montrent la fragilité des surfaces et des orifices corporels, frontières qui se révèlent peu aptes à protéger l'organisme. Le danger vient du minuscule et de l'invisible, et l'organisme est présenté comme d'autant plus vulnérable que ses agresseurs demeurent microscopiques. «C'est l'invasion par l'infiniment petit; l'invisible terrassant le plus fort», écrit Georges Vigarello dans *Le propre et le sale*.²⁴ Le vaccin par contre est le moyen de restaurer l'ordre, de transformer les ferments en objets maîtrisés, «enclos dans une culture, limités dans leurs développements, calculés dans leurs effets.»²⁵ La microbiomanie qui règne à la fin du siècle a quelque chose d'obsessionnel qui s'apparente à l'univers anal, dans son désir de recenser et de classer indéfiniment un nombre toujours croissant de bactéries, de bacilles, de virus, comme si jamais ce travail pût jamais être définitivement accompli.

La révolution pastorienne s'inspire des tensions sociales et politiques de l'époque, dont elle reprend les images et les métaphores, les métaphores guerrières en particulier. Elle accompagne le projet colonial en cherchant à détruire les contagions venues d'outre-mer. Dans l'imaginaire collectif, elle renforce la lutte contre la montée du socialisme et d'un pouvoir croissant des «classes dangereuses», elle appuie l'idée belliciste de la Revanche en insistant que seule une véritable guerre saurait mettre halte à la menace microbienne qui pèse sur la nation. Le microbe lui-même peut devenir une arme, comme le montrent les premiers rêves de guerre bactériologique. C'est ainsi qu'Alphonse Allais écrit: «L'idée m'est venue d'utiliser la science moderne pour faire la guerre dans des conditions plus économiques. Pourquoi employer la poudre sans fumée qui coûte un prix fou, quand on a le microbe pour rien? [...] Au lieu de tout cet attirail coûteux et tumultueux, on installerait discrètement de petits laboratoires où l'on cultiverait les microbes les plus virulents, les plus pathogènes. [...] Le jour où l'Allemagne nous embêtera, au lieu de lui déclarer la guerre, on lui déclarera le choléra, ou la variole, ou toutes ces maladies à la fois.»²⁶

²² Pierre Darmon, *Pasteur*, Paris, Fayard, 1995, p. 256.

²³ Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France*, Harvard, Harvard University Press, 1988, p. 38. Traduction de *Les microbes: Guerre et paix suivie de irréductions*, Paris, Métailié, 1984.

²⁴ Georges Vigarello, *Le propre et le sale*, Paris, Seuil, 1984, p. 220.

²⁵ Vigarello, 1993, p. 259.

²⁶ Ironie peut-être, mais n'oublions pas que ce fragment provient d'une lettre insérée aux *Chants du soldat* du poète nationaliste Déroulède (1872), dont Allais était un admirateur.

La représentation de frontières corporelles menacées, d'un pouvoir organique fragilisé, d'ennemis microscopiques mais féroces, barbares qui ne connaissent que la loi du nombre, renvoient aux révoltes sociales de l'époque tout autant qu'à l'humiliation de la défaite de 1870.²⁷ Un hygiéniste parle à propos des microbes «d'ennemis de l'espèce humaine», un autre souligne: «Que la fissure se fasse à l'extérieur, ces microbes pénétreront dans l'économie et il suffira de quelques heures, dans certains cas, pour détruire à jamais cet organisme plus résistant.»²⁸ Dans certains dessins politiques, les innombrables armées de microbes sont représentées avec le casque prussien qui a tant inquiété les Parisiens. Vers la fin du XIX^{ème} siècle, l'hygiéniste est d'ailleurs promu au rang de héros national.

Le phénomène hygiéniste est surtout masculin; certaines dames de la bonne société comme la baronne de Staffe, la comtesse de Gencé, la comtesse de Tramar, ont écrit des manuels où l'hygiène joue un rôle important, mais les préoccupations hygiénistes y sont toujours subordonnées à la politesse, au savoir-vivre, à la santé et à la beauté. Madame de Garches écrit en 1894: «Une divinité que nous devons vénérer est la toute-puissante déesse Hygie; sans elle pas de beauté réelle car pour être belle, il faut se bien porter et l'hygiène, c'est la santé.»²⁹

Les ouvrages d'hygiénistes hommes ont toujours une dimension politique, qui va être reprise par certaines idéologies. Avec Drumont, le microbe passe dans le discours antisémite: «Pour savoir bien quelles conditions sont nécessaires pour que vive une Patrie, il faut regarder attentivement comment meurt un monde qui a formé peu à peu dans cette Patrie comme une agglomération de bacilles.»³⁰ Dans la vision idéologique où la nation, d'après les principes du darwinisme social, est présentée comme un organisme vivant, c'est le juif, cosmopolite et nomade, qui a contaminé le corps social en lui infligeant le virus fatal de la décadence; lui non plus ne se laisse pas arrêter par des frontières. La tradition anti-judaïque a d'ailleurs toujours présenté le juif comme celui qui amène les épidémies, et qui empoisonne les sources et le bétail.

Le microbe a une formidable force émotionnelle, qui tourne souvent au catastrophisme; il réveille une vieille angoisse, celle du Mal qui pénètre insensiblement pour détruire et anéantir. Le corps social est en proie à la décadence, et décadence signifie ici manque de forces et de vitalité, dévirilisation, féminisation d'une nation où ne naissent pas suffisamment d'enfants, qui n'a pas su arrêter les armées prussiennes et se sent également menacée de l'intérieur par les classes dangereuses et les juifs. Dans le cas des Prussiens qui sont entrés en France, des juifs qui s'installent dans les différentes classes sociales et les professions, des ouvriers qui refusent désormais le rôle qui leur était assigné, ce qui fait peur, c'est l'effacement des frontières et des cadres, le mélange et l'indistinction, l'assimilation et la contamination.

Les armées de microbes tout comme les éléments socialement dangereux s'attaquent à un corps fragilisé, féminisé, qui est pénétré sans pouvoir réagir, comme la douce France-Ville, qui ne possède ni armes ni armées, va l'être par l'obus géant de Herr Schultze. C'est cette angoisse de pénétration qui va nourrir les sources profondes d'une idéologie nationaliste se basant sur la régénération grâce au principe de virilité. La pénétration, et la passivité qu'elle implique, représente selon Freud l'une des angoisses fondamentales de l'homme. Le stade sadique-anal est profondément marqué par la polarité entre l'actif et le passif, qui annonce la polarité sexuelle ultérieure. Dans le livre de Jules Verne, France-Ville symbolise la passivité masochiste et Stahlstadt l'activité sadique.

L'obus-fusée inventé par Herr Schultze, avec sa puissance de perforation inégalée, contient dans ses flancs une explosion terrible, qui signifie une mort subite et sans bruit pour des milliers d'individus asphixiés en un bref moment. Cet engin digne de l'enfer est braqué sur France-Ville et devrait bientôt tomber sur le centre de la cité, immense phallus anal qui symbolise la puissance agressive de la Prusse. Mais Schultze s'est trompé dans ses calculs démoniaques: à l'heure de la

²⁷ Georges Vigarello, *Le sain et le malsain*, Paris, Seuil, 1993, p. 263.

²⁸ Cité dans Vigarello, 1985, p. 220.

²⁹ Cité dans Csergo, 1988, p. 53.

³⁰ Edouard Drumont, *La fin d'un monde* (1886), Paris, La Librairie Française, p. II.

catastrophe, une masse sombre passe dans les hauteurs du ciel pour aller se perdre au-delà de la ville avec un sifflement sinistre. Comme l'explique Marcel, «un projectile, animé d'une vitesse initiale vingt fois supérieure à la vitesse actuelle, ne peut plus tomber!» (p. 183) France-Ville est sauvée en dépit du fait qu'elle ne saurait se défendre: elle ne possède aucun engin de guerre capable de lutter contre celui de Herr Schultze, et ses habitants ne peuvent que fuir ou s'apprêter à essayer de limiter les dégâts.

Herr Schultze disparaît, la mort plane sur Stahlstadt, dont les hautes cheminées se dressent à l'horizon comme des squelettes. Marcel va retrouver le roi de l'Acier, lui-même asphyxié dans son laboratoire, anéanti par ses propres armes. France-Ville va pouvoir enfin prospérer en paix et s'accroître, «débarassée de toute inquiétude, en paix avec ses voisins, bien administrée, heureuse grâce à la sagesse de ses habitants». Quant à la ville de l'Acier, elle aussi a été recyclée pour devenir un centre de production incomparable pour toutes sortes d'industries.

Tout avait commencé avec l'argent de la Bégum. Freud a souligné l'équivalence symbolique entre fèces = cadeau = argent: des valeurs symboliques de don et de refus seraient attachées à l'activité de la défécation. Avec l'argent légué par la Bégum, figure maternelle mais aussi symbole – masculin – d'extraordinaire richesse et puissance, les deux frères ennemis se font la guerre et expriment la rivalité profonde qui les sépare. La tonalité anale du roman de Jules Verne est surtout flagrante au moment de leur confrontation. Après l'attente anxieuse, la rétention, qui symbolise le contrôle et la maîtrise, a lieu l'évacuation, point culminant de l'érotisme anal et moment d'agressivité sadique. Suivent ensuite l'élimination et le recyclage, phase finale de purification.

L'ordre est rétabli, le propre a gagné, le sale et le souillé ont été transformés, grâce à la morale hygiéniste, en un objet d'utilité sociale.

8½ and Me

NORMAN N. HOLLAND (*)

One morning, late in April 1995, my phone rang. It was my friend Gerry O'Grady, my former colleague at SUNY/Buffalo in media study. Gerry urged me to talk at a conference on 8½ he was running at Harvard. It celebrated the retirement of another old friend, Vlada Petric. Not only would several other friends be participating, but I would also be able to address Alan Hobson, whose experimental work on dreams I know and admire and whose relentless Freud-bashing I regret and would like to mollify.

The conference sounded like fun and opportunity, but it also presented problems. Whenever I approach a new project these days, I face the question, How shall I write? How does one write a reader-response paper about, say, 8½? I don't want to repeat the theoretical things I wrote in the '70s and '80s. I also feel that the usual critical essay has become wearisome. Always, the reader-response criticism that I favor demands a fresh approach. It really requires a different kind of essay for every new topic. As a result, I've been experimenting with novel ways of writing criticism, for example, as fiction.

Gerry's telephone call thus left me with a problem. How would I write this reader-response paper? Particularly since 8½ has been written about and written about: at least three whole books, two collections of essays, and more articles than I could shake a footnote at.

*

Reader-response starts with free associations, and the first thing that comes to me about 8½ is that I reviewed the film back in 1963, when I was doing film criticism for the *Hudson Review*. Like most critics of the day, I was disconcerted by an autobiographical film, and I was pretty nasty about it.¹ The review had two parts. The first half was, as one of the standard bibliographies says, «a supercilious retelling of the film's plot.»² The second half, however, was one of my earliest excursions into psychoanalytic aesthetics. As Dwight Macdonald complained, «Mr. Holland groans under a massive load of primitive Freudianism.»³

Actually, Dwight, wherever you are, I wasn't groaning. I was happy. I had been studying psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic criticism for just a few years, and I was quite crazy about it. I was beginning to develop theories that would become in 1968 a book called *The Dynamics of Literary Response*.

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¹ Holland 1963.

² Price & Price 1978, s.v. Holland.

³ Macdonald 1964 [1978], 215.

My argument in that book was that a story or a poem or a film, any work of art really, consists at its core of fantasies that would ordinarily create anxiety. But these fantasies are managed by form and meaning toward a feeling of satisfaction. In a work of art, form and meaning act the way defense mechanisms do in a person: they transform unconscious fantasies into ideas acceptable to the conscious ego.

The readiest model for all this is a joke: the «point» of a joke and the way it moves aesthetically towards that «point» authorize the nasty sexual and aggressive content of the joke. Form and meaning legitimate fantasy. In effect, my theory of literary response extended Freud's model of the joke to all art.

This transformation from anxiety-evoking fantasy to satisfying meaning and aesthetic unity, all this happens inside the work of art itself. In effect, a work of art embodies a psychological process. Then, when you or I take in the work of art, we incorporate this process into our own psychic processes. We tack onto this transformational process whatever personal analogies seem appropriate to us. In a nutshell, a film like *8½* is a dream dreamed for us.

The trouble with *8½* as I saw it in 1963 was that it was so purely personal. Fellini «uses his fantasies raw to express his own problems as a director.» It didn't contain a meaning that could serve as a transforming defense for Fellini's fantasies. And the adjectives I tacked onto meaning were: «universal», «moral», and «intellectual». I spoke of the «gamut of the mind» running from «higher, abstractable meaning» to deep unconscious fantasies. A work of art that runs the whole gamut is quote-unquote better than one like *8½* that confines itself to one level, the autobiographical fantasies.

All this transforming was, in the manner of 1963, *in* the film itself. I could argue that the film had to have «moral and intellectual content». And, as in that word, «content», all this moral and intellectual stuff was supposed to be *contained* in the film. As I wrote,

Fellini's last three films seem to me to rank in merit according to the amount of «meaning» in each. *La Dolce Vita* fairly reeked of «meaning», with its Christ-symbols, parallels to Dante, moral indictment of a contemporary life-style, and what not. The *Boccaccio 70* episode had its little fabulated moral. But *8½* has little or no intellectual content.

Note again the *in* or «content». Meaning is contained *in* the film. That seemed obvious in 1963.

Today we recognize that that *in* is metaphorical. We are using a container metaphor for the film, and containers are simply one of our commonest metaphorical structures for describing works of art or language and *not* a very accurate description of the psychological processes involved. Container metaphors are crude, and we can be much more sophisticated today.

And what were Fellini's fantasies in *8½*? As I saw them in 1963, he was interested in turning people into mere images and sounds. His fantasies about women were that they were either all-powerful good or all-powerful bad, either a virgin-mother-goddess who would bring utter happiness and fulfillment or a Saraghina, dangerously, sinfully sexual. Men were impotent creatures of words and thoughts, empty by comparison.

I summed up the pattern by pointing to the two *cardinali* in this film. There is the male *cardinale*, an aging, incoherent clergyman nattering on about guilt and salvation and the church, clearly missing the point so far as Fellini is concerned. The other is Claudia *Cardinale*, a Muse, a virgin goddess who will bring cleanliness and order and sex and free up Fellini's imagination. But, as it turns out, he is too weak for her help. He is just another helpless male.

What has happened to all this since 1963? Would I say the same in 1995? Well, one thing I've noticed is that the mind rambles more freely in these latter decades of life. Perhaps it is the climate of the times, perhaps it's the climate of Florida, perhaps it's just me, but I am easier with just random thoughts. So let me offer you three random thoughts about *8½* in 1995. Just to be properly scholarly and analytical, I will give them three titles:

Federico's Answer to Ingmar
Why Did Fellini Build the Launching Pad? and
Why Does Harvey Greenberg Dislike This Movie So?

One random thought I had as I was watching this film in 1995 was that it is:

FEDERICO'S ANSWER TO INGMAR

I began to notice similarities among the differences between these two giants of mid-century cinema. Let me start by pointing out just one similarity. The dance of life at the end of *8½* exactly parallels and contrasts with the dance of death, the Totentanz, at the end of Bergman's *Seventh Seal*. This is something that both John Simon and I picked up in our early reviews of *8½* (and his, by the way, was as unfavorable as mine).⁴ That particular image, Bergman's allegorical characters silhouetted against a brooding sky as death leads them off, became *the* image for anyone interested in avant-garde cinema in the 1960s.

Contrast that with the statement of Daumier in this film, at his first interview with the filmmaker about the script for *8½* which he has just read. «Your main problem is, the film lacks ideas, it has no philosophical base. It's merely a series of senseless episodes.... It has none of the merits of the avantgarde film and all the drawbacks.» I think it's hard not to say that Fellini was feeling competitive with this other avant-garde or intellectual filmmaker so completely different from himself.

In fact, Fellini said in 1965, not that long after *8½*: «The author of today's films that I admire the most and find most congenial and that I feel as a brother is Bergman. I have seen only two films, *Wild Strawberries* and *The Silence*, but they were enough to make me love him as a brother, a milk brother.»⁵ Without sibling rivalry?

Let's consider the films Bergman and Fellini had achieved in 1960 when Fellini first outlined his plan for *8½*. Bergman had recently released *The Seventh Seal* (1957), *Wild Strawberries* (1957), *The Magician* (1958), and *The Virgin Spring* (1959). Bergman was becoming, as I read him, more realistic.

Somewhat after 1959, Fellini began changing from his early neo-realism to the later more fantastic or «Fellini-esque» style. The relevant pictures would be: *I Vitelloni* (1953), still strongly realistic; *La Strada* (1954) still realistic but with elements of fable and fantasy; *Il Bidone* (1955) strongly realistic again; *Le Notte di Cabiria* (1957), the same year as *Seventh Seal* and *Wild Strawberries*, quite realistic. Then came *La Dolce Vita* (1960), realistic including realistic treatment of magical and fabulous elements.

In the 1960s, nobody paid much attention to Fellini's episode for *Boccaccio 70* (1962), *The Temptation of Dr. Antonio*, but this little *scherzo* seems to me quite crucial to his development. The film has a 40-foot Anita Ekberg stepping down from a billboard to torment the puritanical Dr. Antonio, waving his puny umbrella against those mighty breasts. Clearly here is one of Fellini's major themes, the all-powerful woman or image of woman, contrasted to the impotence of the moralistic male, but presented in a largely fantastic way. Later critics have recognized its importance. Peter Bondanella, for example, in his massive 1992 study of Fellini, shows how Fellini's decisive encounter with Jungian psychology led to his interest in dreams and his keeping of dream notebooks (starting in 1960). His interest in dreams led in turn to the dreams, surrealism, and metacinema of this 60-minute film and ultimately to *8½*.⁶

It is in *8½*, it seems to me as to most critics, that Fellini finally decisively breaks with realism, turning instead to fantasy. Indeed, that is what this film is about. He shows us how difficult it was for him to go off into this new kind of film. He shows us how everybody around him doubted what he was doing, his producer, his assistants, the press, the critics, the intellectuals. He shows us his helplessness as he tries to make a totally new kind of film for him, for anybody

⁴ Simon 1967, 74-78.

⁵ Levine 1965.

⁶ Bondanella 1992, 150-163.

really. All this really happened, albeit deliberately staged by Fellini in real life. But as Fellini so often pointed out, Guido never succeeds in making his film, but he, Fellini, did.

If you state some of these films in the manner of *TV Guide*, you can see the similarities between Bergman's works and *8½*. A woman is victimized and shows magical powers (*Virgin Spring* or the wife *cum* prophetess in *8½*). An aging man tries to understand himself, aided by a magical young woman (*Wild Strawberries* or Guido in *8½*). The girl is magical because she plays several different roles: Claudia Cardinale in *8½*; Bibi Andersson in *Wild Strawberries*. A man troubled by his age and health has a dream with a coffin in it, *Wild Strawberries* again. *8½* mixes realism, memory, dream, and daydream as Bergman does, in his 1957 – 59 films.

There are some specific similarities between *8½* and *The Seventh Seal*. I've mentioned the big one: Fellini's dance of life as contrasted to Bergman's dance of death. I'd note too that the life-figures in *The Seventh Seal*, the juggler and his wife and child, are dancers, although Bergman doesn't give us a dance of life. Fellini does the opening dream on high-contrast black-and-white film stock, a technique Bergman used, not so much in *The Seventh Seal*, although it does appear there, but very much in *Wild Strawberries*. And I'd note also that it is a Scandinavian airlines hostess who announces Guido's visit to the Cardinal who epitomizes male futility and religion. Both *Seventh Seal* and *8½* have a numerical title. Both are very characteristic of their directors. But, where Bergman's sends us to the murky world of the Book of Revelation, Fellini's sends us to his own career as a filmmaker.

In general, Bergman's theme of tormented intellectualizing as against the simple appeal of life runs all through his films from *Smiles of a Summer Night* until the time of *8½*. In relation to Bergman the figure of Daumier in *8½* becomes important. Notice how he even looks like Bergman.

When Guido wakes up from his opening dream, Daumier is the first person he sees from the film world, and he is the last person Guido sees before the dance of life at the end begins. In that last appearance, sitting in a car with Guido, he is spouting all kinds of intellectual stuff about the importance of keeping silent instead of producing art that has no intellectual point – rather like my 1963 review, come to think of it. And now I remember the opening dream, when Guido is locked in a car and a noxious vapor starts to asphyxiate him. The noxious vapor comes from the passenger side, just like our friend Daumier.

Notice his name, that of an artist who brilliantly combined pictures and words to create cartoons of acid social criticism. In *8½*, Daumier is the spokesman for the WORD. He is the intellectual, committed to verbal meaning and social criticism. He beckons, indeed commands, exactly the opposite direction from the one Fellini-Guido is finding for himself. His name is French, and France was certainly the center for making intellectual comments on film in those days and perhaps now.

His Frenchness reminds me of the French actor Alain Cuny, who played the saintly intellectual Steiner in *La Dolce Vita*. Steiner says: «We should come to love one another outside of time, beyond time, detached, to live detached.» This is exactly the opposite of what Guido-Fellini becomes. Daumier in this film seems to me to echo Steiner. «You're are... primitive as a gothic steeple», one of Steiner's friends tells him. «You're so high that our voices grow faint in trying to reach up to you.» Unexpectedly, Steiner commits suicide, and in *8½* Guido imagines Daumier hanged. Indeed, in the first ending, Guido himself commits suicide under the demands of critics that he be intellectual. Steiner was something of a bourgeois puritan. So is Daumier, who seems so inept with women here. And of course the puritan par excellence is Dr. Antonio in the short film that Fellini made just before *8½*, a film that the curious ½ of *8½* is supposed to remind us of.

In other words, I see as a crucial thematic figure in *8½*, a male who has connections to France or Scandinavia, who is associated with death, who is a bit of a puritan, who is an intellectual, who is committed to the Word, who doesn't create anything, just talk, who is a little removed from life, who is «Northern» in Thomas Mann's sense. This Daumier-Steiner-Dr. Antonio figure makes a total contrast to Fellini's utter Southernness, his fondness for noise and mess and sex and looking instead of thinking.

Now Fellini did not meet Bergman until 1968 when they took a famous night prowling around Rome competing as to who knew the most about death.⁷ They did agree to try to collaborate on a film about love, but it never materialized. Fellini claimed in one of his interviews that, until he met Bergman in 1968, he had seen only one Bergman film. Frankly I find that hard to believe, given that in another interview he said he had seen two, given the stir that Bergman's movies had created since the mid-50s, and given the similarities I see between *8½* and Bergman's work of the period 1955-1960.

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Of course, there are major differences, for example, the launching pad in *8½*, and that brings me to my second random thought:

WHY DID FELLINI BUILD THE LAUNCHING PAD?

One particularly fine study of Fellini up through *Juliet of the Spirits* is Peter Harcourt's «The Secret Life of Federico Fellini». He comments on a rather peculiar image that recurs in Fellini's work.

The first image we see in the first film directed by Fellini himself is an image of a structure sticking up out of the sand with a piece of cloth blowing in the wind. In front of this structure... sits the White Sheik on his horse in all his phony splendor. But it is really in *Cabiria* that this purely visual absurdity acquires its most consistently surrealist force.

He gives several examples from *Cabiria* of random structures in various scenes.

But most absurd of all and most characteristically Fellinian is the strangely functionless structure that exists outside *Cabiria's* house. How did it come to be there and what purpose does it serve? Questions like that can have no answer on any rational plane, but the presence of this structure dominates a number of scenes in the film; and of course it is related both to the beach structures that we've seen more naturalistically in *The White Sheik* and *I Vitelloni* and that structure to end all structures that looms over *8½*.

The launching pad is the quintessential useless structure.

Harcourt suggests that the people walking up and down the structure in *8½* are like the little boys who are constantly clambering around the poles outside *Cabiria's* bungalow. He concludes that both sets of climbers continue a theme in Fellini of purposeless activity, «a kind of physical meaning to the absurdity of life», «movement without direction, life essentially without a goal.»⁸

I think that makes good sense, but I see another possibility. These useless constructions go up. They point to the sky. They connect to another theme in Fellini, the theme of altitude. We first see the White Sheik high up on a swing. We can hardly forget the airborne statue of Christ that opens *La Dolce Vita*. In the opening dream in *8½* Guido flies high, and is pulled down in an Icarus fantasy of flying and falling.

In other words, besides Peter Harcourt's idea that these constructions symbolize an absurd life without a goal, I think we are also looking at a good old-fashioned phallic symbol. I think these constructions are gendered, and they are gendered male. They seem to me distinctly linked to

⁷ Baxter 1993, 4-5, 256.

⁸ Harcourt 1966, pp. 11-12.

phallic striving, to male aspirations, pretensions, and ideas. Remember how Steiner was like a gothic steeple.

As many people have pointed out, there is a theme of verticality in Fellini. Fellini himself spoke before 1963 of «the fear of falling, of being buried.... Each day, each minute, there is a possibility of losing ground... of falling toward the beast.»⁹

When I put that quotation from Fellini alongside these images of men up high or flying, I hear Fellini complaining: I have to try to do these futile, even ridiculous male things. I have to try to do abstraction, philosophy, ideas, religion, this «high» stuff. If I fail, I fall. I will be engulfed, overwhelmed. I will fall into a monster.

That is, of course, the fantasy of the opening dream of 8½. Guido is trapped in his car in a huge traffic jam in an underpass. He clambers out of his car and flies up, apparently escaping out the mouth of the tunnel. Over his head we see wires like those for a trolley car or an electric train. He continues to soar, and we hear the sound of the steaming, noxious vapor in the car giving way to a high, free wind outside. We see sun, clouds, but suddenly, as if it were attached to those trolley wires, we glimpse a huge scaffolding. Lo and behold, although we may not recognize it unless we have seen 8½ before, this is the partially constructed space launching station that is such a crucial part of Guido's film project.

Fellini cuts quickly away to a man in a cloak riding a horse along the seashore, silhouetted against the sunlight (perhaps another echo of *The Seventh Seal*). A second man is lying on the beach – we will see both of them later, as part of Claudia Cardinale's entourage. The second man pulls on a rope attached to Guido's ankle. As he does so, he calls out to the cloaked rider, «Avvocato, lo preso», literally, «Lawyer, I've got him.»

Why a lawyer? Well, in this country we always need a lawyer, but in Italy, the only answer I can think of is that this refers to some contract that *ties* him to making the mysterious film that uses this space launching station we've just seen. In fact, later in the film, this actor will appear as Claudia Cardinale's manager. It is he who *ties* Guido's fantasies of Cardinale as a Muse by contractual obligations to the low practicalities of actually making a movie.

«Down, come down», calls the lawyer. The grip yanks repeatedly on the rope attached to Guido's ankles, which Guido is frantically trying to untie. Finally he falls into the sea. The lawyer, who not only wears a cloak but has a peculiar insignia on his forehead, pronounces, «Giù, definitivamente.» «Down, definitively down.» And Guido wakes as he falls into the sea, wakes to the doctors and «la cura», the cure, the therapy, if I can use that word.

In short, the opening dream deals with flying and verticality, phallic symbols if you will, and specifically associates them with Guido's film project. He tries to rise, to soar, and the space launching station is the phallic symbol of that wish. But he is pulled down by his contract to make a film, and his phallic failure ends in therapy.

Therapy. Following out my associations, I should point out that «construction» has a meaning in psychoanalytic talk. A construction is the analyst's positing an event in childhood to explain something in the patient's adult patterns. One might, for example, posit sexualized baths given by a seductive mother to explain Guido-Fellini's mixed fear and adoration of women.

Like Guido's constructions, these psychoanalytic constructions are expensive - boy, does it cost a lot to have an analyst make one of these constructions! Some people, including Fellini, I think, would say such a psychoanalytic construction is useless. It goes nowhere. It wastes time and money. It is like the huge launch pad in this movie. It is like the male intellectual stuff put forward by Daumier or Ingmar Bergman. Some people would say, the best thing you can do is climb down off it, off this male, psychoanalytic construction.

⁹ Quoted from Salachas 1969 by Herman 1969, p. 258, but without page number.

Therapy, however, brings me to the third random thought I had, looking at this film in 1995:

WHY DOES HARVEY GREENBERG DISLIKE THIS MOVIE SO?

Harvey Greenberg is an analyst in New York who writes regularly – and excellently – about films from a psychiatric, psychoanalytic point of view. He has a particularly long and disappointed analysis of *8½* in his 1975 book, *The Movies on Your Mind*. Dr. Greenberg concludes that Fellini, as early as *La Dolce Vita*, was using «cinematic creation in itself as a crucial ingredient in the working through, the mastery of conflict, internal and external.»¹⁰

He considers and praises *8½*, then goes on to look at the films that followed *8½*. All, he concludes, are failures, «empty displays of exceptional technique that ring increasingly inferior and hollow at base». Perversity and sadism are the panacea for Juliet's ills. *Toby Dammit* is like a bad dream. *Satyricon* ends in self-seeking callousness, the acceptance of ultimate blasphemy. *Clowns* (1970), *Roma* (1972), and *Amarcord* (1974) are all «genial trivialities», «entertaining, but hardly memorable», «as unsatisfying as the meagre leftovers from a banquet.»¹¹

From Dr. Greenberg's point of view, these later films are not just bad films, they are pathological. They show, he writes,

a heightened sense of unreality or «surreality», a facile disregard for the exigencies of time and space, elements the analyst customarily interprets as signatory of more archaic mental activity, experienced nightly in dreams, but often daily by the emotionally disturbed. The intrusion of such perceptions into the conscious thinking processes of a patient, if sufficiently persistent and global, would raise the spectre of an impending psychosis – or at least would warrant one's sharpened concern.¹²

The psychiatric problem is embodied in *8½* with its «terrible relinquishments and false insights». «In psychoanalytic terms, Guido has sustained an overwhelming rupture of his tie to the nurturing maternal image and inevitably to the entire world.» «The brave reconciliation of the ending, from this perspective, bears the mark of an abortive attempt at restitution.»¹³

Moreover, this problem with women, which is Fellini's as well as Guido's, is never resolved. «It is impossible to look unmoved upon the dance of life that ends *8½*, yet from all we have intuited about Guido, it is obvious that the rapturous harmony of this felicitous conclusion obscures – *must* obscure – his still desperate frame of mind.» «If the conflicts of *8½* never reached favorable resolution for the film's creator, what then follows [these films that are failures] may well be the bitter fruits of Fellini's crisis in middle life; the disillusion and dissoluteness of the later pictures may betoken his mounting hopelessness and disintegration.» As for Fellini's later career: «After the spurious joy that concludes *8½*, the great director has given us only the barren declensions of that fearful stillness of the heart.»¹⁴

I might mention another psychoanalytic reading, by David Herman, far more technical in its language, which also sees Guido-Fellini, indeed all of Fellini's works, as sick. «Exposed and vulnerable, he is humiliated by the caprices of a female figure.»¹⁵ In defense, he creates a universe whose inhabitants merge to form a single environment. Boundaries between internal and external fade away. Guido-Fellini's fantasies about women are polarized between a devouring, huge woman and the angel,

¹⁰ Greenberg 1975, pp. 138-68, 159.

¹¹ Pp. 167, 163, 163, and 164.

¹² P. 165.

¹³ Pp. 167, 154, and 154.

¹⁴ Pp. 154, 165, and 168.

¹⁵ Herman (1969), pp. 251-68, 257.

who is, however, innocent and ignorant, and whom Guido-Fellini wishes to eat cannibalistically. He is obsessed with scopophilic fantasies in which eye equals breast equals penis. Underneath all the outer romp and playfulness of Fellini's movies, there is despair. Defensively, Fellini turns to circus and vaudeville people as magical, divine manipulators. He himself turns toward spiritualism. He uses these idealized objects and his visions of purity and innocence to project outward and receive back narcissistic supplies. He imagines himself omnipotent, playing all the parts in his movies (Herman is referring to his directorial style). And so on. Not exactly the picture of mental health.

We can contrast these two readings, which see *8½* as pathological, with a recent reading by Harry Trosman, an analyst in Chicago, so recent that it is unpublished. Dr. Trosman would agree that Guido's supposed cure isn't a cure at all. As he says, «There is little to suggest the type of working through we generally attribute to someone who has undergone a successful conflict resolution as a result of insight».¹⁶ But he nevertheless regards *8½* as a masterpiece.

Dr. Trosman notes, as I do, the way Fellini got past the limits of neo-realism by including fantasy in his earlier films. Dr. Trosman sees this as Fellini's establishing subjective reality and «endopsychic perception» as the basis of his creations. He has recaptured the imaginative capacities of childhood. «To the extent that artistic creation is heavily dependent on the conflation of reality, memory, dream and fantasy, *8½* is a brilliant depiction of this interweaving.» «The creative potential has been generated.» Trosman's summary: «The achievement of *8½* lies in Fellini's having conceived the task of creativity in terms of giving prominence to intrapsychic experience.»¹⁷

Now you would expect three people looking at the same film in essentially the same very specific way, that is, psychoanalytically, to agree. There is, to be sure, some agreement among these three psychoanalytic critics, but also considerable disagreement. The disagreements come about because the three readings are based on value judgments. Greenberg and Herman don't like the films after *8½*. In fact, they don't like *8½* very much. Trosman, however, admires *8½* and likes what follows from it.

Why? Greenberg and Herman concentrate on pathology. Fellini in *8½* demonstrates all kinds of pathology: depression, a crippling work blockage, narcissistic object relations, «as if» character, Don Juanism, bad attitudes toward women – you name it. But at the end, Fellini says, Who needs therapy? I can just go on with my neuroses, feeling happy, enjoying numerous women, and making beautiful movies. Isn't that what old Sigmund wanted us to be able to do? To love and to work. Well, I'm doing just fine, thank you. And he was. I'm OK, you're OK, and that's OK. Now how can any board-certified, card-carrying psychoanalyst accept *that*? One needs anxiety, one needs therapy, one needs insight, one needs «a successful conflict resolution as a result of insight.» *8½* is not the answer a self-respecting psychiatrist wants to hear.

Dr. Trosman also feels the supposed therapy hasn't worked. In fact, he suggested to me that he should entitle his article, «How to Make a Great Movie Without Getting Well». But he greatly admires *8½*. Why? Dr. Trosman has written extensively on creativity. He values what Fellini has done with creativity in this film. Fellini is riding Dr. Trosman's favorite hobby horse.

In other words, our three psychoanalytic critics are responding to *8½* not in a vacuum, but in the context of their own personal concerns. Greenberg and Herman see *8½* as unsuccessful, Trosman as successful. They are each responding to needs. Countertransference. Surprise, surprise.

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What is true of them is true of me, looking at this film first in 1963, now in 1995. *8½* isn't just something «out there» to be talked about in the abstract, to be «thematized» in current jargon.

¹⁶ Trosman unpublished, p. 18.

¹⁷ Pp. 12, 21, 25-26.

I read the film in terms of my life, just as Fellini or Greenberg or Trosman do. And Fellini knew we would. Listen to him in 1965:

Every person has his own fund of experiences and emotions which he brings to bear on every new experience – whether it is to his view of a film or to a love affair, and it is simply the combination of the film with the reality already existing in each person which creates the final impression of unity. As I was saying, this is the way the spectator participates in the process of creation. This diversity of reaction doesn't mean that the objective reality of the film has been misunderstood. Anyway, there is no objective reality in my films, any more than there is in life.¹⁸

Now what Fellini has stated here is, in my world of literary criticism, the purest kind of reader-response position. The idea is that readers make the experience of a film out of their own psyches, using the materials of the film. You read the film the way you do because you are the kind of person you are and because you come from the culture you come from.

That brings me back to *8½* and me. I am a devout reader-response critic. Now I would not go so far as to say there is «no objective reality», but I would say, *For all practical purposes* there is no objective reality. That is, there is no way to know this film or talk about it, except through the frame of some human perception of the film. There is no god's eye view, as I thought in 1963, with me as the god. There is only a limitless variety of human constructions of the film. For all practical purposes, the film doesn't exist out there, but only in here, or more precisely, between out there and in here.

Recognizing this truism puts the critic in a very different position from the «objective», analytical stance that I took in 1963. In 1995, I think we spectators construct an experience of the film, using the materials of the film. Hence, we should ask each other, What do you *feel* toward this film? And how do *you* over there feel? What is *your* fantasy? And your fantasy? And yours? What is your defense? What is your interpretation?

That way, we open the film up to a conversation like our International meeting. Each of us constructs the film, partly as everybody else does, partly as some other people do, and partly as nobody else does. Hence, any given statement about the film is simply one speech in a conversation that in principle need never end.

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How do *I* feel? Shouldn't I take my own counsel and tell you? I *feel* this film is about wanting and being frustrated. Fellini is stifled in his dream, but wakes to doctors who don't give him what he needs. His mistress, his wife, Claudia Cardinale, none of them give him what he needs. At the same time, he is not giving other people what they need. His producer who wants him to cast the film, his staff, the actress who wants to know about her part, the writer who wants to know about the script, the journalists who want to know his ideas – to none of them does he give what he or she needs.

In 1995, the world of *8½* seems to me a world in which people don't get what they need. And what is Fellini's answer? The images of satisfaction in *8½* are Guido in an idealized childhood, Guido in the harem scene, Guido at the end in the dance of life. All unreal. All fantasy. The answer Fellini makes to his and Guido's and everyone's needs is to imagine, to fantasize total gratification, in effect, to make movies.

Why, in my response, am I so preoccupied with need? Where am I coming from? As I said, one morning in late April of 1995 the telephone rang. It was my old friend and colleague, Gerry

¹⁸ Bachmann 1965, p. 85.

O'Grady. Come up to Harvard, he says. See old friends. Meet all these interesting people. Celebrate Vlada Petric's retirement. All you have to do is write a paper on *8½*. *8½!*, I said. I haven't thought about that movie in years. What new can I say about it? Particularly since *8½* has been written about and written about. So of course, I said, Yes, I'll write the paper.

But oh, I didn't need this. This came at just the wrong time of year for me. I was busy trying to organize the program for the Twelfth International Conference in Literature and Psychology in Freiburg in June. I was trying to shepherd through the proofreading and indexing process our huge annual *IPSA Abstracts and Bibliography in Literature-and-Psychology*. I was trying to get some lectures ready for psychoanalytic institutes in Russia. I was busy!

I was needing. I wanted somebody to take care of me. I didn't want to have to give to all these projects and people. I didn't want to have to do this paper. I felt the same kind of suffocating pressure that Guido feels in his opening dream. Those are my feelings and associations, just as if I were in analysis.

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I was in analysis in 1963, at the time I wrote that old review, and doing papers like this one was in fact a big issue for me. I was an active, energetic critic, imposing my own powerful New Critical analyses on all kinds of texts, including movies, including this movie. What analysis suggested was that it might be good if I were able to relax, to be passive, to lie back, to simply enjoy the work. But that felt very dangerous to me. To be passive would be to be feminized with all the fantasies and stereotypes that that implied to someone who grew up in the 1930s and '40s. To be active, in control of literary works, that was the male thing.

In effect, I needed to learn just what Fellini teaches in this movie, and boy, was I resisting! By contrast, Guido-Fellini in his final fantasy accepts himself as he is, accepts the world, life, imperfection – he stops trying to be Bergman or Daumier, he puts aside male strivings, he gives up his directorial position, and he joins the dance.

Isn't that what I needed to do in 1963 and still need to do in 1995, for that matter? To recognize that what you have is what you need. If you need less you worry less about giving papers at fancy conferences, about male rising, male achievement. You can be less preoccupied with ideas, more with people. You can take time to smell the roses or, in Florida, the jasmine and gardenias.

I know all that consciously, but it was and still is hard for me to do. I did end up writing this paper, just as Fellini did end up making his movie. To be sure, I wrote a reader-response paper rather than the old-fashioned analysis of 1963. I found a way.

What would a reader-response treatment of *8½* be like? What is this paper like? You don't look for themes, but accept your reading as it is. You listen to your thoughts and feelings as you see the film, and you accept them. Ah, but wait a minute! That's what the film itself is about, isn't it? Accepting yourself. And that perhaps is the ultimate story of *8½* and me.

It seems to me that Fellini's move at the end of *8½* exactly parallels my own move as a critic. I've changed from the psychoanalytic critic of 1963 discussing themes and fantasies «in» the text to the reader-response critic of 1995 discussing themes and fantasies in me. I wasn't able to do this until a half dozen years after my analysis ended. But I did finally accept the arts as something less to be analyzed than to be experienced.

Again, to quote from Fellini, this time in 1965:

In my films, what is constantly repeated is the attempt to suggest to... modern man a road of inner liberation, of trying to accept and love life the way it is without idealizing it, without creating concepts about it, without projecting oneself into

idealized images on a moral or ethical plane. To try to give back to man a virginal availability, his innocence as he had it in childhood.¹⁹

In other words, just enjoy the movie, enjoy the story, enjoy the poem. How that would liberate my profession from its tired and jargon-ridden critical procedures!

Profession aside, what about me? It seems to me now, in 1995, thirty-two years after my review criticizing this film for its lack of intellectual meaning that I am finally catching on. Fellini was saying to me, C'mon Norm, that's the whole point. *We don't want intellectual meaning*. This is a film about how great it is just to have images and sounds and experiences, particularly of sexy women. Why do you want themes? Abstractable meanings? Why are you writing these critical articles anyway, going to conferences, all that stuff? Are you trying to be another Dr. Antonio? A Daumier? A Bergman? Oh, my, I was such a Bergmaniac in those days...

There was no way I could prize 8½ in 1963 as I do in 1995. Now, I am as enthusiastic about the film as I was negative in 1963. As for that old review, I have a cartoon tacked up on my office wall that shows a professor addressing a class, one student in particular: «There are no wrong answers, but if there were, that would be one.»

Yet, when you come right down to it, how differently do I see 8½? How much have I changed, really? I still see the same themes I saw in 1963. I still see it as a film polarized between male abstraction and female earthiness, between ideas and images, between intellect and emotion. Did the film change me? Did either Fellini or I do what I think the film advocates? I don't notice that Fellini slowed down after making 8½ any more than I slowed down after seeing it.

So why am I doing all this stuff? Why am I pressuring myself this way or letting myself be pressured by others? Am I still carrying on that male striving for achievement that was such an issue for me in 1963, that was my central concern in looking at 8½? I guess so.

I see the film the same way, and I behave the same way, but my values have changed. The polarity is reversed. What was positive is now negative. What I thought was bad I now think is good. What I thought was good («universal» meanings or striving for academic fame) I now doubt. But I still see the film as rejecting meaning, as identifying the male tendency toward abstract ideas and discursive themes with death, as opting for a feminine defined as full of life, passive, nurturing, subservient – and dangerous.

Isn't that what I needed to do in 1963 and still need to do in 1995, for that matter? Come to terms with that passivity or femininity? Don't I need to worry less about lecturing, impressing people, about male rising, masculine achievement? Am I skipping this paper, then? No. I know consciously what I should do, but it's hard.

In that sense, I think my 8½ thoughts lead me to something about human nature. A theme, if you will. I won't say it's a theme for 8½, though, as I did in 1963, only for my experience of 8½.

We don't change very much. We change about as much as Guido changes in this film. Because we aren't going to change very much, we need to accept ourselves as we are. That's the ambiguity of the double ending. *To reject yourself is to kill yourself. Accept yourself and others, then, but that's unreal*. At the beginning Guido knows he needs therapy, but he rejects therapy, and it's not clear at the end whether he still needs therapy or not. And there I go again, still asking for things to be «clear». Am I still on that search for triumphant and controlling knowledge? Am I still being Daumier?

You see, there are no cures. We really don't change very much. We can go to the spa or the psychoanalyst, and we may unblock our writer's block, we may feel better, we may live happier, but we really don't change deep down, at the core, at the center of our identity. I need *not* to look for themes in film, not to judge it as film or as therapy, but simply to accept it as it is. I need to accept my experience of the film rather than seek some quote-unquote *right* reading. We need to accept our experiences, we need to accept ourselves – including the fact that we are not going to

¹⁹ Levine 1965.

change very much. We need to accept that we are what we are, and we are going to stay that way. But I'm still not quite able to do that.

That's how I experience the film in 1995: it's about *accepting the very fact that we can't quite accept ourselves*. I've come to a paradox that fits the paradoxes of fiction and reality Fellini plays with in *8½*. We can't quite accept that we can't quite accept ourselves as we are. And (as Andrew Gordon has suggested to me) by coming to that conclusion, I have been able to overcome my difficulties in writing this paper, just as Guido was able to finish his film.

8½, then, is neither healthy nor unhealthy in the psychoanalysts' terms. It's just the way we are. We are who we are. Get used to it. At least that's the way I see *8½* now, in 1995. Who knows about 1996?

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Misselwitz's spielfilm about disorder: Herzsprung a real place

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Helke Misselwitz made her feature film *Herzsprung* (or *Heartbreak*) in eastern Germany two-and-a-half years after the Wende, that stark turn of the events for both Germanys, Unification. Misselwitz, an East German and member of the formative *Aufbau*-generation (b. 1947), chose to make this film about the disorder and loss Unification unleashed as a specifically eastern production: She worked – purposefully – within the foundering establishment of DEFA studios in Babelsberg, the former state film corporation of the German Democratic Republic (which had been bought by a firm in Paris and is now headed by the New German filmmaker Volker Schlöndorff; DEFA was and is the one remaining venue of East[ern] German film practice.) Her loyal choice was, assuredly, made in order to continue her work in film about East German experience. Yet, I find, Misselwitz's choice for DEFA was in the first instance prompted by her interest in continuing her cinematic exploration of individuals experience, specifically *women's lives*, on the place that has been East Germany. (Prior to this Misselwitz had made only one other film, *Winter ade* [1988], a very low budget documentary about the dailiness and commonality of dailiness of women's lives in the GDR.)

Herzsprung (signifying both loss, English «heartbreak», and false hope, «leap of the heart») is a fictive presentation of a nexus of categorically destructive experiences in both the public and the private spheres; it depicts a thoroughly desolate life in a metaphoric, almost mythic-seeming microcosm of political and personal events (yet: there is in point of fact a town Herzsprung).

In this reading I pose the contradistinction between the political and the personal as the difference between the connotation of a word from the lexicon of National Socialism «Heimat», revived and uickened in current film-criticism, and the term «orginary home» or early environment, from psychoanalytic vocabulary. There is, thus, a clearly established genesis for the fascism of post-Unification Germany society: The experience of interpersonal fascism, Misselwitz shows, proceeds the experience of institutionally structured neo-Fascism writ large. It is, as Alice Miller demonstrates, its necessary precondition. Alice Miller, too, moves between the personal and political in her writing: To demonstrate the conjuncture between interpersonal fascism and mass-scale institutional Fascism, she alternates between case histories, *Der geschmiedene Schluessel/The Untouched Key*

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and social analyses, *Du sollst nicht merken/Thou shalt not be aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child*.

Misselwitz's cinematic project about Heimat and the home toggles in narrative time between the correlative registers by moving between settings in the public and private spheres. *Heartbreak* depicts and evokes, in a filmic vocabulary of lyric stills and quick action sequences, a heavy sense of oppression. This permeating oppression erupts – on screen – in violent events.

The scenes of violence, too, oscillate between domestic and public acts: 1) The protagonist Johanna, an ethnic German and easterner is slapped in the face by her husband and 2) Johanna's lover, a western Black, is subjected to the multi-various forms of torture in a lynching; he is bound, made target to knife-throwing, and emasculated. The viewer has, then, scenes of traditional domestic and classic gang violence for comparison and consideration.

Although the correlation of the forms of violence is traced out, *Herzprung* has been received as a film about a single instance of grand-scale violence. It is known as a film about neo-Nazism in the East. Reviewers speak of *Herzprung* as a rather successful glitzy western look at a typically eastern scenario.

In fact, the western distributors of *Herzprung* market their product in exactly this manner. This film is marketed by Weltvertrieb im Filmverlag der Autoren as paradigmatic of life in the east of Germany: The synopsis of the film-notes about a world «down on its luck» reads: «In a town in the north of Germany after Reunification, times are hard. The women who work in the kitchen of the canteen are fired. Even the Russian soldiers pack up and go home. A dark-skinned stranger is given a lift by Johanna, one of the girls [sic], who has been fired.» The notes from the distributor proceed to sketch the «broken dreams» of all the film's characters after this turn of political events the *Wende*.

The film-notes close with the anonymous critical remark: «The dark-skinned stranger reappears in the village – he remains in the way. And anyone who's in the way has to be removed.» The implication from the read-along is that the nameless dark stranger, the societal alter, is the scapegoat for societal discontent, that is, for *economic* hardship.

Thus, this telling of the content of the film relates the heartbreak as the stranger's death at the hands of a right-wing mob as the dialectic of political violence alone. This understanding of the nature of the violence concurs with the general pale of formal and informal reception around *Herzprung*. This reception further concurs with hermeneutic tradition, contemporary critical practice in eastern film.

I would like to begin another type of investigation of the abjection and oppression of *Herzprung* by directing attention to the attention directed at the «surprise» of the ending in which the Black man dies.

The death of the nameless Dark Stranger is only intimated on screen; and if he dies at all, it is outside the venue of the material film. The Stranger's putative death is, in point of fact, not delivered by the neo-Nazis, rather by a passing and speechless Gypsy and banshee. This woman, too, is nameless; she is only «called» Rosi by the villagers for red for the saturating technicolor red that runs, seeps and drips throughout.

Someone does lie dead, visibly, dead on camera at the end of the film, Johanna who accidentally caught the knife in the back meant for her strange dark lover. That she is dead is confirmed within the film as her former classmate and would-be sweetheart announces in horror: «We were going to leave her out of this.» (He also apologizes to her body.) Her luminescent death shroud, to underscore the truth with symbolism, is covered with goose-feathers; it seems to dissolve into the goose-feathers that from the opening scene have made visual announcements of death. To ensure the finality of the final scene, the camera tracks the feathers sifting off to the highway spliced with a shot of the proverbial forest laid bare, laid still.

Unsurprisingly, then, *Herzprung* is not «about» economic disorder and concomitant violence. Nor is it by chance that the film ends with Johanna's death. Nor is it surprising that Johanna's death

was not by chance: Through the language of the film, I contend, she was destined to die and to die violently – she was marked to die by an *act* of violence.

Her body lies among sifting white goose feathers; there is no longer any possibility of flight. These feathers recall the feathers of the dead geese of the opening scene, those Johanna had plucked herself for her livelihood.

In that opening scene, which itself is a film quote of Misselwitz's earlier *Winter ade*, women workers sit together as one. Eva Maria Hagen sings. The lyrics of the song are about a young woman whose innocence is stolen away (the refrain rings tellingly of fascism: «Heimat / sweet Heimat!»). Here, too, Johanna – as all the women – is dressed in pristine white, dealing in death, the common work of her friends, listening to a mythical ancient tale of sexual violence about the droit d'senior of time out of mind. The unsung ending of the tale that echoes in the mind is of the woman's suicide.

Johanna is singled out from among them to «see the boss». As she walks down an alley – space of no escape – to the boss who will fire her, men workers taunt and tease her. Their heckling is, of course, sexual. Johanna acts out by making a ridiculous production of swinging her hips in an attempt to make sexual aires look preposterous (the men don't get it). Johanna's strutting, filmed from behind, is accompanied by two layers of sound, the men's calling (diegetic) and a track of the boss's authoritarian voice, informing her she has been released, explaining her husband has a job (extradiegetic). The voice-over makes the scene of Johanna's sexual harassment seem to be her line of thought during the time she is being told she will be unemployed: The economic helplessness – here, clearly subordination to male power – is concomitant with the verbal sexual degradation. As she struts in defiance, she is shown as poor and dirty; her hair is filled with these same goose feathers. They do not lift her up and out of her predicament. She is the target for the two-pronged assault.

As she leaves with her walking papers, she picks up a sack of goose feathers; at least she will have that for some money. On the way she is held up by Neo-Nazis throwing knives – one of whom and one of which will kill her. They bait her, use the word «pussy», which makes the subtitles only obliquely. Again her vulnerability is not simply that of the men, lack of money; it is her sex, her Freudian lack.

She wrestles back her sack of feathers and proceeds to station three in the trail of men: the drunken father who calls her by her dead mother's name and expects Johanna to baby him. The father tips her off to the whereabouts of her unemployed husband. She takes a detour to pick up the kids. As her son gets out of her car to urinate, holds her up on her appointed rounds with his physical need and ability to take care of that need publicly, Johanna, by a higher karma, meets her future lover, – the man who will find her via her father, he is negotiating with soldiers.

At the bar where Johanna ultimately locates her husband, he is playing the slot-machine obsessively for some money. Jan, the husband, – played by the same actor who plays the Neo-Nazi who had taunted Johanna (and will kill her) – commands her to kiss him. The transaction between the spouses, his giving her his piddling winnings – all he has got – and her giving him an accommodating kiss on the cheek – all she can manage – results in violence. He does not think the small kiss enough, forces a kiss on her and slaps her to the ground when she resists.

As Johanna has made her way around the circuit of men, she has traced out the chain of experiences of power that enclose her life: There is a fabled gentleman of lore who rapes in the song of the homeland; the unseen boss as voice-over who confers the document that leaves her jobless; the backs of her fellow-workers who hurl only derisive laughter; the abusive and physically aggressive classmates; the emanding and infantile father and demanding young son; the hitchhiker who demands a ride, wearing a coat he traded for a stolen bike, that dark charmer on the take; and, lastly, the husband who, like the lord of the song, knows his rights.

The course of the film narrative carries Johanna from the fiction of sexual violence – over threats and demands, all sexually charged – to an act of violence, a slap in the face. Johanna has had this succession of ever-more threatening experiences as she learns and tells about losing her

kitchen-job. Her real work, tending to needs and demands, however, traces out the pattern of the actual threat in her life, not powerlessness through lack of currency, the Marxist material of exchange. Rather, her vulnerability to sexual aggression. The initial fiction of sexual aggression and final inadvertent-seeming stabbing are connected over socially-encoded and symbolic acts of power.

The initial act of violence, the slap, comes about as the consequence of the denial of a «real kiss», the sexual kiss. That kiss is delivered unseen, behind the hat held up in front of the camera by the Dark stranger. A full and lingering kiss to Johanna's lips is conferred on camera twice, both times by her father: once as she sits on his lap in her thin red slip – he is apparently consoling her on the death of her husband! – and again as she steps from the house on the day her father was to marry his girlfriend dressed as the bride: She lifts her veil to reveal her face to the father. When she plays the bride, the father calls her by her Mother's name, is romantically enchanted.

The implication behind the father's sexually charged relation with Johanna, that is to say the *actuality* of incest, is made by Johanna herself. As she sits in her red car, the one vehicle of her physical freedom, legs elevated and slightly spread on the dash, she speaks to her lover of her father. He had just said that her father loves her a lot (emphasis in original soundtrack). The viewer remembers how the two men had dueled with their axes. Johanna talks of her parents sexual relationship and ends cheerily with the statement: «I am completely like my Mother.» The implied grammatical and logical conclusion to this sentence in its conversational locus is: «completely my Mother to my Father.»

The knife in the back, thrown by the would-be sweetheart, played by the man who was her husband, who was denied the kiss delivered by the father – is surprisingly unaccidental.

The ultimate violence, incest, which has been read in an act of displacement as public and economically motivated, has begun in Heartbreak in the originary home; not the Heimat. It is the originary act of harm, and one that in the political order of images about disorder, somehow and seemingly gets lost.

And yes, daddies, there is a town in Germany Herzsprung.

The Beautiful American: Sincere Fictions of the White Messiah in the American Cinema

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Since Gordon Allport's groundbreaking work, the study of race relations has been dominated by the concept of prejudice. Prejudices are representations of others. But the term makes no reference to the judgments, sentiments, and representations of self that the encounter with the «other» elicits in the perpetrator of racism. As we know from object-relations theory, a self is made up of representations of self and representations of others, and these are indissolubly linked. Racist action always involves both a representation of self and a representation of the other. The self-concept that the presence of the other elicits in the perpetrator, as much as prejudice about the other, helps to explain racist oppression and violence. For example, if I see the other as lazy and dirty, then I am thereby enabled to see myself as industrious and clean.

According to Otto Kernberg, the process of internalizing object relations takes place on three levels: introjection, identification, and ego identity. Introjection is the earliest stage; the infant takes in an interaction with an outside person. Splitting occurs at this stage as the ego splits off undesirable aspects of the self or splits threatening objects. Identification is an intermediate level which involves a relation of subject to object and the taking on of social roles. Finally, ego identity is the highest level of internalization, in which the ego organizes a coherent, continuous self from introjections and identifications. Kernberg proposes that the selection of aspects of object relations that go into an identity formation must be in harmony («Structural Derivatives of Object Relations» 30-38).

We want to extend this concept of identity formation into the area of race relations with the notion of what we call «sincere fictions of the white self». We borrow the concept of «sincere fiction» from the sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who is elaborating on an idea of the sociologist Marcel Mauss. In *The Gift*, Mauss shows how we engage in a gigantic social lie when we pretend that gifts are voluntary and gratuitous, because in reality gift giving is obligatory. Bourdieu extends

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this notion to suggest that almost all social relations depend upon «the sincere fiction of disinterested exchange»:

the institutionally organized and guaranteed misrecognition which is the basis of gift exchange and, perhaps, of all the symbolic labor intended to transmute, by the sincere fiction of disinterested exchange, the inevitable, and inevitably interested relations imposed by kinship, neighborhood, or work, into elective relations of reciprocity.... the labor required to conceal the function of the exchanges is as important an element as the labor needed to carry out the function. (*Outline of a Theory of Practice* 171)

We propose that, in the realm of the self-concept, «sincere fictions» are the externalization of an identity formation, a collection of selective identifications whose purpose is to occult other, unwelcome aspects of the self. Identity formation is a process of substitution in which one abandons certain introjects and replaces them with selective identifications. A sincere fiction of the white self is built up over time and partakes of all three levels of identity formation as described by Kernberg: on the level of introjection, it involves splitting; on the level of identification, the adoption of social roles; and on the level of ego identity, the creation of an ego ideal and the final exclusion of unwelcome aspects of the self.

«Sincere fictions» assumes the world is a narrative and the subject is constantly acting within its precepts. The fictions are sincere because the subject is unaware of the alternative aspects of object relations he or she could have incorporated into his or her identity. Specifically, we assert that the white American self-concept is a sincere fiction that needs to be maintained at all times with intense symbolic labor in an effort to misrecognize the brutal reality of American race relations.

The white self-concept has been little studied since it has been taken for granted as «the self», the minority self being «the other», the deviation. The power to redefine or to force misrecognition is a significant power. Divisions of race are, after all, largely arbitrary constructions, fictions: for centuries, the Irish were not recognized as «white», and the Jews were also seen as a separate race. In America, racial divisions have always been constructed obsessively around a dichotomous model, white or non-white, with the white self seeing racial others as fairly monolithic. The negative images of the other are distortions that originate in the white mind and spread throughout American culture, but the white mind itself is rarely brought into question.

Since we are talking about the identity not simply of individuals but of the majority group in a culture, part of this symbolic labor in propping up the white American self-concept can be clearly seen in the social myths disseminated by Hollywood movies.

In a previous paper, we investigated aspects of the sincere fictions of the white self as they could be seen in the images of four movies across the decades of the twentieth century, movies that deal with one of the crucial periods of American race relations, the era of the Civil War and the Reconstruction: *Birth of a Nation* (1915), *The Littlest Rebel* (1935), *Gone With the Wind* (1939), and *Glory* (1990). What we found in these movies was a persistence across time in representations of the ideal white American self, which is constructed as powerful, brave, cordial, kind, firm, and generous: a natural-born leader. The existence of blacks as «others» and as dependent, faithful followers helps to confirm this grandiose image of the white self.

Such stereotyping was to be expected in the notorious *Birth of a Nation*, a hymn of praise to the Ku Klux Klan, but it was surprising to encounter the same stereotypes 75 years later in *Glory*, a supposedly liberal film about the first black regiment to fight in the Civil War. This persistence suggested that the sincere fictions of the white self have maintained themselves throughout the twentieth century despite decades of struggle and apparent change in American race relations.

We also found that the Civil War was used to dramatize a split in the white self. These movies are not about white versus black but white versus white, narrativized in *Birth* and *Rebel* as North versus South, in *Gone With the Wind* as antebellum South versus post-Civil War South, and in *Glory* as white liberal Northerner versus white bigoted Northerners. All the movies work toward a

final reconciliation or reunification of the split white self, effected through marriage or family reunion in the first four films and through sacrificial death in battle in *Glory*. Blacks in each case are secondary characters coded to enhance certain properties of the white self.

In this paper, we want to extend our investigation of the sincere fictions of the white self in Hollywood movies by looking at a series of films about the white savior. The messianic white self is the redeemer of the weak, the great leader who saves blacks from slavery or oppression, rescues people of color from poverty and disease, or leads Indians in battle for their dignity and survival. This is a narcissistic fantasy found in many Hollywood movies. Usually the white messiah is an alienated hero, a misfit within his own society, mocked and rejected until he becomes a leader of a minority group or of foreigners. He finds himself by sacrificing himself to liberate them. The white messiahs are overwhelmingly male; women do not seem to qualify for this exalted status. Often the white outsider is instantly worshipped by the natives, treated like visiting royalty or a god. This is presented as to be expected, no less than he deserves. The messiah is marked by what Max Weber called charisma, the extraordinary quality that legitimizes his role as leader and that of the foreign population as followers.

The image of the white messiah is ubiquitous in recent American action-adventure movies, especially hit series such as *Die Hard*, *Superman*, *Batman*, *Indiana Jones*, *Rocky*, *Rambo*, *Terminator*, and *Alien*. Such films typically concern a white hero or superhero (only in *Alien* is it a heroine) who triumphs despite impossible odds against archvillains and saves the city, the nation, or the world. Often he defeats evil megalomaniac «others»: foreigners, Nazis, or extraterrestrials who want to rule the whole world. This is a reflection of American civic religion, which transforms collective endeavors into the battle of a lone individual against the forces of organized evil. It is reinforced by Hollywood, which favors narratives about strong individuals. The white action messiah reaffirms modern, individual subjectivity. The action hero is typically a loner, one of a kind, isolated, rarely part of a collective action.

In this paper, we focus specifically on white messiahs who lead people of another color. This is such a powerful cultural myth because it presents whites with pleasing images of themselves as saviors rather than oppressors of those of other races. The adventures of a white messiah is an ideal vehicle for propaganda movies such as *Glory*, a story about whites leading blacks into battle in the Civil War, which we have discussed earlier. The messiah fantasies are essentially grandiose, exhibitionistic and narcissistic. In the white mind, the racial other does not exist on its own terms but only as what Kohut calls «a self-object», bound up with the white self.

There are many such films, but for the purposes of this argument we have limited ourselves to a representative sample from the 1960s through the 1990s. First is a series of stories about Americans encountering the exotic East or a facsimile of Asia: *Stargate* (1994), *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom* (1984), *The Man Who Would Be King* (1975), *City of Joy* (1992), and *The Green Berets* (1968). Finally, we consider a popular movie about a white man who helps a native American: *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975).

What we discover in movies about the white messiah reconfirms what we found in the films about the Civil War. First, the ideal white self is constructed as powerful, brave, cordial, kind, firm, and generous: a natural-born leader. Other races exist as dependent, faithful followers to bolster the grandiose white self-image. And second, in many of these movies, there is a split in the white self which can only be resolved through violence. The function of the sincere fictions encoded in these movies is to enable the white self to live with itself and to absolve the guilt of racism by portraying the white as noble and self-sacrificing on behalf of other races, innocent victims who badly need rescue by a white American.

In myths such as *Stargate* and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, imperialism justifies itself in the name of higher goals: religious, democratic or humanitarian. The white Americans are there not to get wealthy from the natural resources or to exploit the population but to liberate them from slavery. The oppressors are an extraterrestrial tyrant in *Stargate* and Indian aristocrats in *Temple of Doom*. Two critics write, «*Indiana Jones* is a cinematic variant on the theme of the

“white man’s burden”. It seeks to represent imperialism as a civilizing, socially progressive force and so to legitimize Western domination of others. It does so by identifying oppression with the indigenous system of rule» (Postone & Traube 12).

Stargate, one of the most popular films of 1994, is a good starting point since it is the most recent of the films we consider yet presents an almost pure mythic paradigm. Its hero possesses the entire inventory of messianic traits. The film borrows from a wealth of myths, including the legends of Moses and of Christ, and from previous science fiction films using the myth of the birth of the hero, such as *Star Wars* (1977) and *Dune* (1984). But its real myth pertains to American foreign policy in the 1990s, particularly to the relationship of white Americans to foreigners of another race.

Stargate begins with the discovery in Egypt during an archaeological excavation of an ancient, giant metal ring. Decades later, an American government project activates the ring, aided by Dr. Daniel Jackson, an Egyptologist and linguist, who decodes the hieroglyphs. Apparently the ring serves as a gateway to distant stars. They send a military team, led by Colonel Jack O’Neill, to investigate the planet on the other side of the portal, at the other end of the universe. Jackson accompanies them to help the team return. The men discover a desert planet with a population of slaves who labor in the mines. The slaves are kept in ignorance and ruled by terror by an alien being who calls himself Ra, the Egyptian sun god. Ra created the ancient Egyptian civilization and also built the pyramids on Earth as landing sites for his spaceship. Jackson, able to read the hieroglyphs, reveals the truth to the people and persuades them to revolt, in which they are aided by Colonel O’Neill and his men. They finally defeat Ra by using an atomic bomb, originally intended to be set off by O’Neill on a suicide mission to destroy the portal if there was danger on that side.

The mythic elements in *Stargate* are fairly obvious. Jackson is an orphan and an outcast, mocked and scorned by the scientific community, who refuse to believe his theories. The only one who has faith in him is a wise old woman, a mother figure who recognizes his talent. He quickly shows his extraordinary ability by decoding the symbols, which no one else could do. Jackson is next scorned by the soldiers, who resent him as an outsider and mock him as a hopeless «dweeb». But the natives immediately bow down before him, believing him to be the chosen one because he wears an amulet with the sign of Ra, which was given him before he left by the old woman as a good luck charm. Jackson is tested by various ordeals: he maintains his chastity in the face of sexual temptation; he descends into the underworld (the pyramid); he dies and is resurrected (in one of Ra’s machines); he refuses to kill his comrades when ordered to by Ra; he brings his slain lover back to life; he is almost killed again by Ra, but he escapes; and he successfully leads the people to freedom.

The split in the white self occurs between the dual heroes of the film, who are foils. Jackson represents knowledge but O’Neill represents military might. Jackson has faith but O’Neill is embittered, suicidally depressed over the death of his son. Jackson is the mythic hero, the man of an extraordinary destiny, but O’Neill is the more conventional hero. The two initially have nothing in common, and they clash, but later they unite to liberate the natives, and both are redeemed by the experience. At the end, Jackson stays, having found a wife and a place as leader of the tribe. O’Neill returns home, but he has found a substitute son in one of the native boys and has overcome his suicidal grief. The explicit message seems to be that white men can overcome their differences and find themselves by fighting together to liberate the natives from slavery in a foreign land. The natives exist for the white men to realize their potential, and immersion in the exotic other will heal the split in the white self.

But the implicit message of *Stargate* is quite different. The indigenous population is portrayed as credulous, ignorant, and superstitious. If you wear the right amulet, they will bow down and treat you like a god. Like the natives in Hollywood jungle movies of the 1930s and 1940s, they are amazed by a pocket lighter and can be won over with a candy bar. The natives on this planet, who are descendants of the Egyptians, have been slaves for thousands of years, and, without the coming of the white men, they would have remained slaves for thousands more. All it takes is one smart,

white American to lead them to freedom. According to the logic of *Stargate*, if Columbus had been an American, he would have come to the New World not to exploit, enslave, convert, or exterminate the natives but as a humanitarian to liberate the enslaved masses from the yoke of tyranny. These white Americans are good guys, even though they carry an atomic bomb.

Stargate uses a mythic plot to convey its ideological message. The film, which appeared in 1994, is a thinly disguised allegory about the Gulf War of 1990-91, in which the American government, solely out of the kindness of its heart and its love of freedom everywhere, sends its armed forces to liberate some desert people from a usurping tyrant who has invaded their country. The evil Ra, who is a monstrous, androgynous alien (played by Jaye Davidson, who portrayed a transvestite in *The Crying Game*), is a version of Saddam Hussein.

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom is similar to *Stargate*: another myth about the white messiah who liberates the slaves in an Eastern land. *Temple of Doom* indulges in even more blatant stereotyping and caricaturing, justifying this by setting the action in the 1930s, using 1930s movie conventions from the action-adventure and cliffhanger genres, and playing the clichés larger than life and close to preposterous. The tongue-in-cheek, retro mode is established in the opening sequence, an elaborate, Busby Berkeley style song-and-dance sequence supposedly set in a Shanghai nightclub in 1936. A blonde American woman sings «Anything Goes» in Chinese. We are signalled that «anything goes» in this movie, including old movie clichés and outdated racist and sexist stereotypes. On his adventures, «Indy drags with him an oriental orphan (the only male his equal) and a screeching, hysterical woman» (White 413).

In *Temple of Doom*, we are in *Gunga Din* (1939) territory, in which the natives are either loyal subjects of the British Crown or rebellious, blood-crazed Thuggee cultists. The division of racial others into the good – faithful helpers of the white man – and the bad – murderous thugs – is introduced in the opening sequence, in which Indy's life is threatened by Chinese gangsters, who try to poison and shoot him, while he is aided by a loyal Chinese partner, who dies saving him, and by a Chinese street kid whom he has adopted.

In the next sequence, Indy shows up in an impoverished Indian village. As in *Stargate*, the natives treat him as their savior and put on a feast in his honor. In both movies, the hero shows his respect by eating the native cuisine, even though his companions find the food repulsive.

There are in fact many similarities between Daniel Jackson in *Stargate* and Indiana Jones, who both represent the mythic white American hero, the best of the white American self. Both are learned men with doctorates in archaeology and respect for other cultures. Both know languages, so they can communicate with the natives, and both put their learning to use to free the slaves (the whites are not the oppressors – extraterrestrials or other natives are the villains). Even though they are scientists, both are also men of action willing to use violence to defend themselves or the innocent. Both are tested by the same series of ordeals: they maintain their chastity in the face of temptation, descend into the underworld, die and are resurrected (Indy becomes a zombie slave of the Thuggee cult until he returns to normal), refuse to execute their comrades when ordered to by the villain, rescue a lover, escape and lead the people to freedom. Most important, both these fictional characters are kind, fearless mythic heroes who risk their lives for people of an oppressed race, the polar opposite of real life colonial masters.

Jackson, however, is selflessly pure, whereas Indy is an ambivalent character who seems to include both sides of the split white self. *Temple of Doom* seems to be trying to have it both ways about the character. Indy is both a scientist and a soldier of fortune, an archaeologist who respects other cultures and a grave-robber and thief of valuable antiquities. In the opening sequence, he attempts to sell for profit an urn containing the remains of a Chinese emperor. When the Indian villagers ask him to return a sacred stone to their village, one is never quite sure whether he wants the stone for their sake or for the «fortune and glory» to which he often refers. The greedy, self-serving side of Indy is caricatured in Willie Scott, the gold-digging American woman who accompanies him.

The white American self who is torn between serving himself and serving others embodies the contradictions of capitalism. He is the classic American hero seen in such characters as Rick in *Casablanca* and Han Solo in *Star Wars*. And in movies such as *Stargate* and *Temple of Doom*, although white Americans may initially have a profit motive in going to foreign lands, they soon abandon it to free the oppressed masses.

As in *Stargate*, the natives are helpless to liberate themselves. There seem to be no strong men in the Indian village, only women and old men. All it takes is one enterprising American, the great white God sent by destiny, to free the people. Near the end of the movie, when Indy confronts the villainous Mola Ram, high priest of the Thuggees, Indy accuses him: «You betrayed Shiva!» The white American has now appropriated the Indian identity and speaks with the voice of Hindu orthodoxy to denounce the heretic.

In elevating the white American self to the stature of a mythic superhero, both movies distort history and, while seeming to respect other cultures, actually insult them, implying, for example, that the ancient Egyptians were incapable of building the pyramids or that twentieth-century Indians eat monkey brains, indulge in devil worship, unspeakable rituals, human sacrifice, and exploit children as slave labor.

The Man Who Would Be King is a similar story of a mythic superhero, a great white god come to enlighten the poor, ignorant heathen. But director John Huston's version of a Rudyard Kipling story presents the myth ironically, as a cautionary tale about the disaster that can ensue when a white imperialist starts believing that he is a god. Among the movies we consider about the white messiah, *The Man Who Would Be King* seems at first to demonstrate the delusionary nature of the sincere fictions of the white self. Unfortunately, it ends up reaffirming it by glorifying its roguish heroes and stereotyping the natives.

Huston's movie is framed as a tale told to Kipling by his acquaintance «Peachy» Carnahan. Carnahan and his best friend Daniel Dravitt (another Biblical Daniel, like Jackson in *Stargate*) are former British soldiers who stayed on in late nineteenth-century India to exploit the opportunities there rather than return to dull, working-class lives in England. Carnahan and Dravitt are soldiers of fortune, not ambivalent ones like Indiana Jones, but rogues out to steal whatever they can. They retain audience sympathy because they are loveable scoundrels, loyal to each other, fun-loving play actors and bold adventurers. After trying various scams, they decide to pull their boldest con job yet: they undertake an expedition to the remote land of Kaffiristan, a country no white man has penetrated since Alexander the Great. They intend to awe the natives with firepower, set themselves up as kings, and return rich with loot. No one in the movie ever questions the morality of such a conquest, exploitation, and theft.

Kipling first meets them when Carnahan steals his watch and returns it because the watch bears a Masonic emblem. Their membership in this secret society forms a bond between these two white men, even though they are of different classes. Later, the Masonic emblem serves Dravitt well when the natives take it as the sign of his godhood, just as the natives in *Stargate* bow down because Jackson wears the emblem of Ra. According to the movie, the conqueror Alexander the Great was the founder of the Masons, forming a secret fraternity of white men that has lasted throughout most of the history of Western civilization.

Huston says, «I used a Masonic emblem to symbolize a universal connection between men...» (Kaminsky 199). Nevertheless, the connection is not really universal but only serves the purposes of Western male imperialists.

At first, all goes according to plan for Carnahan and Dravitt. Dravitt is mistaken for the son of Alexander and set up as king and god. He even serves the people well, dispensing justice and improving conditions. But things go awry when Dravitt starts believing his own playacting. He thinks he is a god and the reincarnation of Alexander and that it was all determined by destiny, not lucky accident. He has delusions of grandeur, fantasies about being knighted by Queen Victoria for his achievements. Finally, he determines to marry, against the wishes of the priests and the warnings of Carnahan. When his terrified bride bites him during the ceremony, he bleeds, revealing he is not a

god. The angry natives turn against the Englishmen. Carnahan is held as a witness as Dravitt is forced onto a rope bridge over a chasm; it is cut and he falls to his doom. (There is a similar scene in *Temple of Doom*, except that Indy survives the cutting of the bridge.) Carnahan is crucified but lives to tell the tale, although he is crippled and half crazy.

Unfortunately, despite its ironic point of view about the white savior, *Man Who Would Be King* is as condescending in its view of the natives as *Stargate* and *Temple of Doom*. Indians and other Asians are seen in clichéd terms: as exotic others, comic buffoons, or ignorant primitives. The main Indian character is a Ghurka soldier nicknamed «Billy Fish», as if his real name is unimportant. Although he knows the two Englishmen are con artists, he serves them loyally, finally dying on their behalf, like Gunga Din. Because of the childlike portrayal of the natives, Afghanistan (where the action is supposedly set) refused to allow the movie to be shown in its theaters.

One critic claims the racism in the film is due to Huston's attempt to be faithful to Kipling and not to impose contemporary attitudes on the film (Hammen 130). But according to another critic, «Huston has traditionally viewed... natives as amoral, entertaining creatures who need to be taken care of, admired, amused, and used but never trusted or treated as equals. To a certain degree, this is also the director's attitude toward women» (Kaminsky 202). If Huston is faithful to Kipling, it is probably because he shares Kipling's racism.

Man Who Would Be King resembles Huston's earlier film, *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* (1948), in which a group of white American men dig for gold in Mexico. Both films are cautionary tales about the corruption caused by excessive greed or power, but they both see racial others as childlike primitives and never question the logic of white supremacy or of imperialism. For all its irony, *Man Who Would Be King* is a narcissistic fantasy like *Stargate* and *Indiana Jones* in which the natives have been waiting for a white man to rescue them. The difference is that Huston portrays ironically what happens when narcissism goes to the extreme of megalomania.

City of Joy is a more realistic portrait of Indian culture, showing a wide variety of Indian characters of more than one dimension. Unlike the previous three movies, it is not about a mythic superhero. The protagonist, Max, is a disillusioned white American doctor who comes to India to find enlightenment. But an ashram cannot help him. Instead, he realizes himself by serving the poor and the lepers in a free clinic in «the City of Joy», a ghetto in Calcutta. He is in the beginning a reluctant messiah, agreeing to help temporarily, but by the end he has become committed to the people and decides to stay.

The story of Max is paralleled by the story of Hasari, a poor farmer driven off the land who comes to Calcutta with his family to start a new life. At first, the family is swindled and forced to sleep in the streets. But eventually Hasari gets work as a rickshaw driver and the family finds a home in the City of Joy. The lives of these two displaced people, the American and the Indian, become intertwined, and each helps the other. Max gives Hasari courage to stand up to the gangsters who control the rickshaw business and terrorize the community. And Hasari gives Max a family to which he can belong. At the end, Max sits in a place of honor at the wedding of Hasari's daughter. Like Hasari, he has found a home in the City of Joy. Both become leaders of the community.

Unlike the two male protagonists, women are consigned to conventional, secondary roles in *City of Joy*, except for the Irish nurse, a tough, dedicated, truly admirable woman who runs the clinic alone until she recruits Max. But her function is really a maternal one: to prop up the hero. Like the wise old woman in *Stargate*, she recognizes and nurtures the potential of the messiah.

City of Joy is, however, exceptional for a Hollywood film in giving equal time to an American and an Indian and in showing respect for Indian culture. Nevertheless, it shares the same arrogant assumption as the other movies discussed, the notion that all it takes is one white man to rescue or transform a foreign community. All by himself, Max will save the City of Joy by helping the Indians to overcome their cultural passivity and to stand up for their rights.

Despite their cultural arrogance, there is an opposite notion often implied in the white messiah movies: that white American culture is incomplete and exotic foreigners have more soul, so that

you can realize yourself in another country in a way you never could in America. Thus what happens in the white messiah movies is usually a two-way process: not only does the messiah influence the community, but he himself is changed by contact with the people. Jackson in *Stargate* and Max in *City of Joy* are American outcasts who decide to stay in a foreign culture because they have become identified with it. Jackson is an orphan who never really had a father and Max always resented his; in fleeing America, he is trying to escape his father. What happens to both Jackson and Max is a kind of rebirth or re-oedipalization through entry into a substitute family of another race.

In contrast, *The Green Berets*, the weakest movie of the lot, presents us with a cardboard white messiah who undergoes no change at all. It is an unabashed piece of pro-war propaganda, released in 1968, during the height of the Vietnam War. The movie failed, perhaps because it is poorly made, a vanity production of John Wayne, by John Wayne, and for John Wayne, who co-directed and stars, or because the American public was so divided at the time about the war. Wayne plays Col. Kirby, the usual invincible John Wayne military commander, a Green Beret who leads all the operations and never suffers a scratch. Unlike the other white messiahs in the movies, Kirby is never tempted, never doubts, and never develops. *The Green Berets* is static, with many battle scenes but no dramatic tension.

It opens with a press conference in which the army explains that the U.S. is fighting for the South Vietnamese, who want and need Americans there to protect them from brutal Communists. The sole black character in the film is made into a spokesman for the U.S. government position. A cynical reporter who doesn't believe in the war accompanies Col. Kirby to Vietnam, where of course he undergoes a change of heart when he sees how the Green Berets offer free medical assistance to poor villagers, adopt a cute little war orphan (a stock character, like Short Round, the Chinese orphan in *Temple of Doom*), and fight valiantly against the evil Viet Cong, who slaughter civilians. The Vietnamese are either loyal allies or treacherous enemies who must be killed. Like Kirby, everyone in this movie is constructed of cardboard.

In the final scene, Kirby comforts the cute little Vietnamese war orphan, giving him his green beret and saying, «You're what this war is all about». And they walk off hand in hand to the tune of «The Green Berets», a song in which this elite force of Cold Warriors is called «America's best». Rarely has the sincere fiction of the white messiah been presented so crudely: the Vietnamese population is reduced to a helpless, docile, grateful little boy who must be protected by John Wayne. How can Americans be wrong or be racist, when «the best» of the white American self is fighting to protect innocent foreign children of color against aggression? (Indiana Jones is also a kind American warrior, the liberator of children, although *Temple of Doom* is not such naked propaganda.)

Green Berets uses sentimentality to disguise the fact that the Vietnam War was for America a narcissistic conflict. As the recent memoir of Robert S. McNamara reaffirms, U.S. involvement had little to do with the welfare of the Vietnamese but a lot to do with the ideological struggles of the Cold War and with American self-esteem. American intervention in fact produced millions of war orphans, both North and South Vietnamese and American as well. But to recognize that would cause intense psychological discomfort to the white self-image as the savior of people of color.

Finally, we want to consider the movie *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* as an instance of the complete white messiah myth. Ken Kesey's bestselling 1962 novel was later made into a play and a hit movie. The protagonist, McMurphy, is an individualist very much in the American grain, one of the most recognizable archetypes in contemporary American popular culture: a rebel and an outlaw, a totally free spirit who stands up to the establishment on behalf of the oppressed (the inmates of a mental hospital), even though it costs him his life. McMurphy's popularity might also be explained by the fact that he is the only one of the heroes in the movies under discussion who fulfills the entire myth of the messiah. One critic writes, «*Cuckoo's Nest* the movie portrays the typical adventures of Joseph Campbell's monomythic hero who is called to adventure, who engages the forces of darkness, who struggles with doubt and temptation, and who triumphs in the end... by

transferring his virtues to others through sacrifice» (Zubizarreta 63). McMurphy is a cowboy Christ who dies so that we may live (Hauck, Pearson, Wallis). In particular, he is the cowboy who sacrifices himself for his Indian buddy.

The conflict in the movie is allegorical and highly schematic in its dichotomies: McMurphy represents male sexuality, freedom, the cowboy, the outlaw, the human, and nature; the Big Nurse represents sexual repression, control, the schoolmarm, the law, the machine, and civilization. But the allegory is conceived in individualistic, white American male terms, and the deck is stacked in favor of the messiah, the good McMurphy versus the evil Nurse Ratched. Leslie Fiedler describes Kesey's novel as a new version of «the old, old fable of the White outcast and the noble Red Man joined together against home and mother, against the female world of civilization» (177). The film is much the same fable.

The struggle between McMurphy and the Nurse is actually a struggle for the Chief's soul in which cowboy frees Indian. The Chief begins as the perfect institutionalized person: docile and apparently deaf and dumb. He ends as a strong, autonomous Indian brave who escapes from the hospital.

Nevertheless, the liberation of the Indian here is not done for the sake of Native Americans. Consider a turning point in the movie. McMurphy needs one more vote so he and the men can watch the World Series on TV. In desperation, he turns to the chronic patients. Finally, he gets the Chief to hold up his hand. McMurphy enlists his Indian buddy to help him battle a woman (the Big Nurse) and some blacks (her aides) on behalf of himself and a group of white men. The Chief acts as a surrogate for McMurphy and the white inmates, a stand-in for the white self.

The final scene of the movie can also be considered in terms of the white self. When the Chief lifts the machinery to smash the window and escape from the hospital, he seems like the aboriginal American breaking out of the reservation and back into the freedom of nature. But in terms of the plot, he is doing it to fulfill the legacy of McMurphy (who had tried but failed to do the same thing) and to act as a surrogate for the imprisoned white inmates.

The real conflict in the movie is a civil war taking place within the white self which is enacted through the medium of the Indian. Despite their antagonism, McMurphy and the Nurse are similar characters. Both see themselves as generous, kind, self-sacrificing, natural leaders. Both are extremely stubborn control freaks seeking a following, the Nurse through a therapeutic regime and McMurphy through his program of counter-therapy (in one scene, he impersonates a doctor). The civil war is between two versions of the white self, one bureaucratic and the other charismatic.

In the movies about the white messiah we have discussed, with the exception of *City of Joy*, we do not see real Indians, Vietnamese, African Americans, or Native Americans. Instead we see projections, fantasies created by the white self. The foreigners and minority characters are usually docile and grateful. If they are active figures, they are either loyal disciples of the white messiah or evil heathen. The white messiah movies tell us little about those of other races but much about the desire of the white self to avoid guilt and to see itself as charismatic and minorities as needing white leadership and rescue.

In the language of object relations, «the central meaning of narcissistic libido is an erotic or libidinal attachment with oneself, even if an object is the vehicle for such involvement» (Eagle 59). As Erich Fromm puts it, «for the narcissistically involved person, there is only one reality, that of his own thought processes, feelings and needs. The world outside is not experienced or perceived objectively, i.e., as existing in its own terms, conditions and needs» (Fromm 35-36).

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Night Watch in Amsterdam's Red Light District: Prostitutes/Dutch Windows/Utopian and Dystopian Gazes

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Feminist film theorists (such as Laura Mulvey and Mary Ann Doane) and linguist Deborah Tannen (in her description of «marking») have firmly established that the patriarchal gaze transforms every woman into the same entity: object. I wish to contribute to this discussion by asserting that the gaze possesses both utopian and dystopian characteristics. I take a cultural studies approach which describes the pervasive dystopian gaze in terms of viewing Amsterdam prostitutes and locates the yet to be established alternative utopian gaze on canvases created by Claes Oldenburg and Bill Copley. My argument – in addition to including Doane, Mulvey and Tannen – is informed by sociologist Hernan Vera's «On Dutch Windows», an analysis of cultural codes regarding looking into and out of large uncovered Dutch windows.

According to Vera, this looking is an informational game which reflects Dutch conceptions of privacy: «the Dutch window... is a statement on the Dutch sense of the boundary between public and private.... Capitalism brought a dramatic change in existing notions of the private and the public, of what is individual and what is communal. Could the windows offending my learned notions of privacy be traced back to the same “cultural force” that resulted in the invention of capitalism?» (Vera 217). My first section applies Vera's ideas about Dutch windows to the Amsterdam Red Light District's women in windows. The prostitute, the commodified woman on view, transgresses Dutch window culture games regarding public and private, individual and communal. Since Dutch rules regarding looking into uncovered windows are not applicable to women in windows, these women become commodities violated by the eyes of all observers; they are raped by a dystopian gaze. In the second section, I explain how paintings housed in Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum – Bill Copley's «Untitled» (1974) and «I am Curious...» (1973) and Claes Oldenburg's «Sketch of a 3-Way Plug» (1965) – depict alternative looks, utopian views of nonsexist gazing.

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1. DYSTOPIAN GAZES: FRAMED FEMALE OBJECTS

All women are framed (betrayed as well as enclosed) by the patriarchal gaze. The Amsterdam prostitute who is literally framed by her window merely exaggerates the condition of Everywoman. She exaggerates the point that «subjectivity as signed to femininity within patriarchal systems is inevitably bound up with the structure of the look and the localization of the eye as authority... other comes back to haunt her.... The dilemma of difference is assigned to the woman by a patriarchal system – it is a double bind which serves to “keep her in her place”» (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 14). In the presence of the male gaze, all women converge. All women become one framed entity whose place is within the frame the male eye establishes. Since the Amsterdam prostitute exaggerates the visual objectification Everywoman suffers, enables us better to see Everywoman’s visual objectification, it is important to understand her subjugation.

Vera, however, does not apply his analysis of Dutch «window culture» to Amsterdam Red Light District prostitutes. He, in other words, does not explain what the women in windows mean. My visit to the District, accompanied by American men who were my fellow participants at an international literature and psychology conference, clarified this meaning for me. These male colleagues very obviously desired to look at the women – and they enjoyed doing so. They got something (a chance to commodify the female body, an opportunity to look and to satisfy their curiosity) for nothing. While the men’s reaction is predictable, my own response surprised me. I was curious too.

Taking advantage of the jarring and rare opportunity directly to stare at scantily clad women, I looked at the prostitutes dead on. My female gaze did not differ from those of the men; it did not conform to the «split» Laura Mulvey describes: «[i]n a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female. The determining male gaze projects its phantasy on to the female figure which is styled accordingly» (Mulvey 11). My pleasure in regard to an unusual opportunity to stare directly at a woman is as active as the men’s. I looked at the woman with a determining male gaze; I noticed the degree to which her body conforms to male beauty standards. Like the men, I manifested a voyeuristic scopophilic look. Both the men’s looking and my own involved power to stare, not power to experience sexual gratification. We transgressed cultural codes involving looking, not sexuality. Hence, prostitutes in Dutch windows are more dehumanized by multitudinous gazes than by individual paying customers. This is especially true in light of social codes which apply to Dutch window culture. As Vera explains, «I was taught by several [Dutch] friends that the observation of interiors should be done only in the most tactful ways.... By no means should one stand squarely in front of the window. In trying to do so, I alarmed and embarrassed my walking companions» (Vera 223).

In Holland standing squarely in front of windows to stare at prostitutes is a greater taboo than paying for sexual acts. For the Dutch, this direct looking is transgressive to the extent of becoming culturally unbearable: «An American visiting professor of social psychology at Groningen had assigned his students the field experiment of standing squarely in front of windows. The students refused» (Vera 233). The Red Light District offers a looking orgy for all comers. («Comers» strikes me as a most appropriate word choice.) Even though prohibitions against very obviously looking into windows inhibit Americans as well as the Dutch (albeit to a much lesser extent), the male conferees and I indulged. Like these men, I wanted to experience the newness of directly staring at someone standing squarely in front of me.

My gaze, in a country where windows imbue people with humanity, dehumanized the prostitutes positioned behind windows. Vera explains that decorating Dutch household windows with such items as curtains, plants, and handicrafts «gives the occupants of a house an opportunity for individual and familial self-expression» (Vera 216). Red light district windows, in contrast, «are seldom decorated and are kept closed except when their proprietor is open for business» (Vera 219). The lack of Red Light District window ornamentation signals that prostitutes are deprived of individual and familial self-expression. The prostitute herself becomes a dehumanized window

ornament – a statuette, a handicraft, a poster of patriarchy representing Woman as sexual commodity. Closed, curtained Red Light District windows contrast sharply to the see-through windows so integral to Dutch culture. The closed window, like the Nazi appropriation of the yellow star of David, is a sign which places people outside usual social codes. The curtained window marks the prostitute. When the curtains are open, her window becomes a billboard which proclaims the openness of her orifices to all who can meet her price.

The Amsterdam prostitute who is «open for business» is no sexual slave. Although her job is very disagreeable, it is regulated by law. (Her lot is better than that of her American counterparts.) I argue that the prostitute – like every woman – is enslaved by the patriarchal gaze's ability to turn all women into texts: signs about degrees of sexual availability read by all gazers. Deborah Tannen calls this particular sexual semiotics «marking» and argues that no woman can be unmarked:

The term «marked» is a staple of linguistic theory. It refers to the way language alters the base meaning of a word by adding a linguistic particle that has no meaning on its own. The unmarked form of a word carries the meaning that goes without saying – what you think of when you're not thinking anything special.... The unmarked forms of most English words also convey «male». Being male is the unmarked case.... Each woman at the conference had to make decisions about hair, clothing, makeup and accessories and each decision carried meaning. Every style available to us was marked.... Men can choose styles that are marked, but they don't have to.... Unlike the women they [men] had the option of being unmarked.... I asked myself what style we women could have adopted that would have been unmarked, like the men's. The answer was none. There is no unmarked woman.... [W]e women didn't have the freedom to be unmarked that the men sitting next to us had. Some days you just want to get dressed and go about your business. But if you're a woman, you can't, because there is no unmarked woman (Tannen 18, 52, 54).

The Amsterdam prostitute, then, merely underscores all women's daily victimization. She is an exaggeratedly marked woman, an extreme indicator of the fact that all women cannot escape from the patriarchal gaze and its mark. I have given much thought to my unprecedented direct staring, my act of dehumanizing the prostitutes. Men, in contrast, routinely stare unabashedly at women.

As I write while seated in the Stedelijk Museum Cafe, a man is staring at my breasts. His gaze debases me. Such debasement is relative, however. I am less diminished than prostitutes behind windows. I would, however, be less sexually marked if, instead of a tee shirt, I were wearing business attire (a jacket, for example). My point is that all women are always more or less debased by the patriarchal gaze. All women are analogous to prostitutes behind windows. The patriarchal gaze is a communication game which denies power to women; the night watch in Amsterdam's Red Light District permeates all public spaces. The patriarchal gaze eradicates the dividing line between women's public and private territory. (A man's gaze transformed me, a scholar writing in a public place, into a sexual object appropriately located in a bedroom.) Tannen says all women are marked; I say all women who appear in public stand in Red Light District windows.

«These communication games and the way their rules are enforced must be understood as a method of rebuilding public tolerance of the private realm and private acceptance of the public domain. In this context, the Dutch window can be understood to achieve its sensory qualities by constituting the dividing line between two types of territory» (Vera 224), explains Vera. The sexual stare men usually direct at women, like the exaggerated glaring which occurs in the Red Light District, relegates a woman's public domain to the private realm. The male gaze is a socially acceptable communicative rule which deprives women of power – turns their public presence into private sexual marking by blurring the distinction between the appropriately public and appropriately private. In terms of this blurring, Red Light District windows are not Dutch windows; they are exceptions to the looking rules Vera describes.

Vera states that «in the [Dutch] occupied house, this opening [the window] becomes a sort of blank canvas for self and familial expression. This expression requires a large amount of care and energy to keep the glass spotless, the plants trimmed and watered, the curtains washed, the decorative objects dusted» (Vera 231). The women in Red Light District windows function as blank canvases for paid sexual expression and for the patriarchal gaze running rampant. Like the prostitute's vagina, the opening which is her window also satisfies. Prostitutes, and all women, please the male eye and are degraded by the male eye. Prostitutes, and all women, are slaves who serve the patriarchal gaze. According to a metamorphosis made possible by communicative rules governing the femininity game, all people who possess vaginas can be changed into blank selves, blank canvases for men's lascivious looking. These rules stipulate that the male gaze places women's power in jeopardy. The price is always right for men. Gazing is always free of charge for men – and always extracts a large toll from women in regard to power and public self expression.

2. UTOPIAN GAZES: FRAMED ART OBJECTS

Utopian gazing can arise from returning frames to their proper place: around material art objects, not living female sex objects. The framed/betrayed woman must be unframed, seen differently. In other words, there is a need to wrench «the “look”... from... previous structures. And chief among these goals must be that of seeing difference differently, re-vising the old apprehension of sexual difference and making it possible to multiply differences, to move away from homogeneity, away from the same» (Doane, Mellencamp, Williams 14-15). Such goals are attainable. Although women are always marked (are always, as I have discussed, a blank canvas for male sexual self-expression) it is, nonetheless, possible to create new views, to re-see difference. Bill Copley's «Untitled» and «I Am Curious...» depict these new views. Copley pictures nonsexist looking – utopian alternatives to the patriarchal gaze.

The woman in «Untitled» is attired in a manner appropriate for an Amsterdam prostitute. Neither her anal or vaginal orifices are covered. Although these orifices are open to penile penetration, they are not visible and, hence, cannot be appropriated by the male gaze. Her legs engulfed in gartered stockings are as mechanical as the legs which support the camera. Instead of protecting her from the male gaze, the stockings satisfy it. Power, however, can be attributed to the purple cloth covering her head. Even though obliterating a woman's head is a common pornographic trope, the cloth shields her head from the male gaze.

This woman, no woman in purdah, might be looking into the camera while contemplating alternatives to patriarchal gazes. Her eye attached to the camera can picture (ie record) those gazes. Her hands control the phallic silver camera lever attached to the phallic silver camera stand; she can use her hands to satisfy her own artistic desires. She is no prostitute who must use her hands to satisfy men. She controls a means of production to manipulate new nonsexist gazes. This Everywoman marked as the object of the male gaze can think of and picture alternatives to enslavement manifested via this pervasive gaze. She signals that women can themselves gaze and record their new views, that the metaphorical garters holding up the foundations of patriarchal looking rules can become unfastened. Perhaps the squares which form the painting's background represent the constructed building blocks of society. Perhaps the photo the woman is taking is an art form which will stimulate new views and new social constructions. Since «Untitled» is located in a public Dutch museum – not behind a Dutch private home's window – I can stare at it directly and think so.

I can also apply Mary Ann Doane's ideas about the relationship of the gaze and the camera to Copley's «Untitled». Doane explains that the camera controls the gaze: «The gaze... is the possession of the camera, and through identification with that camera, the spectating subject. Hence, it is not at all surprising that this gaze should be further characterized... as precisely controlled in the

service of voyeurism and fetishism – its subject male, its object female» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 82). Copley's painting challenges this statement: it shows the gaze being controlled by a female photographer, attired in the service of voyeurism and fetishism, who is positioned to determine the gazing camera's subject.

Doane might be explaining why the woman photographer's covered head implies power: the «gaze situated outside, the subject necessarily becomes a part of the picture, assimilated by its own surroundings. Differentiation is lost and, with it, subjectivity as a category» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 84). The woman photographer's gaze is situated inside, under the cloth. Her gaze is not a part of the picture and is assimilated neither by the surroundings in the picture nor by the eye of the viewer. Her differentiation from the category «subject of the male gaze» is, thus, retained. However, women who extensively cover their bodies to try not to become further disempowered do not, obviously, supply a solution that I would advocate.

Copley addresses the impossibility of woman appearing outside the male gaze's control as well as the fact that obliterating the sight of women, rendering women invisible, constitutes a problem. Copley, in other words, pictures Doane's notion that from «the point of view of apparatus theory... the subject is both there and not there, maintained and annihilated. There is a certain tension between the positioning of the subject as point, control, unity... and the temptation of space, of losing oneself in a process of de-individualization and the corresponding annihilation of subjectivity» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 85-86). The female photographer is both present and absent. She is a controller of the gaze who is lost in the temptation to try to depict utopian, nonpatriarchal viewing space.

The second Copley painting I discuss, «I am Curious...», eliminates all gender markers – including the femme fatales who «is not the subject of feminism but a symptom of male fears about feminism» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 2-3). His painting at once eliminates this symptom and announces that as «soon as the relation between vision and knowledge becomes unstable or deceptive, the potential for a disruption of the given sexual logic appears» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 14). By disrupting the relation between vision and seeing gender markers, he creates space for alternative sexual looking rules. Copley eradicates the means of production for the visual truth about women Doane describes: «Sexuality becomes the site of questions about what can and cannot be known.... Both cinematic and theoretical claims to truth about women rely to a striking extent on judgments about vision and its stability or instability» (Doane, *Femmes Fatales* 1). Unmarked (or unstable) sexuality leads to new questions, new ways of knowing about women, new truths about women.

«I am Curious...» depicts an anti-femme fatale: sex devoid of any male gaze pleasing contrivances (such as garter belts). It is not clear whether or not the picture portrays two sexual partners or one person touching her/himself. The object placed in the bottom middle of the canvas could either represent a solitary person's foot or a sexual partner's penis. «I Am Curious...» defies portraying sexuality in terms of power and gender roles. It causes the male gaze to become impotent. The anus, an organ identical in both sexes, cannot be seen. Copley nullifies the male gaze; it loses power when a human body's sex cannot be determined. The finger probes the inner space of the anus, a place of sameness in both sexes which cannot be seen with the naked eye. The patriarchal gaze cannot penetrate the anus, Copley's canvas suggests. «I Am Curious...» offers a new utopian nonsexist view which could appropriately be pictured by the photographer in «Untitled». Although such new views are needed vis a vis looking games, eradicating the patriarchal gaze's control of women is as unlikely as the Dutch electing to cover their windows to end the looking which controls the community.

«Dutch windows call our attention to the need of conceiving material culture in terms of the purposive acts we accomplish by adapting objects to our practical and expressive human needs» (Vera 232), concludes Vera. Analyzing Red Light District windows in terms of his insights about domestic Dutch windows, and applying Copley's work to this analysis, underscores the point that

women are not objects adapted to meeting men's practical and expressive sexual needs. Claes Oldenburg's «Sketch of a 3-Way Plug» functions in kind.

To my eye, the two protrusions located at the bottom of Oldenburg's canvas resemble penises; the four black lines representing sockets resemble vaginal openings. (These comments might reflect the fact that they have been generated during my time at the aforementioned literature and psychology conference.) «Sketches» attributes power to women and, in the manner of Copley's work, suggests new views. The openings are, like Dutch windows and prostitutes in windows, forever open to the eyes of observers. But, although observers are free to look at the suggested openings, unlike the prostitute's costumer, the penis/prongs (frozen in their position on the canvas) cannot penetrate these openings, violate the space within them. The immobile penis which does not venture within solves the psychoanalytic problem of woman's lack of a penis.

Mulvey comments upon this problem: «But in psychoanalytic terms, the female figure poses a deeper problem. She also connotes something that the look continually circles around but disavows: her lack of a penis, implying a threat of castration and hence unpleasure. Ultimately, the meaning of woman is sexual difference, the absence of the penis is visually ascertainable, the material evidence on which is based the castration complex essential for the organization of entrance to the symbolic order and the law of the father. Thus the woman as icon, displayed for the gaze and enjoyment of men, the active controllers of the look» (Mulvey 13). Oldenburg's depiction of non-penetration removes woman from icon status. The viewer of his picture of castration sees the look losing its power.

The space located between the prongs and the slits is a location of new meaning for woman as something other than an object. The penis/prongs hang like udders; hence, they are feminized. The female opening is positioned on top of these feminized penises – and the vaginas outnumber the penises. «Plug» is marked on the picture; «sex object» is marked on all women. Oldenburg, like Copley's photographer, suggests a new utopian picture, new cultural games/codes in regard to men viewing women. This new picture is an unseen opening. Like Copley's pictures of the hidden photographer's head and the nonvisible anus, this opening is hidden from all gazers. It is the impossible, nonexistent, unmarked female – a third kind: the female outside the patriarchal gaze.

What would a close encounter with this unseen third kind look like? I am curious. I think the implied unmarked female suggests the deconstructed patriarchal gaze, utopian looking which does not obstruct the free flow of female fluidity. This new utopian vision unplugs the system in which patriarchy determines women's identity. It ends the current pervasive social practice in which only patriarchy has the proper currency to define real and imagined sexual exchanges between women and men. This suggestion has yet to be pictured. Oldenburg is unable directly to let us see it.

In the manner of staring at Red Light District prostitutes, we can look directly at the paintings I have discussed and imagine short circuiting patriarchal social games and gazes. The paintings, after all, share much in common with Mulvey's observations about radical film's ability to undermine traditional views: «The first blow against the monolithic accumulation of traditional film conventions (already undertaken by radical film makers) is to free the look of the camera into its materiality in time and space and the look of the audience into dialectics: passionate detachment. There is no doubt that this destroys the satisfaction, pleasure and privilege of the "invisible guest", and highlights how film has depended on voyeuristic active/passive mechanisms» (Mulvey 18). Three male artists have painted the first blow against the monolithic male gaze's desire to see the painted and framed woman. They imagine a utopian space in which women, in time, will be free from dystopian voyeuristic looks. They imagine toppling the male watch tower which imprisons every woman in the guise of whore.

Zhu Guangqian and Freud: A case of comparative aesthetic studies (*)

WANG NING (**)

To explore the relationship between Zhu Guangqian and Freud might probably run the following risks: From the perspective of influence study, we may find that Zhu Guangqian hardly ever mentioned his being influenced by Freudianism in his books, essays and all the other articles published in his lifetime.¹ From the viewpoint of interdisciplinary study, Freud's theory usually belongs to the field of psychoanalysis or psychology of the unconscious, while Zhu Guangqian's works are usually regarded as aesthetic works by the Chinese academic circles. So when we examine the two at the same time we should do from a perspective of interdisciplinary comparative approach. So in the present essay, I would like to demonstrate that, as one of the few Chinese scholars who introduced and popularized Freudianism in the fields of psychology, culture and literature, Zhu has made outstanding contributions.² In disseminating and criticizing Freud's theory, he himself was, either consciously or unconsciously, influenced by it. The logical starting point at which he founded his own body of aesthetic thought is not philosophy but psychology. The reason why Zhu Guangqian seldom mentioned his being influenced by Freudianism after the founding of the People's Republic in 1949 is simply because he was torn by conflicting thoughts, which reflects the tragic psychology and tragic sense of the Chinese intelligentsia of the older generation who suffered a great deal during the various revolutionary movements, especially that of the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976.

A MAJOR INTERPRETER AND CRITIC OF FREUDIANISM

On July 25, 1921, Zhu Guangqian published a long article in the 14th issue of Vol. 18 of *Journal of the Orient* (*Dongfang zazhi*), entitled «Freud's Theory of the Unconscious and Psychoanalysis» («*Fulude de yinyishi yu xinlifexi*»). In this article, he introduces in an all-round

(*) Prof. Wang Ning was not able to present his paper at Freiburg, but we are pleased to publish it here.

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¹ He only mentioned critically some of Freud's ideas in *A History of Western Aesthetics* and «the Author's Autobiography», see Vol. II of the book, Beijing: People's Press of Literature, 1980.

² As for a comprehensive and detailed description of Freud's influence on modern Chinese literature, see Wang Ning: «The Reception of Freudianism in Modern Chinese Literature» (Part I), *China Information*, 6, 4 (Spring 1991): 58-72.

way Freud's theory of the unconscious: (1) Freud's Theory of the Unconscious; (2) The Unconscious and the Psychology of Dream; (3) The Unconscious and the Myth; (4) the Unconscious and Neurosis; (5) The Unconscious and Literature and Art and Religion, (6) the Unconscious and Education; (7) Psychoanalysis; (8) Psychoanalysis and Mental Therapeutics; (9) Conclusion. He does not aim at elaborating Freud's theory but at «giving a brief introduction to it in simple words». At the time his attitude towards Freudianism is on the whole rather objective. But in the 9th of *Twelve Letters to Young People* (*Gei qingnian de shier feng xin*) (1926-1928), he somewhat changes his mind. In popularizing Freud's theory of the unconscious, he points out, «Intellect is hardly able to govern one's life. Those who advocate intellect and repress emotion are actually turning back the wheel of history of thought. They want to turn back from the present century to the 18th century»³. Apparently, when Zhu introduced Freud's theory to young readers, he was no longer so objective as he had appeared before, but offered his own critical interpretations, with appreciation and depreciation mixed up. Generally speaking, from the very beginning when he introduced and popularized Freud's theory he had a clear-cut inclination. Before his study in Britain and France, Zhu had already obtained much knowledge of psychology and a good command of English and French, even being able to read Freud in those languages. During the period of his study abroad, he covered a wider range of knowledge of Western psychology, aesthetics, philosophy and some other relevant fields of learning. He also made a deep and systematic study of Western aesthetics since Plato and Aristotle and finally, he chose aesthetics, the frontier discipline, as his lifetime research field.

Unlike the work of Guo Moruo, Yu Dafu, Cheng Fangwu, Pan Guangdan, Zhou Zuoren, Zhao Jingshen and some other modern critics, Zhu's meditation and study of Freudianism was basically metaphysical: starting with psychology and psychoanalysis and finally coming to a conclusion of philosophical meditateness through penetrating analyses, rather than applying it to his own critical practice. His attitude towards Freudianism underwent such stages as dissemination and interpretation – theoretic analysis and criticism – critical reception and sublation – parting from it forever. It is obvious that his introduction to, and critical review of, Freudianism do find embodiment in his four books: *The Schools of Abnormal Psychology* (*Biantai xinlixue paibie*) (1930), *Abnormal Psychology* (*Biantai xinlixue*) (1933), *The Psychology of Tragedy* (1933 in English) and *The Psychology of Literature and Art* (*Wenyi xinlixue*) (1936).

The Schools of Abnormal Psychology, one of the most comprehensive and authoritative books in popularizing Freud's theory at the time, deals with such important ideas of Freud's theory as the unconscious, libido, psychoanalysis, the pleasure principle and the reality principle, free association, sublimation and desire, interpretation of dreams and totem and taboo, with the exception of the ideas of the id, ego, superego, the life instinct and the death instinct which appeared in Freud's later works.

First of all, Zhu points out from the angle of psychological history, that the founding of the theory of the unconscious «has dealt a heavy blow at the rationalization of the 18th and 19th centuries»,⁴ thus anticipating the exploration in the depths of psychology in modern times. Then he deals with in the longest section «Freud» the two sources of Freud's theory: «On the one hand, he is the successor of the tradition of such philosophers as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Hartmann, and on the other hand, he once sought knowledge under Charcot and Bernheim, thus having deep predestined relationship with the French school of psychology.»⁵ In effect, meticulous readers might easily find that he not only sums up the various opinions which the Western scholars had at the time about Freudianism, but also suggests its incomparable contributions to human civilization. On the one hand, Freud advocates science and rationality and strives to set up an independent discipline of psychoanalytic science throughout his life; but on the other hand, his hypotheses overemphasize

³ Cf. *Collected Works of Zhu Guangqian* (*Zhu Guangqian quanji*), Hefei: Anhui Educational Press, 1987, Vol. I, pp. 42-43.

⁴ Ibidem, Vol. I, p. 85.

⁵ Ibidem, p. 124.

the function of the unconscious (irrationality). So it is not surprising to see the same origin he has with those irrationalist philosophers. In the concluding section, Zhu says, «The greatest contribution Freud has made lies in his founding psychoanalysis to cure the neurotic», but «his most serious mistake is his pansexualism». Secondly, «his concept of “the unconscious” is very shady». Thirdly, «his interpretation of dreams is somewhat farfetched». Lastly, he «has not made clear the physiological foundation of psychology».⁶ In short, Zhu, in terms of science, questions and criticizes all these philosophical hypotheses which lack in the foundation of scientific experiment. It should be admitted that his scientific attitude is rather striking. And it is such an attitude that basically runs through his interpretation, analysis and criticism of Freudianism later on.

Abnormal Psychology draws largely upon the previous book, but the author's approach is somewhat changed, from popularization and interpretation to analysis and criticism. Sometimes, he even gives his own evaluations. The first three chapters, although not touching upon Freud and his work, anticipate the discussion of him and his ideas from the 4th to 7th chapters which deal with the unconscious, the psychology of dream, pansexualism and psychoanalysis. He sharply criticizes Freud's pansexualism; while he still thinks that psychoanalysis, as a method to cure neurotics, is quite effective. But if we read this book more closely, we shall notice that, in Zhu's eyes, the greatest contribution Freud has made is not just «the founding of psychoanalysis to cure neurotics», but rather the revolutionary transformation from methodology to ontology. Therefore, according to him, Freud's «greatest contribution lies in breaking through rationalist psychology and setting up a new psychology with instinct and emotion as its main body».⁷ So it is apparent that Zhu's orthodox ideas of «scholastic psychology» gradually changes along with the reception of Freud's theory by more and more Western scholars.

As I have discussed above, in interpreting, analyzing and criticizing Freud's theory within the field of psychology proper, Zhu Guangqian was largely influenced by the attitudes of Western scholars at the time. If this is true, it can only show his objective attitude toward science and truth, but cannot show that he receives creatively Freudianism in setting up his own body of aesthetics. As more and more Western writers and critics came to be interested in Freud and tried to exploit the literary possibilities of Freudianism, Zhu's study of Freud turned gradually to the perspectives of aesthetics and philosophy. He attempted to illustrate his own literary ideas by referring to Freudianism. By that time he had entirely turned from the stage of analysis and criticism to that of reception and sublation. According to what he himself said later, he was chiefly influenced by Croce and Nietzsche in the fields of philosophy and aesthetics, but he was also very familiar with Freud's literary thought and the basic ideas of his disciples. So it is absolutely possible for him to observe Freudianism in a broader context of Western aesthetics. At the time, his analysis and critical and creative reception of the Freudian literary thought find embodiment chiefly in his two books: *The Psychology of Literature and Art* and *The Psychology of Tragedy*, which in my view mainly touch upon the following issues:

(1) The relationship between literary creation and the sublimation of desire. To Freud, the motivation of literary creation is actually the gratification of the libido dominated by sexuality. That writers and artists are engaged in creation is subliming their instinctive desire repressed deep in the unconscious. Zhu takes a dialectical attitude toward this arbitrary assumption. He first of all admits that Freud's idea that literary creation is the sublimation of the unconscious desire is undoubtedly a reaction to the aestheticist's «art for art's sake». Then he points out: «Although art is related to the sexual desire in content, we cannot be excited by the sexual drive at the moment we create or appreciate a work of art....The fallacy of the Freudian critics lies in narrowing down the “distance” between art and instinctive emotion too much».⁸ As to the concept of the Oedipus complex, Zhu further expresses his different views:

⁶ Ibidem, pp. 145-147.

⁷ Ibidem, Vol. II, p. 152.

⁸ Ibidem, Vol I, p. 225.

We do not negate that the instinctive desire is a great impulse to literature and art, but we do not agree with the idea that the gratification of the instinctive desire is a particular sense given us by art. The essence of Freudian literary thought should be included in the «aesthetics of hedonism», while their fallacy is to attribute the pleasure of satisfying the desire to the aesthetic sense, or sometimes he even thinks that beyond this pleasure, one cannot see just what the so-called «aesthetic sense» is.⁹

Obviously, to Zhu Guangqian, the Freudian psychoanalysts mix up the sense of pleasure with that of the aesthetic, so they are actually destroying the law of the creation of beauty. Furthermore, since they vulgarize art and neglect or even destroy literary forms, «the chief shortcoming of the sublimation of the sexual desire lies in its only explaining the motivation of literary creation, but not in its explaining the beauty of literary forms».¹⁰ We usually think that the perfection of a literary work lies in its organic unity of content and form. In attaching importance to the content, Freud and his disciples nevertheless neglect the law of the beauty of form, which cannot but reveal its naive attitude toward the relationship between content and form in literary creation.

(2) The Oedipus complex and the theme of tragedy. Freud puts forward his famous concept of the Oedipus concept in his *The Interpretation of Dreams* and then, his disciples try hard to apply it to the interpretation of the themes of tragedies. Zhu Guangqian questions it by first illustrating the concept in a critical way. He then points out that as a result of it, the theme of a tragedy would be oversimplified and overvulgarized: «If we confine ourselves to the sphere of tragedy, we can say that all tragedies come from the Oedipus complex and gratify our incestuous desire in our unconscious. But even so, such a description is obviously made in the unconscious.»¹¹ Here he strictly differentiates the sense of pleasure from that of the aesthetic. Then he argues that the gratification of desire is only realized in the unconscious, while the gratification of pleasure must be helped by the conscious. So ordinary people, when enjoying a tragedy, «would never be satisfied with the incestuous desire».¹² As a result, there is no such thing as the gratification of pleasure or the enjoyment of the aesthetic.

(3) Dreams and the art structure. It is now acknowledged that the greatest characteristic feature of Freud's theory of dreams lies in that it mixes up dreams, sex and the unconscious, thereby embodying in concentration the three contributions of Freudianism. It is true that as soon as his theory of dream came out, it was sharply reproached and attacked by different people from almost all sides. Since Zhu does not agree to the theory of pansexualism, and since he takes a reserved attitude toward the unconscious, he severely criticizes Freud's theory of dreams because of his inclination to the art structure and beauty. But even so, he still admits that the two concepts of «repression» and «transference» put forward by Freud are the very two «particular contributions, which were indeed not put forward by Aristotle, nor were they put forward by his critics.»¹³ Freud's doctrine, in emphasizing the idea of sublimation, is in fact suggesting the concept of «catharsis», although it is not just in its possession. Nevertheless, after his partial approval, Zhu makes more arbitrary criticisms from the point of view of the beauty of form:

The beauty of the artistic form is completely neglected by the Freudian critics, for they do not understand that a poem is not composed of fragmentary dreams or uncertain visions. Nor do they see that the nature of the unconscious of course requires the desire to be presented symbolically, but not necessarily be presented in the form of beauty.... Freudian psychology, if it is deduced logically, might well keep all the

⁹ Ibidem, p. 274.

¹⁰ Ibidem, p. 394.

¹¹ Ibidem, Vol. II, p. 400

¹² Ibidem.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 399.

aesthetic experiences of human life. Art, no matter how lofty, will not merely become a means by which the interior instinct is satisfied. This kind of artistic idea, if not completely wrong, is at least incomplete and exaggerated.¹⁴

Here, Zhu Guangqian, as an aesthetician, certainly has his own experience in, and opinion about, literary creation. So it is not strange that he attaches great importance to the beauty of the artistic form. It is just due to his experience in, and attention to, literature and art that he could pinpointedly criticize Freudianism from the aesthetic perspective rather than others. Apparently, such criticisms sometimes show his extreme attitude towards Freud's theory, which could not be easily escaped. But we should recognize that his voice was out of the ordinary and very forceful at the time when so many Chinese critics and scholars highly praised Freudianism in an unprincipled manner.¹⁵ On the one hand, he correctly points out the fallacy of Freudianism in defence of the scholastic Western psychology, and on the other, he himself takes a calm and scientific approach to Freud's theory and interprets, analyzes and criticizes it in a dialectical way. I think that such an attitude as he adopts and such an effort as he makes are absolutely adequate. Although some of Freud's ideas he once negated have now proved effective and useful, yet to me, his commendableness lies in that, as a philosopher good at dialectics, he remained soberminded at all times, always ready to make his own judgement. *The Psychology of Literature and Art* and *The Psychology of Tragedy* not only represent his analysis and criticism of Freudianism, but also represent his creative transmutation of it, although he did this unconsciously at the time. After this, along with the decline of Freudianism in China and the sudden change in the political situation and the cultural aura, and owing to his stepping into the fields of philosophical aesthetics and various critical debates, Zhu Guangqian parted with Freudianism at last.

INFLUENCE AND RECEPTION: A COMPARATIVE OBSERVATION

It is true that after the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, Zhu Guangqian hardly ever mentioned his contributions to bringing Freudianism into China, but the «texts» that he produced in his lifetime have become the very evidence that can never be wiped off. It is also true that in interpreting and criticizing Freudianism, Zhu was to a certain extent influenced by it and, through such a (passive) influence and his (active and initiative) reception, he set out establishing his own body of aesthetics. In view of his early works and from the perspective of comparing him with the other two most influential contemporary aestheticians (Li Zehou and Cai Yi) in China, I can assert that the logical starting point at which Zhu Guangqian founded his body of aesthetic thought is psychology rather than philosophy.¹⁶ In putting forward some of his aesthetic ideas, he often draws upon, either consciously or unconsciously, Freud's theory, which shows his creative transmutation of Freudianism.

Speaking of Zhu Guangqian's being influenced by Freudianism, I would argue that such influence is not at all of surface value but so profound and intrinsic that it cannot be easily recognized. It is indeed hard to find his simplified figuring or misusing of Freud's doctrine although misreading and misunderstanding could not be avoided. The Freudian influence on Zhu Guangqian chiefly lies in his methodology rather than his theory proper. As for his reception of Freudianism, it is comparatively specific and recognizable. In Zhu's horizon of expectation, according to the contemporary theory of reception, lay deep the wide and rich knowledge of psychology, philosophy,

¹⁴ Ibidem, Vol. II, p. 401.

¹⁵ See Wang: «The Reception of Freudianism in Modern Chinese Literature».

¹⁶ Of all the publications printed in Chinese in the field of Zhu Guangqian studies, almost no one has mentioned the fact that Zhu's aesthetics is more psychology oriented than philosophy oriented, which is especially true of his early works.

aesthetics and literature and art, which provided him with a vast and solid netty structure. Here the signifiers interact on one another, making the new signified that is hard to be recognized. That is to say, in interpreting a specific art phenomenon, Zhu sometimes used not only Freud's theory, so it is very difficult for the researcher to discover its theoretical background. Even so, I would like to have a try and offer some evidence.

First of all, the two scholars had something in common in research approach. In his lifetime, Freud time and again called himself a scientist attempting to found a science of psychoanalysis different from traditional rational psychology. It should be admitted that the logical starting point of his theory is science, or more specifically, psychology or psychiatry, but along with the rise of the movement of psychoanalysis in the West and the gradual expansion of his body of theory and the spread of his fame, Freud intended to go beyond the field of psychoanalysis in an attempt to interpret all the phenomena of human culture with his theory. Advocated by his disciples, the banner of Freudianism came out in the 1920s and 1930s.¹⁷ As one of the most prevailing trends of thought in culture and philosophy in the West, it gave birth to its sons: certain schools of literature in the modernist movement and the critical theory of psychoanalysis. Once beyond the sphere of psychoanalysis, Freudianism shows its same origin with the irrationalist philosophy headed by Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Hartmann. It is therefore not so strange that Freudianism is often looked upon as a trend of irrationalist thought. Zhu Guangqian knew this quite clearly, I am sure, and once questioned some of his ideas. But it is unexpected that he should have followed Freud just at this very point, either consciously or unconsciously: he wanted to take a scientific approach to his study of aesthetics from the point of view of psychology, forming his body of aesthetic thought with psychology as its starting point. As compared with these methods of the Russian Formalists, and later of the Structuralists, Zhu's approach to aesthetics and literature and art and his method of interpreting the phenomena of literature and art are far from scientific – with more elements of intuition, impression, perception and exposition. Or rather, he conscientiously integrated the rationalist spirit of science with the expository method, forming his own methodology. What Freud's doctrine illuminated him most, speaking of methodology, lies in its starting from science and concluding in philosophy by inference. Similarly, in introducing and interpreting Freud's theory, Zhu always adheres to the principle of scientific methodology and tries to correct the mistakes and misunderstandings about Freudianism. For example, he once distinguished the concept of the subconscious (Unterbewusst) from that of the unconscious (Unbewusst).¹⁸ But unfortunately, such an effort as he made has not been paid attention to, so even today, we still easily find that laymen often take these two concepts for one thing and misuse them here and there.¹⁹ Undoubtedly, Zhu, from the angle of scientific psychology, tries to point out the nonscientific elements in Freud's doctrine and gives sharp criticisms; but his analyses and criticisms are mainly philosophic rather than experimentally positivistic. And furthermore, his ideas are obviously influenced by the scholastic thought of Western psychology, so they are not quite convincing. But it should be recognized that, along with the gradual reception of Freud's theory by most of the Western psychologists and due to the fact that many of his hypotheses have now been proved possible by scientific experiments, Freud himself has thus been regarded as «father of modern psychology». Some of Zhu's extreme critical ideas are naturally overshadowed.

In my opinion, however, Zhu Guangqian's criticism and analysis of Freudianism start from science in attitude, but finally conclude philosophically in method. This is why Freud exerted such

¹⁷ In this respect, especially see Frederick John Hoffman, *Freudianism and the Literary Mind* (Chapter II), Louisiana State University Press, 1957.

¹⁸ *Collected Works of Zhu Guangqian*, Vol. I, p. 128. It is true that Freud himself seldom used the term «Unterbewusst» (subconscious), so as to distinguish himself from the earlier French school of psychoanalysis.

¹⁹ In Chinese, the unconscious should be translated as «wuyishi» or «yinyishi» as Zhu did, while the subconscious should be translated as «qianyishi» or «xiayishi». But the present-day Chinese critics and writers often confuse the two terms.

an intrinsic and profound influence on Zhu Guangqian's aesthetic thought. Freudianism was so familiar to him that it permeated his consciousness and unconsciousness before he could realize it affecting his academic study and aesthetic thought. But in interpreting specific phenomena of literature and art, Zhu would rather actively receive Freud's theory than just be passively influenced by it. Here I would like to give two examples.

In the 4th section «The Statue of a Greek Goddess and a Fresh and Bright-Colored English Girl» of *On Beauty (Tan mei)*, Zhu, in order to tell the sense of the aesthetic from that of pleasure, thinks that such a beauty «might give or might not give people a sense of the aesthetic» when they see her,

If you do not have the sexual impulse when you see her, but just regard her as a well-proportioned figure, it means you are enjoying a statue or a portrait. As a man who takes the aesthetic attitude does not have the will, he does not have the sexual desire of possession. In essence, the sexual instinct is a kind of very strong instinct. So it is very difficult for ordinary people to enjoy her curve beauty only without having the sexual desire when they see a fresh and bright-colored girl.²⁰

Obviously, it is somewhat deformed as compared with Freud's idea of «subliming the sexual desire», but its elements of transformation and reception are easily discerned. «Might give or might not give people a sense of the aesthetic» simply means that the sexual desire (or libido) might sublime into «a greater cultural result» (Freud), but it sometimes might not be sublimed; «it is very difficult for ordinary people» not to have «the desire» when they see a beautiful girl, because they intend to project their sexual energy directly at their sexual object; but it is not difficult for an artist to do so, because he usually sublimates the primitive desire into a graceful figure of art, obtaining a sense of the aesthetic from it. From this brief analysis and comparison, we can easily see the similarity between Freud's idea and Zhu's.

Now comes the other example. In the 9th section «The Adult with Utter Innocence», Zhu makes a comparative consideration of (adults') art and (children's) play. Although he does not mention Freud's idea of fantasy and art creation, yet from his discussion throughout we can easily find his reception and transmutation of such an idea of Freud's. Here I would like to offer the two passages written by these two scholars:

(Children's) imagination is not completely bound up by experience and intellect. So they are still free and unrestrained. Provided that one thing touches their train of thoughts, they will play up this into a colorful picture in an instant. As long as they wish, they will make their toys of whatever objects. If you provide them with a world, they will at once make many fantastic worlds of it in return. They are artists.²¹ (Zhu Guangqian, 1932)

Let me offer the other passage:

Might we not say that every child behaves like a creative writer, in that he creates a world of his own, or, rather, rearranges the things of his world in a new way which pleases him? It would be wrong to think he does not take that world seriously; on the contrary, he takes his play very seriously and he extends large amounts of emotion on it.²² (Freud, 1908)

Reading the two in a comparative manner, we can easily see the similarity between them. Obviously, we could say that «the idea of play» came out long before Freud, but the following two factors actually serve the evidence: firstly, to Zhu, *On Beauty* is a «simplified version» of his *The*

²⁰ *Collected Works of Zhu Guangqian*, Vol. II, p. 28.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 57.

²² Sigmund Freud, «Creative Writer and Daydreaming», in Hazard Adams (ed.), *Critical Theory since Plato*, New York, 1971, p. 749.

Psychology of Literature and Art which deals with Freudianism in certain part; secondly, of all the sections, four not only refer to but review Freud's ideas of literature and art. If we observe them from the point of view of psychoanalysis, we may find more elements of Freudianism. However, as an aesthetician who was deeply influenced by Western thought, Zhu usually mixed it with other thinkers's ideas in using Freud's, so ordinary people often find it hard to trace the origin of his ideas. On the other hand, Zhu's profound understanding and initiative reception of Freud's theory enabled him to transmute it in a creative way.

ANALYSIS AND TENTATIVE CONCLUSION

From the above two parts, we seem able to conclude that Zhu Guangqian was deeply influenced by Freudianism in many aspects, especially in his aesthetic thought before 1949 which is obviously characterized by subjective idealism. But unfortunately, in nearly all his writings or talks after the founding of the People's Republic of China, he only once admitted that he was one of Croce's disciples, and later admitted that was a disciple of Nietzsche's, etc., but never mentioned Freud's influence on him and his aesthetic thought although this master of his once indeed stimulated him to found his body of aesthetic thought.²³ This has therefore made nearly all the Zhu Guangqian scholars unable to examine his relations with Freudianism. It is really a pity that he himself did not offer any positivistic evidence for our reference. Here I would like to discuss the possible reasons in a brief manner.

Firstly, to many people, Freud's theory is mainly that of sexuality, so Freud's name, especially in China, has for quite a long period of time been rather notorious. His theory, together with Nietzsche's philosophy of the superman and Sartre's existentialism, has been thought of as a kind of reactionary idealist theory. People criticized it with extremely sharp words but usually without reading the original texts of Freud. Always being among the first to be affected in various political movements, Zhu Guangqian would have been more violently attacked if his name had been associated with Freud's name and the subtle relationship between him and Freud had been mentioned by anyone. It is known to all that Freud's works were for a long time forbidden to be published in mainland China, so few people knew about his theory. Since no one mentioned Zhu's contributions to introducing and popularizing Freudianism in China, he himself would thus keep silent and never touched this sensitive issue. So it is not strange but unfortunate that the topic «Freud and Zhu Guangqian» has long been a blank one in the fields of comparative literature and comparative aesthetics.

Secondly, from the above analysis, we can see that the problem of Freud's influence on Zhu Guangqian is rather complicated. It is not fair simply to attribute the above phenomenon to Zhu himself. We should find reasons for it in other respects. Before 1949, Zhu was widely known for his prolific writings in both aesthetics and literary and art theory. But after liberation, he was viewed as an academic authority of the bourgeoisie and bore the brunt in all the political movements. So he spent lots of time on translation (mostly of Western aesthetic theory and Marxist theory) without writing important theoretical works of his own academic individuality. Even such an important textbook as *A History of Western Aesthetics* (*Xifang meixue shi*) does not introduce the aesthetics of the 20th century although the academic advances in this period are known to all. In addition, he spent much more time on hard work at Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, always shifting his political stand and always criticizing his «mistakes» even to the extent that he sometimes criticized his correct ideas and even gave them up. In his later works, he not only criticized himself but criticized his Western masters of idealism. As a result, he did not dare to

²³ Probably only once, Zhu Guangqian said in his «Author's Autobiography» in a collection of his essays, that he «had made much effort to study Freud's theory», but still, he did not mention Freud's influence on him.

mention the names of some of these masters who once influenced his aesthetic thought. This is a rather complicated phenomenon characterized by many Chinese intellectuals of the older generation with Zhu as a typical representative.

In the early 1980s, Zhu Guangqian admitted in the preface to the Chinese edition of *The Psychology of Tragedy*, that he was more a disciple of Nietzsche than that of Croce. He also expressed regret over his forgetting of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche who exerted profound influence on him.²⁴ Even at this time, he still did not mention Freud's influence. Why? Because in that book, the two thinkers' influence is rather apparent, whereas his discussion of Freud is mainly critical and its influence is not so easy to be seen. The other reason lies in that Nietzsche was then «rediscovered» and reconsidered by some Chinese scholars for his «staunch revolutionary spirit» which finds particular embodiment in the May 4th Period, but Freud was still more criticized than praised. Zhu Guangqian, then still overcautious, certainly did not dare to admit that he was once influenced by Freud. Toward the end of 1985 and the beginning of 1986, Freudianism gradually became a cultural and academic fad, many of Freud's works being published in Chinese and some scholars starting to study the Freudian influence on Chinese culture and literature. But almost no one, I should say, thought of consulting Professor Zhu, who was then too old to meet visitors and even seriously ill and who could not think of Freud any more. Perhaps the reader might well blame him for not mentioning Freud in his later works. But it is too late for him to make a reply. But his death could by no means prevent us from doing some academic research on the relationship between Zhu and Freud, or more specifically, between Zhu's aesthetic and literary ideas and Freud's psychoanalytic and philosophic theory, which is just the right topic for us to undertake Chinese-Western comparative studies of culture and literature in an interdisciplinary way.

²⁴ *Collected Works of Zhu Guangqian*, Vol. II, p. 210.

Sprechakttheorie und Psychoanalytische Literaturwissenschaft

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Die von J.L. Austin entworfene und von J.P. Searle ausgebaute anglo-amerikanische Sprechakttheorie ist eine linguistische Phänomenologie, eine Form der empirischen Sprachphilosophie. Sie fragt, als eine Pragmatiktheorie, nach dem Gebrauch der Sprache im Alltagsleben. Austins Überlegungen zur Frage *How to do things with words* (1962) entstanden in den fünfziger Jahren im Umfeld der Oxford School der *ordinary language philosophy*. Sie kreisten um das Problem, inwiefern eine sprachliche Äußerung als eine Handlung aufzufassen ist und nahmen ihren Ausgang von einer Kategorie von Sätzen *performativer* Art, wie sie etwa bei einer Taufe, einer Wette, einer Trauung oder einer akademischen Promotion ausgesprochen werden. Ein Satz wie «Ich eröffne die Sitzung» ist keine Beschreibung eines Sachverhalts, die wahr oder falsch sein kann, keine konstative Äußerung, sondern eine folgenreiche Handlung in einer nach bestimmten gesellschaftlichen Regeln und Konventionen definierten Situation. Was Austin behandelte, war eigentlich *how to do things with words in a social setting*.

Als sich im Lauf der Zeit diese Sprechakttheorie zur Pragmalinguistik weiterentwickelte, gab sie übrigens den anfangs so einleuchtenden Unterschied zwischen konstativen und performativen Äußerungen wieder auf. Heute betrachtet man jede Äußerung als eine Art Handlung, womit die konstativen Sätze als eine eigene Kategorie unter die performativen subsumiert werden. Shoshana Felman hat auf ihre Weise, Freud, Lacan und Austin verbindend, psychoanalytisch argumentiert, daß konstative Äußerungen eigentlich performativ sind. Wer zum Beispiel, so Felman, das Bedürfnis hat, sich in einer Partnerbeziehung dem anderen unterzuordnen, wird mit vielerlei konstativen Äußerungen über die größere Intelligenz, die größere Energie oder die größere Ich-Stärke des Partners diese Phantasie leben, sie zur Wirklichkeit machen und damit das eigene Verhalten begründen. Die konstativen Sätze über den Partner erweisen sich also auch als durchaus performativ (Felman 1983, 77).

Bis heute erhalten hat sich aber wohl die schon von Austin konzipierte grundsätzliche Dreiteilung sprachlicher Äußerungen in einen *lokutionären*, einen *illokutionären* und einen *perlokutionären* Akt, weil diese Unterscheidungen sich als äußerst fruchtbar erwiesen haben. Der Satz «Schließen Sie bitte das Fenster!» ist zunächst ein lokutionärer Akt, insofern Klänge produziert und sprachliche Regeln angewandt werden. Er ist auch ein illokutionärer Akt, insofern eine

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Handlung, verbunden mit einer Intention – hier eine Bitte an eine andere Person –, verrichtet wird. Wenn die Äußerung zur Folge hat, daß das Fenster nun geschlossen wird, so gehört diese Wirkung des Satzes zum perlokutionären Aspekt. Austin erläutert die Unterscheidung der drei Aktkategorien mit folgenden Beispielsätzen: Der lokutionäre Aspekt überwiegt in dem Satz «Er hat zu mir gesagt: „Das kannst du nicht tun“». Der illokutionäre Aspekt wird als Sprachhandlung des Einspruchs formuliert in dem Satz «Er hat dagegen protestiert, daß ich das täte». Der perlokutive Aspekt schließlich dominiert, wenn gesagt wird: «Er hat mich davon abgehalten, es zu tun.» Was Austin besonders interessierte, waren die Bedingungen für das Gelingen einer solchen Handlung, also für das Zustandekommen des intendierten perlokutionären Effekts. So lehrt die Analyse etwa des Versprechens (im Sinne einer Zusicherung), daß die Aufrichtigkeit des Sprechers eine der notwendigen Vorbedingungen darstellt. Solche Überlegungen führten zur Beschreibung eines Systems von Regeln, die bei jedem Illokutionstypus übrigens anders aussehen können.

Von zentraler Bedeutung ist natürlich die Illokution als eigentlicher Sprechakt, der die sprachlich vermittelte Intention des Sprechers enthält. Austin klassifizierte die illokutionären Akte in fünf Kategorien (Austin 1972, 166), eine Einteilung, die Searle zwar später «eine bloße ad hoc-Konstruktion» (Searle 1971, 110) nannte, die uns aber einen guten Eindruck vom Reichtum der illokutionären Möglichkeiten vermittelt:

- (1) Verdiktive Äußerungen wie beurteilen, deuten, datieren;
- (2) Exerzitive Äußerungen wie befehlen, ernennen, warnen;
- (3) Kommissive Äußerungen wie zusagen, vereinbaren, wetten;
- (4) Konduktive Äußerungen wie bereuen, wünschen, gratulieren;
- (5) Expositive Äußerungen wie behaupten, berichten, folgern.

Andere, sich zum Teil überschneidende Kategorien sind assertive, direktive und expressive Äußerungen. Wichtig ist vor allem die Einsicht, daß je nach dem Kontext, je nach der Sprechsituation, mit einem und demselben lokutionären Akt vielerlei illokutionäre Akte zustandekommen können. So kann der Satz «Ich komme morgen» je nachdem eine Zusage, eine Vereinbarung, eine Warnung oder eine Drohung sein. In diesem Falle spricht Austin von einer primär performativen Äußerung. Sie unterscheidet sich von den explizit performativen Äußerungen, die die Art der Illokution selbst nennen, wie in dem Satz «Ich warne dich, der Hund ist bissig».

Obwohl Austin und Searle die Theorie nur im Hinblick auf die sprachliche Kommunikation im Alltag und ausdrücklich nicht im Hinblick auf literarische Texte entwickelten (Austin betrachtete die Sprechakte im literarischen Kontext als «unernst» und «parasitär», Searle den illokutionären Akt in literarischer Fiktion als vorgetäuscht), haben mehrere Literaturwissenschaftler mit Hilfe der Theorie, namentlich mit dem Konzept der Illokution, das Spezifikum fiktionaler Texte zu erfassen versucht (Iser 1976, Pratt 1977, Felman 1983, Abrams 1989, Petrey 1990). Der Groninger Philosoph J.J.A. Mooij kommt in seinem jüngsten Buch *Fictional Realities* nach einer genauen Prüfung aller Argumente pro und contra zu der Schlußfolgerung, daß das literarische Erzählen, jedenfalls in der westlichen Kultur, als spezifischer illokutionärer Akt zu betrachten sei (Mooij 1993, 104).

Die Sprechakttheorie untersucht als eine Form der Pragmalinguistik sprachliche Kommunikation, wobei sie sich besonders für die Bedingungen und Regeln, die sozialen Konventionen in erster Linie, interessiert, die das Gelingen eines Sprechakts voraussetzen. Diese Regeln leitet sie aus der Analyse der reichlich vorhandenen Fälle mißlingender, nicht geglückter Sprechakte ab. Insofern sie menschliches Handeln in der Form sprachlicher Kommunikation untersucht, tut sie das strikt philosophisch und logisch und verfährt dabei, wenn sie überhaupt Psychologisches berührt, rein bewußtseinspsychologisch. Ihrem Konzept menschlicher Verständigung liegt die Möglichkeit einer unbewußten Kommunikation, wie die Psychoanalyse sie beschreibt, ganz fern. Dies verleiht ihren Schriften einerseits ihre bewundernswerte philosophische und argumentative Stringenz, andererseits spürt man bei ihrer Lektüre, daß jene Dimension, der wir Literaturpsychologen unsere besondere Aufmerksamkeit schenken, nahezu ganz fehlt.

In der heftigen Polemik zwischen Jacques Derrida und John Searle, die in den siebziger Jahren geführt und in dem Band *Limited Inc.* dokumentiert wurde (Derrida 1988), scheint mir die Differenz zwischen den beiden Philosophen in ihrer Auseinandersetzung mit der Sprechakttheorie nicht zuletzt in dem Punkt zu liegen, daß «structural unconsciousness [...] seems alien, if not incompatible with speech act theory» (Derrida 1988, 73). Gegen Austins und Searles rationalistische Auffassung der Intentionalität wendet Derrida mit Recht ein: «no intention can ever be fully conscious» (Derrida 1988, 73). Ein anderer wichtiger Einwand von Derrida betrifft Austins Beschränkung auf die gesprochene Sprache, während für Derrida die Schrift primär ist. Ohne hier auf die Debatte zwischen Dekonstruktionismus und Logozentrismus näher einzugehen, glaube ich, daß Derrida in seiner Kritik an der eng kognitivistischen und meist impliziten Psychologie der Sprechakttheoretiker, deren Aussagen immerhin das so unübersichtliche Terrain menschlichen Handelns und seiner Motive betreffen, Recht hat. Auch problematisiert Derrida überzeugend die von Austin aufgestellte Bedingung für das Gelingen eines Sprechakts, nämlich daß der Sprecher sagt, was er meint. In Derridas Sprachauffassung kann davon natürlich niemals die Rede sein.

Warum lassen sich dann trotzdem, wie ich meine, zwischen Psychoanalytischer Literaturwissenschaft und Sprechakttheorie einige Verbindungen herstellen? Erstens weil ich glaube, daß die Psychoanalyse, wenn auch auf ganz andere Weise und mit anderen Argumenten als Derridas Dekonstruktionstheorie, noch immer einige Implikationen der Sprechakttheorie grundsätzlich in Frage stellt. Das Versprechen als Fehlleistung etwa ist, im Gegensatz zum Versprechen als Zusicherung, – soweit ich sehe – dort noch nicht als spezifisches Sprechakt-Problem erkannt worden. Ist es als Interferenz zweier Illokutionen mit oft entgegengesetzter Intention aufzufassen? Oder als Mißlingen der Illokution, weil gewisse Vorbedingungen nicht gegeben sind? Merkwürdig, daß die sprachlichen Fehlleistungen nicht besprochen werden, wo doch so viele Unglücksfälle in der Kommunikation so scharfsinnig analysiert werden.

Zweitens glaube ich, daß ein wesentlicher Aspekt von dem, was in einer psychoanalytischen Kur vor sich geht, in der Begriffssprache der Sprechakttheorie genau erfaßt werden kann und so zu einer Klärung dieses Prozesses führen könnte. Um welche Art von Sprechakten handelt es sich in der Analyse? Der Analysand spricht zum Analytiker, von dem er Hilfe erwartet. Diese Hilfe besteht nicht darin, daß der Therapeut die Probleme des Patienten löst, sondern daß er ihm dabei hilft, sich darüber klar zu werden. Das heißt, der Analytiker hilft ihm, unter anderem durch seine Deutungen, sich darüber Klarheit zu verschaffen, was er «meint», wenn er mit ihm redet. So betrachtet besteht der analytische Prozeß also daraus, daß die illokutionären Akte des Analysanden, die Formulierung seiner Einfälle und Assoziationen, die er dem Analytiker mitteilt, im Lauf der Zeit anderen illokutionären Akten zugeteilt werden als im Anfang und daß sie nun explizit gemacht werden können. Die Analyse lehrt uns, daß es auch unbewußte, verschobene, verdeckte oder symbolisierte Sprechakte gibt, über deren Art und Intention wir uns nicht im klaren sind. Der Erkenntnisprozeß, der durch die spezifischen Regeln und Bedingungen der therapeutischen Kommunikation in Gang gesetzt wird, besteht oft darin, daß der Analysand einsieht, daß er sich über die Art seiner bevorzugten Illokutionen im Umgang mit anderen getäuscht hat. Eine solche Einsicht kann etwa lauten, daß unter dem vordergründigen Sprechakt der Bitte um Hilfe, um Mitleid oder Verständnis sich ganz andere illokutionäre Tendenzen verbergen, etwa der Angriff gegen den Analytiker, eine Beleidigung oder eine Rache. Alle diese Akte sind, weil es sich um eine Gesprächstherapie handelt, typische Sprechakte, in denen der Analysand mit dem Analytiker umgeht.

Natürlich ist es die Macht der Übertragung, welche die Sprechakttheoretiker in ihren Schriften nicht berücksichtigten, die aber auch im Alltagsleben unsere Kommunikation mit anderen dadurch kompliziert, daß Sprecher wie Hörer selten genau wissen, welchen illokutionären Akt sie gerade ausführen, weil unbewußte, der Vergangenheit entstammende Illokutionen mit der aktuellen interferieren. Das Mißlingen lebenswichtiger Sprechakte in der Vergangenheit, etwa in der Beziehung

zwischen dem Kind und den Eltern, das Ausbleiben irgendeiner feststellbaren perlokutionären Wirkung, läßt den Wiederholungszwang entstehen, unter dessen Diktat wir unseren infantilen Sprechakttypen verhaftet bleiben. Die analytischen Sprechakte im Rahmen des *setting*, so ließe sich sagen, sind dadurch definiert, daß ihre perlokutionäre Wirkung in einer Bewußtmachung der Art jener illokutionären Akte besteht, die im Umgang mit unseren Bezugspersonen die Hauptrolle spielen. Was die Psychoanalyse Übertragung nennt und als Grundphänomen aller zwischenmenschlicher Kommunikation erkannt hat, ließe sich sprechakttheoretisch so formulieren: Daß unsere Verständigungsversuche so oft mißlingen, liegt daran, daß unsere illokutionären Akte in der aktuellen Sprechsituation nicht eindeutig sind, weil sie nämlich von früheren mißlungenen Sprechakten mit anderen Bezugspersonen durchkreuzt werden, ohne daß wir uns dessen bewußt sind. Die sprachliche Fehlleistung ist eigentlich eine Illustration dieser Interferenz.

Drittens glaube ich – nach dem oben Gesagten liegt das auf der Hand –, daß die neuere psychoanalytische Literaturtheorie, welche die Prozesse der Übertragung und Gegenübertragung als grundlegend für das literarische Schreiben und Lesen betrachtet, sich mit Hilfe des Konzepts der Illokution ebenfalls vielleicht noch etwas präziser formulieren läßt.

Ich wende dabei also die Theorie der Sprechakte, namentlich des illokutionären Akts, auf die Literatur an, aber – anders als die oben angeführten Literaturtheoretiker – nicht zur Bestimmung der Fiktionalität, sondern zum besseren Verständnis des Schreibprozesses in seiner Beziehung zum Rezeptionsprozeß. Der Autor richtet sich mit seinem Werk immer an einen Adressaten, auch wenn er dies verleugnet oder verhindern zu wollen scheint. Er organisiert, wie Carl Pietzcker es formuliert, «eine Übertragung auf einen Adressaten» dadurch, daß in seinem Text eine Wirkungsstrategie angelegt ist (Pietzcker 1992, 18f.). Darin entfaltet sich ein Beziehungsmuster, das meist auch durch frühe Emotionen und Erfahrungen bestimmt wird. In dieser, zu einem wichtigen Teil unbewußten, Übertragungsszene wird dem Rezipienten eine Adressatenrolle angeboten, die in der Regel nicht ausgesprochen ist, die unbewußt bleiben kann, aber umso mehr die Einstellung des Lesers bestimmt. Der unausgesprochene Autor, den der Text immer voraussetzt, bietet dem unausgesprochenen Leser, den der Text als Text ebenfalls voraussetzt, eine Rolle an, weil er selber eine bestimmte Rolle angenommen hat. (Ich lasse hier die ebenfalls auftretende Kommunikation zwischen dem wirklichen Autor und der offen wahrnehmbaren Autorfigur einerseits mit dem wirklichen Leser und der offen wahrnehmbaren Leserfigur andererseits außer Betracht.)

Worauf es mir nun ankommt, ist die Überlegung, daß diese Rollenzuweisung in der literarischen Kommunikation, diese spezifische Beziehung zu den fiktionalen Szenen des Werks, in die der Leser hineingezogen wird, vom Autor her grundsätzlich als ein von der Übertragung organisierter und gefärbter illokutionärer Akt aufzufassen ist. Daraus ergeben sich mehrere Konsequenzen. Zunächst heißt das, daß viele der von Austin aufgeführten Typen im Repertoire von Beziehungsmustern hier durchaus auch heuristisch anwendbar sind, daß man aber in psychoanalytischer Interpretation selten eine einschichtige oder eindeutige Illokutionsform voraussetzen kann, sondern – wie bei der Fehlleistung – von einer Interferenz mehrerer Illokutionsformen verschiedener Intention ausgehen muß. Der Vorwurf etwa, unterdrückt zu werden, kann mit dem Wunsch verbunden sein, die Verantwortung zu vermeiden. Der Sprechakt des Belehrens etwa, der dem Leser die Rolle des Schülers zuerteilt, kann durchaus als Abwehr eines anderen Aktes, etwa des Imponierens, verstanden werden. Das Übertragungsgeschehen führt sowohl beim Autor im illokutionären Bereich wie beim Leser im perlokutionären Bereich also zu einer Modifikation des Bildes, das Austin und Searle skizziert haben, nämlich zu der Ergänzung, daß es unbewußte illokutionäre Sprechakte gibt, welche mit den bewußten interferieren.

Der Autor kommuniziert in seiner Übertragung in einer Rolle und mit einer Intention, die sich oft als Bewältigung von *unfinished business* erweist, der Leser reagiert entsprechend darauf in seiner Gegenübertragung, die als perlokutionäre Wirkung dieses Rollenangebots aufgefaßt werden kann. Dieser ganze mehrschichtige und komplizierte Prozeß aber erschließt sich nur schwer der philosophischen Analyse, wenn diese nicht von der psychoanalytischen Gegenübertragungsanalyse ausgeht.

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«Wir Geschiedene. Wir Rücken an Rücken Vereinte. Wir Wiederkehrende.» Von den Qualen der Ambivalenz in Botho Strauß' *Trilogie des Wiedersehens* (*)

CARL PIETZCKER (**)

Im «Symposion» zeichnet Plato die Liebe im Bild der beiden Hälften einer auseinandergeschnittenen Kugel, die wieder zusammenstreben. Liebe erscheint als Sehnsucht, sich mit dem anderen zur verlorenen Einheit der Kugel zusammenzuschließen. In die Sprache der Objektbeziehungspsychologie übersetzt hieße dies, daß Liebende Trennungserfahrungen wiederbeleben und ihnen durch Vereinigungsphantasien begegnen; in ihnen tauchten dann Phantasien früher Einheit wieder auf. Solch ein Vereinigungswunsch muß jedoch in Ambivalenzen führen; denn, wenn die Liebenden in der Kugel aufgingen, verlöre jeder von ihnen inzwischen erlangte Selbständigkeit und Individualität. Sie liefen aber auch Gefahr, in diese Einheit nicht aufgenommen, also zurückgewiesen zu werden und nun, da sie sich geöffnet haben Verlassenheit nur um so deutlicher zu spüren.

Mit solchen Ambivalenzen der Vereinigungs- und Trennungsphantasien arbeitet die Liebesliteratur. Sie hat sie seit der Antike dadurch gemeistert, daß sie die Liebenden nach anfänglicher Einheit, z. B. der Amors und Psyches oder der Romeos und Julias, trennte und erst nach vielen Widrigkeiten wieder zusammenführte, und sei es im Tod. Solch literarische Trennung der Liebenden hielt Vereinigungssehnsucht frei von Angst, verschlungen oder zurückgewiesen zu werden. Sie erlaubte überschaubare Handlungsverläufe sowie eindeutige intensive Gefühle, z. B. solche des Liebesglücks, des Trennungsschmerzes, der Sehnsucht und des Hasses. Dieser klare zeitliche Verlauf mit deutlicher Trennung und schließlich eindeutiger Zusammenführung der Liebenden begann sich im 18. Jahrhundert aufzulösen; heute ist er nur noch der sogenannten Unterhaltungsliteratur möglich. Die Dimension der besseren Zukunft ist als allgemein-gesellschaftliche ja

(*) Dies ist eine Künzfassung von Carl Pietzcker, Einheit, Trennung und Wiedervereinigung. Würzburg 1996, Kapitel VIII.

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weitgehend geschwunden, sodaß Wiedervereinigung der Liebenden zum nur noch privaten Glück schrumpft. Und Trennung selbst ist kaum noch Trennung durch hindernde Instanzen, etwa durch Vater Capulet, sondern gesellschaftliche Vereinsamung. Sie schützt nicht vor dem Sog der Vereinigungsphantasie, sondern läßt ihn anwachsen. So muß die Literatur andere Möglichkeiten suchen, Liebessehnsucht und Liebesglück zu gestalten.

An Botho Strauß' *Trilogie des Wiedersehens*¹ läßt sich eine der Möglichkeiten studieren, heute mit diesen Ambivalenzen literarisch umzugehen: im Schwanken uneindeutiger Gefühle und im Oszillieren zwischen Getrennt- und Verbundensein. Das Stück, 1976 veröffentlicht, 1977 uraufgeführt, wurde schnell als typisches und genau beobachtendes Zeitstück verstanden. Es führt anläßlich der Vorbesichtigung einer Ausstellung im überblickbaren Raum einer geschlossenen Gesellschaft durch einen in drei Teile gegliederten Tag des Jahres 1975, also einer Zeit, in der die Hoffnungen der Studentenrevolte sich zerschlagen hatten. Die Figuren bewegen sich in dieser an Tschechow und Gorki geschulten Gesellschaftskomödie vor einem gelegentlich aufblitzenden Hintergrund von Angst belanglos, handlungs- und spannungsarm in Zuwendung, Abwendung und erneuter Zuwendung. Eine übergreifende Handlungsstruktur fehlt nahezu ganz.

Anders als in der überkommenen Liebesliteratur geht es nicht mehr um ein einziges Paar oder wenigstens um mehrere klar hierarchisierte, sondern um ein ganzes Figurenensemble. Viele Liebesgeschichten relativieren sich wechselseitig; keine erscheint einzigartig. Die Zuschauer können sich nicht mehr in Identifikation mit dem einem Paar ihren Gefühlen hingeben; ihre Gefühle brechen sich. Die Liebesgeschichten werden öffentlich, verlieren den Charakter des Intimen. Im Figurenreigen variieren sie Zu- und Abwendung. Die Wiederkehr solcher Szenen stellt untergründig den Zusammenhang zwischen allen Verläufen des Stückes her, mag dieses selbst auch den Eindruck des Zusammenhanglosen vermitteln.

In Szenen der Trennung, der Sehnsucht und der Wiedervereinigung suche ich das psychodynamische Substrat, also die Phantasien und Emotionen, die das Stück antreiben. Auf meiner Suche nach ihm lasse ich mich leiten von Bildern, die das Stück selbst vorgibt. Ironisch spielt es Platos Kugelgleichnis an: «Hier gehen zwei Hälften ein und desselben Lebewesens» (120); das erweist sich schnell als Täuschung: Martin, eine der «zwei Hälften», geht gelegentlich «zu einer Geliebten» (121). Strauß phantasiert Platos Kugelbild um und läßt seine Susanne sagen:

Wir von Augenblick zu Augenblick, und sonst gar nichts. Wir Geschiedene. Wir Rücken an Rücken Vereinte. Wir Wiederkehrende (18)

Die Kugelhälften sind voneinander geschieden, aber nicht getrennt; sie sind «Rücken an Rücken» «vereint». So oft sie auch wiederkehren, sie können nicht zusammenkommen. Die Kugel schließt sich nicht; ihre Hälften berühren sich an nur einem Punkt. Die Liebenden sind im Auseinandergehen vereint und hierbei nicht von «Kopf bis Fuß», sondern «von Augenblick zu Augenblick» auf «Liebe eingestellt, und sonst gar nichts». Wie das zu verstehen ist, gibt Susanne gegen Schluß zu erkennen:

Sie wissen nicht, wie oft wir voreinander umgekehrt sind, im letzten Augenblick. Er ist gegangen oder ich bin gegangen. Unsere einzige Hoffnung: der gleiche Lauf der Wiederholung... Am Anfang ist immer der Abschied... dann kommt ein Wiedersehen... Zwischen Kommen und Gehen die Wende, dort treffen wir uns... (117f)

Susanne hat das statische Bild in eine Folge sich wiederholender Szenen verwandelt. Sehnsuchtsvoll sind die Getrennten aufeinander zugegangen, dann aber voreinander umgekehrt. Neuer hoffnungsvoller Anlauf, «Wiedersehen», dann die «Wende». Sie ist zwischen «Kommen und Gehen» der Moment, in dem die beiden sich «treffen»: der kurze «Augenblick» der Liebe, den sie in immer neuem

¹ Botho Strauß, *Trilogie des Wiedersehens*, in: derselbe *Trilogie des Wiedersehens*. Theaterstück. Groß und klein. Szenen, München 1980, S. 80f. Nach dieser Ausgabe wird künftig zitiert; Seitenangaben im fortlaufenden Text.

«Wiedersehen» suchen. Um ihn geht es ihnen. Die Bewegung zum «Augenblick» hin und den raschen Rückzug von ihm weg führt das Stück in unendlichen Variationen vor. Dies Drama von «Kommen», «Wende» und «Gehen» läßt sich mit Hilfe der psychoanalytischen Objektbeziehungspsychologie verstehen.

Zur «Wende» kommt es aus Angst; Angst vor dem, wonach die Figuren sich sehnen, Angst in der Liebesvereinigung unterzugehen, aber auch Angst, von ihr enttäuscht, oder auch, zuvor schon zurückgewiesen zu werden. Vor solcher Angst schützen sie sich: im kurzen «Augenblick» der «Wende» öffnen sie ihre Selbstgrenze hin zum anderen und spüren Vereinigung, doch einzig unter der Bedingung, daß sie die Grenze bereits wieder schließen und sich entfernen. Da sie nun abermals getrennt sind, das Glück der Verschmelzung jedoch gespürt haben, drängt es sie wieder zum anderen hin. Diesem Kreislauf, so meine These, liegt ein Szenario nicht klar abgegrenzter und in sich gefestigter Selbst- und Objektbilder zugrunde. Weil der Träger des Selbstbilds seiner Grenze nicht sicher ist, löst der Wunsch, mit dem Objekt zu verschmelzen bei ihm Angst vor Grenzverlust aus; das führt zum Rückzug. Doch solche Trennung gelingt nicht; zu groß ist die Sehnsucht, mit dem Objekt zu verschmelzen. Zu sehr benötigt ein so wenig gefestigtes Selbstbild das Objekt, um von ihm bestätigt zu werden und sich zu vergewissern, «jemand Bestimmtes zu sein». Da in dieses Selbstbild kein Bild eines guten Objekts integriert wurde, ist es seinerseits auch nicht integriert; so ist es von Fragmentierung bedroht, alles wird «undeutlich» (35): das Selbstbild, das Bild des Objekts, die «Qual [der] ewig unentschiedene[n] Gegenwart» mit ihm (18), die eigene Identität, die Grenzen zwischen Einbildung und Realität. In der Beziehung zwischen ungesicherten Selbst- und Objektbildern kommen Ängste auf: Angst, ohne das Objekt in Leere und Gefühllosigkeit zu erstarren, und Angst, sich in sehnsuchtsvoller Verschmelzung mit dem Objekt aufzulösen. Werden Angst und Sehnsucht noch zusätzlich durch das Liebesthema gesteigert, so setzt dies jenen Prozeß in Gang, den das Stück von der Angst des Alleinseins über die Sehnsucht nach Vereinigung bis hin zur Angst vor ihr führt, dann zu Versuchen, sich zu schützen, zur Trennung, zur «Wende» und zu neuem Beginn. Auf einige Momente dieses Kreislaufs will ich hinweisen.

Da die Selbstbilder nicht genügend abgegrenzt und integriert sind, erfahren die vereinzelter Figuren sich als ununterscheidbar und innerlich «leer», d. h. ohne Vorstellungen und Gefühle, wie sie in der Auseinandersetzung mit einem Objekt aufkommen. Der unklaren Abgrenzung der Objektbilder entspricht die Erfahrung der Zusammenhanglosigkeit und Sinnlosigkeit von Welt. All dem suchen sie mit Hilfe eines liebenden und geliebten anderen zu entkommen. Sie erwarten, daß er sie so sieht, daß sie ein Gefühl ihrer selbst erwerben. Doch im Sog der Phantasie liebender Vereinigung verfällt ihre Identität noch weiter; ihre Ununterscheidbarkeit nimmt zu. Die Liebe, die retten sollte, steigert die Gefahr. So weckt der enttäuschende Geliebte Haß. Susanne spricht zu dem abwesenden Moritz:

Wie kommt es, daß Sie mich , mich Ununterscheidbare, von Mal zu Mal wiederfinden, ohne sich zu irren? Was sagt Ihnen: da ist sie ja,... meine Susanne? [...] Kann mir nicht vorstellen, daß Sie mich sehen! [...] du bist mir nicht nur lieb, du bist mir auch verhaßt in meiner Liebe. Du gibst mir kein Gefühl für mich. Du hast mich weit entfernt von mir. [...] Dahinter verfällt das eigene Schicksal wie ein nie bewohntes Haus. Du [...] ahnst nicht einmal, woher ich komme, wer mich geführt und wer mich umgestoßen hat [...]. Wie ich erzogen worden bin, ein Kind, und wie es sich die Grundausstattung seiner Furcht erwarb. [...] Es ist mir schon passiert, daß ich zusammenzucke und meinen Mädchennamen plötzlich nicht mehr weiß (17)

Die Vereinigungsphantasie führt die Liebenden zur Aufgabe von Individualität. Das weckt die Ambivalenz von Liebe und Haß.

Den aus größeren, 1975 nach dem Scheitern der Studentenrevolte auch aus politischen Zusammenhängen Entlassenen wird hier «alles Privatsache» (120); auf sich selbst zurückgeworfen, von Fragmentierung bedroht und leer von Gefühl langweilen sie sich und suchen dem durch «großes

Gefühl», Ursprünglichkeit, «Mythisches» und «Schicksal» zu entkommen. Als «großartig» und möglichst «mythisch» wollen sie sich erfahren in einer, wie das Stück es ironisiert, «dynamischen Tiefenausdehnung der eigenen Person» (43). Es geht ihnen darum, dem eigenen Leben, «ein zentrales Interesse» abzugewinnen (120). Dem dient auch die Liebe; sie soll möglichst leidenschaftlich und schicksalhaft sein. Doch das führt notwendig zur enttäuschenden Erfahrung von Belanglosigkeit.

SUSANNE Und was ist nun das Bemerkenswerte an dieser Geschichte?

MORITZ Nichts Besonderes, im Grunde; nichts Besonderes. (101)

Erfahrung von Nichtigkeit ist die eine Gefahr dieser «großartigen» Liebe, die andere, daß sich Individualität noch weiter auflöst. Deshalb ängstigt das «große Gefühl» auch; und deshalb suchen die Figuren sich vor ihm zu schützen.

Ein Schutz vor Gefühlen ist deren Inszenierung; wer inszeniert, liefert sich nicht aus. In der sexuellen Begegnung schützt dann die psychische Verweigerung durch die frigide Frau.

Vater, frigide...! Was heißt das? Weißt du, was es bedeutet, eine Unberührbare zu berühren? Gibt es etwas Verlockenderes als den verbotenen Zutritt? Ist es nicht die innerste Verweigerung, die uns nicht wieder losläßt? (36)

Im Schutz der Verweigerung lassen sich «große Gefühle» entwickeln. Unter der Bedingung, daß sich die Ambivalenzen der Liebesphantasien nicht ertragen lassen, hilft räumliche «Ferne» Nähe phantasieren: «Dort bin ich niemals gewesen... Wie schön!» (16). Bedingung einer freilich irrealen Nähe. Wo solcher Schutz fehlt, müssen Liebende die Flucht antreten. Kaum hat Susanne Moritz' Antrag zurückgewiesen, deckt er ihn zu und spricht von Answald.

MORITZ [...] Ich wollte fragen, ob wir miteinander schlafen-

SUSANNE Wie?!... Moritz!... Sind Sie verrückt?

MORITZ Nicht. Lassen Sie nur. Schon vorbei. Manchmal, wenn ich getrunken habe, überschlägt sich mein Herz. Hoppla. Ohne daß es eine wirkliche Freude aufgestachelt hätte. Answald hat nun ausgerechnet heute Geburtstag. (20)

Wo der Wunsch nach Objektberührung oder gar Bindung gefährlich werden könnte, erfolgt schnell der Rückzug ins Unverbindliche. Solch schützende Flucht vor dem Objekt, zu dem es die Figuren doch auch hinzieht, führt zum leichten, unverbindlichen Gespräch dieses Stücks, das von immer wieder anhebenden Versuchen der Annäherung, des Kommens und ihm dann schnell folgenden «Gehens» durchzogen ist. Die Angst, die zur Annäherung trieb, wird in der Flucht sofort wieder wirksam. Die Figuren werden zurückgetrieben auf diffuse Gefühle, Gefühle der Leere, der Undeutlichkeit ihrer selbst und ihrer Welt und suchen dem durch Nähe von neuem zu entrinnen. Dort, wo sie vor ihren Gefühlen geschützt sind, dort können sie sich ihnen eine kurze illusionäre Weile lang hingeben. Am besten aber gelingt dies in der «Wende».

Die «Wende» läßt «große Gefühle» zu und schützt vor ihnen. In ihr ist der Kompromiß zwischen Ferne und Nähe, Vereint- und Getrenntsein, der das ganze Stück strukturiert, besonders klar ausgeprägt. «Zwischen Kommen und Gehen die Wende, dort treffen wir uns» (118). Zuerst das «Wiedersehen»: Sie blicken einander ins Auge und wenden sich sofort den «Rücken» zu. In der «Wende» zwischen Augen- Blick und «Gehen» sind sie eine kurze Sekunde «Rücken an Rücken vereint», spüren den anderen, zugleich aber auch, wie er entschwindet. So erfahren sie «Liebe». Wie beim Telefonieren «mit einer weitentfernten Geliebten» (19) sind sie dem anderen fern und können so Phantasien der Nähe wagen; doch hier in der «Wende» sind sie in körperlicher Nähe fern. Und wie in der Liebe zu einer frigiden Frau, können sie im sicheren Schutz der Trennung Vereinigung erfahren; doch Trennung und Sehnsucht sind nun nicht geschlechtsspezifisch verteilt; beide leisten die Trennung und beide erfahren auflösende Vereinigung, also «Liebe».

Als «Liebe» wird ja Grenzauflösung erfahren, Undeutlichwerden und Verschwinden:

Nie habe ich Sie mehr geliebt als jetzt, in diesem, eben in diesem Augenblick [...] Ich bin so glücklich... *Zu den anderen*. Ja ich habe mich tief verloren in diesen undeutlichen Menschen. Daß Ihr es alle hört: ich liebe ihn... (79)

Wer «undeutlich» wird, löst hier Liebesgefühle aus, weil er kein wahrnehmbares abgegrenztes Gegenüber mehr ist. Das führt freilich den, der «undeutlich» wird, zurück auf seine alte Position der Belanglosigkeit.

In der «Wende» dagegen werden beide Liebende, wenn sie sich den Rücken weisen, «undeutlich». Beide lösen sich füreinander auf und bleiben im kurzen Augenblick zwischen «Kommen und Gehen» dennoch füreinander bestehen; sie sind, wie es an anderer Stelle heißt, «kaum noch Etwas, doch längst nicht Nichts» (84). So wünschen in diesem Stück die Liebenden den anderen:

MORITZ [...] Stellen sie sich vor, so etwas gäbe es in Wirklichkeit: würden Sie nicht gerne Ihre Gestalt, Ihren Körper dafür geben, um nur noch Licht zu sein, ein unsäglich zarter physischer Schimmer. Alle Zeit wären Sie hell, unauslöschlich und niemand Bestimmtes. [...] Kaum noch Etwas, doch längst nicht Nichts. Vor diesem Fall kopfüber, vor dem Nichts, schützt Sie ja, daß Sie Licht sind und leuchten, flirren, verführen – nicht Nichts, kaum Etwas. (83f)

Diese Vorstellung weckt bei Moritz Liebesgefühle. «Kaum noch Etwas, doch längst nicht Nichts» - das ist die Erfahrung verschmelzender Liebe im Schutz der «Wende». Sie dauert nur einen «Augenblick» und verlangt deshalb nach Wiederkehr. In ihr, im Leben «von Augenblick zu Augenblick», verschaffen die Liebenden ihrer Liebe unter Wiederholungszwang Kontinuität und mindern den Schmerz des Abschieds. An dieser «Wende» zeigt sich besonders deutlich die Kippstruktur des Stücks, die es in unterschiedlichen Variationen immer wieder durchspielt. Der Minimalberührung in der «Wende» entsprechen «Absteigeabenteuer», Ausweichen in unverbindliches Gespräch und das Kommen und Gehen der Partyrituale.

Von den ausgestellten Bildern, die sie anschauen, erhoffen sich die Figuren das Kippmoment der «Wende» auf Dauer stellen zu können: Objektberührung ohne Ambivalenz. Das Objekt sollte verschwinden und zugleich erhalten bleiben.

«La Sposa» – die Braut, eben noch gegenständlich, eben noch. Ein Werk, vor dem man den Blick senkt, weil man nicht wagt, es unverhohlen anzugaffen... Das Inbild des Unsichtbaren (83)

Auflösung und dennoch Erhaltung. Das wonach die Liebe der Figuren sich sehnt, im Bild erfahren sie es auf Dauer gestellt. Das erreichen die Bilder auch dadurch, daß sie im Gegenständlichen den Blick ins Weite öffnen. Moritz über ein Bild Lucian Freuds:

Es heißt «Weiter Innenraum». Aber was Sie sehen, ist ja ein enges Zimmer. Weit ist es nur, weil die beiden Menschen dort, die alte Frau auf dem Sessel und die junge Frau auf dem Bett, mit nacktem Oberkörper, in ihre Gedanken versunken starren, weit ist es nur durch die große Öffnung ihrer Augen (99f)

Hier öffnet gerade die detailgenau abgemalte enge Realität der Imagination einen weiten Raum.

Im Bild überdauert, anders als im Leben der Figuren, das von «Kommen und Gehen» bestimmt ist, der Blick in die Weite und so das «große Gefühl». Es gewährt ambivalenzfreie narzißtische Objektbeziehung.

Die Liebenden und die Kunstbetrachter gehen von derselben Selbstbild-Objektbildstruktur aus; doch ihre Vereinigungsphantasien suchen unterschiedliche Wege. Die der Liebenden finden ihre geschützt-gebrochene Erfüllung in der «Wende», die der Ausstellungsbesucher im «Kaum noch Etwas, doch längst nicht Nichts» des Bildes. Die Rezipierenden aber erfahren diese Struktur durch die Form des Stücks. Sie werden hineingezogen in Szenen zwischen «undeutlichen» Selbst- und Objektbildern. Das sich in Momentaufnahmen zwischen cuts entfaltende Geschehen fragmen-

tiert ihre Wahrnehmung. All die Umschwünge und Stimmungswechsel im «Kommen und Gehen» der Figuren lassen sie einen Zustand undeutlicher Beliebigkeit erfahren; die Parallelführung mehrerer Gespräche läßt sie kein gesondertes Einzelnes wahrnehmen, verstärkt den Eindruck des Diffusen und weckt in Reaktion hierauf, ganz wie bei den Figuren, so auch bei den Rezipierenden Sehnsucht nach Eindeutigkeit und «großen Gefühlen». Doch die wird enttäuscht; auch sie werden auf Undeutlichkeit und Belanglosigkeit zurückgeworfen.

Als Komödie hält das Stück Angst und Sehnsucht, die die Figuren zueinander hin und wieder auseinandertreiben, auf Abstand; es läßt sie kurz aufsteigen und überwindet sie dann aber in der Komik des Umkippen. So wird das psychische Substrat des Stücks spielbar und gewährt das Glück, dem Kreislauf zu entkommen. Die Komödie läßt den Kitzel von Angst und Sehnsucht spüren, im Lachen dann aber die Gegenbewegung. Eine Tragödie würde Figuren und Zuschauer ihrer Angst, ihrer Sehnsucht und deren Folgen ausliefern. Diese Komödie dagegen läßt sie nur spüren und wehrt sie dann ab. So wird es den Rezipierenden möglich, sich «fröhlich» über Verlorenheit und Identitätslosigkeit zu erheben:

Ich komme, ich weiß nicht, von wo?
Ich bin, ich weiß nicht, was?
Ich fahre, ich weiß nicht wohin?
Mich wundert, daß ich so fröhlich bin. (116)

So ist es möglich, Phantasien von Trennung und Vereinigung der Liebenden auch noch in Texten unserer Jahrzehnte zu gestalten – allen Ambivalenzen zum Trotz.

Der blinde Fleck: Kritik der normativen Heterosexualität in Dramen von Else Lasker-Schüler und Gerlind Reinshagen

HELGA KRAFT (*)

Dramen von Frauen wiesen schon immer eine gewisse Unterminierung der normativen Geschlechteridentitäten auf, die aber erst in letzter Zeit kritischen Blicken auffiel. Feministische und postmoderne Theorien schärfen diese Aufmerksamkeit seit den siebziger Jahren. Die Genese der dualistischen Geschlechteridentität und ihre Wirkung wurden anhand von psychoanalytischen, soziologischen und philosophischen Überlegungen aufgedeckt. Dabei konnte die normative Zwangsheterosexualität und ihre Verflechtung mit Klasse, Rasse und anderen Gruppierungen als Gesellschaftsgrundlage erkannt werden. Für diese Norm, die Männern und Frauen bestimmte Rollen und Identitäten zuweist, und dabei oft Angst vor und Haß gegen Frauen, Homosexuelle, Lesbierinnen und andere Minoritäten auslöst, kann jedoch keine plausible biologische und daher essentielle Grundlage gefunden werden. Dies legt z.B. die amerikanische feministische Theoretikerin Judith Butler in ihrer Studie *Das Unbehagen der Geschlechter* dar, auf die sich die Überlegungen in diesem Artikel stützen. Butler fragt: «Was geschieht mit dem Subjekt und der Stabilität der Geschlechter-Kategorien (*gender categories*), wenn sich herausstellt, daß diese scheinbar ontologischen Kategorien durch das epistemische Regime der vermeintlichen Heterosexualität hervorgebracht und verdinglicht werden?» (Butler, 9) Sie zeigt in ihrer Untersuchung, daß die vorgeschriebene heterosexuelle Geschlechterdifferenz eher auf einer Phantasie-Fabel beruht, die im Megadiskurs unserer Gesellschaft ideologisch eingesetzt wird, um eine gewisse Machtverteilung zu untermauern. Die Fabel, die im Laufe der Zeit patriarchalisches Denken verfestigte und Männer favorisierte, wird durch wiederholte performative Handlungen weiter aufrecht erhalten, um sodann als einzig mögliches Modell der Identitätsformierung verinnerlicht zu werden. Das bedeutet aber gleichzeitig, daß die Geschlechteridentität auch eine historische Entwicklung durchmachen kann, und daß eine Veränderung möglich ist.

Bislang wurden die genitalen Merkmale des Körpers politisch genutzt, wodurch auch der menschliche Körper in seiner biologischen Substanz einer Konstruktion unterlag. Das Geschlecht

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(Sexualität) ist somit bis zur Unkenntlichkeit mit dem gesellschaftlich konstruierten Geschlecht (Gender) verhakht; ja das letztere ist gewissermaßen in den Körper eingeschrieben. Die Geschlechter-Fabeln unserer Gesellschaft etablieren dabei die Fehlbenennung natürlicher Fakten und bringen sie in Umlauf. Sie werden durch Nachahmung und durch Maskerade der gewünschten Bilder und Aktionen naturalisiert und als etwas Naturgegebenes legitimiert und weitergegeben.

Der blinde Fleck in der Gesellschaft liegt darin, daß die Geschlechter-Gender-Komponente zwar eine einschneidende Rolle spielt, jedoch bisher besonders in ihrer negativen Auswirkung kaum erkannt ist. Diese Leerstellen müssen beleuchtet werden, wenn verborgene Machtverhältnisse aufgedeckt werden sollen. Eine Möglichkeit dafür besteht im parodistischen Einsatz von Praktiken der Wiederholung, d.h. durch die gleichen Handlungen der unbewußten Einübung. Durch eine bewußte Übertreibung jedoch werden die Praktiken sichtbar, und es kann gelingen, die aufoktroyierte Geschlechterdifferenz in ihrer Bedeutung kenntlich zu machen und subversiv zu unterminieren.

Obgleich einigen feministischen Theorien die Überzeugung zugrunde liegt, daß ein unterliegendes vor-ödpales, vorsprachliches und semiotisches Kommunikationssystem ein Weibliches sei, das Aufklärungshilfe leisten kann (wie z.B. Kristevas Idee der «chora», Kristeva, 35 ff.) verneinen andere Theorien diese Möglichkeit: Diese Sicht postuliere weiterhin eine Polarisierung von Weiblich und Männlich. Die gegenwärtige normative Zwangsheterosexualität würde dadurch zwar verworfen, doch nunmehr der andere Pol favorisiert, und das Patriarchat bekäme eine legitime genealogische Grundlage. Butler ist z.B. der Ansicht – im Gegensatz zu Freud –, daß vor der ödipalen Phase, d.h. ehe Bewußtsein und Sozialisierung einsetzen, das erotische Begehren weder heterosexuell, bisexuell noch homosexuell besetzt sei, sondern alle Möglichkeiten einschließe. Deshalb ist ein Machtgefälle, das auf der künstlichen Konstruktion irgendwelcher Geschlechterdifferenzen basiere, so absurd wie ein gesellschaftliches Gefüge, das Menschen mit blauen oder braunen Augen privilegiert.

Die Sprache hingegen, die Bewußtsein und Sozialisierung voraussetzt, bietet immerhin subversive Möglichkeiten, obgleich sie vom «Gesetz des Vaters» – im Lacanschen Sinne der kulturellen Entwicklung – im Bereich der vorgegebenen Geschlechteridentitäten geformt wurde. Durch ihren Einsatz könne zum Beispiel die erwähnte performative Wiederholung der automatisch eingeübten Handlungen parodiert werden, wodurch es möglich ist, deren ideologischen Zwang aufzudecken und zu vermindern. Dabei würde ebenfalls die geschichtliche Veränderungsfähigkeit der Geschlechteridentitäten sichtbar, bzw. die Möglichkeit für Frauen, sich einem Zwangssystem, das zu ihren Ungunsten besteht, zu entziehen, bzw. es ad absurdum zu führen.

Wie schon zu Anfang bemerkt, haben die meisten Dramatikerinnen – auch wenn sie meinten, am dominanten Diskurs teilzunehmen – seit eh und je durch ihre Sprache und ihre Bühnengestalten bewußt oder unbewußt parodistische Praktiken in ihre Stücke eingeschmuggelt, und heutzutage ist durch postmoderne Annäherungen auch durch RegisseurInnen die krasse Bloßstellung der normativen Geschlechterdifferenz im System von der Bühne nicht mehr wegzudenken. Eine der gravierendsten Parodistinnen ist Elfriede Jelinek, die z.B. in ihrem Drama *Krankheit oder moderne Frauen* die inneren Prinzipien der Einschreibung des unterdrückenden Geschlechterdiskurses als schlechthin fleischgewordene Sprache auf die Bühne bringt.

Zwei dramatische Werke – eines vom Anfang und eines aus der zweiten Hälfte dieses Jahrhunderts – sollen betrachtet werden, um eine Darstellung der vorgeschriebenen Geschlechteridentität sowie den Prozeß einer Kritik von der Bühne herab im 20. Jahrhundert zu beleuchten. *Die Wupper* von Else Lasker-Schüler wurde schon im Jahre 1909 geschrieben und 1919 uraufgeführt. Ungewöhnlich früh – in der Vor-Weimarer Zeit, als die «neue Frau» besonders in den Großstädten zögernd ihre Stimme entwickelte – skizziert Lasker-Schüler auf ihrer Bühne die Unschärfe und die Konsequenzen einer bröckelnden normativen Heterosexualität in Verbindung mit einem Zweiklassensystem (Großbürger und Proletarier). Das zweite Drama, *Frühlingsfest* von Gerlind Reinshagen, das in den fünfziger Jahren des «Wirtschaftswunders» spielt, wurde 1980 geschrieben und uraufgeführt. Es reflektiert die Geschlechterdifferenzen der letzten Nachkriegszeit und ist

exemplarisch dafür, wie im Drama *Maskerade* als performative Parodie mit postmodern Techniken subversiv eingesetzt werden kann.

In Lasker-Schülers Stück *Die Wupper* werden die Geschlechternormen in einem heillosen Durcheinander auf die Bühne gewirbelt. Das «Gesetz des Vaters», das die normative Heterosexualität (im Sinne von Freuds ödipaler Struktur) bestimmt, ist löchrig geworden. Der Übervater der Gesellschaft in dem Stück, der Fabrikbesitzer Sonntag, ist schon längst tot, und seine beiden Söhne sind in ihrer Nachfolge mit dem Gesetz des Vaters nur schwach verbunden. Der eine Sohn, Edward, schwindsüchtig und den Tod erwartend, will Franziskaner-Mönch werden, um dem kapitalistischen Machtsystem zu entkommen. Der andere Sohn, Heinrich, übernimmt nur halbherzig und ungern die Rolle des Oberhauptes als Fabrikleiter. Er hätte lieber Soldat gespielt als Arbeiter angefeuert; im Militär gibt es klare Befehle.

Die Lebensentscheidungen der Söhne - Heinrich begeht Selbstmord und Edward geht ins Kloster - parodieren die Todesarten, die in der Literatur der Vergangenheit für das weibliche Geschlecht reserviert waren. Frauen waren sonst diejenigen, die Befehle ausführten, im Kloster verschwanden oder Selbstmord begingen - jedenfalls in Werken männlicher Autoren. Doch nicht nur die Söhne der herrschenden Klasse scheitern auf so «weibische» Weise. Auch Carl, der Proletariersohn, dem es daran gelegen ist, im patriarchalischen Machtgefüge mitzuwirken, schafft es nicht, die Nachfolge des Vaters anzutreten. Um seinen Platz in der höheren Klasse zu erwerben, will er evangelischer Pfarrer werden; doch er fällt durch das Examen, und er wird als Freier der reichen Marta abgewiesen. Er ist nun dazu verdammt, in der unteren Klasse zu verbleiben, und als deren Mitglied bleibt er in seiner Schwäche weiblich markiert und landet folgerichtig als Alkoholiker im Abseits.

Lasker-Schüler gelingt es zu zeigen, daß das Gerüst eines Gesetzes der normativen Heterosexualität, das die Machtverhältnisse verteilt, durch die ihm selbst innewohnende Unzulänglichkeit zerbröckelt. Die einzige Vatergestalt ist der uralte, proletarische Großvater. Als seniler Vertreter des «Gesetzes des Vaters» möchte er sich die Frauen noch immer dienstbar machen, und so drückt er erotische Gelüste auch für die Jüngsten aus. Er ist kindisch geworden, und auch seine Sprache ist bis auf das immer wiederholte «Tum tingelingeling» verkümmert. Das klingt wie Jahrmarkt, und drückt eine Einstellung aus, die das Menschengetümmel nicht ernst nimmt. Er wird als wahnsinnig verlacht, und seine Zugehörigkeit zur unteren Klasse ordnet ihn ohnehin der Machtlosigkeit zu. Das «Gesetz des Vaters» erweist sich auf Lasker-Schülers Bühne nicht als Norm einer verlorenen goldenen Zeit, sondern als leere Chiffre. Hierin liegt das Postmoderne ihres Stückes.

Es herrscht hingegen Mutter Pius, eine alte Frau aus dem Arbeitermilieu, die teils weise und heilkundig eingreift, teils kupplerisch und betrügerisch agiert. Der Großvater gibt zu: «Jetzt leb ich von de Gnade meiner Tochter un die (er zeigt auf Mutter Pius).» (*Wupper*, 65) Eine Figur im Stück sagt von ihr: «de Mutter Pius ... [is] das Karussell, wo wir alle drin sitzen.» (*Wupper*, 59) Das heißt, die Gesellschaft, die noch im Freudschen oder Lacanschen Sinne dem Gesetz des Vaters zu folgen scheint, wird hier schon von einem anderen Diskurs gelenkt. Nicht nur der lineare, in die Zukunft weisende Weg polaren Denkens, sondern auch eine kreisförmige, sich immer wiederholende Lebensform der sinnlichen Körperlichkeit, die nicht auf einen Endpunkt ausgerichtet ist, wird von ihr repräsentiert. Mutter Pius ist in ihrer Duplizität undurchsichtig und zwiegesichtig. Ist sie das negative, weibliche Prinzip, der andere Pol der patriarchalischen Gesellschaft, wie z.B. die traditionelle Hexe im Märchen, die aus dem Dunklen, Irrationalen schöpft, den *status quo* des herrschenden Diskurses bedroht und deshalb bekämpft werden muß? Ist sie die vor-patriarchalische Herrscherin, durch die Lasker-Schüler mit einem besseren, gesellschaftlichen Prinzip aus der mythischen, matriarchalischen Vergangenheit kokettiert? Ist sie nur proletarische Großmutter und Schwiegermutter verschiedener agierender Personen, die sich im Stück zwischen unterer und oberer Klasse hin- und herbewegt? Sie ist es, und sie ist es nicht. Man weiß, sie hat studiert, sie kann Latein, sie war auch schon im Gefängnis. Sie gibt keine Antwort, sie gibt zu denken. Manchmal ist die hellseherische Mutter Pius weise, manchmal erweisen sich ihre Handlungen als Schwindel, als

Kartentrück. Sie ist auch Mittäterin im dominierenden Diskurs, und sie unterminiert ihn zugleich. Ihre Identität bleibt unbestimmt, unfixiert. Nur eines ist klar: sie weicht von der Norm ab. So ist sie es auch, die die Unmündigkeit der unteren Klasse versteht. (Sie sagt zu den Arbeitern: «Alte Schafsköpfe, wo man euch hintreibt, freßt ihr.» (*Wupper*, 71) Sie wirkt in der Gesellschaft von innen heraus durch subversive Handlungen, durch ihre Karussellfahrt. Durch sie wird dargestellt, wie marginalisierte Kräfte ins Zentrum rücken, und die Leere dieses Zentrums sichtbar machen zu können.

Subversives kommt bei Lasker-Schüler von der Peripherie, und Mutter Pius, als marginalisierte Frau, ist es nicht allein, die das traditionelle Gesellschaftssystem kontaminiert. So bringt Lasker-Schüler auch das abseitige Völkchen des Jahrmarktes auf die Bühne, wo alles, was nicht der Norm entspricht, versammelt ist, wie z.B. die Riesendame, die mit ihrem Männerbart beide Geschlechtermerkmale in sich vereinigt. Sie ist gewissermaßen die riesige Chiffre der Absurdität, die auf Geschlechterdifferenz baut. Als Jüdin wußte Lasker-Schüler sehr wohl, was Marginalisierung bedeutete. Auch ihr Mut, in männlicher Verkleidung als Prinz Jussuf in der Öffentlichkeit aufzutreten (und sich wechselnde Personae zuzulegen, wie Tino von Bagdad, Prinz von Theben, Malik, Joseph von Ägypten) beweist, daß sie selbst bewußt an der Überschreitung der Geschlechteridentität teil hatte und das Unerhörte – im doppelten Sinne des Wortes – nicht nur inszenierte, sondern auch praktizierte.

So wundert es nicht, daß das Begehren der Geschlechter von dem vorgeschriebenen heterosexuellen Gebot abweicht. Dieser Vorgang wird besonders von drei transsexuellen Landstreichern verkörpert, die sowohl als Chor wie auch als Teilnehmer das Geschehen begleiten. Lasker-Schüler kehrt die Funktion des griechischen Chors um, denn sie vertreten nicht das Gewissen der Gemeinde (die Gemeinde hat kein Gewissen), sondern sie provozieren die Bürger durch ihr sexuelles und geistiges Anderssein und ihren Abstand vom materialistischen Denken. Es ist folgerichtig, daß der Aufsteiger Carl, zum Beispiel, ohne besonderen Grund einen von ihnen den Arm verdreht. Pendelfrederech ist Exhibitionist mit sichtbarem Penis, Gläserner Amadeus ein zarter, androgyner Poet und lange Anna ist Transvestit, der sich z.B. mit «rauschende[r] Papierschürze und eine[r] Frauennachthaube aus Papier mit flatternden Bändern auf dem Kopf und eine[r] dicken Warzennase» (*Wupper*, 43) und hoher Stimme produziert. Diese drei Wesen von abweichender Geschlechteridentität hat Lasker-Schüler mit Begehren ausgestattet, die es in der Gesellschaft nicht geben darf, aber doch gibt. Am nächsten fühlte sich Lasker-Schüler dem Gläsernen Amadeus «... – denn ich bin ja auch identisch mit den Herumtreibern; ja der Amadeus bin ich, *wäre* ich, wenn ich nicht E Lsch wäre.» (*Lieber gestreifter Tiger*, 191) In einer amerikanischen Studie konstatiert Katrin Sieg, daß «der androgyne Poet Amadeus mit seinem gesprungenen Herzen die genitale Organisation des geschlechtlichen Begehrens in Zweifel setzt, und damit auch die klassische Teilung zwischen Erotik und Vernunft, Leidenschaft und Intellekt.» (Sieg, 95) Den drei Landstreichern steht ihre abweichende Identität auf den Leib geschrieben. Sieg interpretiert diese drei Figuren innerhalb des Geschehens wie folgt:

Die drei Landstreicher ... stören die Geschlechterordnung, die auf klar geschiedener Gender-Differenz, auf «korrekter» Objektwahl und genitaler Sexualität basiert. Diese sexuellen Nomaden schweifen im Niemandsland zwischen einem Gender-Neuland und der Familienstruktur. Im Gegensatz zu den Arbeitern und Besitzern befinden sich die Ausgestoßenen außerhalb der Sphäre von Produktion und Reproduktion. ... Die Landstreicher sind nutzlos in jeglichem utilitarischen Sinne und bekennen offen ihr fehlendes Interesse am Reichwerden. (Sieg, 96)

Die drei bilden eine Folie zu allem Unechten und Heuchlerischen der anderen Figuren, die die Normen der Zwangsheterosexualität ausnutzen oder in ihnen gefangen sind. Sie bieten eine neue Möglichkeit, eine andere Art von «Sexualität und Geistigkeit, die das bekannte gesellschaftliche Gewebe langsam auflösen.» (Sieg, 95) Gläserner Amadeus wird von Angehörigen des gegenwärtigen Systems so sehr brutalisiert, daß sein gläsernes Herz einen permanenten Sprung erhält. Diese

Verletzung, die Lasker-Schüler teilt, will sie ihren Zuschauern in einem poetischen Bild glaubhaft vor Augen führen. Sie war weit davon entfernt, ein naturalistisches Milieudrama zu konstruieren, wofür *Die Wupper* oft fälschlich gehalten und woran sie mit negativem Resultat gemessen wurde. Die Zerstörung der geordneten Welt des Naturalismus bei Lasker-Schüler erscheint eher vielversprechend, sogar utopisch und nicht so sehr ein trauriger, zu betrauernder Prozeß. (Sieg, 96)

Die Dramatikerin setzt in ihrer Kritik dort an, wo das Geistige in der Gesellschaft verankert sein sollte: im praktizierten Christentum, das die Geschlechternormen stützt. Die Gebote der Kirche werden in dem Stück pausenlos unterlaufen. Während die Männer jedoch diese patriarchalische Institution zu ihren Zwecken ausnutzen (Carl will nicht aus Glaubens- sondern aus Karrieregründen evangelischer Pfarrer werden), weichen die Frauen vom orthodoxen Glauben ab, weil sie dessen Zwang entkommen wollen. Der Witwe des Färbereibesitzers wird z.B. vorgeworfen, daß sie nicht an Gott glaube. Sie gesteht, daß sie Gott nicht liebe, weil sie nichts als menschliche Empfindungen habe, mit denen sie keinen Gott finden könne (*Wupper*, 75). Sie ist nicht gewillt, sich eine vorgeschriebene Wirklichkeit vorzulügen, die sie nicht mit ihrem Körper oder ihrer Erfahrung vereinbaren kann. Auch Lieschen, die ca. dreizehnjährige Hauptfigur, die sich frühreif mit ihrer Sexualität und ihrem Begehren auseinandersetzen muß, tauscht das Bild des Herrn Jesus «mit seine rotgeheulte Augen» über ihrem Bett gegen eine gemalte Puppenmutter aus. Der «alte Herr Jesus», sagt sie, «guckt wie der Vater, wenn er von de sündige Welt predigt.» (*Wupper*, 57) Sünde wird schon für die Allerjüngsten in der katholischen Beichte mit sexuellen Gelüsten assoziiert. Und so ist ihre erwachende Sexualität mit gesellschaftlichen Vorstellungen durchdrungen. Lieschen benötigt eine reale, fürsorgliche Person (repräsentiert durch die Puppenmutter) und nicht einen abstrakten, furchterregenden Märtyrer. Die mütterliche Mutter Pius, unterstützt ihr kindliches Spiel und erwachendes körperliches Begehren, das Lasker-Schüler durch Lieschens konkretes Schlafwandeln und schlafwandlerisches Verhalten ausdrückt. Der Wunsch nach körperlicher Berührung und jugendlichem Spaß reibt sich jedoch an den sexuellen Tabus, deren Schaden auch Mutter Pius nicht durchschaut, die deshalb zur Mittäterin wird.

Lasker-Schüler zeigt, daß in einer Zwangsgesellschaft, die auf einer Fiktion aufgebaut ist, die automatisch akzeptierte Identität der Menschen irgendwann verfallen muß. Das Begehren vieler Menschen wird vielleicht noch immer vom Gesetz des Vaters in enge Wege geleitet, aber man kommt auch immer wieder davon ab. Das Inzest-Tabu, das Freud als notwendige Folge der ödipalen Entwicklung versteht, wird im Stück versteckt thematisiert, einmal durch Andeutungen einer Geschwisterbeziehung zwischen Lieschen und ihrem Bruder, sowie in Abwandlung durch pädophile Handlungen. Lasker-Schüler macht eine Praxis sichtbar, die in der patriarchalischen Gesellschaft von privilegierten Männern seit eh und je im Geheimen geübt wurde. So ist der Juniorenchef Heinrich (der seinen Wunsch, Soldat zu sein, nicht ausleben kann) dafür bekannt, daß er sich kleine Mädchen nimmt. Im Wuppertaler Dialekt wird er der «Puppenhangri» (*Wupper*, 37) genannt. Auch an die Hauptfigur Lieschen macht er sich heran. Beide werden am Schluß nach Maßgaben des traditionellen Systems für ihre Abweichungen bestraft: Lieschen wird in ein Erziehungsheim abtransportiert, und Heinrich – als gehorsamer Soldat – vollzieht das internalisierte Gesetz durch Selbstjustiz, d.h. Selbstmord. Lasker-Schüler gelingt es, die beiden als Opfer in einem heillosen, brutalen System zu charakterisieren, in dem die Mittäterschaft der Erwachsenen unausbleiblich scheint.

Die destruktiven Elemente der normativen Sexualität verbindet die unteren und die höheren Klassen im Stück dadurch, daß Männer die Frauen mißhandeln oder zum Objekt ihrer Sexualität oder Machtgelüste mißbrauchen. Die Figuren auf der Bühne diskutieren z.B. die schon oft gehörten Schreie, die davon herrühren, daß eine Nachbarin von ihrem Mann, einem Arbeiter, geschlagen wird. Ein anderes Beispiel ist das Schicksal der Schwester eines anderen Arbeiters im Färbereibetrieb, die vom Betriebsvorsteher der Firma, Simon, verführt wurde. Sie kann keinen Ehemann mehr finden und wird als «gebrauchte Ware» jeglicher Zukunft beraubt. Daß dieser Mißbrauch von Frauen durch die Herrschenden entscheidend dafür ist, einen Arbeiterstreik zu planen, beweist, daß

Gender und Klasse eng verknüpft sind. Lasker-Schülers Bühne thematisiert diese Tatsache anhand von Frauen der unteren Klasse auf breiter Ebene. Da die Dienstmädchen im Stück die Dynamik des Systems nicht erkennen, hoffen sie vergeblich, mit ihrem Körper und ihrer Sexualität eine respektvolle Zukunft durch einen höher situierten Mann erkaufen zu können. Eine der Dienboten, die es begriffen haben, will am Schluß nach Amerika auswandern. Das ist auch die Lösung bei Fleißer. In vielen ihrer Werke hat auch sie das Schicksal der Dienstmädchen und ihre sexuelle Ausbeutung durch den Herrn des Hauses eingebracht. (Siehe Fleißer, *Pioniere in Ingolstadt*, in *Ingolstädter Stücke*)

Abweichungen von den sexuellen Tabus werden von den Menschen im Stück besonders stark geahndet, wenn sie von Frauen gewagt werden. Bei Martha, der jungen Tochter der Färbereibesitzerin, werden lesbische Tendenzen angedeutet, denn sie bekommt einen Blumenstrauß von einer Freundin, die auch ein Nacktphoto von ihr aufgenommen hat. Dieses Foto spielt eine bedeutende Rolle. Es kursiert in der Gesellschaft und wird pornographisch und erpresserisch verwertet, um sie zum Objekt männlicher Gelüste zu machen, bzw. sie zu diskreditieren. Martha glaubt nicht mehr an die Liebe, wie sie auch das Blumenorakel «schon lang nicht mehr» (*Wupper*, 36) befragt. Sie zieht es vor, ihre Gefühle auszuschalten und sich mit dem Arbeiterschänder und Dienstmädchenverderber Simon zu verloben. Sie macht sich nun keine Illusionen mehr. Mehr oder weniger bewußt akzeptiert sie die traditionelle Rolle der Ehefrau im Patriarchat, deren Mann sie zur Machterweiterung benötigt und der weiterhin andere Frauen sexuell ausnutzen wird. Die Zeit ihrer Experimente als «neue Frau» mit Gedanken an Unabhängigkeit, freie Wahl und Sexualität sind vorbei. Die in Aussicht gestellte Heirat am Ende hat zwar die Geschlechter- und Klassenstörungen im Ort beseitigt, doch dekonstruiert die Dramatikerin das konventionelle sogenannte Happy-end.

Lasker-Schüler reserviert für die sexuell unbestimmten Penner die letzte Szene und für den geistesgestörten Großvater das letzte Wort. «Will se schon vertreiben, die Nachtgespenster,» ruft der Großvater als sein Enkel Carl, der gescheiterte Pfarrer, jetzt auch betrunken und heruntergekommen mit den drei Landstreichern Lange Anna, gläserner Amadeus und Pendelfederich die Bühne verläßt. Dieses Ende ist parodistisches Mimikri des verfahrenen Systems einer normativen Heterosexualität, die den einzelnen Menschen auf ein prokrustisches Bett zwingt und verdirbt. Mit Gespenstern benennt der Großvater die Abweichlinge von der heterosexuellen Norm, die er als Vertreter des löchrig gewordenen «Gesetzes des Vaters» von sich weist, doch in seiner eigenen, senilen Schwäche ebenfalls repräsentiert.

In Reinshagens *Das Frühlingsfest* (1980) werden die Geschlechternormierungen erbarmungslos dekonstruiert und der Einfluß auf das Machtgefüge der Gesellschaft auf breiter Basis in Bilder und Vorgänge umgesetzt. Gegen Ende des 20. Jahrhunderts hat sich im Vergleich zu der Situation bei Lasker-Schüler noch nicht viel geändert. Klarer abgeteilt als bei Lasker-Schüler, wechselt die äußere Wirklichkeit mit der inneren ab, die surrealistisch aus der anderen hervorgeht. Das normative Weibliche stellt sich in seiner Reinform nur noch als Maskerade dar, wobei Reinshagen die Situation der Frauen innerhalb einer gewissermaßen bankrotten Mittelklasse verfremdet darstellt. In perfekter Form wird die Norm im Stück von dem Transvestiten Karl-Ernst repräsentiert. Die dem Körper zugeschriebenen weiblichen Merkmale der Schönheit, Gepflegtheit, Eleganz mit perfektem Make-Up, sinnlichen Bewegungen hat Karl-Ernst zu bieten, den die Männer aus dem Lokal Bocaccio zur Privatparty mitschleppten. Blendend schön kommt er in zärtlich wirkender Umarmung mit einem der Ehemänner graziös hereingetanz. Reinshagen findet hier ein Bild für die Überlegung, daß es nur der Mann zur Perfektion des Weiblichen bringen kann, da das Idealbild der Frau der patriarchalen, männlichen Phantasie entspringt. Die wirklichen Frauen im Stück – wie die Hauptfigur Elsa, aus deren Perspektive das Stück abläuft – sind ihrer Geschlechteridentität müde geworden. Sie sind zu matt, dem Idealbild von Schönheit auf der einen und Dienstbarkeit auf der anderen Seite zu entsprechen.

Das Stück spielt nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg, und Reinshagen inszeniert in surrealistischer Übertreibung die bitteren Konsequenzen der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit innerhalb eines Gender-Dialogs. Sie macht die Situation der Frauen im Metadiskurs der normativen Heterosexualität trans-

parent. Es gelingt ihr, in einer Szene vor Augen zu führen, daß die Geschlechteridentität, der die Frau entsprechen sollen, eine performative Handlung ist, die ewig wiederholt werden muß. Hier trainiert der Geschäftsmann Pauly seiner Frau Elsa ein normatives weibliches Benehmen ein, das sie zuerst marionettenhaft, schlafwandlerisch nachahmt, das am Ende des Stückes bei ihr jedoch schon ganz natürlich wirkt. Er sagt Elsa ein:

Bleib so! Ja... Stehen bleiben! Gut! Gut! Du bleibst stehen! Mit gewendetem Kopf!
Gar nicht schlecht! Jetzt ... zurücksehen bitte! Über die Schulter siehst du zurück! Du
hebst die Hand! Streichst das Haar aus der Stirn! Mit der Hand streichst du dir das
Haar aus der Stirn Langsamer! Leichter!
Unwillig. Ah, nicht so absichtsvoll! Nicht dieser Aufwand!
Eine Frau, die weiß worauf es ankommt (*Frühlingsfest*, 358)

Durch ihre eingeübte Sexualität soll sie mit einem anderen Mann, von dem sich der Ehemann geschäftliche Vorteile erwartet, verkuppelt werden. Der sonst unausgesprochene Prozeß, in dem die Frau zum Austauschgut zwischen Männern wird (wie es als erster Lévi-Strauss dargelegt hat), wird auf der Bühne in den Befehlen des Ehemannes, Pauly, verdeutlicht.

Weit ist Elsa von dem Schönheitsideal Karl-Ernsts entfernt, der ja auch Außenseiter ist und das Weibliche nachahmt, um die Grenzen seiner eigenen Männlichkeit zu überschreiten. Im Laufe des Stückes verfällt Elsas Aussehen immer mehr. Eine Folie zu Paulys Dressur bietet Nancy, die als Amerikanerin das Oberflächlich-Künstliche als Rezept gegen den Tod versteht. Sie schminkt Elsa nach Hollywood-Manier, d.h. sie setzt ihr ein äußerliches Bild auf, das jedoch übertrieben und grotesk ausfällt. Elsa fehlt das innere männliche Begehren nach einer bestimmten, weiblichen Schönheit, das Karl-Ernst kopieren kann, weil er ein Mann ist. Sie jedoch kann dem Bild auf Grund ihrer abweichenden Individualität nicht entsprechen.

Auch die anderen Frauen im Stück haben Schwierigkeiten mit der vorprogrammierten Geschlechteridentität. Wenn sie nicht mehr als Objekt männlichen Begehrens fungieren, wirken sie bedrohlich. Die junge zweite Frau des Industriekapitäns und früheren Luftwaffenfliegers Monk, gilt als «nicht richtig», denn sie muß seit langem «ohne Grund» mit Drogen beruhigt im Bett liegen. Oda, die alte Tante im Haus, wird als verrückt erklärt, weil sie sich eine eigene Lebensgeschichte, eine eigene Identität erdacht hat (sie erfand sich einen Sohn, der im Krieg geblieben ist). Als Hexengestalt, stellt sie Elsa einen Wunsch frei. Im Gegensatz zu Mutter Pius bei Lasker-Schüler hat sie kaum irgendwelche Macht. Solche defekte Weiblichkeit kann dem Mann im Wirtschaftswunderland der fünfziger Jahre nicht zugemutet werden. Schließlich wird die Frau im Patriarchat gebraucht. So beansprucht Frau Monks Ehemann, der mächtige Großkunde, jede Frau auf der Party – einschließlich der sechzehnjährigen Henny – als Objekt seiner Begierde und Bestätigung der Männlichkeit und Macht. Henny hat das gewünschte Jugend- und Schönheitsideal zu bieten. Aber auch das privilegiert sie nicht sehr, denn sie wird als Sexobjekt zur «Beute», jeder nimmt sich ein Kleidungsstück von ihr, zwei Männer knöpfen ihr Kleid auf. (*Frühlingsfest*, 400)

In surrealistischen Szenen verbildlichen oder sprechen die Figuren immer wieder gewisse innere bedrohliche Wahrheiten zur Geschlechterposition aus, die beim normalen Partytreiben dann ins Oberflächliche umschlagen. Frau Mylius, Frau des alten Generals, der den Untergang des etruskischen Reiches der damaligen Weiberherrschaft ankreidet und die drei Söhne und eine Tochter im Krieg verloren hat, ruft die Frauen auf dem Fest zur Rache auf. Alle sind dazu bereit, und jede der Frauen schleudert eine Todesart für ihre Männer ins Publikum: «Gift in den Kaffee», «Arsen ins Bier», «Rasiermesser in die Halsschlagader». Frau Mylius verlangt, «Du, was dich zerschlägt, das zerschneide bis auf die Knochen». (*Frühlingsfest*, 438) Als Elsa fragt, wofür diese Rache sei, antwortet die eine: «Für nichts», und die andere: «Für einen vergessenen Blick, ein verschlucktes Wort, ein Grinsen zur un rechten Zeit, einen einsamen Bei-Schlaf...» (S. 438) Man könnte hinzufügen: für das Ignorieren und Ausnutzen der Frauenexistenz.

Die Männer verlangen von den Frauen, weiterhin zu ihrer Verfügung zu stehen. Sie hoffen, daß sie im unbewußten Geschlechterdiskurs weiterhin schlafwandlerisch die gewünschte Position

einnehmen werden, so wie Elsa es tut, während ihr Mann Pauly in einer surrealistischen Szene arrogant seine männliche Position preisgibt: Wozu braucht er die Frau? Sie soll ihn erlösen. Aber er verrät, daß sie bei ihm nichts zu erwarten habe. Sie wird zufrieden sein, mit dem, was er ihr hinwerfen wird. Die Frau, die er wünscht,

wird das wenige, das sie besitzt, ihr kleines Vermögen an Schönheit, an Jugend, mir überschreiben, und ich werde keinen Pfennig Zinsen dafür zahlen. Ich, der für alles gewissenhaft zahle, für sie will ich nichts zahlen! ... schon in aller kürzester Zeit wird sie den Konkurs anmelden müssen, ja ein Insekt in meiner Hand wird sie sein, und ich, ich werde die Faust darum schließen ... Sie wird nicht gebeten, sie wird nicht gezwungen, freiwillig soll sie zu mir kommen. ... Sie wird ihre Ketten wollen. Ich will das Äußerste, das Unberechenbare, das ganz und gar Unbezahlbare ... Sie soll mich erlösen. (*Frühlingsfest*, 444-445)

Die absolute Hingabe der Frau würde die absolute Machtposition des Mannes garantieren, so scheint es. Doch sie würde eher seine Schwäche verdecken. Die Herrscherposition der Männer hat einen gewaltigen Stoß bekommen, denn die Männer im Nachkriegsdeutschland kamen als Verlierer zurück. Pauly ist darüber hinaus noch als Krüppel mit einem Bein zurückgekehrt. Reinshagen greift das Thema der körperlichen Behinderung auf, die in der Gesellschaft einen Menschen ins Außen-seitertum schiebt. Paulys körperliche Schwäche wird durch seine hoffnungslose finanzielle Position verstärkt. Nur seine Zustimmung zum Betrug und Verkauf einer Droge, die Menschen ohne es zu wissen süchtig macht, kann ihn retten. Auch die anderen Männer um ihn herum sind heruntergekommen und Schwächen treten zutage, die sonst nur bei Frauen toleriert wurden. Philipp, der Intellektuelle, spricht und kritisiert zwar viel, doch hat er schon einige Selbstmordversuche hinter sich. Er gibt vor, Elsa zu lieben; doch als er mit ihr auf und davon gehen soll, erweist er sich als handlungsunfähig. Die Utopie, aus der differenzierten Geschlechteridentität eine eigene, gemeinsame Geschichte zu bauen, wie es Elsa will, schlägt somit fehl.

Die Männer brauchen die konventionelle Weiblichkeit als das Andere, als das, was ihnen fehlt, als das, was sie von sich weggewiesen haben: Fühlen, Emotionen, Friedensbestrebungen, Zuneigung, Schwäche, das Irrationale, das Unbewußte, moralisches Denken, Liebesfähigkeit. Die Frauen können oder wollen dieses polare Andere nicht mehr tragen. Mit der verlorengegangenen idealen Weiblichkeit ihrer miesepetrigen Frauen müssen die Männer, gebunden durch normative Heterosexualität, in immer tiefere Positionen hinabsinken. Reinshagen hinterfragt die politische Komponente des männlichen Identitäts-Diskurses, der darauf ausgerichtet ist, im Wirtschaftswunderland wieder die Macht und das Kapital zu ergreifen. Dieser Diskurs läßt keine Menschenfreundlichkeit, keine humanen Beziehungen zu, wie es die Frauen in ihrer Liebes- und Sorgefähigkeit noch anstreben. Der Kapitalist Monk meint, es komme nicht darauf an, die Leute zu bluffen, es komme darauf an, sich selber zu bluffen. Er will eine Identität künstlich erzeugen, die auf Amnesie beruht, wobei die Erlebnisse der Nazi- und Kriegszeit ausgemerzt werden – ein typisches Ansinnen im Jahrzehnt des deutschen Wirtschaftswunders. Die Phantasie eines totalen Neuanfangs im «Jahre Null» (1945) hat alle Bedenken, Schuldgefühle aus dem Weg geräumt. In Wirklichkeit ging es einfach weiter wie zuvor. Doch die falsche Unschuld verdeckte in den fünfziger Jahren die menschenfeindlichen Praktiken, die seit eh und je in der kapitalistisch-patriarchalischen Gesellschaft üblich waren. Dornbacher, der gerade die unethische Entscheidung getroffen hat, die gefährliche Droge als harmlos zu vermarkten, sagt sich kalt, «Wir müssen doch nur ... glauben, was wir denken, wir müssen denken ... was wir sagen, wir müssen sagen ... was wir glauben.» (*Frühlingsfest*, 120) In diesem Teufelskreis der patriarchalen Identitätsstruktur, der nur sich selbst beweist, hofft man, die Verletzungen des Krieges, die Schwäche des herrschenden Geschlechts zu überwinden, und geht dabei weiterhin über Leichen.

Dabei ist Reinshagens parodistische Maskerade, die am Schluß in einem lebenden Bild kulminiert, nicht mißzuverstehen: Elsa wird auf einem Kinderauto, einem Borgward, hereingefahren. Sie ist mit Pelzen und Juwelen beladen, grotesk geschminkt und geschmückt und wird als das neue

Ideal der Schönheit proklamiert. Dieses Kitschbild ist Chiffre des neuen Wohlstandsstaates. Das lebende Bild, das «Wirtschaftswunder» heißen könnte, zeigt an, daß es auch mit einer heruntergekommenen, aufgedonnerten Weiblichkeit im heterosexuellen Zwangssystem weitergeht, wenn man nur nicht so genau hinschaut. Es ist folgerichtig, daß die naturalisierte Perfektion der weiblichen Schönheit, der Transvestit Karl-Ernst, sich verängstigt in einen Baum verkriecht und klagt: «Umschließe mich Baum, nimm mich in deinen Schoß zurück.» Schließlich ist Karl-Ernst ein Mann, der die Geschlechtergrenzen überschritten hat und die Absurdität der Zweiteilung versteht.

Da nun einmal die Chiffre «Schönheit» dekonstruiert ist, beginnt Pauly, der Geschäftsmann, die neue Ära damit, auf die Service-Leistungen seiner Frau Elsa zu pochen. Zum Schluß feuert er sie zur Hausarbeit an. Als Reaktion will sie ihn mit dem Messer rücklings erstechen. Ihr Schrei, der sich in der Kehle bildet, wird erstickt, indem Oda, die wahnsinnige Tante, ihr im Schlußbild den Mund zuhält. Reinshagen deutet an: wenn die Frau nicht wahnsinnig wird oder tötet, geht die normative Heterosexualität weiter, in der sie versklavt ist, und die sie ihrer Stimme und ihrer Utopie beraubt. Reinshagen schrieb das Stück Ende der siebziger Jahre, wobei sie prophetisch auf die Dekade des «Geldfiebers», (wie der amerikanische Essayist Tom Wolf die achtziger nennt) vorausweist.

Sowohl Lasker-Schüler Anfang des Jahrhunderts wie auch Reinshagen mehr als siebzig Jahre später bringen eine Kritik der normativen Zwangsheterosexualität auf die Bühne, wobei sich beide ähnlicher Figuren bedienen, die z.B. unmännliche Männer, Frauen, die dem Weiblichkeitsideal widersprechen, Transvestiten, die das normative Geschlechterverständnis in Frage stellen, Menschen, die als Wahnsinnige oder Selbstmordkandidaten aus dem Identitätsdiskurs ausgestoßen sind oder Liebespaare, die das Absurde der Rollen parodieren. Die Autorinnen bedienen sich einer Dramenstruktur, die von der klassisch-aristotelischen abweicht, und die surrealistische Elemente in «realistischen» Abläufen aufleuchten läßt. Es gibt kaum eine Story Line. Es sind eher Bilder aus einer verschobenen Perspektive, die sich aufdrängen; es ist der blinde Fleck der Geschlechterdifferenz, der sich langsam belebt und seinen bisher ignorierten Einfluß auf alle Institutionen, auf Politik, Geschichte, und besonders den Körper des Menschen erkennen läßt. Wenig hat sich das ganze Jahrhundert hindurch geändert. Doch es wird trotzdem ein Optimismus ausgedrückt, der in der Struktur der Dramen zum Ausdruck kommt. Durch die parodistische Wiederholung von subversiven Handlung gegen die normative Heterosexualität auf der Bühne wird der blinde Fleck unserer Gesellschaft bewußt dekonstruiert. Das Theater als moralische Anstalt, weiterhin. Es müssen sich nur noch die wiederholten Aufführungen verwirklichen, bis die Kritik eingeübt ist.

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Der verschlingende und der verschleierte Blick: Das Schau-Spiel der Macht in Klaus Manns *Mephisto*

CARLOTTA VON MALTZAN (*)

«Im Parkett riß man Mund und Augen auf. Man verschlang die Gesten der drei Menschen [...] als das außerordentliche Schauspiel, [...] deren Titel lautet: Der Schauspieler verführt die Macht».¹ Der Schauspieler Hendrik Höfgen, Protagonist von Klaus Manns Roman *Mephisto*, trifft während der Pause einer *Faust*-Aufführung, in der er den Mephisto spielt, den Fliegergeneral und dessen Frau in deren Loge und wird hierbei vom gesamten Theaterpublikum begafft. Im Roman wird mittels des Blicks eine Hierarchie der Macht festgelegt. Je nachdem, ob sich der Einzelne oder die Masse mit der Macht konfrontiert sieht, stellt sich der Blick als verschlingender oder verschleierter Blick dar, in einer Veranstaltung, die man als Schau-Spiel der Macht bezeichnen könnte.

«Wenn der Zweck des Schauspiels dahin geht, „Furcht und Mitleid“ zu erwecken, eine „Reinigung der Affekte“ herbeizuführen, wie seit Aristoteles angenommen wird, so kann man dieselbe Absicht etwas ausführlicher beschreiben, indem man sagt, es handle sich um die Eröffnung von Lust- oder Genußquellen aus unserem Affektleben.» (Freud, 1987: 163) Mit diesem Satz eröffnet Freud einen kurzen Text, dem er das Theater bzw das Schauspiel als Untersuchungsgegenstand zugrunde legt, und in dem er die entscheidende Frage nach der Beziehung der Psychoanalyse zum Theatralischen stellt.² Nach Lacoue-Labarthe (1993: 104) versucht Freud durch die «ausführlichere» Beschreibung des Zwecks des Schauspiels das eigentlich Wesentliche der *Poetik* von Aristoteles in den Vordergrund zu rücken, so daß sich *Psychopathische Personen auf der Bühne* als eine Interpretation, als ein analytisches Lesen, als eine Über-setzung oder vielleicht besser Über-tragung lesen lassen, indem Freud sich von der Frage leiten läßt: Wie kommt es, daß die Veranstaltung oder das Spektakel des Leidens, der Vernichtung und des Todes Lust hervorbringen kann?

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¹ Klaus Mann 1981: 232. Im folgenden verweisen die im Text in Klammern angegebenen Seitenzahlen auf diese Ausgabe.

² *Psychopathische Personen auf der Bühne* wurde erst nach Freuds Tod zum ersten Mal in englischer Übersetzung 1942 und im deutschen Original 1962 veröffentlicht und ist von Freud wahrscheinlich entweder Ende 1905 oder Anfang 1906 geschrieben worden, vgl. editorische Vorbemerkung, Freud 1987: 162.

Der aristotelische Begriff der Katharsis wird von Freud als eine Reinigung vom Leiden, d.h. von Furcht und Mitleid verstanden. In einem entscheidenden Punkt unterscheidet sich Freuds scheinbar getreue Übertragung der *Poetik* von Aristoteles jedoch, und Freud erweitert dadurch die aristotelische Theorie. Wie Lacoue-Labarthe (1993: 106) nämlich zeigt, postuliert Freud die Mimesis bzw wie er sich ausdrückt, die Identifizierung als diejenige, die den eigentlich kathartischen Prozeß ermöglicht. Freud überträgt die aristotelische Erkenntnis bzw das Wiedererkennen (anagnorisis) auf die Beziehung zwischen Bühne und Publikum auf solche Art, daß ein besonderes Interesse im Zuschauer hervorgerufen wird. Dadurch führt Freud einen Aspekt ein, der vorher nicht zum aristotelischen «Programm» gehört hat, der aber die Verbindung zwischen Katharsis und Mimesis bzw Identifizierung erklärt: Tragischer Genuß oder tragische Lust ist wesentlich masochistische Lust. Denn das Drama soll nach Freud

tiefer in die Affektmöglichkeiten herabsteigen, die Unglückserwartungen noch zum Genuß gestalten, und zeigt daher den Helden im Kampf vielmehr mit einer masochistischen Lust im Unterliegen. Man könnte das Drama geradezu durch diese Relation zum Leiden und Unglück charakterisieren, sei es, daß wie im Schauspiel nur die *Sorge* geweckt und dann beschwichtigt oder wie in der Tragödie das Leiden verwirklicht wird. [...] Die Helden sind zunächst Aufrührer gegen Gott oder ein Göttliches, und aus dem Elendsgefühl des Schwächeren gegen die Gottesgewalt soll durch masochistische Befriedigung und direkten Genuß der doch als groß erkannten Persönlichkeit Lust gezogen werden. (Freud, 1987: 164)

Freud bringt hier zwei Aspekte zur Sprache, nämlich zum einen, daß der Kampf des Helden, der auf der Bühne dargestellt wird, als ein solcher konzipiert ist, daß dieser eine masochistische Lust im Unterliegen empfindet, und zum anderen, daß auch der Zuschauer beim Schauspiel im Akt des Sehens bzw des Zuschauens eine masochistische Lust erfährt. Nicht umsonst spricht Freud daher vom Schauspiel in seiner eigentlichen Bedeutung als «Schau-Spiel» (Freud, 1987: 163). Damit verweist Freud einerseits auf die Bühne als einen Ort, der als Ort der Entwirklichung oder als ein Ort, der als außerhalb der Realität stehend angesehen werden muß. Das, was auf der Bühne dargestellt wird, ist nichts als ein Spiel, d.h. die Tragödie stellt nie das Leiden her, sondern stellt das Leiden dar und setzt damit immer schon einen Bereich außerhalb der Wirklichkeit voraus. Aus diesem Grunde kann das «höchste Pathetische doch nur ein ästhetisches Spiel sein», wie Nietzsche (1930: 176) es in seiner Abhandlung *Die Geburt der Tragödie* formuliert hat. Andererseits verweist das Schauspiel als «Schau-Spiel» aber auch auf die Rolle, die der Zuschauer bzw der Rezipient eines Textes – Freud (1987: 164) verweist ausdrücklich darauf, daß die von ihm hier entwickelten Rezeptionsbedingungen «auf alle Formen der Dichtung» zutreffen – in Bezug auf das Schau-Spiel einnimmt:

Der Zuschauer erlebt zu wenig, er fühlt sich als «Misero, dem nichts Großes passieren kann», er hat seinen Ehrgeiz, als Ich im Mittelpunkt des Weltgetriebes zu stehen, längst dämpfen, besser verschieben müssen, er will fühlen, wirken, alles so gestalten, wie er möchte, kurz Held sein, und die Dichter-Schauspieler ermöglichen ihm das, indem sie ihm die *Identifizierung* mit einem Helden gestatten. Sie ersparen ihm auch etwas dabei, denn der Zuschauer weiß wohl, daß solches Betätigen seiner Person im Heldentum nicht ohne Schmerzen, Leiden und schwere Befürchtungen, die fast den Genuß aufheben, möglich ist; er weiß auch, daß er nur *ein* Leben hat und vielleicht in *einem* solchen Kampf gegen die Widerstände erliegen wird. Daher hat sein Genuß die Illusion zur Voraussetzung, das heißt die Milderung des Leidens durch die Sicherheit, daß es erstens ein anderer ist, der dort auf der Bühne handelt und leidet, und zweitens doch nur ein Spiel, aus dem seiner persönlichen Sicherheit kein Schaden erwachsen kann. (Freud, 1987: 163)

Die Bühne hat so gesehen eine Ersatzfunktion, da sie durch die Geschlossenheit des Tragischen den Raum herstellt, in dem stellvertretend die eigentliche rituelle Opferhandlung vorgenommen wird, die den Mord des Urvaters in Erinnerung bringt, wie Freud an anderer Stelle in *Totem und*

Tabu dargelegt hat.³ Gleichzeitig verbirgt sich mit dem Hinweis auf die Identifizierung, die vom Zuschauer hier mit dem Helden vorgenommen wird, ein anderer Hinweis, nämlich dem auf die Bedeutung des Urvaters, die Freud in seiner Schrift *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* weiterausgeführt hat. Auf «den wissenschaftlichen Mythos vom Vater der Urhorde» führt Freud (GW 13: 151) die Identifizierung des Zuschauers mit dem Helden im Schauspiel zurück. Der epische Dichter nämlich erfand den heroischen Mythos aus der Sehnsucht heraus «sich von der Masse loszulösen und sich in die Rolle des Vaters zu versetzen» (Freud, GW13: 152). Das bedeutet, daß der Heros derjenige ist, der allein den Vater erschlagen hat. «Wie der Vater das erste Ideal des Knaben gewesen war, so schuf jetzt der Dichter im Heros, der den Vater ersetzen will, das erste Ichideal.» (Freud, GW13: 152) Wenn der Dichter also den Herosmythos erfindet, tut er nichts anderes als sich von der Masse zu lösen, um genau dieser Masse von den Taten des von ihm erfundenen Helden zu erzählen, einem Helden, der im Grunde er selbst ist. Genau aber hier findet die Überschneidung mit dem Hörer oder Zuschauer statt. Auf die gleiche Weise wie der Dichter stellt sich auch der Zuschauer vor, der Held zu sein: «Die Hörer aber verstehen den Dichter, sie können sich auf Grund der nämlichen sehnächtigen Beziehung zum Urvater mit dem Heros identifizieren.» (Freud, GW13: 153)

Von Freud wird die Funktion des Schau-Spiels solchermassen festgelegt, daß es dem Einzelnen ermöglicht wird, sich hier, gerade weil es sich um einen Raum außerhalb der Wirklichkeit handelt, selbst als «Großer» zu genießen, indem er «unterdrückten Regungen wie dem Freiheitsbedürfnis in religiöser, politischer, sozialer und sexueller Hinsicht ungescheut nachgeben und sich in den einzelnen Szenen des dargestellten Lebens nach allen Richtungen austoben» (Freud, 1987: 163-4) kann.

Die Frage der Identifizierung spielt auch in der Funktion des Blicks in Klaus Manns Roman *Mephisto* eine Rolle. Denn der Blick kommt immer dann zum Tragen, wenn von der Beziehung des Einzelnen zu einem Machthaber oder von der Beziehung der Masse zur Macht die Rede ist. Die Richtung des Blicks und die Bedeutung, die ihm innewohnt, ist einerseits bestimmt durch Ichidentifizierung und zum anderen durch Ichidealersetzung durch das Objekt.

In Klaus Manns *Mephisto* wird mittels des Blicks, und der Richtung, die dieser einnimmt, eine Hierarchie der Macht festgelegt. Der Protagonist Hendrik Höfgen nimmt in diesem Zusammenhang eine Mittlerrolle ein. Durch den Blick kann die Beziehung Hendrik Höfgens zur Schauspielertruppe im Hamburger Künstlertheater, noch ganz zu Anfang seiner Karriere, erstellt werden, in der er bereits eine führende Position einnimmt. Wenn Höfgen sich später mit der faschistischen Macht liiert, wird der Blick ebenfalls relevant, einmal der Blick Höfgens auf die Macht, ebenso wie der Blick der Masse auf Höfgen und die Macht.

Bereits über die Beschreibung der Augen wird im Roman eine Charakterisierung der Figuren in «gute», das heißt solche die späterhin dem antifaschistischen Lager nahestehen, und «böse», d.h. diejenigen die zum faschistischen Lager gehören, vorgenommen. Dabei zeichnen Ernst und Intelligenz die Figuren des antifaschistischen Lagers aus: Bei dem Theaterdirektor Kroge fallen «die gutmütigen, gescheiten Augen» (M 29), bei Hedda von Herzfeld die «wehmütig intelligenten Augen» (M 30), bei der gefeierten Schauspielerin Dora Martin die «klugen, unbetrügbaren und traurigen Augen» (M 46) und bei dem Kommunisten Otto Ulrichs die «gescheiten und lustigen Augen» (M 37) auf, um nur einige Beispiele zu nennen. Dagegen kennzeichnen Durchtriebenheit, Schläue und Eiskälte die Augen faschistischen Figuren: bei dem faschistischen Dichter Cäsar von Muck sind es die «stahlblauen Augen» (M 14), beim Propagandaminister seine «tiefliegenden, schlauen Augen» (M 19), bei der Provinzschauspielerin Lotte Lindenthal ihre «etwas hervortretenden Kuhaugen» (M 24), die besonders hervorstechen.

Nicht nur durch die Beschreibung seiner Physiognomie, sondern insbesondere auch durch die seiner Augen scheint Höfgen dem faschistischen Lager zugeordnet:

³ vgl. dazu Freud: Totem und Tabu, IV (7).

Hinter den großen Brillengläsern wurden seine Augen nur zuweilen sichtbar und wirksam: dann erkannte man nicht ohne Schrecken, daß sie, bei aller Weichheit, eiskalt, bei aller Melancholie sehr grausam waren. Diese grün-grau schillernden Augen ließen an Edelsteine denken, die kostbar sind, aber Unglück bringen; gleichzeitig an die gierigen Augen eines bösen und gefährlichen Fisches. (M 22)

Interessant an dieser Beschreibung allerdings ist, daß sich hier der allwissende Erzähler in der Beschreibung unmittelbar an den Rezipienten richtet, nicht aber etwas über den Erkenntnisstand der Figuren selbst zum Ausdruck bringt, denn bei einer genaueren Analyse des Verhaltens der Erzählfiguren zueinander kann von einem Erkennen der Eiskälte und der Grausamkeit Hendrik Höfgens nicht die Rede sein. Im Gegenteil, Höfgens wird als derjenige beschrieben, dem es gelingt, alle, die mit ihm in Berührung kommen, in seinen Bann zu ziehen. Genau an diesem Punkt ist der Rezipient also gezwungen, sich die Frage zu stellen: Wie kommt es, daß Höfgens diese Fähigkeit besitzt? Was genau ist es, was an ihm fasziniert? Wie ist es möglich, daß er alle, egal, welchem politischen Lager sie zuzuordnen sind, berücken, bezaubern und verführen kann?

Ein Hinweis darauf ergibt sich aus der Gruppendynamik, die ihn als Führerpersönlichkeit anerkennt, wie aus einer Analyse des Blicks nachgewiesen werden kann. Noch im Hamburger Künstlertheater gelingt es ihm, sobald eine größere Gruppe zusammen ist, sich in Szene zu setzen. «Alle schauten auf ihn, [...] bezwungen» (M 46). «Dabei glitten seine prüfenden Augen durch das Lokal, über die Schauspieler hin, wie die Augen eines Feldherrn über Truppen.» (M 48) Daß Höfgens in der Tat von den Schauspielern des Künstlertheaters als Führer und Herr anerkannt wird, wird während einer Theaterprobe noch expliziter zum Ausdruck gebracht. Als einer der Schauspieler es wagt, während einer besonders lange währenden und anstrengenden Probe Einspruch zu erheben,

warf Höfgens ihm einen vernichtenden Blick zu aus seinen weichen und eiskalten Augen. Er sagte: «Wann aufgehört wird, das bestimme ich allein!»
[...] Dem eingeschüchterten Ensemble zeigte er das Antlitz eines edlen und nervösen Tyrannen [...] Alle fürchteten sich; besonders der kleinen Angelika liefen süße und heftige Schauer über den Rücken. Einige Sekunden verblieb man in demütiger Regungslosigkeit; das Aufatmen war hörbar, mit dem die verängstigte Gruppe auf die nächste, befreiende Geste ihres Herrn reagierte. (M 56)

Es ist vielleicht nicht zufällig, daß in diesem Zusammenhang der Blick Höfgens mit dem eines Feldherrn, der seine Truppen überschaut, bzw dem eines Tyrannen und Herrn verglichen wird, da hier zweierlei Gefühlsbindungen veranschaulicht werden. Jeder Einzelne ist einerseits an Höfgens als Führer, andererseits an die anderen Schauspieler libidinös gebunden, wodurch die Machtbeziehung als Schau-Spiel zu erkennen ist. Wie Freud in der *Massenpsychologie und Ich-Analyse* dargelegt hat, zeichnet sich «das Wesen der Massenbildung in neuartigen libidinösen Bindungen der Massenmitglieder aneinander» (Freud, GW 13: 113) aus. Die gegenseitige Bindung der Schauspieler aneinander liegt in der affektiven Gemeinsamkeit, nämlich in der Art der Bindung an Höfgens. Damit wäre die Beziehung der Schauspieler zueinander und ihre Bindung an Höfgens wie folgt zu beschreiben: Sie sind «eine Anzahl von Individuen, die ein und dasselbe Objekt an die Stelle ihres Ichideals gesetzt und sich infolgedessen in ihrem Ich miteinander identifiziert haben.» (Freud, GW 13:128) Dabei entbehrt die Bindung des Einzelnen unter Umständen nicht der Symptome der Verliebtheit, die sich im Verhältnis zum Sexualobjekt durch das Zusammenwirken von ungehemmten mit zielgehemmten Trieben äußert. Freud zeigt, wie Verliebtheit zur Sexualüberschätzung und schließlich zur Idealisierung führen kann, bei der «das Objekt dazu dient, ein eigenes, nicht erreichtes Ichideal zu ersetzen» (Freud, GW 13: 124). Dadurch kann das Verhalten des Verliebten zur Demut, völligen Kritiklosigkeit dem Objekt gegenüber, ja zur Selbstschädigung führen. Wenn also der kleinen Angelika süße und heftige Schauer über den Rücken laufen und die Truppe Schauspieler in demütiger Regungslosigkeit Höfgens gegenüber verharren, sind hier alle Anzeichen sowohl der Verliebtheit als auch der Ichidealersetzung vorhanden.

Wie kommt es aber, daß ein Einzelner eine derartige Macht über eine Gruppe ausüben kann? Oder, wie Freud es formuliert «in welcher Beziehung zur Konstitution einer Urhorde die Veranstaltung steht, mittels derer – abgesehen von Zwangsmitteln – eine künstliche Masse zusammengehalten wird.» (Freud, GW 13: 139) Die Ausgangsposition ist nämlich dabei eine, in der alle Einzelnen in einer Gruppe einander gleich sind, die sich miteinander identifizieren können. Auf der anderen Seite steht ein Einziger, ihnen allen Überlegener, von dem alle beherrscht werden wollen. Freud identifiziert auf Grund dieser Ausgangssituation den Menschen als ein Hordentier, d.h. als «ein Einzelwesen einer von einem Oberhaupt angeführten Gruppe» (Freud, GW 13: 135). Nach Freud erscheint die Masse als ein Wiederaufleben der Urhorde, bei der die Einzelnen in der Masse so gebunden waren, wie wir sie heute finden, während der Urvater frei, «sein Ich wenig libidinös gebunden war [...] er darf von Herrschernatur sein, absolut narzißtisch, aber selbstsicher und selbständig.» (Freud, GW 13: 138) Die Frage nach der Wirkung, die der Machthaber auf die Masse hat, bzw nach dem Geheimnisvollen der Massenbildung, erklärt Freud durch den Hinweis auf die Hypnose, die durch ihren Charakter des Unheimlichen auf etwas der Verdrängung verfallenes Altes, aber dadurch Wohlvertrautes hindeutet, wodurch eine Zurückführung der Masse auf die Urhorde des weiteren bestätigt wird. Der Hypnotiseur, dessen geheimnisvolle Macht von Freud durchaus der von Königen und Häuptlingen bei den Primitiven gleichgesetzt wird und auch die geheimnisvolle Macht des modernen Machthabers erklärt, bringt seine Macht «typischer Weise durch seinen Blick» in Erscheinung. «Gerade der Anblick des Häuptlings ist aber für den Primitiven gefährlich und unerträglich.» (Freud, GW 13: 140)

Durch seine Maßnahmen setzt sich der Hypnotiseur an die Stelle der Eltern und weckt «beim Subjekt ein Stück von dessen archaischer Erbschaft, die auch den Eltern entgegenkam und im Verhältnis zum Vater eine individuelle Wiederbelebung erfuhr, die Vorstellung von einer übermächtigen und gefährlichen Persönlichkeit, gegen die man sich nur passiv-masochistisch einstellen konnte, an die man seinen Willen verlieren mußte, mit der allein zu sein, “ihr unter die Augen zu treten” ein bedenkliches Wagnis schien.» (Freud, GW 13: 142) Freud kommt zu der Schlußfolgerung, daß der unheimliche und zwanghafte Charakter der Massenbildung, der sich vor allem in seinen Suggestionerscheinungen zeigt, mit Recht auf seine Abkunft von der Urhorde zurückgeführt werden kann. Immer noch ist also der Führer der Masse «der gefürchtete Urvater, die Masse will immer noch von unbeschränkter Gewalt beherrscht werden, sie ist im höchsten Grade autoritätssüchtig, hat [...] den Durst nach Unterwerfung. Der Urvater ist das Massenideal, das an Stelle des Ichideals das Ich beherrscht. (Freud, GW 13: 142)

Wie der Blick des Führers nicht nur eine Schauspielergruppe, sondern auch, und insbesondere eine faschistische Masse beherrscht, kommt im *Mephistoroman* gleich zu Anfang im «Vorspiel 1936» zum Ausdruck. Der Anblick des Führers ist dabei dermaßen furchterregend, daß die Augen für die Masse nicht mehr kenntlich sind: das Wagnis des «unter die Augen treten» wird in der Beschreibung des Machthabers, im *Mephisto* der Fliegergeneral, in der verzerrten augenlosen Fratze versinnbildlicht:

Die kolossale Größe und Breite seiner monströsen Figur war geeignet, Schrecken und Ehrfurcht um sich zu verbreiten. [...] Auf dem kurzen, wulstigen Hals erschien sein massives Haupt wie übergossen von dem roten Saft: das Haupt eines Cäsars, von dem man die Haut abgezogen hat. An diesem Gesicht war nichts Menschliches mehr: es war aus rotem, ungeformtem Fleische, ein Klotz. (M 23-4)

Der Anblick der Macht ist für den Einzelnen unerträglich, sein Blick deshalb verschleiert. Das geht auch Hendrik Höfgen nicht anders, als er um die Gunst der faschistischen Macht wirbt. Als er endlich erreicht, daß er von dem Fliegergeneral während der Pause bei einer Aufführung des *Faust* in dessen Loge gebeten wird, stellt er sich zunächst noch vor, «dem Halbgott von Angesicht zu Angesicht gegenüber(zu)stehn» (M 230). Als es jedoch tatsächlich soweit ist, sieht Höfgen

in seiner Angst und zitternden Gespanntheit so gut wie nichts. Vor der ausladenden Gestalt des Gewaltigen schien ein Schleier zu hängen – jener mystische Nebel, der seit eh und je das Bild der Mächtigen, der Schicksalsbestimmenden, der Götter dem bangen Blick der Sterblichen verbirgt. (M 231)

Diese Beschreibung des Zusammentreffens zwischen Höfgen und der Macht liest sich wie ein Kommentar oder eine Umsetzung der Freudschen Analyse des Blicks und des Anblicks der Macht. Genau wie in diesem Zitat die Wirkung der Macht jetzt mit der Wirkung der Macht schon in Urzeiten verglichen wird, verfolgt auch Freud die Wirkung des Blicks der Macht von den Primitiven, für die der Anblick des Häuptlings «gefährlich und unerträglich» war, «wie später der der Gottheit für den Sterblichen» (Freud, GW 13: 140) bis zum Führer der Masse in der Moderne.

Wie gestaltet sich jedoch der Blick, wenn er nicht der eines Einzelnen ist, der alleine dem Machthaber unter die Augen treten muß? Denn wer alleine der Macht gegenübertritt, sieht nichts. Der Anblick der Macht ist verschleiert. Wenn allerdings die Masse der Macht gegenübertritt, gestaltet sich das Verhältnis zur Macht anders. Durch das Wissen der Gemeinsamkeit mit den anderen der Masse gewinnt der Einzelne in der Masse an Stärke, und so kann sich der Blick anders gestalten. Was genau geschieht, kann durch das bereits zu Anfang erwähnte Zitat erläutert werden:

Im Parkett riß man Mund und Augen auf. Man verschlang die Gesten der drei Menschen dort oben in der Loge, als das außerordentliche Schauspiel, als die zauberhafte Pantomime, deren Titel lautet: Der Schauspieler verführt die Macht. Noch nie war Hendrik so heftig beneidet worden. (M 232)

Die Beziehung der Masse zur Macht stellt sich im verschlingenden Blick dar, und das, was die Masse sieht, ist ein Schauspiel. Beide Aspekte, sowohl der verschlingende Blick als auch das Schauspiel deuten daraufhin, daß die Position, die die Masse sowohl Höfgen als auch dem Machthaber gegenüber einnimmt, diejenige der Identifizierung ist. Die Identifizierung ist nach Freud von Anfang an ambivalent. «Sie benimmt sich wie ein Abkömmling der ersten oralen Phase der Libidoorganisation, in welcher man sich das begehrte und geschätzte Objekt durch Essen einverleibte und es dabei als solches vernichtete. Der Kannibale bleibt bekanntlich auf diesem Standpunkt stehen; er hat seine Feinde zum Fressen lieb, und er frißt die nicht, die er nicht irgendwie lieb haben kann.» (Freud, GW 13: 116) Der verschlingende Blick, den die Masse Höfgen und der Macht gegenüber einnimmt, bringt genau diese Ambivalenz zum Ausdruck. Einerseits wird er dafür geliebt, daß es ihm gelingt, die Macht zu verführen, und insofern drückt sich in der Identifizierung auch aus, daß das eigene Ich danach strebt, sich ähnlich zu gestalten, wie das andere zum Vorbild genommene. Andererseits wird Höfgen heftig beneidet, und im Neid läßt sich der Wunsch nach Beseitigung erkennen.

Es gibt in dieser Szene aber auch noch einen zweiten Aspekt zu bedenken: Höfgen wird zwar von der Masse zusammen mit der Macht betrachtet, aber noch gehört er nicht zur Macht. Er befindet sich sozusagen in einem Übergangsstadium, er ist zwar schon aus der Masse herausgetreten, wird aber von ihr dennoch als einer der ihren anerkannt, und ist insofern noch nicht ganz der Macht teilhaftig. Genau aus diesem Grunde ist auch eine Identifizierung über den verschlingenden Blick möglich. Denn wenn die Masse der Macht allein gegenübersteht, kann nicht mehr von Identifizierung, sondern nur von Ichidealersetzung gesprochen werden. Der Blick dem Machthaber gegenüber ist immer ein verschleierter Blick, er kann kein direkter Blick sein, der Macht kann nicht direkt ins Auge geschaut werden, er bleibt, wenn überhaupt, immer nur ein «scheuer Blick» (M 18).

Nicht umsonst wird die Begegnung zwischen Höfgen und der Macht im Text aber auch als Schauspiel bezeichnet. Damit käme ich auf die eingangs erläuterten Zusammenhänge zwischen dem Zuschauer und dem Helden eines Schau-Spiels zurück. Die Szene, die sich vor dem Theaterpublikum abspielt, findet nicht auf der Bühne, sondern in der Minister-Loge statt, die als Bühnenersatz fungiert, damit aber immer noch den Ansprüchen eines Raumes außerhalb der Wirklichkeit, nicht zuletzt auch ihrer erhöhten und damit vom Zuschauerraum abgetrennten Position

wegen, genügt. Gerade aber, weil das Schauspiel der Macht ein Spektakel ist, ist es für den Zuschauer möglich, aus dem Schau-Spiel Lust zu ziehen. Zudem ist die Szene, die sich dem Publikum bietet, «viel spannender als der „Faust“» (M 233) Was sich dem Auge des Zuschauers hier bietet, ist ein Held, mit dem es sich identifizieren kann, weil es im Grunde nichts sehnlicher wünscht als an seiner Stelle zu stehen. Höfgen ist gleichsam der «Aufrührer gegen Gott oder ein Göttliches» (Freud, 1987: 164). Der Zuschauer stellt sich zu Beginn der Vorstellung noch die Frage, wie die Begegnung mit der Macht für den Helden wohl ausfallen möge, eingedenk der Tatsache, daß man Höfgen «schon beinahe aufgegeben und zum Auswurf der Nation (...) gezählt hatte» (M 233). Nun, da es ihm gelingt, den Mächtigen scheinbar zu bezwingen, murmelt man «ergriffen angesichts eines solchen Schauspiels» (M 233).

In Klaus Manns *Mephisto* zeigt sich die Macht im Schau-Spiel, im Spiel des Blicks, d.h. im Spektakel, das den Mythos von der Ermordung des Urvaters feiert und eine Veranstaltung darstellt, «mittels derer (...) eine künstliche Masse zusammengehalten wird» (Freud, GW 13: 139). Daß die Lust oder Befriedigung, die der Zuschauer aus dem Schau-Spiel der Macht zieht, einem zärtlichen Gefühl entspringt, deren Vorläufer als die ungehemmten Sexualbestrebungen anzusehen sind, wird aus der Reaktion der Millionärin beim Anblick Höfgens und der Macht beim Ball des Ministerpräsidenten nur zu deutlich, denn sie «stöhnte wollüstig vor lauter Angeregtheit und Freude an der erhabenen Situation» (M 20) und «bekam so sinnliche Augen» (M 22).

Die Identifizierung der Masse mit Höfgen ist jedoch nicht die Gleiche wie die des Zuschauers oder Rezipienten, der sich mit dem Helden eines Theaterstücks identifiziert. Im ersten Fall läuft die Identifizierung über eine «wahrgenommene Gemeinsamkeit mit einer Person, die nicht Objekt der Sexualtriebe ist», und im Falle des Zuschauers entsteht die Identifizierung durch eine libidinöse Objektbindung, «gleichsam durch Introjektion des Objekts ins Ich» (Freud, GW 13: 118).

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Annette von Droste-Hülshoff *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* und Franz Kafka *Ein Landarzt*

ASTRID LANGE-KIRCHHEIM (*)

In Schnitzlers Reigen sagt das «süße Mädel» zum Dichter: «Die Schriftsteller sind doch alle Doktors». Und der Dichter protestiert: «Nein; nicht alle. Ich z. B. nicht». In der ihr vom Dichter attestierten «göttlich[en] Dummheit» - welche Doktorgrade meint sie? – spricht sie ein großes Wort, einen literarischen Topos, gelassen aus: der Poeta ist «doctus».¹ Und zu seiner Allround-Gelehrsamkeit gehört von alters her auch die Heilkunst, schreibt doch schon Ovid nicht nur eine *Ars amatoria*, sondern auch eine *Remedia amoris*. In der Nachfolge des großen Mannes am Anfang der Kultur, der in sich die Funktionen von Zauberer, Priester, Mediziner vereinte, scheint seit dem 18. Jahrhundert auffällig die Einheit von Dichter und Arzt thematisiert zu werden, ganz abgesehen von der wachsenden Anzahl an Dichter-Ärzten in der historischen Realität.² Auf die topische Verknüpfung beider Rollen macht deren programmatische Aufkündigung durch den russischen Schriftsteller Aleksandr Herzen, Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts, aufmerksam, der von den Dichtern sagte: «Wir sind nicht die Ärzte, wir sind der Schmerz».³ Geht diese Entidealisierung

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¹ Arthur Schnitzler: *Reigen*. In: Arthur Schnitzler. *Das Vermächtnis. Dramen 1897-1898 (Das dramatische Werk. In chronologischer Folge)*. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1994. Hier: «Das süße Mädel und der Dichter». S. 58-59.

² Eine Geschichte dieses Topos ist noch nicht geschrieben. Bausteine dazu hat Walter Müller-Seidel bereitgestellt, u. a. in seinem Aufsatz: «Moderne Literatur und Medizin. Zum literarischen Werk Arthur Schnitzlers». In: *Akten des internationalen Symposiums «Arthur Schnitzler und seine Zeit»*. Hg. von Guiseppe Farese. *Jahrbuch für Internationale Germanistik*. Reihe A. 13. 1985. S. 60-92. Müller-Seidel verweist nicht nur auf die Dichter-Ärzte Döblin, Benn, Carossa, sondern auch auf die Problematisierung der Arztrolle in Kafkas *Landarzt*. Peter Heller führt aus, daß dieser Text «alle Punkte der Medizinkritik in Kafkas autobiographischen Schriften» enthalte. «Franz Kafka. *Ein Landarzt*». In: *Kindlers Neues Literaturlexikon*. Hg. von Walter Jens. Bd. 9. München: Kindler, 1990. S. 42.

³ Zitiert bei Ulrich Weinzierl: «Nur keine Ärzte. Mühsames Geschäft: In Bled traf sich der Internationale Pen». *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* vom 7. Juni 1995. S. 37. Trotz intensiver Bemühungen, auch der Kollegen des Slavischen Seminars der Universität Freiburg, war die Quelle dieses Ausspruchs bisher nicht aufzufinden. Kafka kannte von Alexander Herzen: *Erinnerungen*. Aus dem Russischen übertragen und eingeleitet von Otto Buek. 2 Bde. Berlin: Wiegandt & Grieben, 1907.

ärztlicher Kompetenz mit einer Krise der Identität des «großen Mannes» einher? Und wo ist der Platz der Dichterin in dieser ärztlich-männlichen Topographie? Diesen Fragen werde ich am Vergleich der beiden Texte, welche den Arztberuf im Titel führen, nachgehen und dabei weibliche und männliche Autorschaft patriarchatskritisch kontrastieren.

Kafkas Landarzt, der kein «Weltverbesserer» (L 256) sein will und seiner Aufgabe zu heilen nicht nachkommt, sondern im Gegenteil tötet (den Jungen nämlich, der «still» wird und «hinüber» geht [L 260]), lenkt den Blick zurück auf die entgegengesetzte Gewichtung dieser konkurrierenden Rollen im Modell Goethe: sein Wilhelm Meister entscheidet sich gegen den Künstlerberuf des Schauspielers und für den Beruf des Arztes. Kafkas Landarzt, der vor der Wunde versagt, ruft das Ideal des Wundarztes auf, dem Wilhelm, einst selbst durch einen Wundarzt gerettet, zum Wohle der Menschheit nacheifert. Die «Instrumententasche» (L 252, 255) zitiert in gezielter Umkehrung und negativer Wendung die «Tasche mit Instrumenten» und das «Besteck» des Wundarztes bei Goethe:⁴ Kafkas Landarzt läßt die *Pinzette* und den kranken Jungen *liegen*, hilft ihm nicht auf die *Beine* (L 255 f.).⁵ Andererseits verfährt Kafkas Desillusionierung ganz im Goetheschen Sinne, denn schon dieser bezeichnet das Wundarztbesteck als Fetisch und entlarvt die Idealisierung des Ärzteberufs als Projektion und Kompensation der Hilfsbedürftigkeit des Patienten.⁶ Damit erweitert sich die Schar der Patienten um die der heilungsbedürftigen Ärzte. Kafka ontologisiert zudem die individuelle Krankheit zur Manifestation des allgemeinen Todeskeims⁷ und stellt damit seiner eigenen Zeit eine Diagnose, die nicht mehr auf eine Therapie zielt, sondern geradezu nach einem neuen Fetisch als Ausweg ruft. Folgerichtig tritt an die Stelle des Wundarztbestecks das Schreibbesteck. Kafkas Landarzt schreibt immerhin noch Rezepte und betreibt wohl nur auf diese Weise noch eine «blühende Praxis» – nämlich mit den «flores rhetorices» der Dichtkunst. Annette von Drostes Verserzählung – 1833 konzipiert – kann als *eine* Station in diesem Prozeß der Desillusionierung des Ärzteberufs und der Aufkündigung der topischen Personalunion von Arzt und Dichter gewertet werden. Auch ihre Arztfigur ist hilfloser Helfer, mehr Patient denn Arzt, aber er ist vor allem eins: ein Schreiber. Seine nachgelassene Aufzeichnung einer traumatischen Lebenskrise ist das «Vermächtnis», bildet den Text. Ich verstehe meine Untersuchung als einen Beitrag zur Intertextualität, welcher impliziert: eine Historisierung Kafkas und vor allem eine Aktualisierung der Droste. Der an Kafka geschulte Blick für die Schreibproblematik, die Interdependenzen zwischen Schreiben und Leben, befreit den Droste-Text aus dem Grab einer christlichen Hermeneutik und entdeckt seine geradezu postmodernen Züge. Ob Kafka den Text der Droste kannte, ist bislang ungeklärt.⁸

⁴ Vgl. *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*. In: *Goethes Werke*. Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden. Hg. von Erich Trunz. 9. überarb. Aufl. München: C. H. Beck, 1977. Hier: Band 7. S. 227 und Bd. 8. S. 280 f.

⁵ Bei Goethe dagegen öffnet der Wundarzt mit der Lanzette die Wunde für den Aderlaß: «das Blut sprang reichlich hervor [...]. Das Leben kehrte wieder. Kaum hatte der liebevolle Wundarzt nur Zeit, die Binde zu befestigen, als der Jüngling sich schon mutvoll auf seine Füße [!] stellte [...].» *Goethes Werke*. Ebd., S. 459. Konsequenterweise muß sich Kafkas Landarzt vom Jungen sagen lassen: «Du [...] kommst nicht auf eigenen Füßen» (L 260). Als intertextuelle Kontrastfolie dient hier vermutlich auch die neutestamentarische Geschichte vom Jüngling zu Nain, zu dem, einem Toten, der Arzt Jesus sprach: «Jüngling, ich sage dir, stehe auf!» Lukas 7, 14.

⁶ *Goethes Werke*. Ebd., S. 281.

⁷ «Ich bin zu der Meinung gekommen, daß die Tuberkulose [...] keine besondere Krankheit [...] ist, sondern nur eine [...] Verstärkung des allgemeinen Todeskeims.» Franz Kafka, *Briefe 1902-1924*. Hg. von Max Brod. Frankfurt: S. Fischer, 1975. S. 177 (Brief an Max Brod, Zürau, Anfang Oktober 1917). *Ein Landarzt* entstand Januar/Februar 1917.

⁸ *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* lag zur Entstehungszeit des Landarztes in vier verschiedenen Droste-Ausgaben vor. 1.) *Annette Freiin von Droste-Hülshoffs sämtliche Werke in sechs Bänden*. Hg. von Eduard Arens. Leipzig: Max Hesses Verlag. o. J. [1904] und Dass. [1909] (= Max Hesse's Neue Leipziger Klassiker-Ausgaben). Hier: Bd. 2: Balladen. – *Größere erzählende Dichtungen*. – 2.) *Gesammelte Werke*. Hg. von Elisabeth Freiin von Droste-Hülshoff. [...] mit Biographie, Einleitungen und Anmerkungen versehen von Wilhelm Kreiten. Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 1906. Hier: Bd. 2: *Die größeren erzählenden Gedichte*. – 3.) *Sämtliche Werke in sechs Teilen*. Hg., mit Einleitungen und Anmerkungen versehen von Julius Schwegler. Berlin, Leipzig, Wien, Stuttgart: Deutsches Verlagshaus Bong & Co. o. J. [1912] (= Goldene Klassiker-Bibliothek. Hempels Klassiker-

Ich gebe kurz eine inhaltliche Orientierung: In beiden Erzählungen wird ein Arzt nachts zu einem Kranken gerufen. Die Reise ist schwierig und unheimlich. Dem Landarzt fehlt zunächst das nötige Pferd, dann transportieren ihn zwei in phantastischer Fahrt, daß ihm Hören und Sehen vergeht. In analoger Anspielung auf die Kastration wird der Arzt der Droste, «geblendet» (V 510), d. h. mit verbundenen Augen (V 109), von zwei Räubern, ebenfalls zu Roß, durch eine gespenstische Wald- und Gebirgsgegend in die Höhle einer Bande gebracht. Dem kranken Jungen im Bett, «nicht kalt, nicht warm» (L 255), mit der offenen Wunde «in [der] Seite» (L 258) entspricht, «kalt, totenfahl» (V 198), der Mann der Droste, dessen Lungenwunde (!) mit einem Tuch bedeckt ist (V 199). Kafkas Kranken umgibt die Blutsgemeinschaft von Vater, Mutter, Schwester; dieser Familie korrespondiert bei der Droste der «blut'ge Rat» der Räuberbande, zu der auch eine Frau gehört (V 456). Diese «unglücksel'ge» und später getötete «Braut» (V 360), Theodora, korrespondiert dem Opfer Rosa bei Kafka und wird auch mit einer Rose verglichen (V 349). Dem *Erniedrigungszeichen* «Dienstmädchen» (Rosa) entspricht die totenähnliche Starre Theodoras, welche als Reaktion auf die *Demütigung* durch einen Verführer ausgewiesen ist (V 368-370). Beide Ärzte stehen unter dem imperativen Mandat zu heilen, wenn ihnen ihr Leben lieb ist.⁹ Beide Texte stellen die Gleichung zwischen Arzt und todkrankem Patienten her. Beide Ärzte sinnen auf Rettung, suchen mit «List» einen «Ausweg» (V 233, 299), welcher auf eine Verleugnung der Todeswunde hinausläuft: der Landarzt erklärt den Jungen schlicht für gesund (L 256), der Arzt der Droste ruft den Todgeweihten mittels Arznei kurzzeitig wieder ins Leben zurück (V 295 f.). Während es diesem Arzt in einem zweiten Anlauf gelingt, seine Freilassung im Gespräch mit einem der Räuber zu erwirken, vermag sich der Landarzt der Familie, die ihn wie in einem Schamanenritual zur Zwangsheilung neben den Jungen legt, nur durch Tötung des Kranken und Flucht zu entziehen. Die Rückkehr ist für beide Ärzte noch weit schwieriger und unheimlicher als der Hinweg: für den Arzt der Droste wird sie zu einem «Hexenritt» (L 585), der Landarzt, mit «unirdischen Pferden» sich «[umher]treibend» (L 261), kommt überhaupt nicht mehr nach Hause. Beide Ärzte sind mit dem Wahnsinn geschlagen. Auch der Arzt der Droste kam nur scheinbar frei, denn sein Retter verwandelt sich in einen Verfolger, der ihn, nächtlich halluzinatorisch wiederkehrend, heimsucht und das Kainsmal an seiner Stirn, «die heiße Stelle» (V 816), durch Berührung erneuert. Dadurch wird auch dieser Arzt einer Mordtat überführt.

Die Folge des Wahnsinns offenbart, daß diese Reise mehr ist als eine Initiation in die Existenz-tatsachen der Sterblichkeit und der Geschlechtlichkeit. Zunächst: die Szene mit dem «Wunden» (V

Ausgaben in neuer Bearbeitung). Hier: Teil 3. - 4.) *Sämtliche Werke*. Hg. von Bertha Badt, Hermann Cardauns und Kurt Pinthus. Bd. 2. München, Leipzig: Georg Müller, 1914. «Das Vermächtnis des Arztes [!]» S. 109-113. – Außerdem erschien *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* in mehreren Auflagen von Oskar Ludwig Bernhard Wolff: *Poetischer Hausschatz des deutschen Volkes. Ein Buch für Schule und Haus*. Zuletzt in der 16. Aufl., Leipzig: Otto Wiegand, 1853. – Der unheimliche Ritt des Arztes spielt an «Böhmens Grenze» (V 58) – könnte diese Ortsangabe eventuell einen bisher unbekannten Abdruck in einer Anthologie, Zeitschrift o. Ä. bewirkt haben, den Kafka dann las? – Auch der bisher einzige Aufsatz, der beide Texte nebeneinandergestellt hat, geht der Frage, wer den Droste-Text an Kafka vermittelt haben könnte, nicht nach. Dominique Iehl: «Annette von Droste-Huelshoff à la lumière de Kafka. (Etude sur *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* und *Ein Landarzt*).» In: *Hommage Maurice Marache 1916-1970*. [Paris]: «Les Belles Lettres», 1972. S. 265-271. Hier wird mit dem Verweis auf Kierkegaard ein existentialistischer Zugang unternommen. Gegenüber den aktiven Ärzte-Figuren von Balzac bis Camus seien hier die Ärzte als passive Zeugen und passive Opfer dargestellt. Die Verfasserin kontrastiert die religiöse *Obsession* bei der Droste mit der psychologischen Behandlung der Thematik bei Kafka, bei dem sie «une forme d'humour» feststellt: «L'oeuvre n'est obsédée qu'en apparence, et l'auteur domine ses cauchemars» (S. 209). – Berührungen mit den von mir vorgetragenen Thesen ergeben sich hier kaum.

⁹ «Und heilt er nicht, so tötet ihn! / 'Sist nur eine Arzt, 'sist nur ein Arzt.» Franz Kafka: *Ein Landarzt*. Drucke zu Lebzeiten. Hg. von Hans-Gerd Koch, Wolf Kittler und Gerhard Neumann. Frankfurt am Main 1994. S. 252-261. Nach dieser Ausgabe wird im folgenden mit der Sigle L zitiert. Hier: L 259. – Annette von Droste-Hülshoff: *Sämtliche Werke* (Bibliothek deutscher Klassiker). 2 Bände. Frankfurt am Main 1994. Hier: Band 2: *Prosa, Versepen, dramatische Versuche*. Hg. von Bodo Plachta. «Des Arztes Vermächtnis»: S. 29-52. Nach dieser Ausgabe wird im folgenden mit der Sigle V und der Verszahl zitiert. «Ich sah wohl, wie es mit uns beiden stand, / Mit mir und ihm, wir beid' an Grabes Rand»; «Und über'm Haupt an einem Haar das Schwert» (V 217 f. und 225).

463) bei der Droste weckt Assoziationen an die Urszene und an die Ödipus-Tat. Das Arztpatientenpaar bei Kafka läßt sich als Brautpaar, als männliches Liebespaar und als ein Mutter-Kind-Paar lesen. Die ödipale Auseinandersetzung als Test auf die gelungene Entwicklung von der Einheit zur Differenz im Sinne Irene Fast's, d. h. die Anerkennung der Geschlechterdifferenz, wird in beiden Fällen nicht bestanden.¹⁰ Der Landarzt hat den Schritt von der homosexuellen zur heterosexuellen Objektwahl im Sinne Freuds nicht vollzogen – die Frau, Rosa, bleibt durch den rosa Knaben abgewehrt. Der Arzt der Droste hat zwar einen Sohn, doch wird das Erlöschen des Geschlechts in der Enkelgeneration angedeutet (V 284 f.). Die Initiation scheint damit mißlungen.

Meine These ist, daß beide Autoren am Beispiel ihrer Ärztefiguren sowohl das patriarchale Modell solcher Initiation wie den Ort, an dem sie durchgeführt wird, die Familie, kritisieren. Beide Ärzte gelangen an ihren Heilungsort wie an den unheimlichen Ort einer Wiederkehr des Verdrängten und verlassen ihn, re-traumatisiert, mit einem erneuten Akt der Verdrängung, was zum Wahnsinn führt: der Arzt der Droste versucht den Mord an der Frau, an Theodora, in den Bereich des Traumes zu verweisen, der Landarzt leugnet, indem er das weibliche Geschlecht als Wunde am kranken Jungen «auffindet» (L 258), die Geschlechterdifferenz, und er leugnet die Sterblichkeit, indem er dem Jungen die Kastrationswunde – im Doppelbezug auf Geschlecht und Tod – als Auszeichnung interpretiert (L 260). Da im Jungen das abgewehrte Geschlecht der Frau, nämlich Rosa, als rosa Wunde Anerkennung heischend wiederkehrt, bleibt dem Arzt nur die Möglichkeit, Rosa im rosa Knaben zu töten, um sein Wahnsystem, in dem die Frau nur als Zeichen und als Ort der Kastration und des Todes fungiert, zu retten.¹¹ Folglich bleibt er als Untoter, als lebender Leichnam zurück.

Liest man Räuberbande und Krankenfamilie als Metaphern der Familie, kehrt jeweils der Sohn in Gestalt des Arztes, sei es unter Zwang, sei es als Folge einer Fehlleistung, an den Ort seiner Herkunft zurück, was nichts anderes heißt, als daß er niemals wirklich freigegeben wurde. Damit werden hier nicht-generationsfähige, pathologisch-symbiotische Familiensysteme sichtbar, welche Trennungen mit Ausbruchsschuld und Verfolgungsangst ahnden und in denen Eltern die Söhne «zu heiligen [sc. heilenden] Zwecken mißbrauchen» (L 259).¹² Kafka selbst hat von der «dumpfe[n], giftreiche[n], kinderauszehrende[n] Luft des schön eingerichteten Familienzimmers» gesprochen,¹³ was der «[kaum atembaren Luft] im Krankenzimmer» der *Landarzt-Geschichte* einerseits (L 255), dem «dunstigen Gemach» der unterirdischen Grotte «von übler Vorbedeutung» (V 306, 327) der Droste andererseits entspricht. Auch die Delegationslogik solcher Familiensysteme hat Kafka bündig als elterliche Double-bind-Botschaften formuliert: »Du bist mein Sohn, deshalb werde ich dich zu meinem Retter [– zu meinem Arzt –] machen»,¹⁴ wobei für die Droste die

¹⁰ Vgl. Irene Fast: *Von der Einheit zur Differenz. Psychoanalyse der Geschlechtsidentität*. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer, 1991.

¹¹ Christa Rohde-Dachser hat den phantasmatischen Ursprung der Theorie des «phallischen Monismus» herausgestellt, nämlich die Phantasie, es gäbe nur *ein* Geschlecht, das männliche. In der Figur seines Landarztes zeigt Kafka ein Verhalten, das in der Realität immer wieder Bestätigung für diese Phantasie sucht, laut Rohde-Dachser also «Wahrnehmungsidentität» herstellt, was zu einer fortschreitenden Verkennung der Realität führt und im Wahn endet. Vgl. Christa Rohde-Dachser: *Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent. Weiblichkeit im Diskurs der Psychoanalyse*. Berlin/ Heidelberg/ New York: Springer, 1991. S. 49 f. und S.136 f.

¹² Ich orientiere mich hier an Konzepten der Familientherapie, wie sie von Helm Stierlin (*Delegation und Familie*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1978) und Luc Ciompi (*Affektlogik. Über die Struktur der Psyche und ihre Entwicklung. Ein Beitrag zur Schizophrenieforschung*. Stuttgart: Klett, 1982) entwickelt worden sind. – Bei der Droste wird die Assoziation einer Familienszene auch durch die eigentümliche Bezeichnung der Waffe, mit welcher der wunde Mann offenbar verletzt worden ist, hervorgerufen: «Ein Messer aus dem Küchenschrank [!]» (V 243), wozu sich in den Varianten die Alternative findet: «Ein Messer, aus dem Brodschrank kams vielleicht». Vgl. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe. Werke. Briefwechsel*. Hg. von Wilfried Woesler. Bd. III, 2: *Epen. Dokumentation*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1981. S. 668.

¹³ Brief an Elli Herrmann, Herbst 1921. Franz Kafka: *Briefe 1902-1924*. S. 347.

¹⁴ Ebd., S. 346.

mütterliche Variante das größere Gewicht hatte: »Du mußt mir glauben, denn ich bin deine Mutter!«.¹⁵ Entsprechend bindet den Arzt der Droste der Schwur, den er dem Räuber-Jüngling zu leisten hat, an das »tötende Angesicht der Mutter« (V 504). Folgen dieses elterlichen Delegations- und Bindungsverhaltens sind Allmachts- und Ohnmachtsphantasien bei den Kindern, d. h. Formen narzißtischer Pathologie. Der Landarzt beansprucht, den Überblick zu haben, und hält sich für unersetzlich (L 260 f.). Der Arzt der Droste ist in Form seines weiblichen Doppels: Theodora, d. h. Gottesgeschenk und Gemarterter. Vor allem aber sind beide Arztfiguren zutiefst Einsame und Ausgesetzte, ausgesetzt der Ambivalenz von Wahr und Falsch, Eigenem und Fremden, ohne Urteil und unfähig zur Trennung.¹⁶

Das zeigt sich an den Gemeinsamkeiten in der Form beider Texte und an dem großen Gewicht, welches in beiden der kompensatorischen Funktion der Kunst, vor allem der Kunst des Schreibens, zukommt. Beides sind Ich-Erzählungen mit der Tendenz, in Lyrik überzugehen. Die Droste setzt um die bereits in Versen – in 5-hebigen, zumeist paarig gereimten Jamben – gehaltene epische Niederschrift des Arztes einen lyrischen Rahmen von 4-hebigen Jamben und klammert damit das Epische geradezu ein.¹⁷ Kafkas *Landarzt* kann wohl als der lyrischste seiner Texte angesehen werden:¹⁸ nicht nur ist er von zwei Gesangspartien durchsetzt, sondern klingt auch mit einer Klage aus, die als einziger Absatz des Textes eine lyrische Coda bildet und das epische Präteritum endgültig ins Präsens monologischer Ich-Aussprache und der Evokation einer Existenz jenseits von Zeitlichkeit verwandelt. Diese Lyrisierung dient der ganz offensichtlich intendierten Traumstruktur beider Texte, welche das Korrelat der Wahnsinnsthematik bildet. Auf dem Gebiet der Figurenzeichnung verwenden sowohl die Droste wie Kafka zahlreiche Textsignale, um alle Figuren als Abspaltungen, Teilseelen, textuelle Disseminationen des einen erzählenden, sc. träumenden Ich auszuweisen, und schaffen damit eine Entsprechung zur Subjektstufentheorie des Traums.¹⁹ Bei Kafka sind dies z. B. die exzessiv verwendeten Personal- und Possessivpronomina der 1. Person, welche den *Landarzt* zu einem im buchstäblichen Sinn »egozentrische[n]Text«²⁰ machen.

Die der Ich-Erzählerrede gleichsam wesensmäßig anhaftende Verwechselbarkeit mit der Autorfunktion fördert das beiden Texten eigene hohe Maß an Selbstreferentialität. In Kafkas *Landarzt* weist beinahe jedes Element des Textes auf den Prozeß und das Ergebnis seiner Hervorbringung zurück. Clayton Koelb hat mit seiner Lektürestrategie des »lethetic reading« gezeigt, wie z. B. die Pferde erst Teil der Wirklichkeit der Fiktion werden, nachdem sie durch die Apostrophe, »Hollah, Bruder, hollah, Schwester!« (L 253) an- und aufgerufen worden sind.²¹ Hier geschieht also

¹⁵ Ebd. Entsprechend muß der Landarzt mit »Spitzfindigkeiten« (L 257) auf die Ansprüche der Familie reagieren, ohne jedoch damit die metakommunikative Ebene gewinnen zu können, die ihm die Trennung ermöglichen würde; denn mit den Spitzfindigkeiten als »Aushilfe« hält er nur die eigenen Aggressionen in Schach.

¹⁶ Vgl. V 23 und 29 f. Bei Kafka heißt es: »die Eltern stehen stumm vorgebeugt und erwarten mein Urteil« (L 255), ein Satz, der später folgendes Echo erhält: »Immer das Unmögliche vom Arzt verlangen« (L 259). Außerdem ist seit Kafkas *Urteil* auch die Teilung bzw. Trennung in diesem Wort, mitzuhören, welche auf der Urteilung, der von Mutter und Kind bei der Geburt, aufrucht und sie wiederholt. Diesem Anspruch der Individuation – psychoanalytisch im Sinne der »Loslösungsphase« – sind weder der Landarzt noch der Arzt der Droste gewachsen.

¹⁷ Die Verse V 1-35 und 826-836 bilden den Rahmen.

¹⁸ Hans Helmut Hiebel bezeichnet Kafkas *Landarzt* als »expressiv-lyrische, beinahe balladenhafte Kurzerzählung«. In: *Kindlers Neues Literaturlexikon*. Hg. von Walter Jens. Bd. 9. München: Kindler, 1990. S. 42.

¹⁹ Diese Theorie nimmt Frank Möbus (*Franz Kafka. Sünden-Fälle. Die Geschlechtlichkeit in Erzählungen Franz Kafkas*. Göttingen: Wallstein, 1994) zum Ausgangspunkt seiner Landarzt-Interpretation und vertritt die These, Kafka habe die von Freud her bekannten Gesetze der Traumproduktion intentional - im Kontrast zu unbewußt - für die Fiktion verwendet (S. 117 und 145). Diese These haben bereits vorher vertreten: Eric Marson and Keith Leopold: »Freud, Kafka, and *Ein Landarzt*«. In: *German Quarterly* 37. 1964. S. 146-160. Vgl. S. 157: »The story is in the form of a dream consciously synthesized according to the "laws" which Freud established in *Die Traumdeutung*«.

²⁰ So Möbus, *Franz Kafka. Sünden-Fälle*. S. 125.

²¹ Clayton Koelb: *Kafka's Rhetoric. The Passion of Reading*. Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1989. S. 198 f.

eine Geburt der Fiktion aus der Rhetorik. Die Assoziation zur biblischen Fleischwerdung des Wortes rückt den Textproduzenten damit in eine Analogie zum Schöpfergott. Ein entsprechender Vorgang ist die bei Kafka beobachtete Materialisation der Schriftzeichen. Die Ich-Rede: «Ich war zerstreut», materialisiert sich in der Aufsplitterung des Ichs in die Figuren und Gegenstände des Textes, deren Zugehörigkeit zum Ich durch die Verwendung des Possessivpronomens «mein» wachgehalten wird.²² Die Bedeutung von «dicht» realisiert sich, nach Koelbs Beobachtung, in der Alliteration auf «d» in der Wortfolge «dicht ausdampfend» (L 254).²³ Entsprechend könnte man das «Schneeegestöber» (V 252) in der ungewöhnlich großen Zahl von Semikola materialisiert sehen. Auf diese Weise entsteht eine Brücke zwischen dem fiktiven Schauplatz der Erzählung und dem tatsächlichen Ort und dem aktuellen Vorgang des Schreibens: «Schneeegestöber» kann der Leser auch phantasieren als das weiße Blatt und die noch chaotische Menge der Schriftzeichen, die der Ordnung durch den kreativ-formativen Impuls harren. Der Synchronisation von fiktivem Erzählvorgang und aktuellem Schreibvorgang dienen bei Kafka bekanntlich auch die Polysemien von *Blatt, Seite, Hand, Finger, Sätzen, Weg, Spur, Schatten*, von denen eine Bedeutungsvariante auf den Schreibprozeß zeigt.²⁴

Und eben diese Techniken der Selbstreferenz verwendet ansatzweise auch die Droste.²⁵ Gleich zu Anfang vermittelt das «Blättchen» vom Baum der Natur über die (Schrift-)«Rolle in des Jünglings Hand» zum «Blatt» mit der «Spur» der «Hand»(-Schrift) (V 14-27). Das herabfallende Blättchen initiiert also – zunächst – einen Schreibprozeß, macht aus der Hand quasi die Schreibhand, denn vom Jüngling heißt es: «Gedankenvoll dem Boden ein / Gräbt Zeichen er mit spitzem Stein»; und es initiiert – sodann – einen Leseprozeß: der Jüngling «löst gedankenvoll das Band / Am Blatt» der Schriftrolle. Die wiederholte Qualifikation beider Vorgänge durch das Adverb «gedankenvoll» macht aus beiden *eines*. Die fiktionale Welt, in welcher der Jüngling als Lesender fungiert, wird dem Leser auf ihr Geschriebensein hin durchsichtig gemacht. Lesen und Schreiben geraten zu austauschbaren Vorgängen, alles Gelesene mahnt an seinen Schriftcharakter. Der «*spitze* Stein» als Schreibwerkzeug, etwa, verwandelt, unterstützt durch die identifizierende Reimbindung, die «*Felsenritzen*» in ein Gebilde aus Schrift, zu deren «Schnörkel[n]» (V 288) die blühenden «Ranken» in Analogie treten (V 2). Der «Raum» der Landschaft materialisiert sich als Schrift-«Raum» (V 1, 288, 784). Wie noch bei Kafka «Gebirge» und «Wald» als Metaphern des Textes gelesen werden können,²⁶ so drängen sich auch bei der Droste, vermittelt über die Vertikalität der Buchstaben in ihrer Aufeinanderfolge, «des Waldes Spalten» (V 97, 831) und der «Fichten Spindel» (V 57) als Schriftgebilde auf. Diese Autoreferenz ist umso wahrscheinlicher, als die Droste, wie die Varianten belegen, an solchen Stellen experimentiert hat. Zu «des Waldes Spalten» (V 831) werden verzeichnet die Varianten: «des Waldes Ritzen» und «des Waldes Spitzen».²⁷ R(Sp)itzen korrespondieren mit «Felsenritzen», werden aber, wohl zur Vermeidung der Wiederholung und um des Wohlklangs der

²² Vgl.: «mein Dienstmädchen», «mein Hoftor», «mein Haus», «mein Kranker» etc. Vgl. ergänzend Möbus: *Franz Kafka. Sünden-Fälle*. S. 125 f.

²³ Koelb: *Kafka's Rhetoric. The Passion of Reading*. S. 197.

²⁴ Vgl. ergänzend dazu Hans-Thies Lehmann: «Der buchstäbliche Körper. Zur Selbstinszenierung der Literatur bei Franz Kafka». In: *Der junge Kafka*. Hg. von Gerhard Kurz. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1984. S. 213-241 und Detlef Kremer: *Kafka. Die Erotik des Schreibens. Schreiben als Lebensentzug*. Frankfurt am Main: Athenäum, 1989.

²⁵ Diese sind bisher, soweit ich sehe, bei der Droste nicht beschrieben worden. Deshalb geht es hier zunächst einmal um den Nachweis. Die historische Herleitung, welche auf die Romantik zurückgreifen müßte, kann an dieser Stelle nicht geführt werden.

²⁶ Vgl. Detlef Kremer (*Kafka. Die Erotik des Schreibens*. S. 63) zu Kafkas *Der Ausflug ins Gebirge* und Detlef Kremer: «Verschollen. Gegenwärtig. Franz Kafkas Roman *Der Verschollene*». In: *Franz Kafka. Text + Kritik. Sonderband*. Hg. von Heinz Ludwig Arnold. München: edition text+kritik, 1994. S. 238-253.

²⁷ Vgl. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 721. Die Variante: «In sich versenkt des Arztes Sohn / Schwand in den Wald Minuten schon» (ebd., S. 720), welche keine Gelegenheit zur Selbstreferentialität bietet, wurde bezeichnenderweise ausgeschieden.

Assonanz willen, ersetzt durch «des Waldes Spalten», zumal diese Wendung schon zuvor gebraucht wurde, und zwar im Zusammenhang mit der die Thematik der Kunstproduktion stützenden Reimbindung auf «Gestalten»: «Im tiefern Grau verschwammen die Gestalten; / Nur selten zeigten mir des Waldes Spalten / Noch meines Vormanns untersetzten Bau» (V 96 f.).

*Spalten, Ritzen, Spindel, Riß*²⁸ werden auch dadurch als Metaphern der Schrift lesbar, als ihnen bedeutungsmäßig die Vorstellung eines aggressiven Eindringens mittels eines Werkzeugs, sc. des Bearbeitens einer Schreibunterlage, gemeinsam ist. *Wand, Kuppe, Stein, Boden, Schicht* können bei der Droste als solche Unterlage der Schrift gelesen werden.²⁹ Das steht in Korrespondenz zu der emphatisch an den Textanfang gestellten Zeichenproduktion des Jünglings, der «mit spitzem Stein» gleichsam *Schriftgräber* herstellt.³⁰ Daher ist es nur konsequent, wenn die Materialisierung des Schreibvorgangs auf den Lesevorgang übergreift. Dem Jüngling steht im Lesen buchstäblich ein «Eindringen» in ein «Geheimnis» (V 32) bevor, welches – vermittelt über die Gegenständlichkeit der (Schrift-)Rolle – als *schwarzes Geheimnis*, nämlich als die Schwärze der Schriftzeichen gelesen werden kann.³¹ Die Vorstellung des Schreibens als eines aggressiven Eindringens macht auch die Wortbildungen mit «schlagen» und «fallen» zu *Wendungen*, d. i. Tropen des Schreibvorgangs. Als Beispiele wären zu nennen: «Die rote Welle schlägt der Berge Saum» (V 452).

Doch eben traf ein Strahl den scharfen Rand.
So unversehens fällt kein Schlag im Spiel,
Als mir's wie Hammerschlag zum Herzen fiel (V 788-790).

Der Wellenschlag der Schrift konstituiert das weiße «Etwas» von Untergrund und Zwischenraum, jenes weiße «Tuch», das nicht wäre, wenn es nicht durch die «Scholle» bzw. «die Zacke»³² zum «[R]agen» gebracht würde.

Am Grunde sah ich Etwas ragen,
Das weiß und zuckend an der Scholle hing.
Mir schien's ein Tuch vom Wellenschlag getragen,
Der Himmel wolle, daß ich falsch gesehn! (V 799-802).

Am Schluß nimmt die Droste die beiden Schreiber- und damit auch Dichterfiguren, nämlich Vater und Sohn, wieder in die Schrift zurück: die fiktive Erzählung im Rahmen, das *Vermächtnis* des Arztes im engeren Sinne, endet mit dem *leeren Blatt*, und der Sohn des Arztes schwindet in des «Waldes Spalten» (V 826, 831). Diese Rücknahme der fiktiven Autorinstanzen in die Schrift ermöglicht der Droste, sich in deren Nachfolge als lyrisches Ich auf dem nunmehr leeren Blatt einzuschreiben. Analog dem Jüngling/Sohn, der sich schreibend-lesend die Geschichte seines

²⁸ Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe*. Ebd., S. 719.

²⁹ Vgl. V 24, 322, 388, 784, 787, 797.

³⁰ Zur Verwandtschaft von Schreiben und Grab(en) vgl. den instruktiven Artikel von Jan Assmann: «Schrift, Tod, und Identität. Das Grab als Vorschule der Literatur im alten Ägypten.» In: *Schrift und Gedächtnis. Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation*. Hg. von Aleida und Jan Assmann und Christof Hardmeier. München: Fink, 1983. S. 45-63.

³¹ Daß deren «Geheimnis» im Kontrast zur weißen Unterlage der Schrift bzw. den weißen Zwischenräumen besteht, materialisiert Eugen Gomringer, seinerseits in einer Art Re-konkretisierungsvorgang, mit Hilfe einer Konstellation:

das schwarze geheimnis
ist hier
hier ist
das schwarze geheimnis

Eugen Gomringer: *worte sind schatten. die konstellationen 1951-1968*. Hg. und eingeleitet von Helmut Heißenbüttel. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1969. S. 29.

³² Vgl. diese Variante in: Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 682 und 732.

Vaters – eine *regellose Spur* (V 27) – lesbar machte, macht sich die Droste mit Hilfe dieser beiden Autorinstanzen ihre eigene Vorgeschichte lesbar und erschreibt sich damit allererst ein Ich. Dieses ist ein lyrisches, das sich erst in der vorletzten Zeile des Textes als solches benennt, also im wahrsten Sinne ein *erschriebenes* ist. Es kennzeichnet seine Fragilität, daß es in der Objekt-Position verbleibt und sich in der Gewichtlosigkeit einer redensartigen Formel artikuliert, welche noch dazu etwas Ephemereres, den Traum, benennt:

Mich dünkt [!] es flüst're durch den Raum:
O Leben, Leben! bist du nur ein Traum? (V 835 f.)

Erst vom Schluß her ist also erkennbar, daß der Rahmen von einem Ich gesprochen wird, die gerahmte epische Fiktion also quasi der Stabilisierung eines lyrischen Ich dient, welches zu Beginn nur in Rhythmus, Reim, Metaphorik anwesend ist und sich noch nicht als Ich benennen kann. Sukzessiv erschrieben, kann es erst als Ergebnis des Schreibprozesses sichtbar werden. Diese Ermächtigung durch den Schreibvorgang scheint der tiefere Sinn des *Vermächtnisses* des Arztes zu sein: die poetische Gabe der Schriftrolle, ein Testament, welches zugleich das Testamentarische als Wesen des Graphems ist und bedeutet,³³ diese Gabe der Schrift ermächtigt den Sohn des Arztes, und in seiner Nachfolge die Droste, zum Schreiber, zur Autorin zu werden.

Diese Verschlingung von Autorfunktion und Erzählfunktion, von Erzähl-Ich und aktuell schreibendem Ich, die Erkenntnis nämlich, daß im Schreibvorgang eine Selbstfiktionalisierung des schreibenden Ich stattfindet – das macht die Droste außerdem mit ihren höchst kunstvollen Rückgriffen auf die Herausgeberfiktion *innerhalb* der Binnenerzählung sichtbar.

Hier folgt ein Blatt, bekritzelt und zerpfückt,
Quer über'n Raum die wilden Schnörkel fahren,
Mitunter Striche, durch's Papier gedrückt,
Gepreßter Finger Zucken offenbaren.
Der Jüngling seufzt und wendet rasch das Blatt.

Hier steht's: «Mir war nicht wohl, nun bin ich matt. [...]» (V 287-292).

Die zweimalige Hier-Deixis stellt eine geradezu zoom-artige Fokussierung auf die konkrete Schreibsituation im Hier und Jetzt her. Das «Hier steht's» macht quasi das Blatt sichtbar, welches aktuell beschriftet wird. Entsprechend ist der Leser nicht mehr nur mit dem lesenden Jüngling identifiziert und «wendet rasch das Blatt» mit ihm, sondern tritt – und das ist eine andere Wendung des Blattes – selbst in die Rolle des Schreibenden ein. Lesen und Schreiben werden austauschbare Vorgänge. Wie bewußt die Droste diese Hier-Deixis verwendet, zeigt deren Wiederholung am Ende der Binnenerzählung:

«Ach Gott! du weißt nicht, wie voll Brand mein Hirn,
Wenn mir der Dunkle nächtlich rührt die Stirn,
Genau wie scheidend er gereckt die Hände:
Auch jetzt! - ich fühle, wie das Blut sich dämmt.
Geduld, Geduld! Da kömmt er - kömmt er - kömmt!»

Das Blatt ist leer; hier [!] hat die Schrift ein Ende.

So mild die Landschaft und so kühn!
Aus Felsenritzen Ranken blühn,
Der wilde Dorn die Rose hegt (V 821-829).

³³ «Jedes Graphem ist seinem Wesen nach testamentarisch». Jacques Derrida: *Grammatologie*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1974. S. 120.

Hier wird also deutlich *eine* Schrift beendet und wird Raum beansprucht für eine *neue*. Und damit kommt die Geschlechterdifferenz ins Spiel.

Zunächst: beide Autoren, sowohl die Droste wie auch Kafka, legen nahe, daß die Gabe der Schrift höchst zweideutig ist. Die genannten Schreibtechniken beleben, materialisieren und stabilisieren das zur Fragmentierung neigende (Autor-)Ich nur für die Dauer des Schreibvorgangs, danach verliert es wieder seine Kohärenz. Das zeigen beide Texte, indem sie den Schreibprozeß selbst abbilden. Kafka beginnt mit «Schneeegestöber» und dem vom Schnee paralysierten Ich: Zeichen für die Qualen vor dem leeren Blatt am Schreibbeginn. Die Droste benötigt quasi die «eingegrabenen Zeichen» und die Schrift-«Rolle» der Fiktion, um selbst ins Schreiben zu kommen. Am Ende des Schreibprozesses stehen die Rückkehr in die «Schneewüste» des leeren Blattes bei Kafka – in ihr treibt sich der Schriftkörper des Landarztes quasi als Analogon der wieder richtungslos gewordenen Schreibintention umher – oder die Rückkehr in die Einsamkeit der Natur bzw. die imaginäre Existenzweise des «Traums»: mit diesem Wort schließt der Text der Droste. Beidesmal zeigt diese Rückkehr Depression und Fragmentierung an.

Damit bestätigen die Schreibstrategien, wie sehr sie dem «wunden Herzen» (V 5), d. h. einer narzißtischen Verletzung, korreliert sind. Der erlittene Seelenmord führt die Droste sogar dazu, ihre Schrift als weiblich auszuweisen: die «gespaltene Kuppe», «des Waldes Ritzen» und der «Rötel in der Schicht» (V 796) als Metaphern der Schrift sind Spuren des Mordes an einer Frau. Das Schriftgrab ist ein Frauengrab.³⁴ Die Droste unterscheidet sich von Kafka, indem sie nicht nur vom Tod des Mannes, sondern auch von der Tötung der Frau, der «unglücksel'ge[n] Braut» Theodora, erzählt (V 359). Dies ist eine Erzählung *in* der Erzählung, ein Vermächtnis *innerhalb* des Vermächtnisses und eine Schrift *in* der Schrift, denn es ist die Geschichte eines Grabmals: Theodora wurde lebend schon zur Toten, zum «Steingebilde über's Grab gestellt» (V 389). Die Droste fiktionalisiert hier die große Liebesenttäuschung ihrer Jugend. Es ist die Geschichte einer extremen narzißtischen Kränkung: zwei Freunde, zwischen denen sie sich nicht entscheiden konnte, erregten und mißbrauchten intrigant ihre Liebesgefühle, um sie öffentlich bloßzustellen. Die Theodora-Version erlaubt sogar den Schluß, daß hier das heterosexuelle Liebesobjekt Frau die «geschädigte Dritte» darstellt als Bedingung für die Liebe zwischen zwei Männern.³⁵ Die Heilige Theodora,³⁶ die ihres Glaubens wegen verbrannt wurde, metaphorisiert damit *mehrfach* den Flammentod der Frau und dessen Folgen auf dem Opferaltar einer männlichen Gesellschaft:³⁷ die «unglücksel'ge Braut» erglüht in den Flammen der

³⁴ Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 718 verzeichnet als Fortsetzung zu Vers 884 f.: «So fiel mein Blick in einer Kuppe Raum, / Gespalten grade einen Leib zu fassen», die Variante: «Seltsam daß ich ihn nicht zuvor gesehn, / Da sich das eingewühlte Zeichen fand». Hier wird deutlich der tote Frauenkörper als zeichengebend ausgewiesen: mit dem Leib der Frau wird geschrieben, er produziert den *Spalt* im *Raum* der *Kuppe*.

³⁵ Bekanntlich prägt Freud in seinem Aufsatz «Über einen besonderen Typus der Objektwahl beim Manne» (1910) die Formel von der «Liebesbedingung des geschädigten Dritten» (*Sigmund Freud. Studienausgabe*. Hg. von Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards, James Strachey. Bd. V. *Sexualleben*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1972. S. 188). Sie besagt, daß für den in Rede stehenden Typus des Liebenden das Liebesobjekt Frau erst dann interessant wird, wenn es von einem Dritten begehrt wird. Dieser ist dann der Geschädigte. Bei der Droste «drängt» der Mann, dem die Braut versprochen ist, sich einem Fremdling – welcher der geheime Verführer der Braut ist – «zum Genossen auf» (V 360-375): Daß dieser Fremde für «die Braut erglüht[!]», macht ihn offenbar für den Bräutigam, der als «alberner Patron» (V 376) bezeichnet wird, erotisch attraktiv. Die Droste bringt hier eine heilsichtige Korrektur an der genannten Freudschen «Liebesbedingung» an, indem sie die homosexuelle Basis dieser nur vordergründig heterosexuellen Dreiecksbeziehung herauskehrt: die Dichterin sieht, was Freud nicht sah, daß nämlich die *Frau* in dieser Konstellation der/die Dritte ist, die geschädigt wird.

³⁶ Zum Einfluß dieser Märtyrerlegende vgl. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 746.

³⁷ Vgl. für diesen Zusammenhang: *Schrift der Flammen: Opfermythen und Weiblichkeitsentwürfe im 20. Jahrhundert*. Hg. von Gudrun Kohn-Waechter. Berlin: Orlanda-Frauenverlag, 1991. Zur Frau als «Gründungsopfer» für die patriarchalische Gesellschaft siehe besonders den Aufsatz von Michael Jäger: «"Man töte dieses Weib!" Frauenbilder in Strauss-Opern oder der Kampf um die Geschlechtlichkeit des Todes» (ebd., S. 148-169).

Liebesleidenschaft *und* in den Flammen des Hasses – abgewehrt unter einer Maske von Stein –, erglüht als Rötzel, d. h. rote Schrift auf der Wand – ganz in der Art eines Menetekels³⁸ – und schließlich als «heiße Stelle» auf der Stirn des Mannes. Das Heiligenarsenal der katholischen Kirche nutzt die Droste höchst subversiv, denn ihre Theodora ist eine «flammierte Frau», die «dem Himmel zürn[t]» (V 381). Weniger «trauernd [...] als still entbrannt» (V 380), mit einem Auge wie von Stein und einer Stirn wie ein Gletscher, «Durchkältend uns mit dem gefrorenen Strahl» (V 259-265), ist sie prägnantes dichterisches Bild der Depression und der in ihr eingefrorenen Aggression.

Im kranken Jungen mit der weiblichen Blut-, Deflorations- und Geburtswunde hat Kafka die beiden Toten der Droste, den wunden Mann und die Braut, zu *einer* Figur zusammengezogen, verdichtet, und damit nur noch sehr vermittelt das Blutopfer der Frau thematisiert. Gleichwohl ist es im «Opfer Rosa»³⁹ deutlich genug präsent. Die Droste und Kafka thematisieren also beide, über die Zeiten hinweg, das dem phallischen Monismus inhärente destruktive Potential.⁴⁰ Die Droste ist radikaler im Konkreten, indem sie – als Frau – die Opferung der Frau vorführt; Kafka ist radikaler in der abstrakten Diagnose, indem er zeigt, wie – im kranken Jungen – erniedrigte Frau und Homosexueller in *einer* Figur der Ausgrenzung zusammenfallen, deren Tötung den Wahnsinn des sich «allen überlegen» dünkenden Arztes manifestiert (L 259).

Ich skizziere abschließend die Leistungen der Einschreibung weiblicher Autorschaft in den Text, welche bei der Droste zu einer Duplizität der Narration führt, die bei Kafka keine Parallele hat und sich z. B. am quasi doppelten Geschlecht der Erzählerfigur zeigt. Der Arzt erfährt seine Initiation am 12. Mai (V 54, 63), dem Feiertag der Heiligen Theodora, und etwa im gleichen Alter wie die Droste ihr Jugendtrauma. Das Datum enthält auch einen Verweis auf den Geburtstag der Droste, den 12. Januar. Die Verserzählung trug ursprünglich den Titel: *Theodora*. Dies alles zusammengenommen, ermöglicht die assoziative Gleichung: Arzt – Theodora – Droste. Das hat folgende Lektürekonsequenzen:

1. Als fiktive Figur stellt der Arzt das Schicksal des Mannes und Schriftstellers in einer männlichen Kultur dar – und hierin besteht die Vergleichbarkeit mit Kafkas *Landarzt*. Da die «heiße Stelle am Kopf», «der Brand im Hirn» (V 816, 821) – beides Metaphern des Wahnsinns – auf Theodora zeigen, macht die Droste noch buchstäblicher als Kafka die Frau zum Symptom⁴¹ – und Phantom – des Mannes. Doppelgängertum und Vampirismus als Motive der Schauerromantik in beiden Texten haben hier ihre Funktion.

2. Durch den metonymischen Bezug auf Theodora wird die Figur des Arztes auch zu einer Stellvertreterfigur für diese, d. h. weiblich. In der Arztfigur erleidet die Frau ihre eigene Opferung und ist gleichzeitig deren Zeuge; sie sieht ihr handlungsunfähig wie einem äußeren Vorgang zu. Die Reise des Arztes zum «wunden Mann» ist deshalb so bedrohlich, weil sie die Reise einer Frau in ihr Grab, an den Schauplatz der Re-inszenierung ihres Todes ist. Und das meint nicht nur den Tod der Frau im Repräsentationssystem einer Kultur, ihr Zur-Metapher-Gemacht-Werden,⁴² und auch nicht nur ihren sozialen Tod, sondern vor allem den Verlust, die Möglichkeiten ihres weiblichen Geschlechts leben zu

³⁸ V 797 f. Heines «Belsazar» erschien 1827 im *Buch der Lieder* bei Hoffmann und Campe in Hamburg. Die Droste kannte auch sicher Lord Byrons Gedicht «Vision of Belshazzar» (1815). Lord Byron: *The Complete Poetical Works*. Ed. by Jerome G. McGann. Vol. III. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. S. 303 f. – Zum Einfluß der Versepen Byrons auf *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* vgl. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 652 f. und 745 ff.

³⁹ «Rosa ist sein Opfer», heißt es im *Landarzt* (L 261).

⁴⁰ Vgl. zur «Theorie des phallischen Monismus» Rohde-Dachser: *Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent*. S. 136 ff.

⁴¹ Vgl. zu dieser Lacanschen Konzeption Elizabeth Wright (Hg.): *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: A Critical Dictionary*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1992. S. 59 und 425 f.

⁴² Die Frau als Bild (des Mannes) und daher etwas Totes, diese Geschlechterkonstruktion macht die Droste wiederholt mit den entsprechenden *Wendungen/Tropen* sinnfällig. Von der Person der Theodora heißt es: «Man sagte mir, dies wunderschöne Bild [...], [...] Man nennt' es eine unglückselge Braut» (V 357-360). Sie wird mit dem «Steingebilde über's Grab gestellt» und mit den «Formen» der Kunst verglichen: «Nur wenig minder Totes war mir nah», sagt das Erzähler-Ich des Arztes über sie (V 389-394).

können: «Morgenstern» und «Tauben» als Venuszeichen bestätigen die Kostbarkeit jenes verlorenen «Etwas das mir teuer war» (V 770, 803). Erst indem man den Arzt sowohl als Fiktionalisierung des Mannes wie der Frau liest, ergibt sich eine plausible und zugleich patriarchatskritische Auflösung des Kainszeichens an der Stirn: in der Frau tötete der Mann das ihm Ebenbürtige, einen Bruder.

3. In der Figur des schreibenden Arztes macht schließlich die Droste ihre eigene weibliche Autorschaft zu einem metatextuellem Anliegen. Sie benötigt den Topos vom Dichter/Arzt, um einmal der Frau eine Stimme zu geben – ist doch in einer patriarchalischen Kultur die sprechende Frau eine Aporie – und zum anderen, um in zweifacher Inversion der Rollen – der Arzt wird zur Patientin – weibliches Leiden, auch das der Autorin, zu artikulieren. In der Selbstfiguration als männlicher Dichter aber macht sie sich der *Komplizenschaft* schuldig, denn sie wiederholt nun selbst die topische Tötung der Frau als Voraussetzung von Autorschaft. *Widerstand* leistet sie jedoch, indem sie den Blick auf eine andere Art des Schreibens lenkt und das Vermächtnis des Arztes pointiert abschließt mit: «[Hier] hat die Schrift ein Ende» (V 826). Diese «Hier»-Deixis gewinnt geradezu kämpferische Qualität, denn sie postuliert das Ende der männlichen Schrift als eines Grabes von Frauen. Schon im Schreiben der Droste läßt sich also die von Elisabeth Bronfen hauptsächlich bei den Autorinnen des 20. Jahrhunderts aufgezeigte widersprüchliche Einheit von Komplizenschaft und Widerstand im Verhältnis zur herrschenden Kultur nachweisen.⁴³ Auch für diese Art von Wahnsinn scheint mir die «heiße Stelle» an der Stirn ein Zeichen zu sein, diesmal an der Stirn der Autorin selbst: die Droste erschreibt zwar der Frau, sich selbst, den Status eines Subjekts, bezahlt dies jedoch mit lebenslangem psychosomatischen Leiden.⁴⁴

Der Name Theodora fällt nur ein einziges Mal, und zwar als Apostrophe (V 707). Diese Anrufung der Märtyrerin lese ich als Apotropäon gegen den sozialen Tod. Für die schreibende Frau kann die Märtyrerin zur Muse werden, denn sie führt gewissermaßen den autonomen Umgang mit dem Tod vor. Die Theodora im Text «kann nicht beten» (V 708), d. h. die Droste nimmt ihre Identifikationsfigur aus dem christlich-katholischen Rahmen heraus. Die Droste tötet die Frau im Text im Zeichen einer anderen Frau, im Namen Theodoras, und läßt damit ihre Frauenfigur gerade *nicht* die (Todes-) Nachfolge des *Mannes* antreten, auch nicht von Christus, auf den der Mann auf dem Sterbebett sowohl bei der Droste wie bei Kafka anspielt.⁴⁵ Ob Theodora sich zu «Gott [...] gewandt» (V 719), wird ausdrücklich offen gelassen. Der Droste dient der *Name* der Heiligen also vor allem dazu, die Frau historisch mit einer Subjektposition auszustatten, eine Textstrategie, die ihr selbst die *namentliche* Autorschaft erleichtert, wenn auch nur – hellsichtig – über den Vornamen: Ihre erste Buchpublikation, welche auch *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* enthielt, konnte die Droste ihrer Mutter nur mit dem Zugeständnis der *halb-anonymen* Verfasserschaft abringen, also: «*Gedichte von Annette Elisabeth v. D.... H....* . Münster 1838. In der Aschendorff'schen Buchhandlung.»⁴⁶

Die Droste klammert die epische Schrift des Arztes ein und setzt an deren Stelle ihre eigene lyrische Stimme. Sie ersetzt damit die Schrift eines Vaters, der sie freilich zum Schreiben ermächtigte: im Vater des Jünglings darf man wohl auch den Vater der Droste selbst vermuten, vor allem da sie sich wiederholt in jünglingshaft-androgyner Gestalt in ihre Dichtungen einschreibt.⁴⁷ Das *Liber*

⁴³ Elisabeth Bronfen: *Nur über ihre Leiche. Tod, Weiblichkeit und Ästhetik*. München: Kunstmann, 1994; vgl. bes. Kapitel 18. «Von der Muse zur Creatrix - Schneewittchen entfesselt». S. 569-625.

⁴⁴ Zur Krankengeschichte als lebensgeschichtlichem Hintergrund von *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* siehe Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 648-652.

⁴⁵ Vgl. zu den christlichen Bezügen im *Landarzt* besonders Hans Helmut Hiebel: *Franz Kafka. «Ein Landarzt»*. München: Wilhelm Fink, 1984. S. 123 und passim.

⁴⁶ Vgl. die Reproduktion des Bucheinbands bei Herbert Kraft: *Annette von Droste-Hülshoff*. Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1994. S. 78.

⁴⁷ Im übrigen geht dem Versepos *Des Arztes Vermächtnis* das Gedicht *Des Arztes Tod* voraus, das vermutlich schon bald nach dem Todes des Vaters der Droste (25. Juli 1826) entstanden ist: für beide Texte kann angenommen werden, daß in ihnen die Droste den Verlust des Vaters zu bewältigen versucht. Vgl. Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. III,2. S. 646 f.

mirabilis des Vaters, ein Buch des Wunderbaren und der Gelehrsamkeit, verfaßt in lateinischer Sprache, kann analog der Schriftrolle des Arztes als Vermächtnis gelesen werden.⁴⁸ Dessen Zweideutigkeit bekundet sich in der obsiedierenden und kontaminierenden Macht des väterlichen Wahnsinns, der auf den Sohn, sc. die Tochter, übergreift und als Unsterblichkeitsphantasie des phallischen Monismus⁴⁹ auch noch das Nicht-Sterben-Können von Kafkas Landarzt bedingt. Obwohl seine «blühende Praxis» (L 261) verloren ist, kommt er nicht zur Selbsteinsicht. Aus der Perspektive der Droste gesehen, geht es hier auch um das Ende einer Schreibpraxis – eines männlichen Umgangs mit den «flores rhetorices» –, und das ist eine, die das Blühen der Frauen usurpiert. Kafka kritisiert im Landarzt/Schriftsteller männliche Einzigartigkeit und Unersetzlichkeit, welche als Konsequenz der Leugnung der Geschlechterdifferenz sich selbst im Gebären von Texten das weibliche Geschlecht aneignet. Durch das lyrische Spiel der Klänge und Signifikanten wird der «Frost [...] dieses unglücklichsten Zeitalters» mit dem weit entfernten «Pelz am Haken» als eine Art Straf- und Vergeltungszustand ausgewiesen, denn dieser Zustand der Ungeborgenheit erscheint als die Konsequenz der aggressiven paternalistisch-kastrierenden *Hiebe* der «Hacke im Forst».⁵⁰ Vergolten wird in der Kunst- und Künstlerfigur des Arztes die Usurpation der Omnipotenz des göttlichen Wortes, welches ins Leben rufen und töten kann, und vergolten wird die *männliche* Omnipotenz dieses Schöpfungswortes. Das ist Kafkas sehr präzise Patriarchatskritik. Kafkas Landarzt versucht sozusagen, schreibend den Frost eines männlichen Zeitalters zu überwinden – «den weiten Raum zwischen mir und ihm [!]» (L 252) –, bringt ihn jedoch auf diese Weise immer wieder hervor. Die Geschichte *Ein Landarzt* ist selbst ein Text-Sohn, nämlich der neunte Sohn jenes Erzähler-Ichs aus der Geschichte *Elf Söhne*, der elften Geschichte des gesamten *Landarzt*-Bandes, welchen Kafka seinem Vater gewidmet hat. Also lauter Geschichten einer männlichen Prokreation! Aber mit ihnen hat Kafka deutlich Klage geführt gegen den Vater als Repräsentanten einer phallozentrischen Ordnung,⁵¹ ohne deren psychosomatische Manifestation in der eigenen Lungen- sprich: Kastrations-, Gebär- und Textwunde verhindern zu können.

⁴⁸ Vgl. die Beschreibung des *Liber Mirabilis* in dem Prosa-Fragment der Droste *Bei uns zu Lande auf dem Lande* und die entsprechenden Erläuterungen in: Annette von Droste-Hülshoff. *Historisch-kritische Ausgabe* (wie Anm. 12). Bd. V,1: Prosa. Text. 1978. S. 147 und Bd. V,2: *Prosa. Dokumentation*. 1984. S. 686 und 694.

⁴⁹ Vgl. hierzu Rohde-Dachser, welche ausführt, daß die Theorie des phallischen Monismus nicht nur eine Strategie der Verleugnung des weiblichen Genitales im Dienste der Sexualängste des Mannes darstellt, sondern auch der Verleugnung des Todes dient. «Der Weiblichkeitsentwurf der „kastrierten Frau“ kann [...] als eine (männliche) Phantasie verstanden werden, mit der der Mann seine Todesangst zu bändigen sucht, indem er den Tod - wie auch schon die Kastration - der Frau zuweist. Sie ist es dann, die ihn erleidet, während er - Besieger des Todes - auf der Seite des Lebens steht» (*Expedition in den dunklen Kontinent*. S. 136).

⁵⁰ Vgl. L 260 f. Mit diesen Klangvariationen folgt Kafka bewußt den Techniken der Traumproduktion, wie sie Freud in der *Traumdeutung* (1900) verzeichnete, die Kafka bekannt war. Hier treffen z. B. die Beobachtungen Freuds über die durch «paraphasischen Gleichklang» - eine Form von Verdichtung - hervorgerufenen witzigen Effekte in Träumen zu. Vgl. Sigmund Freud. *Die Traumdeutung. Studienausgabe*. Hg. von Alexander Mitscherlich, Angela Richards, James Strachey. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1972. Bd. II. S. 295.

⁵¹ Daher ist die von Kafka überlieferte Äußerung, «diese Widmung habe ich ironisch gemeint», nur konsequent: vgl. Friedrich Thieberger: «Kafka und die Thiebergers». In: «*Als Kafka mir entgegenkam ...*». *Erinnerungen an Franz Kafka*. Hrsg. Hans-Gerd Koch. Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 1995. S.121-127; hier: S. 127.

Goethes Knabenmärchen: *Der Neue Paris*

IRMGARD ROEBLING (*)

Goethe hat das «Knabenmärchen» im zweiten Buch seines autobiographischen Romans «Aus meinem Leben. Dichtung und Wahrheit» veröffentlicht mit der Vorgabe, es handele sich um ein Märchen, daß er siebenjährig mit viel Gewinn so oft seinen Freunden erzählt habe, daß es ihm noch im Alter «ganz wohl vor der Einbildungskraft und im Gedächtnis schwebt.» (51)¹

Das Märchen präsentiert sich zweigeteilt: zunächst wird von einem Traum erzählt aus der Nacht vor Pfingstsonntag, in dem der Knabe verschiedene Kleider für das Fest vor dem Spiegel ausprobiert. Während dieser Kleidersuche² erscheint ihm Merkur als «junger schöner Mann» (51) und gibt ihm drei Äpfel (rot, grün und gelb), die er an die «drei schönsten jungen Leute von der Stadt» (52) verteilen soll, welche dadurch Gattinen nach Wunsch finden sollen. Die Äpfel verwandeln sich in seiner Hand in schöne puppenkleine Frauenzimmer, die auf seinen Fingern tanzen. Sie verschwinden, als er nach ihnen haschen will. Es erscheint aber danach in noch kleinerem Format ein kleines Mädchen auf seinen Fingern tanzend. Auch dieses will er greifen, bekommt aber einen Schlag vor den Kopf, fällt betäubt nieder und wacht dann auf.

Der zweite Teil zeigt zunächst pfingstlich-familiäre Betätigungen: Gottesdienst, Besuch bei Großeltern und Freunden, Spaziergang zu den Gärten. Damit hört der realistische Duktus auf, und die Geschichte nimmt im Grunde wieder den Traumfaden auf, ohne das aber genau zu markieren: Der Knabe entdeckt an der sogen. «schlimmen Mauer» ein hübsches Pfortchen, welches sich schließlich öffnet. Vor ihm steht ein alter Mann mit Bart, judenähnlich und doch wie ein katholischer

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¹ Im Folgenden zitiere ich *Dichtung und Wahrheit* mitsamt dem *Knabenmärchen* im laufenden Text (mit Seitenzahlen in Klammern) nach: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Werke. Hamburger Ausgabe in 14 Bänden. Bd. 9. Autobiographische Schriften I. Textkritisch durchgesehen von Lieselotte Blumenthal. Kommentiert von Erich Trunz. München 1982.

² Über die Tatsache, daß der junge Goethe in der Tat mit Fragen der Kleiderauswahl viel Zeit verwandte und differenzierten Aufwand trieb, erfahren wir aus einem Brief Bettina von Arnims an Goethe vom 28.11.1810, in dem sie ihm von einer Erzählung seiner Mutter berichtet, die lautete: «In seiner Kleidung nun war er ganz entsetzlich eigen – ich mußte ihm täglich drei Toiletten besorgen: auf einen Stuhl hing ich einen Überrock lange Beinkleider ordinäre Weste, stellte ein paar Stiefel dazu, auf den 2ten einen Frack, seidne Strümpf die er schon angehabt hatte, Schuhe pp, auf dem dritten kam alles vom feinsten nebst Degen und Haarbeutel; das erste zog er im Hauße an, das zweite wenn er zu täglichen Bekannten ging, das dritte zum Galla.» (Zit. nach Ulrike Prokop: Die Illusion vom Großen Paar. Bd. 1: Weibliche Lebensentwürfe im deutschen Bildungsbürgertum 1750-1770. Frankfurt/M. 1991, S. 288.) Es ist nicht auszuschließen, daß dieser Brief von Bettina Goethe zur der Kleiderszene inspiriert hat.

Christ, der ihn nun in verschiedenen Stationen und unter verschiedenen Bedingung wie Kleidungswechsel, Gehorsamsgebot usw. in einen wunderschönen, kunstvollen Garten führt. Dieser von der Mauer umgebene Garten ist in sieben konzentrischen Kreisen aufgebaut, deren einzelne Partien wieder je durch kreisförmige Absperrungen in Form von Gittern, Zypressen, Säulen, Kanälen, Mauern abgetrennt sind. Während in den ersten vier Segmenten der Alte als «Führer» fungiert, begleitet den Knaben in den letzten 3 Kreisräumen ein niedliches Mädchen mit Namen Alerte, in dem er das Mädchen seines Traumes wiedererkennt. Im innersten Saal findet er auf einem Blumenrasen seine drei schönen Frauen wieder, die dort eine «himmlische Musik» (57) machen. Er hört mit Alerte eine Weile zu, beide tanzen dann zusammen, und schließlich führt ihn Alerte zu ihren Spielsachen. Sie wählen Bleisoldaten als Reiterfiguren aus, die sie beide heerförmig auf den herabgelassenen Gittern über dem Kanal aufbauen. Alerte «rühmte sich» (60), das Amazonenheer mit Penthesilea zu führen, der Knabe übernimmt das Griechenheer mit Achill, und beide bewerfen das je feindliche Heer nun mit Achatkugeln. Der Kampf wird immer heißer, man vergißt die Regeln und zerstört gegen die Verabredung die feindlichen Figuren, die sich jedoch erstaunlicherweise nach der Zerstörung «von selbst wieder zusammenfügen» (61) und weggaloppieren. Alerte in der Wut über ihre Verluste gibt dem Knaben eine Ohrfeige, der rächt sich, ganz Kavalier, mit einem «derbe(n) Kuß» (62), worauf ein Schrei ertönt, die Gitter sich wieder aufrichten, die Kinder getrennt werden und der Knabe hochgeschleudert wird und sich schließlich durchnässt am Boden wiederfindet. Er enblößt sich und genießt seine Nacktheit, steht dann aber doch beschämt vor dem herbeigeeilten Alten, der ihm die angekündigte Strafe androht. Jetzt trotzt der Knabe aber auf, deklariert sich als Liebling der Götter, der über Wohl und Wehe der Frauenzimmer entscheidet, die ohne ihn «in ihrem Zauberkloster verschmachten» (63) müßten, und bringt den Alten zur Unterwerfung. Er erbittet sich das kleine Mädchen zum Lohn und wird vom Alten entlassen. Den Ausgang der Märchenerzählung bilden Berichte des Erzählers, wie alle Freunde des Knaben immer wieder versucht haben, die Stelle des Pfortchens in der Mauer zu finden, an der die in Erinnerung gehaltenen Elemente: Nußbäume, eine steinerne Tafel, ein Brunnen aber nie in dergleichen Konstellation wie vordem wiedergefunden werden konnten.

Das Märchen ist hochkomplex und überdeterminiert und hat entsprechend in der Forschung eine Reihe sehr verschiedener Interpretationen erfahren³, die v.a. darum bemüht sind, es zeitlich zu datieren, autobiographische Bezüge sowie Anregungen von und Beziehungen zu literarischen und bildnerischen Werken aufzuweisen und seine Stellung im Gesamtwerk Goethes mit Vergleichen v.a. zum *Faust* und zum Melusinen-Märchen zu verdeutlichen. Dennoch ist – betrachtet man die Fülle der Goethe-Forschung im Ganzen – eine erstaunliche Zurückhaltung in seiner Befassung zu beobachten. Dieses wundert um so mehr, als schon die Weise seiner Präsentation zusammen mit dem an Georg von Wellings «Opus mago-cabbalisticum»⁴ erinnernden topographischen Aufbau vermuten läßt, daß hier eine Art *mythe personel* (Holland) preisgegeben wird. Dieser Mythos stellt sich mir dar als eine in elementarer Bildlichkeit präsentierte Verbindung autobiographischer und kreativitätsbezogener Reflexionen: Im Rahmen einer märchenhaften Bearbeitung seiner Beziehung

³ Wichtige Interpretationen liegen vor von: Philipp Sarasin: Goethes Mignon. In: *Imago* XV, S. 349ff (darin: Das Knabenmärchen, S. 368-371); Wolfgang Schadewald: Goethes Knabenmärchen *Der neue Paris. Eine Deutung*. In: *Die neue Rundschau*. Jg. 1959, S.599-616; Karl-Heinz Kausch: *Goethes Knabenmärchen «Der neue Paris»* oder: Biographica und Aesthetica. In: *Jahrbuch der Deutschen Schillergesellschaft* 1980, S. 102-122; Gonthier-Louis Fink: *Le Nouveau Paris de Goethe ou L' Echee Provisoire de l' Enfant*. In: *Études Germaniques* 1983, S. 32-55; Hans Geulen: Goethes Kunstmärchen *Der neue Paris* und *Die neue Melusine*. Ihre poetologischen Imaginationen und Spielformen. In: *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte* 59. Jg. 1985. H. 1, S. 79-92; Rolf Tiedemann: Zu Goethes Knabenmärchen *Der neue Paris* und den Faustdichtungen. In: *Jahrbuch der Psychoanalyse* 18 (1986), S. 221-235.

⁴ Goethe besaß die zweite Ausgabe von Wellings Werk bekanntlich selbst und hat es im Kontext der Arbeit an seiner Autobiographie zusammen mit anderen kabbalistischen Werken wieder konsultiert. Zur Darstellung kabbalistischer und alchimistischer Elemente im *Neuen Paris* siehe v.a. Stéphane Mosès: *Spuren der Schrift von Goethe bis Celan*. Frankfurt 1987, S. 13-38.

zur Schwester Cornelia werden Reflexionen zur Geschlechterdifferenz gestaltet, die zugleich an eine Quelle, vielleicht *die* Quelle von Goethes Dichtertum führen, ins Zentrum seiner Kreativität.

Im folgenden werde ich diese drei zusammenhängenden Themenkomplexe vorstellen und im Rahmen des hier zur Verfügung stehenden Raumes wenigstens ansatzweise interpretieren. Ich werde das Parismärchen also lesen als Darstellung 1. der Cornelia-Erinnerung, 2. der Differenzerfahrung und 3. des Ursprungs von Kreativität.

1. DER TEXT ALS CORNELIA-DENKMAL

1. Die besondere Bedeutung der Beziehung Goethes zu seiner Schwester Cornelia und insbesondere die Bedeutung ihres frühzeitigen Todes, an dem sich der Bruder nicht unschuldig fühlen konnte, ist bekannt und von Eissler⁵ überzeugend dargestellt worden. Die Rolle, die diese komplizierte Beziehung für das Werk des Autors gehabt haben mag, ist jedoch bisher nur in Ansätzen erfaßt. Frau Lange-Kirchheim⁶ hat im Zusammenhang ihrer Interpretation von Goethes «Triumph der Empfindsamkeit» und «Proserpina», in der die künstlerische Abwehr des Schwester-Traumas eine zentrale Rolle spielt, darauf aufmerksam gemacht, wie Goethe offensichtlich nach 1810 im Zuge seiner autobiographischen Arbeit zu einer neuen Beschäftigung mit der Schwester kam. Er stimmte einer Neuvertonung des 1778 (also ein Jahr nach Cornelias Tod erschienenen) Monodramas «Proserpina» zu, überwachte selbst die Proben der Weimarer Aufführung, schrieb einen Artikel im Morgenblatt dazu für «Theater-Directionen» und rezitierte beim ersten Vorlegen von Eberweins Vertonung persönlich und mit größter Emphase die Rolle der Proserpina. Lange-Kirchheim vermutet, daß hier ein effektvoll-monumentales Denkmal gesetzt werden soll in Ersatz des geplanten und nie ausgeführten Cornelia-Romans. Sie erkennt die Ambivalenz dieser Aktivitäten, die einerseits zeigen, daß der Schwester-Komplex im Autor noch wirkt, daß aber andererseits nach fast 40 Jahren der Dichter Möglichkeiten der ästhetischen Distanzierung für sich gefunden hat, wie auch immer wir die einschätzen wollen.

Das Paris-Märchen ist im Jahre 1811 geschrieben, liegt also mitten im Zeitraum dieser Wiederbelebung. Die Interpretation Alertes als Schwester-Figuration wird nahegelegt durch den Kontext im autobiographischen Roman (Erzählung der Kindheit), durch die Figurenkonstellation im Märchen selbst, in der die Beziehung Knaben-Ich und Alerte zwischen geschwisterlicher Zuneigung, Rivalität und erotischer Neugier oszilliert, durch beider gemeinsames Spielen und Tanzen und insbesondere durch die Mittelpunktsszene, in der die Frauenfiguren zu mutterhafter Größe angewachsen sind und den beiden Kindern ein Bänkchen zum Zuhören anweisen, wie es Wolfgang und Cornelia von Eltern und Großeltern oft erfahren haben. Im Sinne der für *Proserpina* thematisierten Schuld-Abwehr-Funktion könnte man den Verlauf des zentralen Kampf-Spieles als Versuch einer phantasiereichen distanzierenden Bewältigung ansehen. Die Erfahrung von Schuld und Tod wird nicht nur an andere (zeitlich weit entfernte Wesen, die Bleifiguren nämlich) delegiert, sondern das Geschehen wird zusätzlich durch die *Spielebene* und das puppige *Kleinstformat* der Protagonisten bagatellisiert und damit entschärft. Vor allem die Tatsache aber, daß die zerstörten Figuren sich nach der Zerstörung von selbst wieder zusammensetzen - und diese Tatsache wird *dreimal* im Text genannt - kommt einer nun wirklich märchenhaften Auslöschung der Todeserfahrung und damit jeder Schuldzuweisung gleich; sie trägt maßgeblich zu dem hagestolzen Herumspazieren am Ende und der Erhebung über den Alten bei. Der letzte Wunsch allerdings des Knaben an den Alten als Lohn (!) lautet: «Vor allen Dingen das kleine Geschöpf (...), die mich in diesen verwünschten Zustand gebracht hat» (63).

⁵ K.R. Eissler: Goethe, eine psychoanalytische Studie. 1775-1786. Basel 1983.

⁶ Astrid Lange-Kirchheim: Spiel im Spiel - Traum im Traum. Zum Zusammenhang von Goethes *Triumph der Empfindsamkeit* und *Proserpina*. In: B. Urban und W. Kudszus (Hg.): Psychoanalytische und psychopathologische Interpretation. Darmstadt 1981, S. 125-151.

Dieser Satz hat für mich – bezogen auf den erzählenden Autor – etwas Herzerreißendes, weil er wie der Kinderwunsch des alten Mannes klingt, der das, was er kaputtgemacht hat, heile wiederhaben möchte. Und doch zeigt der Satz und der Ausdruck «verwünschter Zustand» auch die endlich gewonnene Fähigkeit, distanziert zu benennen, was der Verlust einem angetan hat.

Wichtig in der Analyse dieser Geschwister-, respektive Corneliadarstellung ist aber v.a. das *Wie*, in diesem Fall die strukturelle und die ikonographische Einbindung. Auf der *Strukturebene* fällt auf, daß die Alerte-Figur sowohl im Eingangsteil, als Epiprodukt der Frauenerscheinungen, wie im Zentrum der Geschichte vorkommt, und daß diese Identität vom Knaben-Ich gestiftet wird: die Pfortnerin «glich» dem «niedlichen Mädchen» des Traumes. Zu bedenken in jeder weitergehenden Interpretation wäre demnach Alertes Bedeutung im Zusammenhang mit den Frauen, ihre auslösende Funktion, ihre leitende und ihre zentrale Stellung als Gegenüber, ja fast Spiegelung des Knaben im Textgeschehen.

In der ikonographischen und motivgeschichtlichen Darstellung lassen sich fünf Ebenen ausmachen, deren Implikate alle in die Interpretation der Beziehung eingehen müßten: 1. das Motiv von *Kleinheit* und Puppenhaftigkeit, denn das Mädchen wird im Text noch kleiner als die kleinen Frauen auf den Fingern eingeführt und dann nochmal im Puppenmotiv verkleinert; 2. die motivgeschichtliche Ebene der *Parissage*, nach der Alerte mit Aphrodite oder Helena parallelisiert werden müßte; 3. die *Penthesilea-* und *Amazonenebene*, wodurch einerseits der heldenhafte, beinahe männliche Zug der antiken Amazonenkönigin, andererseits der stark bedrohliche, zugleich sexualisierte und verschlingenden Charakter von Kleists «Penthesilea» in die Schwester-Figur fließt. (Goethe lehnte Kleists Drama bekanntlich strikt ab und kann Penthesilea hier entsprechend nur ganz verkleinert zulassen); 4. zusammen mit Penthesilea eine Anspielung auf den *Artemismythos*. Sowohl der Nymphencharakter Alertes, ihr kriegerisches Handeln, das Agieren und Spritzen mit Wasser wie die beherzte Gegenwehr bei männlichen Übergriffen verweisen auf die Erzählungen um die Tochter von Zeus und Letho. Artemis ist aber v.a. als Zwillingschwester Apolls, des Gottes der Künste und des Musenführers bekannt, ist Tänzerin, liebt die Musik und trägt wie Apoll selbst androgyne Züge. 5. in der Ausgestaltung des Gartens als *hortus conclusus* eine Verbindung der Alerte-Figur mit der *Marien-tradition*.

Schaut man die Bezugsbilder und -figuren im Vergleich an, so fällt auf, daß es sich bei allen genannten weiblichen Vergleichsfiguren: Aphrodite, Helena, Penthesilea, Artemis, Maria um hoch- bis höchststehende Frauenfiguren unserer Kultur handelt, die innerhalb ihres Geschlechts kaum zu übertreffen sind. Wenn es sich hier um ein Cornelia-Denkmal handeln sollte, ist dieses an Monumentalität nicht zu übertreffen. Für den zugeordneten Knaben hat das zwiegesichtige Bedeutung. Zum einen wertet es ihn als Bruder, Partner, Zwillings, *alter ego* ungeheuer auf, da die traditionell zugeordneten Männerfiguren: Paris, Achill, Apoll und Jesus ebenfalls an Bedeutung nicht zu übertreffen sind. Diese kolossalische Selbsterhöhung wird zwar augenzwinkernd vom erinnernden Autor kommentiert, indem er die Vögel im Garten von den Bäumen «Narziß, Narziß» (54) zwitschern läßt; die narzißtische Grundlage des Textes kann solche ironische Einspielung aber nicht in Frage stellen. – Trotz aller beidseitigen Erhöhung bedeutet andererseits eine so starke und gleichwertige Schwesterfigur aber auch eine Bedrohung für das männliche Ich, der im Text durch die verschiedenen Verkleinerungsbilder begegnet wird. Insofern durch die Verkleinerung Gefahr und Rivalität überschaubar gehalten werden, steht so auch die Puppenhaftigkeit (die im Falle der Schwester auch auf den ersten Umgang des Bruders mit ihr anspielt) letztlich im Dienste des Narzißmus.

Weiblichkeit stellt sich durch die zitierten kulturellen Weiblichkeits-Spiegel als höchst ambivalente Erfahrung dar. Alle genannten Frauen gelten als außerordentlich schön und begehrenswert und manches im Text weist auf libidinöse Elemente in der Beziehung der Kinder. Auffallend ist aber, daß die drei letzten Frauenbilder (Artemis, Penthesilea, Maria) trotz eines hohen Maßes an Weiblichkeit und Schönheit auch und vor allem für Jungfräulichkeit stehen, für eine weitgehende Aussparung von Sexualisierung. Dieses ist im Kontext des Corneliathemas um so bedeutsamer, als bekannt ist, wie schwer für Goethe die Tatsache der Verheiratung und Mutterwerdung seiner Schwester, die er am liebsten als Äbtissin in einem Kloster sich vorstellte, gewesen ist. Die Angst vor der Frau als Mutter und Sexualwesen zeigt sich – wie wir wissen – in vielen Werken Goethes.

Dagegen erscheint die jungfräuliche Frau als Phantasie weniger bedrohlich zu sein, da sie zum einen androgyner, dem Manne verwandter wirkt, zum anderen noch nicht von der Vaterwelt okkupiert ist. Das Bild der *Maria gar, der jungfräulichen Mutter*, erweitert das androgyne Bild um die Dimension der Fruchtbarkeit und Produktivität und legt so eine Verbindung zum schaffenden Künstler nahe.

Das Knabenmärchen gelesen als Schwestererinnerung zeigt die ungeheure Bedeutung, die Cornelia für ihren Bruder gehabt hat, für ihn als Kind, als Aufwachsenden und als werdenden Künstler. Cornelia stellte eine Verbindung zur Mutter und zur Welt der Frauen überhaupt dar. Die belastende Bedeutung ihres Todes für den Bruder läßt sich an den verschiedenen Abwehrstrategien ablesen. Mögliche Schuldkomplexe werden durch Überhöhung der Schwester ins Göttliche abgeleitet mit dem doppelten Effekt einer immensen Selbsterhöhung. Im indirekt durch die Artemisanspielungen evozierten Bild des androgynen Zwillingspaars Apollo-Artemis erscheint die Schwester als Spiegel des göttlich-narzißtischen Künstlers, der aus diesen Spiegelprozessen seine Kraft schöpft, den Spiegelträger selbst aber in den Schranken dieser Funktion belassen möchte.

2. DIFFERENZERFAHRUNG IM TEXT

Das Thema *Differenz* ist dem Text auf verschiedenen Ebenen und in verschiedenen Motivzusammenhängen eingeschrieben. Im erweiterten Sinne könnte man das ganze 2. Buch von *Dichtung und Wahrheit* als Einführung in die Erfahrung von Differenz lesen. Das Kind erfährt, was Krieg als politische Differenz bedeutet, erkennt die Differenzen in der Kriegseinstellung der Erwachsenen, die im Hause Goethe österreichisch oder «fritzisch» waren: «Die Welt (...) spaltete sich sogleich in zwei Parteien, und unsere Familie war ein Bild des großen Ganzen.» (46) Der Junge bekommt Ich-Konturen, löst sich vom Elternhaus, bekommt Freunde, die ihn verschieden stark mögen, erfährt sich als von ihnen different, lernt Vorlieben und Abneigungen, «Mißreden» kennen. Der Erzähler spricht vom «Gewahrwerden partiischer Ungerechtigkeit» (48), aber auch der Erfahrung der «Klemme», in die Aufwachsende «zwischen dem Naturzustande und dem der Zivilisation» (68) geraten, und dem «Widerspruch» zwischen elterlicher Zivilisation und Jugendvorstellungen. Es häufen sich im 2. Buch Begriffe wie *Mißhelligkeiten, Streit, Händel, Parteien*, und zusammenfassend wird von der «Verschiedenheit der Ansichten» der «ohnehin schon auf mancherlei Weise voneinander getrennten Bürger» (73) gesprochen.

Eingebettet in den Kontext dieser individuellen, familiären und gesellschaftlichen Differenzenerfahrung – und auf der Ebene der Erinnerung kausal damit verbunden – werden Berichte erster vorkünstlerischer Betätigungen des Kindes Wolfgang, und zwar im Puppenspiel und beim Märchen-erzählen. Beide sind selbst durch zunehmende Differenzierung miteinander verbunden, insofern die Kinder immer mehr vom vorgegebenen Grundtext, den sie zunächst auswendig lernten, abweichen: «wir veränderten die Garderobe, die Dekorationen und wagten uns an verschiedene Stücke» (49), in denen sie dann selbst als Personen mitspielten. Der erinnernde Autor Goethe kommentiert, daß «diese kindliche Unterhaltung und Beschäftigung auf sehr mannigfaltige Weise bei mir das Erfindungs- und Darstellungsvermögen, die Einbildungskraft und eine gewisse Technik geübt und befördert» hat. (49)

Das Parismärchen nimmt von all dem etwas auf, man kann es als Fortführung und phantasievolle Spiegelung der Selbstkonturierung durch zunehmende Differenzenerfahrung lesen: als Auseinandersetzung mit Mutter- und Vaterimagines, Erfahren der Welt des Vaters und der Mutter, Erfahren der eigenen Ohnmacht und Macht, Erfahren aber v.a. der Geschlechterdifferenz.

Schon der Titel: *Knabenmärchen* ist ungewöhnlich, da Geschlechterdifferenz markierend. Ich nenne einige weitere, deutlich Differenzenerfahrung signalisierende Motive: Das ganze Märchen durchziehen Kleider- und Garderobefragen. Es beginnt mit dem Knaben vor dem Spiegel, der Sommerkleider anprobiert und nicht klarkommt, da er immer die Kleider verwechselt. Auch im Garten dann spielen Kleideranforderungen eine große Rolle. Kleider verweisen auf Differenz, sind unterschieden nach Jahreszeit (hier Sommerkleider) nach Alltag und Festtag (hier Pfingsten) und

markieren Differenz in Rollen, Stand, Geschlecht und Herkunft. Insofern halte ich es nicht für einen Zufall, daß mitten im Kleidertauschwesen, das wir als Suche des Knaben nach differenzierter Identität verstehen können, es heißt: «In dieser großen Verlegenheit trat ein junger schöner Mann zu mir» (51), eben Merkur. Offenbar steht die überzeugenden Identität des Götterboten (schöner Mann) für eine Lösung der Identitätsprobleme des Kindes und wirkt wie eine Anleitung zu entsprechenden Lösungen. Der Auftrag Merkurs, der den Knaben selber auszeichnet vor anderen, erfordert nun von ihm Differenzierungsleistung: er soll die «drei schönsten jungen Leute von der Stadt» (52) aussuchen. Interessanterweise führt der Text die Differenzierung weiter als die mythologische Vorlage und unterstreicht sie dadurch als Thema: *drei farblich differenzierte Äpfel*, statt *eines goldenen*, werden überreicht. Dem Knaben wird aber augenscheinlich eine Differenzierung der *Frauen* (noch) nicht zugetraut, wie es Paris aufgetragen wurde, sondern man verbleibt (wie in der ganzen ersten Hälfte des Textes) im Männerbereich, im Bereich der Ödipalität, könnte man sagen: Merkur «ein junger schöner Mann» gibt den Auftrag der Männerdifferenzierung, später besucht der Knabe *Freunde* und hat dann den alten Mann zum Führer in den Garten. (Dazu ließe sich assoziieren, daß der junge Goethe immer ältere Männer: nach seinem Vater Zunächst Behrisch, dann Schlosser als Leitfiguren gebraucht hat). Das Ergebnis der Differenzierung unter den Männern soll aber schließlich Glück in Form von wünschenswerten Gattinnen bringen.

Als weitere Differenz- und Differenzierungssignale erscheinen im Texte neben den vielen Kleideraktionen v.a. differenzierte Wahrnehmung der verschiedenen Schönheiten des Gartens und die vielen (Gebiete unterscheidenden) Grenzmarkierungen. Gegen die Mitte des Gartens zu, bevor die Leitung an das Mädchen übergeht, bekommt der Junge leichte Differenzierungsschwierigkeiten, insofern er sich mühen muß, die einzelnen Instrumente zu unterscheiden, die die «himmlische Musik» aus dem Gartenzentrum produzieren. (Kann er zwischen Mutterbildern und Mütterderivaten nicht unterscheiden?) Dann bekommt er aber *seinen* Platz neben Alerte auf dem Bänkchen zugewiesen, womit zumindest die Generationsdifferenz geklärt ist. Die im Umkreis der Mutterbilder erfahrene Harmonie erscheint hier nicht als symbiotische Einheit, sondern durch die Evokation von Musik und durch das Kinderballett als gelungener Zusammenklang in sich verschiedener Einheiten.

Vor dem Hintergrund der Generations-Klärung und ausreichender oraler Befriedigung schreitet der Text fort zu neuen Aufgaben, zu Fragen der Geschlechterdifferenz. Alerte zeigt dem Knaben ihre Spielsachen, die deutlich geschlechtlich differenziert sind, Mädchensachen eben, von Alerte unterstrichen durch die Worte: «Das ist nichts für Euch, ich weiß es wohl» (60). Mit den Bleifiguren glaubt sie etwas gefunden zu haben, «das für Euch und mich gleich vergnüglich ist» (60). Es ist ein Kampfspiel, ein Rivalitätsspiel, das auf ein Sich- gegenseitig-Messen ausgerichtet ist. Es ist ein Spiel, welches – und das scheint mir besonders wichtig – die Gleichwertigkeit der Partner für eine längere Phase voraussetzt, denn: für *beide* soll es vergnüglich sein, die Kampfgegner, Penthesilea und Achill, sind *gleichrangig*, die Regeln besagen: *keine* Figur soll *beschädigt* werden. Gleichwertig heißt allerdings nicht: gleichartig; die Kampfpartner bleiben verschieden, in der Erhitzung des Gefechts reagiert Alerte «mädchenhaft» wütend, lamentierend, und der Knabe *jungenhaft*, heftig, unmutig, erbost. Der Kampf vollzieht sich lange unter der Kategorie des «*Wechselseitigen*» und Gegenseitigen. Dennoch: Spielen bleibt für beide Partner gefährlich, und die Regeln dämmen die Gefahr nicht ganz ein. Von daher erklärt sich die für den Knaben beglückende Erfahrung der Wiederauferstehung der gefällten Bleifiguren, die er -wie gesagt – dreimal erwähnt. Die durch die Geschosse bewirkte Destruktion ist also nicht endgültig, der Gegner überlebt, die Balance wird trotz steigenden Kampfgeistes immer wieder hergestellt: auf Alertes Ohrfeige folgt schließlich sein Kuß, auf den Kuß ihr Schrei, nach der Trennung der beiden erklingen Gelächter und Spottworte der «Gegnerin», die *ihn* wieder zu neuen Vernichtungsaktivitäten anstacheln.

Im Medium dieses Spiels, so möchte ich interpretieren, vollzieht sich in Ansätzen das, was Jessica Benjamin⁷ eine geglückte Differenzierung der Geschlechter nennt. Die schwierige Leistung

⁷ Jessica Benjamin: Die Fesseln der Liebe. Psychoanalyse, Feminismus und das Problem der Macht. Frankfurt 1990.

der Differenzerkennung und -annahme bedeutet für sie Anerkennung des geschlechtlich Anderen als gleichwertiges Subjekt, bedeutet eine permanente Aufrechterhaltung der spannungsvollen Balance zwischen Selbstbehauptung und Anerkennung. Im Text wird sie verbildlicht im sich steigernden erhitzten Kampfspiel der gleichwertigen Gegner. Um sich selbst im Sinne des eigenen Narzißmus auch in seiner Geschlechtlichkeit als wertvoll und eigen zu erfahren, muß der Andere immer wieder unserer Omnipotenzphantasie unterworfen und damit zerstört oder degradiert werden, muß seine unabhängige Existenz verleugnet werden. Indem der Andere aber diese Zerstörung überlebt, konturiert er sich als Anderer und zugleich als solcher, der als gleichwertiges Subjekt mich in meiner Andersheit anerkennen kann.

Für den Knaben im Märchen scheint diese Differenzierung gelungen; sie hat ihn im Prozeß gegenseitiger Anerkennung zu einer ersten Form männlicher Identität, durchaus mit erotischer Färbung gebracht (auch wenn in diesem Text – und das verweist auf die zugrundeliegende Geschwisterkonstellation – jeder sexuelle Übergriff sofort vehement bestraft wird, also deutlich schuldhaft scheint). Der Knabe genießt gravitatisch schreitend seine Nacktheit, und er kann dem Alten wie einer depotenzierten Vaterfigur «trutzig» entgetreten und sich als Götterliebling deklarieren. Er kann sich am Ende nun auch «behend» ankleiden und «geputzt» von dannen schreiten. Die Zeit der Verwirrung scheint also vorbei.

Auch für die Alertefigur geht die gleichrangige Differenzierung zunächst erstaunlich weit (ers- taunlich, insofern wir es hier mit einer Männerphantasie über ein weibliches Wesen zu tun haben). Bezüglich der *geschlechtlichen* Differenzierung werden ihr aber (wie ihrem Vorbild Cornelia) Grenzen gesetzt. Trotz aller angeblichen Mädchenhaftigkeit erscheint Alerte im Text zunächst eher wie ein Knabe, scheint androgyn wie einige ihrer mythologischen Gewährsfrauen (Artemis und Penthesilea). Auffällig konsequent und hellstichtig spricht der Erzähler jedoch nur aus ihrer Perspektive und bezüglich ihrer weiblichen Aspekte von einem «unersetzlichen Verlust», von «Weinen und Jammern» (61). *Ihr* werden keine libidinösen Gesten zugestanden, *ihr* nicht Nacktheit und Siegerposen. Sie ist letztlich einzuordnen in den Kreis der Frauenzimmer, über die der Götterliebling bestimmt, ob sie «in ihrem Zauberkloster verschmachten und veralten» (63) sollen (Auch hier wird man nicht umhinkommen, sich des Ausspruchs Goethes, daß er sich seine Schwester am liebsten als Äbtissin in einem Kloster vorstellten konnte, zu erinnern.)

Die signifikanten Unterschiede bei aller zunächst erscheinenden Gleichheit zwischen dem Jungen und dem Mädchen legen die Vermutung nahe, daß in der knabenhaften Gestalt der Alerte, die im Text ja deutlich ein Abkömmling der Mutterbilder ist, auch eine Figuration der abgespaltenen weiblichen Anteile des Knaben phantasiert wird, gegen die er heftig und mit steigender Wut kämpft. Sein stolzes nacktes Selbstbewußtsein nach dem Kampfspiel zeigt, wie durch diese Abspaltung seine männlichen Anteile belebt und bestätigt wurden. Als Figur hat Alerte damit ihre Schuldigkeit getan, sie verschwindet von der Szene, überlebt aber in der Sprache und Phantasie des Knaben als Objekt der Sehnsucht. Damit wird sie auf neue Weise relevant für die Frage nach der Kreativität.

3. DIFFERENZ UND KREATIVITÄT

Jedem, der das Parismärchen liest, müßte sich nicht nur durch die Einleitung, sondern auch durch das permanente direkte und indirekte Zitieren von Kunstwerken, von mythologischen Gestalten, von kunstvoll gearbeiteten Objekten, von Kunstgenuß und von Schönheitserfahrung die Vorstellung aufdrängen, daß es sich hier um ein Märchen über die Ursprünge der Kunst oder der künstlerischen Kreativität handelt und daß dies eng mit dem im Zentrum des poetischen Raumes gestalteten Kampfspiel zusammenhängt.

In dem Versuch, die Bedeutung des Spiels in diesem Text zu verstehen, war mir Winnicotts Buch «Vom Spiel zur Kreativität»⁸ sehr hilfreich. Beinahe hatte ich das Gefühl, hier das phantasievoll

⁸ D.W. Winnicott: Vom Spiel zur Kreativität. Stuttgart 1974.

gestaltet zu finden, was Winnicott den *potential space* nennt. Er faßt diesen *potential space* ja als eigenen Bereich zwischen Innenwelt und Außenwelt, als Übergangsbereich zwischen Subjektivem und objektiv Wahrgenommenen auf. Durch die Existenz und die Schaffung dieses Raums, in dem auch das «Übergangsobjekt» lokalisiert wird, lernt das Kind nach vertrauensvoll erfahrener Einheit mit der Mutter, sich von dieser zu trennen, lernt spielen. Allein in diesem schöpferischen Spannungsbereich sieht Winnicott den Ort kulturellen Erlebens und die Möglichkeit der Entwicklung von Kreativität. Ohne mich hier auf den Ausschließlichkeitscharakter dieser These einzulassen, kann ich in meiner Interpretation doch an einige Gedanken anschließen.

Der Knabe im Märchen kann nach erstem Verlust mütterlicher Bilder und nach einer Phase der Vaterorientierung Zugang zu einem Raum finden, der paradiesisch konnotiert ist und als Mutterwelt erscheint. Es ist eine Welt, in der er sich – verbildlicht im Musik- und Tanzmotiv – als getrennt und doch verbunden mit den Mutterfiguren erfahren kann und in der er Befriedigung erfährt. Diese wird (am Beispiel oraler Motive) selbst zunehmend differenziert dargestellt: *Äpfel* stellen den Ausgangspunkt seiner Differenzierungsleistungen dar, differenzierte *Obstgenüsse*, «Orangen, Feigen, Pfirschen und Trauben (...) Früchte fremder Länder» (59), bilden einen ersten Lohn seiner Anstrengung. Diese *gute Versorgung* befähigt ihn zum Spiel: «Ich hatte mich an den Früchten hinreichend gelabt, – „Nun wollen wir spielen“ sagte sie» (59). Im Medium des Spiels kann der Junge seine Selbst- und Objektwahrnehmung erproben und zu einer verstärkten Erfahrung von Selbst und Realität gelangen, inclusive einer ersten Form geschlechtlich differenzierter Identität. Indem das Spiel auf der Grenze zwischen Subjektivem und objektiv Wahrgenommenem sich abspielt (Alerte rühmt sich als Penthesilea zu kämpfen, der Knabe als Achill), und indem in diesem Spiel auf Zerstörung immer wieder die Erfahrung folgt, daß der Andere überlebt, wird aber nicht nur die *Realität* des Anderen außerhalb der eigenen Phantasie bestätigt, sondern zugleich die eigene Phantasie zu neuen unbedrohlichen Spielen ermutigt. Benjamin sagt: «Zu akzeptieren, daß der oder die Andere außerhalb meiner Phantasie existiert, ermöglicht, die Phantasie in das Selbst zurückzunehmen und zu spielen zu beginnen. Es öffnet einen Raum für Kreativität, der die unausweichliche Erfahrung des Verlassens wie des Verlustes des Anderen, sogar des Todes, enthalten kann.»⁹

Für den Bereich der Kunst und Kunstproduktion, den wir ja im Auge haben, ließe sich auf der Grundlage des so Verstandenen und in deutlicher Abhängigkeit davon eine Parallelebene zur Ebene der Identitätsentwicklung ausmachen. So wie und indem der Knabe vor dem Hintergrund mütterlicher Versorgung («hinreichend gelabt») und harmonischer Trennungs- und Einheitserfahrung mit Mutterfiguren (Musik, Tanz) spielend zu einer differenzierten Selbsterfahrung (auch geschlechtlich differenzierten) gelangt, so kann er nun auch vor dem Hintergrund einer breiten, sozusagen mütterlichen kulturellen Tradition zu eigener Kunstproduktion kommen. Von daher würde verständlich, warum in diesem Märchen auf der einen Seite beinahe alle großen abendländischen Kulturdiskurse: griechische Mythologie mit der Parissage, Krieg um Troja, Penthesilea, Bibel mit Schöpfungsgeschichte und neuem Testament, Elemente der christlich-jüdischen Kabbala, Kleists Penthesilea usw. *zitiert* aber sogleich *abgewandelt* werden. An der Parissagegeschichte habe ich es ja angedeutet: Drei Äpfel statt einem, Männer statt Frauen aussuchen usw. Im mütterlich abgesicherten Raum des Spiels wird das Kind im weitesten Sinne befähigt zum Umgang mit der Kultur (die ja selber eine Integrationsleistung von Subjektivität und Welterfahrung darstellt) und wird zugleich befähigt, den für die Identitätsentwicklung nötigen Übergang von Kontinuität zu getrenntem Nebeneinander, von Einheit zur Differenz produktiv zu nutzen.

⁹ Jessica Benjamin: “Die allmächtige Mutter: Ein psychoanalytischer Versuch über das Verhältnis von Phantasie und Realität. In: J.B.: “Phantasie und Geschlecht”. Studien über Idealisierungen, Anerkennung und Differenz. Frankfurt 1992, S. 82.

Die phantastisch symbiotische Erfahrung des Knaben Wolfgang mit seiner märchenerzählenden Mutter, von der Bettina von Arnim¹⁰ erzählt, die uns Goethe in *Dichtung und Wahrheit* aber nicht berichtet, wird im Erzählen vom Knaben, der ein selbstverfaßtes Märchen seinen Freunden erzählt, im Sinne des sich durch Differenzierung abzeichnenden Künstlertums überwunden. Das Knabenmärchen *Der neue Paris* markiert Differenz und Trennung als *conditio sine qua non* von Kreativität. Dieser Paris ist auserwählt und neu und er hat Neues *qua* Differenzierung zu verteilen. Das in diesem Kindheitstext formulierte Ziel seiner Differenzierungsaktivitäten, nämlich «glückliches Leben» von Frauen mit Gatten zu ermöglichen, weist aber mit der Implikation von Mutterschaft auf den kabbalistisch umkreisten Urgrund seines Künstlertums zurück, das paradiesisch- harmonische, spielmöglichende Leben im Umkreis beglückender Mutterbilder.

¹⁰ Die köstliche Geschichte wird von Bettina von Arnim in *Goethes Briefwechsel mit einem Kinde* (Köln 1960, S. 271) erzählt. Demnach hat Goethes Mutter dem Sohn Märchen erzählt, diese an einer aufregenden Stelle unterbrochen, sodaß das Kind selbst weiterdenken konnte. Wolfgang pflegte dann aufgeregt zur Großmutter zu gehen, dieser seine Vorstellung vom weiteren Ablauf des Geschehens zu erzählen, was die Großmutter wiederum der Mutter berichtete, die dann im Sinne des Kindes weitererzählen konnte. Eissler (a.a.O. S. 118-124) und Prokop (a.a.O. S. 285-287) berichten ausführlich darüber, heben beide die Verschmelzung von Mutter und Sohn im Medium kultureller Symbole hervor und die Förderung der kindlichen Größenphantasien durch das wunschgemäße Erzählen der Mutter. Prokop geht – sicher zurecht – skeptischer als Eissler mit der wörtlichen Faktentreue des Berichts um und räumt hier auch Bettinas Phantasien und ihrer eigenen Erfahrung mit der Rätin Goethe ein Mitspracherecht ein. Der Struktur nach hält aber auch sie die Schilderung der Situation für glaubhaft.

Claire Goll: Perverse weibliche Verhaltensstrategien als Symptom und Konsequenz der Sozialisation

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Im Jahre 1976, ein Jahr vor ihrem Tode publiziert Claire Goll mit ihren Memoiren *La poursuite du vent* das dritte Buch, das ihr Leben zum Thema hat. [Zuvor waren bereits 1941/42 *Der gestohlene Himmel* (dt. 1962) und 1971 *Traumtänzerin. Jahre der Jugend* (dt. 1971) erschienen]. Das Buch ist in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Journalisten Otto Hahn entstanden und verursacht bei seinem Erscheinen einen Illustriertenskandal. Es scheint, als hätte der deutsche Verleger sich diesen zunutze machen wollen, wenn er der deutschen Ausgabe den Titel *Ich verzeihe keinem. Eine literarische Chronique scandaleuse* mitgibt.¹ Wie dem auch sei, Tatsache ist, daß es der Autorin mit diesem Buch gelingt, das Interesse der (literarischen) Öffentlichkeit erneut auf sich zu ziehen, nachdem es seit der Celan-Kontroverse² recht still um sie geworden war.

Wenn man aber das Reißerische des Buches außer acht läßt und – um mit Sigrid Weigel zu sprechen – diesen Text einer Frau «nicht nach den darin vertretenen Positionen, sondern nach den durch die Schreibweise konstituierten Entwürfen von weiblichem Subjekt und historischem Sinn»

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¹ Barbara Glauert-Hesse schreibt in ihrem Nachsatz («Zur Edition», 186-192) zum Gestohlenen Himmel, daß Claire Goll ihre Memoiren selbst ins Deutsche übersetzen wollte: «Noch am 21. Januar 1977, vier Monate vor ihrem Tod, schrieb Claire Goll an den Verleger: »Ich allein kann aus der Verfolgung des Windes ein Kunstwerk machen, denn ich feile an jedem Wort« (191). Und im Nachwort zum Roman Ein Mensch ertrinkt (1993) weist Glauert-Hesse im Zusammenhang mit den Memoiren darauf hin, daß «bereits in der französischen Originalausgabe von 1976 derartig viele Fehler [enthalten sind], daß Claire Goll schon diese Edition eigentlich einstampfen lassen wollte. [...] Den deutschen Buchtitel hatte nicht sie, sondern der Verlag erfunden» (184).

² Claire Goll erwähnt Paul Celan in ihren Memoiren mit keiner Silbe, obwohl sie jahrelang gegen ihn polemisiert und versucht hatte nachzuweisen, daß er von Yvan abgeschrieben habe. In ihrer Wahrheit unbeirrbar, vergleicht sie mit der Akribie eines Buchhalters die Metaphern Golls mit denen Celans und weist auf den Tag genau nach, wer welche Metapher in welchem Gedicht zuerst verwendet hat. Für Claire steht fest, daß Celan vor allem aus *Traumkraut*, aber auch aus der *Pariser Georgika* und aus *Abendgesang* abgeschrieben habe. Diese Polemik teilt die literarische Öffentlichkeit in Deutschland und Frankreich in zwei Lager und viele (alte) Freunde wenden sich von Claire Goll ab.

(Weigel 1987, 19) beurteilt, muß man konstatieren, daß Claire Goll bemüht ist, sich selbst als Kind-Frau, femme fatale oder Melusinengestalt zu porträtierten. Ihr Hauptanliegen aber ist es – und wer die Memoiren gelesen hat, wird mir das bestätigen müssen – als die legendarische Ehefrau und Muse Yvan Golls in die (Literatur)Geschichte einzugehen. Zu diesem Zweck glättet sie nicht nur seine Biographie, wenn sie zunächst ihre Rivalin Paula Ludwig aus seinem Werk streicht. Die Autorin «re-konstruiert» und gestaltet auch die eigene Identität, was mitunter zu einer Fiktionalisierung der erinnerten Ereignisse führt. Das Verschweigen oder Frisieren bestimmter Ereignisse oder Fakten aber ist – darin stimme ich mit Annegret Heitmann überein – «keine Frage der Moral, sondern Spiel mit der Wahrheit [...], eine literarische Frage, durch die der Text bestimmte Aussagen macht» (Heitmann 1994, 46). Da diese Grenzüberschreitungen von Faktizität nach Fiktionalität nur in Relation zur Wahrheit sinngebend sind, ist bei der Analyse der Memoiren Claire Golls nicht die Frage nach der «absoluten Wahrheit» zu beantworten, sondern die Frage, *warum* sie von sich als weiblichem Subjekt gerade den Weiblichkeitsentwurf der Muse und der großen Liebenden proklamiert sehen will.

Unter Zuhilfenahme der Theorie Louise J. Kaplans über weibliche Perversionen – die sie in ihrem Buch *Female Perversions* (1991) entwickelt – werde ich zuerst versuchen zu verdeutlichen, daß das Begehren Claire Golls, den o.g. Weiblichkeitsmodellen zu entsprechen, Ausdruck ihres (unbewußten) Unbehagens ist, als Frau geboren zu sein: Eine Tatsache, der die Autorin äußerst ambivalent gegenübersteht, wenn sie einerseits bestrebt ist, sich dem Ideal-Bild von «der Frau» anzugleichen und andererseits die sozialen Normen, die an dieses Bild gekoppelt sind, mit ihrem Handeln ständig unterläuft. Danach – gewissermaßen als Ergänzung zu Kaplans Theorie – werde ich zeigen, daß sich diese perverse Ambivalenz nicht allein auf Claire Golls Umgang mit ihrer Weiblichkeit beschränkt, sondern auch in ihrem Schreiben wiederzufinden ist. Die Autorin schreibt zwar in männlichen Modalitäten, um die Aufnahme ihrer Werke in den literarischen Kanon sicherzustellen, untergräbt aber dessen literarischen Gesetze, wenn sie die «Realität» fortlaufend mit Hilfe ihrer Phantasmen entwertet.

Louise Kaplan beschäftigt sich – ausgehend von neueren Theorien über die Entwicklung des Kindes und die Annahme seiner «objektiven» Sexualität (u.a. Mahler, Benjamin, Fast) mit der Frage, was passiert, wenn diese Entwicklung nicht «normal» verläuft, wenn die traumatischen Erlebnisse der frühesten Kindheit im Laufe der Entwicklung nicht verarbeitet und neutralisiert werden. Sie erfaßt in ihrem Perversionskonzept aber nicht nur die pathologischen Formen der Sexualität, sondern schließt den Zwang, den die Geschlechterrollen auf das Individuum ausüben, sich an das von der Gesellschaft normierte Bild von der – in unserem Falle – weiblichen Identität anzugleichen, in ihre Betrachtungen ein. Kaplan sieht in dem rigiden Geschlechtsrollendiktat die Ursache für eine Vielzahl typisch weiblicher Perversionen, zu denen sie u.a. das Hörigkeitsskript und den Transvestismus zählt. Aber auch die Kleptomanie, die Magersucht oder die Selbstverstümmelung können – so Kaplan – Reaktionen auf die Erkenntnis sein, daß Weiblichkeit gleichbedeutend ist mit Minderwertigkeit. Unter dem Deckmantel der Rolle der perfekten Hausfrau, der fürsorglichen Mutter oder der idealen Gattin versteckt die Frau die eigene Unsicherheit über ihre Identität; lebt aber auch die daraus resultierenden Haß- und Rachegefühle aus.³ Mit diesen Szenarien versuchen die Frauen immer aufs neue, die traumatischen Erlebnisse der Kinderzeit zu überwinden: In symbolischer und unerkannter Form werden Trennung und Vereinigung, Kastration und Heilung, (Liebes)Verlust und Wiederfinden unendlich variiert und wiederholt.

Der Gedanke, daß Frauen a priori minderwertige Wesen sind, ist Claire Goll seit ihrer frühesten Kindheit vertraut. Die Mutter, deren Bild sich in der Erinnerung Claire Golls zum Bösen schlechthin verdichtet, regiert im Hause uneingeschränkt und mit harter Hand. Selbst an einen ungeliebten Mann gebunden, läßt sie ihre Frustrationen an den Kindern aus, die sie zu unbedingtem

³ Aus dieser Definition wäre zu schließen, daß die Perversion auch – wie die (Zwangs)Neurose – als Abwehrreaktion aufgefaßt werden könnte. Sie unterscheidet sich von dieser aber – so Kaplan – durch das Maß von Verzweiflung und Fixiertheit (14).

Gehorsam jeglicher Autorität(spersion) gegenüber erzieht. Besonders die Tochter muß es entgelten, wenn sie sie mit Methoden, die durchaus sadistisch zu nennen sind, zwingt, sich ihren Forderungen und Demütigungen zu unterwerfen. So hat die Autorin nie gelernt, sich als Subjekt mit eigenen Gefühlen, In-teressen und Bedürfnissen, das unabhängig vom Willen der Mutter existiert, zu sehen, weil sie in den frühen Lebensphasen keinerlei Gelegenheit gehabt hat, die Mutter zu «zerstören» (Winnicott) und so zu erfahren, daß diese den Angriff überleben kann, ohne das Kind aus Vergeltung zu «verschlingen». Da der Konflikt nicht intersubjektiv gelöst wird, verlagert sich die kindliche Aggression nach innen, der Konflikt bleibt intrapsychisch bestehen. Zudem wird Claire Goll von der Mutter dazu erzogen, sich dem sozio-kulturellen Konstrukt von Weiblichkeit anzugleichen, was – grob verallgemeinert – bedeutet, kein Eigenleben zu beanspruchen, sondern sich mit Leib und Seele in den Dienst der Familie bzw. des Mannes zu stellen. Die Mutter zwingt die Tochter, sich den für die Frau von der Gesellschaft tradierten Normen und Werten zu unterwerfen, die für die Mutter selbst aber nicht zu gelten scheinen. Aufgrund dieser Erziehung durchdrungen vom Gedanken der Inferiorität des weiblichen Wesens, ist es dem Kind nicht möglich, sich aus der primärnarzißtisch/imaginären Beziehung mit der Mutter zu lösen und sich mit ihr als weiblichem Wesen zu identifizieren. Stattdessen hält es an seinen psychischen omnipotenten Selbstrepräsentanzen fest und ist bestrebt, ein Identifikationsobjekt zu fin-den, das ihm seinen Subjektstatus, seine Handlungsfähigkeit bestätigt. Da der Vater – denn er ist in der Regel diese andere Person – durch seine emotionelle Abwesenheit das Begehren (der Handlungsfähigkeit) der Tochter und damit ihr Selbstwertgefühl negativ beeinflusst, kann erneut die Trennung von der Mutter nicht vollzogen werden. Die Beziehung zu ihm ist – genau wie die zur Mutter – von Doppeldeutigkeit und Ambivalenz bestimmt, wenn sie den Vater aufgrund seines Verhaltens sowohl den Kindern als auch seiner Frau gegenüber ablehnt, den für sie unerreichbaren Vater aber gleichzeitig (über)idealisiert und als Repräsentanten ihres Begehrens zum Idol für das eigene Ich-Ideal erhebt: Eine Konstellation, die in ihrer Paradoxalität mit der Kaplanschen Definition der Perversion übereinstimmt und die Gefahr der masochistischen Unterwerfung in sich birgt.⁴

Wiewohl generell gezeigt werden könnte, daß alle zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen, die Claire Goll in den Memoiren beschreibt, Abbilder der frühen introjizierten Objektbeziehungen sind und die Suche der Autorin nach der «guten» Mutterimago symbolisieren, möchte ich mich in meiner Beweisführung auf einige Aspekte der Beziehung der Autorin zu Yvan Goll konzentrieren, den sie nach ihrer gescheiterten Ehe mit Heinrich Studer in der Schweiz kennenlernt; zu einer Zeit also, in der die Autorin zum ersten Mal in ihrem Leben versucht, sowohl die Grenzen ihres sozialen Umfeldes als auch die der von ihr inkorporierten weiblichen Verhaltensmuster zu übersteigen, wenn sie sich dem Journalismus verschreibt. Die Erklärung dafür, daß Claire Goll eigentlich recht schnell in die Verbindung mit Yvan Goll einwilligt, obwohl sie in den Memoiren den gegenteiligen Eindruck zu erwecken versucht, ist wiederum zweigliedrig. Zum einen ist es der Versuch, sich endgültig von der Mutter zu lösen und zum anderen erweist sich die moralische Indoktrination durch die Mutter als so stark, daß sie nur allzu schnell bereit ist, einzusehen, daß auf die Dauer ein Mann an ihrer Seite ihr mehr Erfolg im öffentlichen Leben einer patriarchalischen Gesellschaft garantieren kann, als alles berufliche Engagement. Da Claire Golls Selbstbewußtsein zum großen Teil von dem Urteil der Außenwelt abhängig ist, will sie sich mit dieser Ehe nicht nur die Anerkennung ihrer Umgebung und die Sicherheiten einer festen Bindung sichern, sondern sie hofft auch, diese Ehe als Deckmantel für ihre verbotenen Ambitionen nutzen zu können, umsomehr, als Yvan sie anspornt, ihre Schriftstellerei seriös zu nehmen. Diese Überlegung führt zu der paradoxen Situation, daß Claire Goll – die sich bemüht, das Bild von sich als arbeitender Frau mit dem

⁴ Benjamin (1988) betont in dem Bedürfnis des Mädchens die Vaterfigur zu idealisieren, nicht so sehr den Wunsch nach Trennung von der Mutter, sondern das Verlangen des Mädchens, vom Vater als Subjekt anerkannt zu werden. Aber auch Benjamin führt aus, daß diese Konstellation in einer sadomasochistischen Beziehung enden kann, wenn die Vaterfigur nicht bereit ist, diese Anerkennung zu gewähren.

soziokulturellen Bild von «der Frau» in Einklang zu bringen – sich dem Deutungsmuster in dem Maße nähert, wie sie versucht, es zu überschreiten. Im Laufe ihres Zusammenlebens ordnet sie sich mehr und mehr dem (künstlerischen) Einfluß Yvans unter, spielt die Rolle der hilflosen Kind-Frau und scheint keinesfalls geneigt zu sein, die Bilder, die sie von Weiblichkeit hat, als kulturelles Konstrukt erkennen zu wollen, sondern setzt alles darein, diesen Identitäten zu entsprechen. Wiedereinmal lautet die Formel für die Situation der Autorin: (All)Machtsstreben versus soziale Unterwerfung. Claire Goll zieht sich in ihre Liebe zu Yvan wie in den schützenden Mutterschoß zurück. Sie verhält sich ihm gegenüber äußerst abhängig, erwartet, daß er sie hegt und pflegt wie ein kleines Kind. Ihre an den Tag gelegte «Hilflosigkeit» kann als ein Anzeichen dafür interpretiert werden, daß sie, obwohl sie sich in all ihren Äußerungen bewußt von der Mutter distanziert, unbewußt noch immer an dem kindlichen Verlangen nach der guten Mutter festhält, für die es selbstverständlich ist, die Bedürfnisse des Kindes zu erfüllen. Claire nimmt Yvan gegenüber die Haltung eines Kindes an, das in seiner Abhängigkeit von den Elternimages bereit ist, sich deren Wünschen unterzuordnen, sie wird ihm in gewisser Weise hörig. Gleichzeitig steckt in dieser gespielten naiven, spontanen Kindlichkeit auch ein Rest von dem idealen Fraubild der Romantik. Aus dieser Verankerung ihrer Rolle im historischen Kontext zieht sie Sicherheit für ihr Selbstbewußtsein und den Mut, diese Rolle analog dem historischen Vorbild um die Dimension der Muse zu erweitern. Mit dieser Handlungsweise Claire Golls erreicht ihre Selbstverleugnung in der Beziehung, die sie ja ursprünglich eingegangen war, um sich im herrschenden Kulturbetrieb etablieren zu können, ohne die ihr als Frau gesteckten sozio-kulturellen Grenzen auf Dauer unterlaufen zu müssen, ihren ersten Höhepunkt.

Als sie erkennen muß, daß Yvan trotz ihrer absoluten Unterwerfung andere Beziehungen anknüpft, fühlt sie sich durch die Untreue Yvans der «guten» Mutterimago und des «magischen Phallus» beraubt und sieht nur *eine* Möglichkeit, sich ihrer «Besitztümer», die faktisch die Grundlage ihrer Identität und damit ihrer Existenz bilden, erneut zu versichern: Sich selbst um jeden Preis mit dem Bild, das Yvan ihrer Meinung nach von der idealen Frau hat, in Übereinstimmung zu bringen. Jedes neue Abenteuer, das Yvan eingeht, spornt sie an, sich seiner Kontrolle und seiner erotischen Macht noch stärker als bisher in der Hoffnung zu unterwerfen, daß er sie schließlich der jeweiligen Rivalin vorziehen wird (dabei spielt es keine Rolle ob diese Rivalin wirklich oder nur in ihrer Phantasie existiert). In ihrem Bestreben, die Wiedervereinigung mit Yvan unter allen Umständen herbeizuführen, ist sie selbstverständlich bereit, sich selbst die Schuld für die (zeitweilige) Trennung zu geben. Das Muster dieser Seite der Beziehung zu Yvan Goll gleicht auffallend dem des Verhältnisses des kleinen Mädchens zur Mutter. Trotz oder gerade wegen seiner Abenteuer ist Yvan für Claire die allmächtige Person, die (zu) ihr gehört: Durch sein Kommen und Gehen ist er derjenige, der ihr Liebe geben oder verweigern kann. Je größer ihre Verzweiflung über den Verlust Yvans, desto gloriöser geht sie aus der Versöhnung hervor, denn die Tatsache, daß sie imstande ist, Yvan «zurückzuerobern», speist ihr Selbstwertgefühl. So gesehen erweist sich die (gegenseitige) Untreue als ein unbewußter, aber notwendiger Bestandteil in der (erneuten) Inszenierung des frühkindlichen Erlebnisses der Trennung. Durch die ständige Wiederholung der Trennung, auf die jetzt – im Unterschied zur Kindheit – eine Versöhnung folgt, vermag Claire Goll das traumatische Erlebnis zu beherrschen. Aber der Preis für dieses Überlebensritual ist hoch. Ihre Ehe nimmt immer mehr die Form einer Instanz an, in der Yvan die Partei ist, die sich die Freiheit nimmt, nach den eigenen Wünschen zu handeln, während Claire diejenige zu sein scheint, die versucht, seinen Ansprüchen zu genügen, ihm gehorcht und seine Entscheidungen akzeptiert, sie wird zum Herr-Knecht-Verhältnis. In dem Moment, wo Yvan Goll sie (endgültig) verläßt – dh. Paula Ludwig auch zu seiner literarischen Gefährtin erhebt – sieht die Autorin in der Einnahme einer Überdosis Veronal die letzte Möglichkeit, die Trennung vom geliebten Objekt aufzuheben und damit die Unabhängigkeit des Selbst in der freiwilligen, aber totalen Unterwerfung unter den «Anderen» zu erreichen. Für Claire Goll scheint dies nur mehr möglich, indem sie die eigenen Ich-Grenzen überschreitet, durch Vernichtung und Verlust des Selbst. Der eigene Tod ist für sie nicht nur Ausdruck höchsten Leidens, in ihm weist sie auch Yvan der Öffentlichkeit als den eigentlich Schuldigen an ihrem

Tode an. Der Suizidversuch der Autorin beleuchtet nicht nur ihre Unfähigkeit mit ihren Ängsten umzugehen, sondern offenbart auch den sado-masochistischen Charakter ihrer Beziehung zu Yvan. Mit der Drohung, die eigene Existenz zu vernichten, versucht sie letztendlich die Durchsetzung des eigenen Willens zu erzwingen.⁵ Diese Überlegung stimmt mit der Theorie Kaplans überein, nach der die Überbetonung der weiblichen Rolle als eine unbewußte Strategie interpretiert werden muß, die die sadistischen Wünsche der Frau dem männlichen Geschlecht gegenüber sowohl enthüllt als auch verbirgt. Obwohl die Autorin die männliche Position längst verinnerlicht hat, kann sie dem männlichen Geschlecht nicht verzeihen, daß es sie nicht als Gleiche unter Gleichen in seine Reihen aufnimmt: Die Umkehrung des eigenen Begehrens (nach Handlungsfähigkeit und Subjektstatus) in weibliche Unterwerfung wäre demnach als Ausdruck des Hasses in erotischer Form zu werten.

Mit dem Verlust Yvans wird auch ihre Musen-Identität für sie wertlos. Da sie keine andere hat, bleibt ihr nur die Möglichkeit, sich ihrerseits von einem Liebhaber bestätigen zu lassen, daß sie wert ist, geliebt zu werden, oder anders gesagt: Claire Goll (miß)braucht die eigenen Liebesabenteuer unbewußt dazu, ihr Selbstbewußtsein zu stärken und sich eine neue Identität aufzubauen. Bereits als Kind durch den Lebenswandel der Mutter sensuell stimuliert, versucht sie jetzt – wie diese – ihre sexuellen Phantasien hinter der Maske der *femme fatale* auszuleben. In dem Verweigern oder Gewähren ihrer Gunst wiederholt sich für sie das kindliche Verlangen nach der mütterlichen Liebe. Nur sind jetzt die Vorzeichen umgekehrt: Sie will nicht mehr die Suchende, sondern diejenige sein, die gibt oder verweigert. Da sie jedoch vordergründig versucht, in und durch die Liebe zu ihrem jeweiligen Liebhaber zu leben, oder anders ausgedrückt, ihre primärnarzißtischen Wünsche auf die Beziehung zu ihrem Partner projiziert, ist jeder Beziehung der unvermeidliche Mißerfolg gewissermaßen von Anfang an eingeschrieben.

Die ständige Suche der Autorin nach dem passenden Liebhaber ließe sich demnach auch als ein unbewußter Versuch interpretieren, das infantile Trauma, das die erzwungene Aufgabe der omnipotenten Geschlechtsrepräsentanzen zweifellos darstellt, zu kompensieren. Nur eine in soziokultureller Hinsicht wertvollere männliche Person, ein Liebhaber, kann ihr ihre Weiblichkeit bestätigen und ihr gleichzeitig das Gefühl geben, *perfekt* zu sein. Es versteht sich von selbst, daß die Perfektion, die von Claire Goll angestrebt wird, nur mit einem «Superstar» realisiert werden kann; mit einem Mann, der auf mindestens einem Gebiet Herausragendes zu leisten vermag.⁶

Die Autorin beeilt sich stets hinzuzufügen, daß sie ihre Erfolge bei Männern «ihrer Weiblichkeit» zu verdanken hat: einem Begriff, mit dem sie die weibliche Identität auf die Attraktivität des weiblichen Körpers – auf das Äußerliche also – reduziert. Aber auch hier zeigt sich wieder ihre Ambivalenz. Indem sie ihren Körper durch die Überbetonung ihrer weiblichen Schönheit fetischisiert, versucht noch die erwachsene Claire Goll, der Geschlechtsrollenauffassung ihrer Mutter (und damit der der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft) zu genügen und zugleich sichert sie sich damit den «Blick» des Mannes. So wie die Adoration der Männer für die Autorin die Bestätigung dafür ist, daß sie wirklich existiert, ist ihre weibliche «Verkleidung» die Struktur, die sie vor ihrer Angst vor endgültiger Fragmentation in ein männliches und ein weibliches Partial-Ich schützt. Gleichzeitig ist sie sich natürlich der Tatsache bewußt, daß sie mit ihren schriftstellerischen Ambitionen und ihrer Lebensweise die Grenzen der weiblich-passiven Rolle überschreitet. Die (drohende) Erfüllung

⁵ Am 23. Juli 1938 schreibt Claire Goll an Yvan: «Und wenn ich auch in diesen Minuten alles verzeihe, habe ich noch eine heilige Bitte an Dich: lebe nicht mit Paula L. Du kannst nicht mit dem Menschen das Dasein genießen, der es mir geraubt, der seit vielen Monaten wußte um das Nahen des notwendigen Endes. Eine böse Magie liegt seit 9 Jahren über uns: eine Sühne bist Du mir schuldig für den Kummer dieser langen Spanne Zeit, dem ich nicht mehr gewachsen bin und der mich ausbrechen ließ in zornige Schreie anstatt in Liebesworte» (Goll/Goll 1981, 232).

⁶ Vgl. hierzu u.a. die Tagebucheintragung Claire Golls vom 21. Oktober 1917: «Vielleicht liebe ich nur Deine Bedeutung. Das eine ist jedoch sicher, daß ich ihn ohne die Begabung nicht lieben würde. Der Mensch I. genügt mir nicht.»

verbotenen Begehrens ruft Angstgefühle hervor. Um diese Angst zu vermeiden, muß Buße getan werden. So erweisen sich ihre männliche Aktivität und ihre sexuelle Promiskuität auf der latenten Ebene als Quelle für ihren Masochismus; sie nähren ihren Hang zum Leiden und ihr Bedürfnis nach Strafe. Das einzige Rezept, diesem Dilemma aus Schuldgefühl-Angst-Strafe-Buße zu entkommen, scheint für Claire Goll ge-wesen zu sein, ein neues Abenteuer einzugehen. Wenn sie mit 86 Jahren noch immer behauptet:

Ich wollte es lieber im Leben zu Erfolg bringen, als eine bloße literarische Karriere zu machen. Als Frau wußte ich, daß ich es mit der Kraft der männlichen Inspiration keinesfalls aufnehmen konnte (Goll 1980, 113).

Wenn ich Goll dichterisch antworten konnte, hat er mich dazu erzogen, mir Talent gegeben. Er war mein Meister, dessen Überlegenheit ich anerkenne (Goll 1980, 164).

ist diese Aussage – meiner Meinung nach – nicht in erster Linie als Denunzierung des weiblichen Intellekts zu werten, sondern vielmehr als logische Konsequenz ihres Lebens. Sie sieht den beruflichen Erfolg als Domäne des Mannes und empfindet dementsprechend den eigenen schriftstellerischen Erfolg als Anschlag auf ihr Weiblichkeitsgefühl. Ihr Erfolg wird für Claire Goll zu einer Quelle der Angst, «weil», wie Ruth Moulton ausführt, «sie [Erfolg und Leistung] die Erfüllung verborgener Abhängigkeitswünsche zu durchkreuzen drohen» (1986, 171).

Gleichzeitig kann die Autorin, deren Leben sich als eine Suche nach dem verlorenen Paradies umschreiben läßt, aber auf eine literarische Arbeit nicht verzichten. So wie sie als Jugendliche versucht hatte, den Status der narzißtischen Ganzheit über die Religion zurückzuerobern, setzt sie später ihre Hoffnung auf die ideale Liebe. Aber auch die Liebe erweist sich als nicht stark genug, um das Gefühl des Getrenntseins überwinden zu können. Sie kann keine Transgression auf Dauer bewirken, sondern nur Momente des Eins-Seins erschaffen. Was Claire Goll im Leben nicht gelingt, ermöglicht ihr jedoch die Phantasie. Mit Hilfe der Sprache glückt es ihr, ihre Trennung von der symbiotisch-nar-zißtischen Welt für die Dauer des Schreibprozesses aufzuheben. Ihre Schreibstrategien und ihre biographischen Daten beeinflussen sich wechselseitig, bilden gewissermaßen eine Einheit, oder anders gesagt: Claire Goll braucht *auch* die Schriftstellerei, um die kindlichen Traumata überleben zu können. Die Memoiren der Autorin bilden in diesem Prozeß den Höhepunkt und zugleich abschließenden Versuch, die Idee ihres Lebens zu vertexten und damit zu realisieren. Das Schreiben stellt für Claire Goll *die* Möglichkeit dar, ihr Ich in einem konstruierten Ideal aufgehen zu lassen, das es ihr ermöglicht, das eigene reale Ich zu negieren. So wird Ambivalenz zur Perversion und Schreiben zur Subversion, wenn sie soziale/öffentliche und individuelle/private Normen und Werte zu akzeptieren scheint und sie durch ihre Phantasmen sofort wieder außer Kraft setzt. Außerdem wird mit dem kreativen Prozeß nicht nur die Glaubwürdigkeit ihres weiblichen Selbsthasses besiegelt, sondern auch das Begehren der männlichen Kunstkritik intendiert, oder anders gesagt: In dem Bestreben dem Manne zu gefallen, wird noch der schöpferische Akt zur Perversion.

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Hermeneutische Psychotherapie

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In wissenschaftlichen begründeten Psychotherapieverfahren ist in den letzten Jahren eine abnehmende Tendenz zu verzeichnen, verschiedene Verfahren und therapeutische Ansätze – häufig unter verzerrender Darstellung der jeweils anderen – zu polarisieren und eher patienten- und klientenzentriert als methodenzentriert zu arbeiten. Neben den Vorteilen dieser Entwicklung ist auch der Nachteil eines undurchsichtigen psychotherapeutischen Polypragmatismus zu beachten.

Wir werden uns dem Bemühen um eine «Allgemeine Psychotherapie» von einer anthropologischen Vergegenwärtigung der menschlichen Kommunikation her nähern, weil wir zu der Auffassung gelangt sind, daß in der Interpretation empirischer Befunde der Psychotherapieforschung (s. z.B. Grawe 1995) Fragen aufgeworfen werden, die in anderem wissenschaftlichem Bezugsrahmen wenn nicht gelöst, so doch bereits eingehend und auf hohem Niveau bearbeitet worden sind.

Im Zentrum meiner Bemühungen stehen die allgemeinen Grundlagen des psychotherapeutischen Gespräches auf der denen die einzelnen psychotherapeutischen Techniken aufbauen. Zur Bestimmung dieser Grundlagen gehe ich vom «Narrativ» konkreter Kasuistiken und Behandlungsprozesse aus. Die spezifische Struktur dieser Behandlungsprozesse werde ich mit Hilfe der anthropologischen Konzeption des psychotherapeutischen Gesprächs transparent machen.

1. GRUNDLAGEN EINER «HERMENEUTISCHEN PSYCHOTHERAPIE»

In der philosophischen Hermeneutik von Hans Georg Gadamer findet sich ein erkenntnis- und wissenschaftstheoretisch ausgewiesener Weg, das subjektive und emotionale Erleben des psychotherapeutischen Geschehens mit einem wissenschaftlich rationalen Anspruch zu begreifen. Diese Hermeneutik hat gegenüber den hermeneutischen Ansätzen von Ricoeur (1965), Habermas (1968) und Lorenzer (1977) einen entscheidenden Vorteil: Sie weist «Hermeneutik» nicht nur als Methode der Geisteswissenschaften auf, sondern als anthropologisches Fundament der kommunikativen Existenz. Die Hermeneutik von H.G. Gadamer (1960, 1986) zeigt, daß der Mensch seine Erfahrungen notwendigerweise dialogisch gestalten muß. Weil die Hermeneutik Gadamers die Prinzipien der dialogischen Gestaltung von Erfahrung und Erleben präzise herausarbeitet, ist sie für das psychotherapeutische Gespräch von großer Relevanz.

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Ein weiterer Vorzug der Hermeneutik Gadammers gegenüber den vorgenannten Auffassungen von Hermeneutik besteht darin, daß sie den traditionellen Rahmen der Dichotomie von Natur- und Geisteswissenschaften überschreitet und auch der naturwissenschaftlichen Erfahrung einen Platz im hermeneutischen Geschehen einzuräumen weiß.

Drittens begründet Gadamer eine für die Psychotherapie wesentliche Auffassung der kommunikativen Interaktion als Gestaltungsprozeß. Im Gegensatz zu einer informationstheoretischen Auffassung des Gesprächs belegt Gadamer die Notwendigkeit der sprachlichen und psychisch repräsentierenden Gestaltungsarbeit, um sich überhaupt als konsistentestes Wesen erfahren zu können (s.u.).

2. PRINZIPIEN EINER HERMENEUTISCHEN PSYCHOTHERAPIE

In allgemeinsten Definition ist «Verstehen» in der Hermeneutik Gadammers «gelebter Auslegungsprozeß der Interaktion des Subjektes mit seiner Welt». Im nachfolgenden wollen wir differenzieren, welcher psychischer Akte sich dieser Auslegungsprozeß bedient.

2.1. *Geschichtlichkeit – Erinnerung*

Die Geschichtlichkeit des Erkennens und Erlebens stellt die erste hermeneutische Grundannahme dar. Der geschichtliche Abstand, auch zu sich selbst, wird durch Er-innerung gleichzeitig gebildet und überwunden. Gadamer (1986, S.9) spricht von der allgemeinen «hermeneutischen Funktion des Abstandes». Tiefenpsychologisch orientierte Psychotherapeuten gehen davon aus, daß lebensgeschichtliche Erfahrungen in der psychischen Struktur Spuren hinterlassen. Zeitlebens befinden sich menschliche Wesen – zumeist unbewußt – in einem von Stimmungen und Empfindungen getragenen «Gespräch» mit Eltern, Geschwistern, Liebespartnern, Konkurrenten und vielen anderen. Diese Erfahrungen konstituieren im Zusammenspiel mit biologischen Prozessen unsere psychische Struktur des Menschen.

Die Psychoanalyse hat diese vielen Menschen zugängliche Alltagserfahrung mittels ihres Konzeptes der psychischen Organisation beschrieben: «Das Ich ist der Niederschlag der gehaltenen Objektbesetzungen» (Freud, 1923, S. 257). Die moderne Psychoanalyse hat durch die Theorie der «inneren Objekte» (Klein 1957) die Dynamik von vergangenen Beziehungen zu den Mitmenschen weiter differenziert.

Freud hat gezeigt welche schädlichen Folgen eintreten, wenn es Patienten gelingt, sich gegen die Präsenz des Erlebten, der «inneren Objekte» und der damit verbundenen Affekte zu wehren, weil diese ihnen zu bedrückend, zu beängstigend oder zu beschämend erscheinen. Das Resultat gelungener Verdrängung und Abspaltung ist nicht nur eine Einbuße der inneren Differenziertheit. An psychischen und körperlichen Symptomen ist ablesbar, daß die verdrängten und abgespaltenen Anteile virulent bleiben. Auch wenn deutliche psychische und psychosomatische Symptome ausbleiben, so ist der Preis für die Erleichterung, die die Verdrängung und Abspaltung wesentlicher Erfahrungen bescheren mag, in Form von Entleerung, diffusen Verstimmungen und gestörtem Selbstgefühl hoch.

Wenn es unseren Patienten gelingt, wie anderenorts (Holm-Hadulla 1995b) geschildert, schwierige Situationen und Konflikte mit wichtigen Beziehungspersonen zu erinnern, so ist dies nicht nur ein Auffinden des Faktischen. Wichtiger ist die «Aneignung» von persönlicher und sozialer Geschichte. Damit wird passives Geschehen zu aktivem Erleben.

Die Inbesitznahme ihrer persönlichen Geschichte und ihrer «Lebenswelt» wird für viele unserer Patienten erst durch die Psychotherapie möglich. Psychotherapie wäre dann als Anregung aufzufassen, Erinnerung zu gestalten und die Autorenschaft für das eigene Leben zu übernehmen. Dieses an der literarischen Gestaltung (s.u.) geschulte Modell von Erinnerung ergänzt in einer wesentlichen Hinsicht die physiologischen, neuronalen, kybernetischen und cognitv-psychologischen Modelle vom «Funktionieren des Denkens»: Es hat die Welt «Sinngestaltender Repräsentationen» zum Gegenstand.

2.2. Sprache – Repräsentierende Gestaltung

Wahrnehmung und Erinnerung ist wesentlich an sprachliche und bildhaft szenische Gestaltung gebunden. Die große Bedeutung der sprachlichen Gestaltung von Geschehnissen, die erst durch die Symbolisierung zu strukturierten psychischen Erfahrungen werden, haben uns Künstler, z.B. die großen Romanciers dieses Jahrhunderts, vor Augen gestellt. Marcel Proust zeichnet in seiner «Recherche» nicht die Vergangenheit einfach nach, sondern kann sie nur durch die sprachlich gestaltete Erinnerung als eigene erleben. James Joyce findet in seinem «Ulysses» durch die literarische Ausarbeitung erst Anschluß an seine Geschichte und Identität, und Thomas Mann erreicht eine höchst persönliche Inbesitznahme seiner eigener Existenz - ins Mythische und Weltgeschichtliche gewendet - im Josepchs-Roman.

Diese Dokumente des menschlichen Phantasielebens sind für den Psychotherapeuten relevant, weil sie die Bedeutung der Vergegenwärtigung subjektiver Geschichte für «psychische Gesundheit» illustrieren (s. Holm-Hadulla 1995a)

In dieser Hinsicht erhebt Gadamer die sprachliche Gestaltung zum zweiten hermeneutischen Grundprinzip. Seiner Konzeption folgend dient Sprache in der Kommunikation nicht vorwiegend als Zeichensystem, das der Übermittlung von Informationen dient. Sprache wird in einem weiteren Sinn gebraucht, so wie wir etwa von der Sprache der Natur reden:

«Nicht nur in Rede und Schrift, sondern in allen menschlichen Schöpfungen ist "Sinn" eingegangen, den herauszulesen eine hermeneutische Aufgabe ist. Somit läßt sich begründen, daß alle Welterkenntnis sprachlich gefaßt ist». (Gadamer 1986, S.9)

Auch hier ist – wie bei der Geschichtlichkeit des Verstehens -die «Abstandserfahrung» von fundamentaler Bedeutung. Hierbei muß es sich nicht immer um einen geschichtlichen Abstand handeln. Der Abstand erweist sich auch in der Gleichzeitigkeit, z.B. in der Begegnung zwischen Personen, «die im Gespräch erst den gemeinsamen Grund suchen» (a.a.O., S.9) als ein hermeneutisches Moment.

Die Sprachlichkeit in die wir hineingeboren werden, wird in Gadamers Hermeneutik als Angelpunkt menschlicher Selbst- und Welterkenntnis durchsichtig:

«Die Sprache ist überhaupt kein Instrument, kein Werkzeug.... Wir sind vielmehr in allem Wissen von uns selbst und allem Wissen von der Welt immer schon von der Sprache umgriffen, die unsere eigene ist. Wir wachsen auf, wir lernen die Welt kennen, wir lernen die Menschen kennen und am Ende uns selbst, indem wir sprechen lernen. Sprechen lernen heißt..., die Vertrautheit und Erkenntnis der Welt selbst, und wie sie uns begegnet, erwerben» (1986, S.148f.)

So geht es also im hermeneutischen Gespräch als Modell des psychotherapeutischen Gesprächs um die Herstellung einer gewissen «Einheit der Erfahrung» (a.a.O. S.149) und «Weltorientierung» (a.a.O. S.6). Sprechen über Geschehenes dient dessen Integration in einen konsistenten Erfahrungszusammenhang.

Der Gewinn neuer Perspektiven ist in der philosophischen Hermeneutik an die sprachliche Gestaltung gebunden. Aber Sprache hat nicht nur diese Erkenntnisfunktion, sondern sie trägt und strukturiert die individuelle und kollektive menschliche Existenz. Gadamer (1986) faßt in seinem Aufsatz «Die Universalität des hermeneutischen Problems» zusammen:

«Wir kennen das alle, z.B. bei dem Versuch des Übersetzens, im Leben oder in der Literatur oder wo immer, dieses seltsame, un-ruhige und quälende Gefühl, solange man nicht das richtige Wort hat. Wenn man es hat, den Ausdruck gefunden hat (es braucht nicht immer ein Wort zu sein, ...), dann ist etwas, "zustande" gekommen, dann haben wir wieder einen Halt inmitten der Flut des fremden Sprachgeschehens, dessen unendliche Variation die Orientierung verlieren läßt. Was ich so beschreibe ist aber die Weise der menschlichen Welterfahrung überhaupt. Ich nenne sie hermeneutisch» (a.a.O. S. 246)

Die elementare Rolle, die der Sprache für die Konstitution einer strukturierten persönlichen Welt zukommt, wird hier offenkundig. Wir können diesen Standpunkt zugunsten der bildhaften Gestaltung in der präsentativen Symbolik (Langer 1946) erweitern. Wahrscheinlich würde Gadamer nicht widersprechen, wenn wir präsentative Gestaltungen wie den freien Einfall, bildhaft szenische Phantasien und dem Traum eine ähnlich strukturierende Funktion zumessen wie der gesprochenen Sprache.

2.3. *Dialog – Interaktionelles Erleben*

Wir wollen jetzt ein weiteres für die Psychotherapie wichtiges Element der philosophischen Hermeneutik beschreiben: Das interaktionelle Erleben.

Der Begriff des Erlebens ist für die psychologische Wendung der Hermeneutik bei Dilthey zentral gewesen. Gadamer leitet die erkenntnisbildende Funktion des Erlebens zunächst aus der dialogischen Natur sprachlicher Welterkenntnis ab. Er erhebt die dialogische Struktur des Erkennens zu einem hermeneutischen Grundprinzip. Der Ausgangspunkt ist hierbei, daß der objektive und scheinbar voraussetzungslose wissenschaftliche Diskurs als solcher keine angemessene Zugangsweise zu der individuellen und vielschichtigen Erfahrung darstellt, wie wir sie in einer menschlichen Begegnung machen. Zumindest herrscht ein Spannungsfeld zwischen Lebenswelt und Wissenschaft, zwischen der vielgestaltigen individuellen Lebenserfahrung und den zu anonymen Zeichen erstarrten Aussagen der Wissenschaft. Die Hermeneutik tritt in dieses Spannungsfeld ein, indem sie Sinn und Bedeutung im Erleben der mitmenschlichen Situation ansiedelt.

Die Erschaffung eines konsistenten Erfahrungszusammenhangs ist, wenn wir Gadamer weiter folgen, ein kommunikativer Prozeß. Hierbei wird das «Vorverständnis» der Gesprächsteilnehmer im Vorgang des Verstehens eingesetzt und, im Gegensatz zu einem festgefügtten Vorwissen, das sich einfache empirische Bestätigung sucht, verflüssigt und korrigiert, um neue Perspektiven zu gewinnen. Dabei bringt der Verstehende seine eigenen Voraussetzungen systematisch ins Spiel:

«Der produktive Beitrag des Interpreten gehört auf eine unaufhebbare Weise zum Sinn des Verstehens selbst. Das legitimiert nicht das Private und Arbiträre subjektiver Voreingenommenheiten...» (Gadamer 1986, S.109)

Das eigene Verstehen konstituiert sich im Verstehen des anderen als eine dialektische Erfahrung, die nie vollendet ist:

«Vollendete Erfahrung ist nicht Vollendung des Wissens, sondern vollendete Offenheit für neue Erfahrung» (a.a.O., S.271)

Bei Hegel vollendet sich das verstehende Tun des einen in der verstehenden Wahrnehmung des anderen. Es ist damit Konstruktion einer geteilten Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit. Gadamer formuliert dies folgendermaßen:

«Hier gelangt offenbar ein zentrales Motiv aller Hermeneutik, nämlich die Überwindung der Fremdheit und die Aneignung des Fremden, zu seiner besonderen, ja einzigartigen Ausgestaltung.... Im Gespräch sein heißt aber, über sich hinaus sein, mit dem anderen denken und auf sich zurückkommen als auf einen anderen». (a.a.O., S.369)

Für die therapeutische Begegnung ist die mit dieser Perspektivenübernahme ausgelöste Veränderung sowohl auf der kognitiven als auf der emotionalen Ebene relevant.

Sie kann auch unter dem hermeneutischen Gesichtspunkt des Konstitutionszusammenhangs von Teil und Ganzem betrachtet werden. Ein einzelnes Ereignis kann für die Hermeneutik nur unter Bezugnahme auf das interaktionelle Ganze verstanden werden. Das Verstehen der einzelnen Äußerung wirkt in das Ganze zurück und verleiht diesem eine neue Prägnanz. So werden höchst individuelle einzelne Ausdrucksformen menschlichen Seins, sei es ein Text, eine psychoanalytische Szene oder irgend eine andere Lebensäußerung, auf die Gesamtheit des persönlichen Lebensentwurfs bezogen, dessen Verstehen sich damit ausfaltet und verändert. In der Psychoanalyse sprechen wir von

Überdeterminierung, wenn in einer einzelnen szenischen Darstellung, einem Traum, einer freien Assoziation oder einem handlungsdialogischen Fragment fast alles enthalten ist, was sich im Prozeß der Analyse erst ausfaltet. Der besondere Akzent der psychotherapeutischen Übertragungs-Gegenübertragungssituation als hermeneutischer liegt nun darin, daß die in beiden Beteiligten aufsteigenden Affekte und deren bildhafte Strukturierung systematisch als Interpretament benutzt werden. Somit ist die psychotherapeutisch-hermeneutische Situation nicht einfach Kommunion der Seelen, wie in der romantischen Hermeneutik Schleiermachers. (Tiefen-) hermeneutisches Verstehen ist zwar Aufnahme der Gefühlswelt des einen in das Erleben des anderen, doch reflektiert auf dem Hintergrund der persönlichen Lebenserfahrung und des psychotherapeutischen Vorwissens. Dadurch werden die vorgegebenen Sichtweisen verändert und zu einer neuen Gestalt gebracht. Dieses Verstehen als «Horizontverschmelzung» (Gadamer 1960) und die Herausbildung eines gemeinsamen Sinnes ist ein kreativer Akt, der noch nicht Gestaltetes in den Verfügungsbereich der Subjekte bringt. In psychotherapeutischer Terminologie könnte man dies als Integration zuvor abgespaltener oder verdrängter Erfahrung bezeichnen.

3. DER BEDEUTUNG DES HERMENEUTISCHEN UND PSYCHOTHERAPEUTISCHEN SPRACHSPIELS FÜR DIE KONSTITUIERUNG MENSCHLICHER ERFAHRUNG

Einen Angelpunkt gelungenen Verstehens und letztlich gelungener Lebensführung stellt das «spielende Verhalten» dar. Die Hermeneutik Gadamers weist dem menschlichen Spiel – ähnlich wie Winnicott (1971) – eine sinnstiftende, existentiell notwendige Funktion zu:

«Im spielenden Verhalten sind alle Zweckbezüge, die das tätige und sorgende Dasein bestimmen, nicht einfach verschwunden, sondern werden auf eigentümliche Weise gestaltet. Das Spielen geschieht nicht nur “um der Erholung willen”, sondern dient auch der Heilung von unguten Regungen und Gemütszuständen» (Gadamer 1960, S. 107).

Wir finden in der Explikation des Spielbegriffs, auf den sich die philosophische Hermeneutik Gadamers in «Wahrheit und Methode» stützt, eine Begründung für die elementare Bedeutung des psychotherapeutischen Sprachspieles. Wie in der künstlerischen Gestaltung, die für Gadamer das Leitbild seiner Überlegungen darstellt, finden wir auch in der psychotherapeutischen Situation einen zum Alltagsleben in Kontraposition stehenden «Erlebensraum». Auch hier wird jenseits unmittelbarer Zweckbezüge mit Erinnerungen, Vorstellungen und Worten «gespielt». Dieses therapeutische Sprachspiel dient, ähnlich wie die echte künstlerische Gestaltung (in der Auffassung von Gadamer), der Weiterentwicklung des Individuums und der Gemeinschaft und einem konstruktiveren Umgang mit innerer und äußerer Realität.

Zur Begründung des Wahrheitsgehalts des in der psychotherapeutischen Interaktion stattfindenden Sprachspieles möchte ich am Rande Wittgensteins Konzept des Sprachspiels anführen (1971). In seinem langen Ringen, den Wahrheitscharakter einer sprachlichen Äußerung zu bestimmen, war Wittgenstein in seinem späten Werk zu der zusammenfassenden Feststellung gelangt, daß nur im Sprechakt zu entscheiden sei, ob eine Äußerung wahr sei. Diese Wahrheit ist nicht zu objektivieren. Sie ist lediglich daran ablesbar, ob die sprachliche Äußerung in der kommunikativen Situation brauchbar ist. D.h., eine Äußerung ist dann wahr, wenn es dem Gesprächspartner gelingt, diese zu verwenden, um sein Sprachspiel fortzusetzen.

Dem Kriterium der «kommunikativen Brauchbarkeit» kommt nun in den «verstehenden Psychotherapien» eine hervorragende Bedeutung zu. Für die psychoanalytischen Therapieformen ist dies insbesondere von Loch (1986) herausgearbeitet worden. Aber auch in anderen Therapieverfahren wie z.B. den Systemischen wird, unter Verweis auf neurobiologische Modelle (Maturana/Varela 1987), der «kommunikativen Brauchbarkeit» eine zentrale Position in der Erkenntnisbildung zugewiesen: «Dieses Kriterium (das der kommunikativen Brauchbarkeit, Anm.

d. Verf.) betrifft die operationale Koordination derer, die an einem Kommunikationsprozeß beteiligt sind und gleiche Ziele verfolgen.... Eine Erkenntnis ist kommunikativ brauchbar, wenn sie sich beschreiben, also mitteilen läßt, eine angestrebte Koordination fördert und einen Vorteil (Zugewinn) gegenüber anderen Erkenntnissen oder der Unkenntnis bedeutet» (Ludewig, 1992, S. 59f).

Weniger technisch und die Rolle des «Sprachspiels» zur Konstruktion von Wahrheit beleuchtend, formuliert H.G. Gadamer in «Wahrheit und Methode» (1960):

«Sprachliche Spiele sind es auch, in denen wir uns als Lernender – und wann hören wir auf, das zu sein? – zum Verständnis der Welt erheben. So dürfen wir uns hier an unsere Feststellungen über das Wesen des Spiels erinnern, wonach das Verhalten des Spielenden nicht als ein Verhalten der Subjektivität verstanden werden dürfe, da vielmehr das Spiel es ist, das spielt, indem es die Spieler in sich einbezieht und so selber das eigentliche Subjektum der Spielbewegung wird. Entsprechend ist auch hier nicht von einem Spielen mit der Sprache oder mit den uns ansprechenden Inhalten der Welterfahrung oder Überlieferung die Rede, sondern von dem Spiel der Sprache selbst, die uns anspricht, vorschlägt und zurückzieht, fragt und in der Antwort sich selbst erfüllt» (S. 493 f).

Ein gelungenes Sprachspiel bedeutet somit, daß ein Mensch in einem sprachlich oder präsentativ symbolisch gestalteten Kontakt mit seiner Innen- und Außenwelt steht. In der konkreten therapeutischen Situation ist dies relativ einfach festzustellen. Wenn ein Patient z.B. die sprachliche Intervention des Therapeuten hört und ihm daraufhin neue Einfälle und Erinnerungen vor Augen treten und er sich über die Erweiterung seiner psychischen Wahrnehmungskompetenz schrittweise von Ängsten und Symptomen befreit sieht, so ist dies ein empirischer Befund.

Freud steht der realitätsbewältigenden Funktion des Spieles wesentlich kritischer gegenüber. Es diene zunächst nur dazu, «sich dem Drucke der kritischen Vernunft zu entziehen» (GW XI, S. 141). Die Wirklichkeitserfassung im Spiele ist immer gefährdet durch ihren infantilen Ursprung in der «halluzinatorischen Wunscherfüllung» und der «Allmacht der Gedanken». In dieser Hinsicht verhält sich der Phantasierende und Spielende autoerotisch-narzißtisch im Gegensatz zum Wissenschaftler, der sich auf reale Objekte bezieht:

«Die Ersatzbefriedigungen, wie die Kunst sie bietet, sind gegen die Realität Illusionen, darum nicht minder psychisch wirksam, dank der Rolle, die die Phantasie im Seelenleben behauptet hat.... Doch mag die milde Narkose, in die uns die Kunst versetzt, nicht mehr als eine flüchtige Entzückung aus den Nöten des Lebens herbeizuführen und ist nicht stark genug, um reales Elend vergessen zu machen» (GW XIV, S. 433f).

Andererseits betont Freud, daß das Spiel nicht ausschließlich im Dienste des Lustprinzips stehe, sondern auch zur Bewältigung der Realität dienlich sei:

«Beim Kinderspiel glauben wir erst zu begreifen, daß das Kind auch das unlustvolle Erlebnis darum wiederholt, weil es sich durch seine Aktivität eine weit gründlichere Bewältigung des starken Eindrucks erwirbt, als beim bloß passiven Erleben möglich war» (GW XIII, S. 36).

Somit fällt dem kindlichen Spiel, dem Phantasieren des Erwachsenen und dem künstlerischen Gestalten die Funktion zu, Realitätsprinzip und Lustprinzip zusammenzuführen (GW XII, S. 236). Das kreative Spiel mit Vorstellungen und die künstlerische Gestaltung haben ihr Negativ zum einen im neurotisch realitätsabgewandten Verlieren in Tagträume und zum anderen im belanglosen Ästhetizismus. Als gelungenes Spiel findet die Phantasietätigkeit des Kindes und des Erwachsenen, im Gegensatz zur neurotischen Bildung, den Weg zurück in eine durch neue Perspektiven erweiterte Realität.

Aus der Vergenwärtigung der Grundlagen menschlicher Kommunikation lassen sich Konsequenzen für eine allgemeine Grundhaltung in verstehenden Psychotherapien und eine spezifische Technik von Hermeneutischer Beratung und Psychotherapie ziehen.

4. HERMENEUTISCHE GRUNDHALTUNG, HERMENEUTISCHE BERATUNG UND HERMENEUTISCHE PSYCHOTHERAPIE

Die Wirkprinzipien der hermeneutischen Beratung und Psychotherapie kommen wohl in den meisten verstehenden Psychotherapien zum Tragen. Deswegen müssen wir zwei Ebenen der hermeneutischen Psychotherapie unterscheiden:

- Eine «hermeneutische Grundhaltung» als Basis von «allgemeiner Psychotherapie»,
- «Hermeneutische Beratung» und «Hermeneutische Psychotherapie» als Akzent von tiefenpsychologisch fundierter Psychotherapie und spezifische Beratungs- und Behandlungstechnik bei bestimmten Lebensproblemen und psychischen Störungen.

4.1. *Die «hermeneutische Grundhaltung»*

Die hermeneutischen Prinzipien haben gegenüber den allgemeinen Wirkprinzipien der Psychotherapien von Grawe (1995) den Vorteil, daß sie sich auf eine epistemologisch ausgewiesene Theorie berufen können und die Wirkung der Gestaltungsprozesse im therapeutischen Gespräch durchsichtig machen. Wird die «hermeneutische Grundhaltung» im geschilderten umfassenden Sinn verstanden, so kann sie als Basis von verstehenden Psychotherapien angesehen werden, auf der sich verschiedene weitergehende Techniken auftragen lassen. So können je nach Störungsbild auf der Grundlage einer hermeneutischen Haltung psychoanalytische Deutungen formuliert werden und zum entscheidenden psychotherapeutischen Agens bestimmt werden. Oder es können bei anderen Störungsbildern oder augenblicklichem therapeutischem Erfordernis kognitiv verhaltenstherapeutische Strategien gewählt werden. Insofern kann eine «hermeneutische Grundhaltung» als eine philosophisch-anthropologisch ausgewiesene Basis einer integrativen Psychotherapie angesehen werden.

4.2. *Hermeneutische Beratung und Hermeneutische Psychotherapie als spezifische Beratungs- und Behandlungstechnik*

Die Wirkprinzipien einer «hermeneutischen Psychotherapie» lassen sich über die «hermeneutische Grundhaltung» hinausgehend durch spezifische Interventionsstrategien zur Anwendung bringen. Diese Techniken werden sicher implizit auch in anderen, besonders den analytisch orientierten und gesprächspsychotherapeutischen Verfahren berücksichtigt. Sie sind aber auch als explizit zu praktizierende Techniken und Strategien anwendbar:

5. THERAPEUTISCHE TECHNIK DER HERMENEUTISCHEN BERATUNG UND PSYCHOTHERAPIE

5.1. *Kompetentes Interesse für die innere und äußere Welt des Patienten*

Viele Patienten können in der Psychotherapie zu für sie wesentliche «innere Objekte» erstmals Verbindung aufnehmen. Es kann ihnen gelingen, sich mit seinen zunächst abgespaltenen Erfahrungen auseinander zu setzen. Dies ist möglich, wenn Therapeut die Erfahrungen ihrer Patienten ernst nehmen. Durch ihr Interesse signalisieren sie ihren Patienten, daß ihre Erfahrungen wichtig sind. Psychodynamisch könnte man vermuten, daß das Interesse des Therapeuten eine psychische Besetzung von zunächst unstrukturierten Erfahrungen ermöglicht, weil es angstmindernd, narzißtisch- und Über-Ich- entlastend wirkt.

Jenseits solcher psychodynamischer Vermutungen können wir aufgrund der philosophisch-anthropologischen Theorie der «Aneignung des Fremden im Gespräch» (Gadamer, 1960) festhalten, daß die erste Technik der «Hermeneutischen Beratung» und «Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie»

darin besteht, durch «Kompetentes Interesse» den inneren und äußeren Erfahrungen der Patienten ihre «Fremdheit» zu nehmen.

Diese Strategie kann nun «Hermeneutische Beratung» und «Hermeneutische Psychotherapie» vom interessierten Gespräch des Alltagslebens oder von anderen therapeutischen Verfahren, wie z.B. der Gesprächspsychotherapie nach Rogers (1957), nicht unterscheiden. Ein wesentlicher Unterschied zu den genannten Gesprächsformen ist jedoch, daß der Therapeut die Erfahrungen des Patienten mit seiner Mitwelt gezielt in sich redupliziert und durch seine eigene Anschauung des Geschehenen die Wahrnehmungen des Patienten erweitert. Dies geschieht zwar auch in anderen Gesprächszusammenhängen, aber nicht in einer systematischen und einseitigen Form, wo ein Gesprächsteilnehmer, der Therapeut, dem Anderen, dem Patienten, seine Wahrnehmungskompetenz bedingungslos zur Verfügung stellt.

Kann der hermeneutische Therapeut signifikante Aspekte des Patienten und seiner Mitwelt wahrnehmen, so wird er diese nicht aufgrund einer psychologischen Theorie interpretieren. Er wird vielmehr, Patienten zunächst nicht sichtbare Aspekte ihres Fühlens, Handelns und ihrer Erfahrungen in ihrer Mitwelt aufzeigen. Dieses «Aufzeigen» ist durchaus visueller Art. Es ist «Deutung» nur im ursprünglichen Sinne der Ermöglichung und Aufforderung zum Hinsehen. Wir erwähnen hier die platonische Auffassung der Anamnese als «sehendes Er-innen» (H.G. Gadamer, pers. Mitteilung).

Wenn wir der interessierten Wahrnehmungseinstellung des Therapeuten in der «Hermeneutischen Beratung» und «Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie» eine besondere Bedeutung zugemessen haben, so ist dies auch schon eine erste Kompetenz, über die er verfügen muß. Der Therapeut muß sich für die emotionale und reale Lebenswelt seiner Patienten interessieren und deren Erfahrungen szenisch in seiner Phantasie aktualisieren können.

Zweitens bedarf der Therapeut einer gewissen Angstfreiheit, sich auch befremdlichen und unangenehmen Wahrnehmungen zu stellen. Diese beiden Kompetenzen kann er sich nur durch eine Selbsterfahrung erwerben, die ihm ermöglicht, fremdartige Aspekte seines eigenen Innenlebens kennenzulernen. Warum dies am besten in einer psychoanalytischen Selbsterfahrung möglich ist, werden wir weiter unten begründen.

Drittens ist für die Wahrnehmungskompetenz des Therapeuten ein breites Interesse für die Möglichkeiten nicht nur des menschlichen Scheiterns, sondern auch für die vielgestaltigen Möglichkeiten, menschliche Existenz zu gestalten, vonnöten. Deswegen ist von ihm nicht nur eine fundierte Kenntnis psychologischer, psychotherapeutischer und psychiatrischer Krankheitslehren zu fordern, sondern auch eine eingehende Beschäftigung mit den «Spielweisen menschlicher Existenz» wie sie uns z.B. durch die Literatur zur Wahrnehmung gebracht werden.

5.2. Bewußte Aktualisierung von Phantasieprozessen

Ist das «Kompetente Interesse» für die innere und äußere Welt des Patienten noch eine relativ unspezifische Strategie der «Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie», so scheint uns die bewußte Aktualisierung bildhafter Phantasien schon eine besondere Technik z.B. im Vergleich mit dem Alltagsgespräch, der Gesprächspsychotherapie und den psychodynamischen Therapien zu sein.

Entsprechend dem zweiten Wirkprinzip von «Hermeneutischer Beratung» und «Hermeneutischer Psychotherapie», der «repräsentativen Gestaltung», begibt sich der Therapeut bewußt in eine szenische Anschauungswelt, die wesentliche Aspekte der Interaktionen des Patienten mit seiner Mitwelt repräsentiert.

Im Unterschied z.B. zur psychoanalytischen Fokalthherapie hält sich der Therapeut nicht an ein umschriebenes Konfliktmodell, das er in verschiedenen Verkleidungen beim Patienten wieder findet und dort offenlegt. Ganz im Gegenteil versucht sich der Therapeut von seinen eigenen Erfahrungen und theoretischen Vormeinungen immer wieder zu befreien, um für vom Patienten projizierte szenische Anschauungsbilder offen zu sein. Diese müssen nicht analysiert werden, sondern haben als psychische Gestaltungen schon als solche die Funktion, zunächst Diffuses und Bedrängendes zu strukturieren.

Dies ist eine klinische Erfahrung, die durch die philosophische Hermeneutik (s.o.), die Theorien von präsentativen Symbolen (Langer 1965) und Übergangsphänomenen (Winnicott 1971), sowie der ästhetischen Konstitution konsistenter Welterfahrung (Holm-Hadulla 1995a) theoretisch begründet werden kann.

Die Fähigkeit des Therapeuten, sich stellvertretend für den Patienten Phantasieprozessen zu überlassen, bedarf einer gewissen Neigung, Begabung und langjähriger Übung. Letztere ist am besten im Rahmen einer Psychoanalyse zu gewinnen, da hier die Wahrnehmungseinstellung vornehmlich auf innere szenische Anschauungen gerichtet ist. Die interaktionelle Situation der -gelungenen- Psychoanalyse kann auch gewährleisten, signifikante Anschauungsbilder von belanglosen Ästhetisierungen zu unterscheiden. Hinzukommt die Möglichkeit, die Fähigkeit zu visuell- szenischen Vorstellungen im Rahmen alltäglicher Phantasiebildung oder in der Versenkung in literarische und andere Kunstwerke zu pflegen.

5.3. Interaktionelles Erleben

Ich habe versucht zu zeigen, daß ein wesentliches Moment der Arbeit in der «Hermeneutischen Beratung» und «Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie» darin besteht, daß der Therapeut die Interaktionen des Patienten in sich repräsentierend erlebt.

Dieses systematische Repräsentieren von intersubjektiven Geschehnissen möchten wir in Anlehnung an den hermeneutischen Erlebnisbegriff (Dilthey 1900; Gadamer 1960) als dritte Technik der Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie bezeichnen: Das interaktionelle Erleben.

In der Sprache der anderenorts beschriebenen Spieltheorie des psychotherapeutischen Geschehens (Holm-Hadulla 1995a) bedeutet das interaktionelle Erleben als therapeutische Technik, daß der Therapeut ein innerpsychisches Spiel mit wichtigen Beziehungspersonen zunächst stellvertretend für den Patienten gestaltet. Dies verlangt, daß der Therapeut auch bereit ist, die vom Patienten anvertrauten, affektiv getönten Beziehungskonstellationen in sein Innenleben aufzunehmen und dort durchzuspielen.

Zur Vorstellung dieser komplizierten Zusammenhänge hilft vielleicht die Analogie der Interaktion von Mutter und Kind. Auch das Kind ist nicht einfach faktisch da und teilt der Mutter mit, wie es ihm geht und was es braucht, sondern wird im Gefühlsleben und in der Phantasie der Mutter, häufig unbewußt, repräsentiert und diese kann aufgrund ihrer eigenen Gefühle und Phantasien gegenüber dem in ihr lebenden und repräsentierten Kind spontan und adäquat auf dessen Bedürfnisse eingehen.

Das interaktionelle Erleben ist eine emotional anspruchsvolle Aufgabe, die wiederum eine besondere Bereitschaft und Kompetenz des Therapeuten voraussetzt. Um die rechte Balance zwischen stellvertretendem interaktionellem Erleben und eigener integrierter Innenwelt zu halten, bedarf der Therapeut neben seiner Wahrnehmungskompetenz und der Fähigkeit zu repräsentierender Gestaltung einer genügenden «Abständigkeit» im Sinne von Gadamer, um seine Befassung mit den affektiven Interaktionsgestaltungen des Patienten auch emotional erträglich zu halten. Die Psychoanalyse hat für die zum hermeneutischen Verstehen notwendige «Abständigkeit» den Begriff der «therapeutischen Ich-Spaltung» geprägt. Er bezeichnet die Notwendigkeit, sich einerseits erlebend einzulassen und andererseits dem psychodynamischen Geschehen diskursiv denkend gegenüberzustehen.

In dieser Hinsicht ist für den Therapeuten in der «Hermeneutischen Psychotherapie», neben einer differenzierten Selbst- und Welterfahrung, auch eine fundierte klinische Erfahrung und theoretische Reflexion seines Tuns vonnöten.

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Eichendorffs Gedicht *Sehnsucht* (1834): Versuch einer jungianischen deutung

MARIA KARDAUN (*)

Sehnsucht

- 1 Es schienen so golden die Sterne,
2 Am Fenster ich einsam stand
3 Und hörte aus weiter Ferne
4 Ein Posthorn im stillen Land.
5 Das Herz mir im Leib entbrennte,
6 Da hab' ich mir heimlich gedacht:
7 Ach, wer da mitreisen könnte
8 In der prächtigen Sommernacht!
- 9 Zwei junge Gesellen gingen
10 Vorüber am Bergeshang,
11 Ich hörte im Wandern sie singen
12 Die stille Gegend entlang:
13 Von schwindelnden Felsenschlünden,
14 Wo die Wälder rauschen so sacht,
15 Von Quellen, die von den Klüften
16 Sich stürzen in die Waldesnacht.
- 17 Sie sangen von Marmorbildern,
18 Von Gärten, die überm Gestein
19 In dämmernden Lauben verwildern,
20 Palästen im Mondenschein,
21 Wo die Mädchen am Fenster lauschen,
22 Wann der Lauten Klang erwacht
23 Und die Brunnen verschlafen rauschen
24 In der prächtigen Sommernacht.⁻¹

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¹ Aus: *Joseph von Eichendorff. Werke in einem Band*, Wolfdietrich Rasch Hrsg., 1984³ München/Wien.

I

Im Jahre 1834 veröffentlichte Joseph von Eichendorff in seinem Roman *Dichter und ihre Gesellen*, zunächst ohne Überschrift, ein Gedicht, das sich später unter dem Titel *Sehnsucht* in fast allen Florilegien deutscher Dichtkunst einen Platz erwerben sollte.

Dieses Gedicht, «unvergänglich wie nur eines aus Menschenhand»², hat seit seiner Entstehung eine überwiegend unabhängige Existenz geführt und wird eher selten in seinem ursprünglichen Kontext gelesen. Es scheint daher berechtigt, den Versuch zu unternehmen, es als eine selbständige, in sich geschlossene, Kohärenz und Sinn aufweisende Einheit zu interpretieren (wobei es allerdings nicht verboten sein soll, bei der Interpretation auch den vom Autor ursprünglich geplanten Kontext einzubeziehen, zumal dies unsere Einsicht in die Kohärenz und den Sinn des Gedichtes womöglich vergrößern kann).

Das Streben, das Gedicht so zu interpretieren, daß es möglichst kohärent und sinnvoll erscheint, heißt nicht, daß man *a priori* festlegt, daß es in jeder Hinsicht nachweisbar kohärent und sinnvoll sein muß. Daß Kohärenz und Sinn vorhanden sind, wird zwar als Ausgangspunkt angenommen, aber dieser Ausgangspunkt wird nicht etwa von einer dogmatischen Voreingenommenheit eingegeben, sondern ist lediglich als eine noch zu prüfende, nützliche Arbeitshypothese gemeint, die dazu dient, eine positive Suchaktion nach Kohärenz und Sinn des Gedichtes in Gang zu setzen. Da wir es beim Gedicht *Sehnsucht* mit einem anerkannt literarischen Kunstwerk zu tun haben, ist die Annahme, daß mit Erfolg nach Kohärenz und Sinn im Gedicht gesucht werden kann, immerhin sehr wahrscheinlich. Das Gedicht hat offenbar einen packenden, dem Leser auf einer bestimmten Ebene zugänglichen und «verständlichen» Inhalt; denn es wird von vielen Rezipienten sehr geschätzt. Meistens wird das intuitive Erfassen des Inhaltes des Gedichtes dem Leser genügen und besteht nicht das Bedürfnis, für sich selbst oder andere das, was man bei der Lektüre erfahren hat, möglichst genau zu konzeptualisieren und in Worte zu fassen. (Insofern das Erfassen des Gedichtes rein persönlicher Art ist, gibt es ja auch kaum Möglichkeiten, sich sinnvoll mit anderen über das Werk auseinanderzusetzen.) Eine systematisch vorgenommene Betrachtung des im Gedicht Enthaltenen kann dem Leser jedoch zu einer reflektierteren und klarer artikulierbaren Einsicht in das, was das Gedicht zu sagen haben könnte, verhelfen.

Der vorliegende Aufsatz beabsichtigt, einen Beitrag zu unserem Verständnis von Eichendorffs Gedicht *Sehnsucht* zu liefern, und zwar aus der jungianischen («analytisch-psychologischen») Perspektive. Zuerst soll daher kurz etwas über die spezifisch jungianische Betrachtungsweise des dichterischen Kunstwerkes gesagt werden.

II

Nach jungianischer Auffassung bildet das Unbewußte den weitaus größten Teil der menschlichen Psyche. Wie Jung meint, ist die Rolle, die das Bewußtsein in der Psyche spielt, gering.

Innerhalb des Unbewußten unterscheidet Jung persönliche unbewußte Inhalte, das *persönliche Unbewußte*, und überpersönliche unbewußte Inhalte, das *kollektive Unbewußte*. Das persönliche Unbewußte setzt sich aus psychischem Leben zusammen, das bewußt hätte sein können, dies jedoch bei einem bestimmten Individuum aus lebensgeschichtlichen Gründen nicht ist. (Es handelt sich zum Teil um Beobachtungen und Erfahrungen, die einfach nicht die Schwelle des Bewußtseins erreicht haben – das Bewußtsein kann sich im Gegensatz zum Unbewußten nur mit wenigen Begebenheiten gleichzeitig befassen –, und zu einem weiteren Teil um vergessene und verdrängte Inhalte.) Das kollektive Unbewußte ist hingegen nicht von der persönlichen Lebensgeschichte des betreffenden Individuums abhängig. Es enthält die Möglichkeiten für allgemein menschliche Erlebnisse und Reaktionen und ist gleichsam der psychische Niederschlag immerzu wiederkehrender menschlicher Erfahrungen.

² Adorno 1957/1974, 85.

Das kollektive Unbewußte weist, wie Jung meint, eine Gliederung in überindividuelle Strukturen, die sogenannten Archetypen, auf. Archetypen sind typische Reaktionsmuster und Denkart, die dem menschlichen Sein zugrunde liegen. Sie sind immer mit fundamentalen menschlichen Möglichkeiten verknüpft, und ihre Zahl ist in der Praxis beschränkt, wiewohl es theoretisch unendlich viele Archetypen geben kann.

Ein anderes wichtiges jungianisches Konzept ist «Individuation»: der psychische Reifungs- oder Entfaltungsprozeß eines Menschen. Individuation findet statt, indem die wichtigsten Archetypen allmählich ins Leben integriert werden.

Das Kunstwerk hat nach Auffassung Jungs vieles mit dem Traum gemein. Beide sind ihrem Wesen nach Erzeugnisse des Unbewußten. Daher spricht das Kunstwerk, wie der Traum, in der Sprache des Unbewußten, d.h. in Symbolen. Ein Symbol in jungianischem Sinne ist, kurz gesagt, eine bildhafte Wiedergabe eines Archetypus oder von einem Aspekt eines Archetypus. Kunst, auch die literarische Kunst, geht grundsätzlich nicht diskursiv vor, sondern bedient sich der meist vieldeutigen (Wort-)Bilder.

Ferner haben Traum und Kunstwerk Jung zufolge beide eine kompensatorische Funktion: dadurch daß im Traum bzw. im Kunstwerk die Sicht des Unbewußten auf die Sachverhalte der Wirklichkeit bildhaft wiedergegeben wird und zur Kenntnis genommen werden kann, kann die Einseitigkeit der bewußten Erkenntnisse einigermaßen kompensiert werden. Indem beide Standpunkte aufeinanderstoßen, entsteht – richtigenfalls – eine Korrektur der psychischen Entwicklung des betreffenden Individuums, d.h. des Träumers (wenn es sich um einen Traum handelt) oder des Rezipienten (wenn es sich um ein Kunstwerk handelt).

Während nun der Traum oft bloß für das träumende Individuum Sinn und Bedeutung hat, drückt das Kunstwerk immer zumindest teilweise etwas aus, was eine größere Gruppe von Menschen betrifft. Das Kunstwerk ist nach jungianischer Auffassung eine aus dem Unbewußten kommende, kompensatorische Wiedergabe der Wirklichkeit, wie der Traum, aber dann mit allgemeiner, überindividueller Tragweite. (Letzteres ist im übrigen eine Frage der Definition; denn, ähnlich wie im normalen Sprachgebrauch, kann von einem Kunstwerk in jungianischem Sinne erst die Rede sein, wenn es «wirkt», d.h. eine genügende Anzahl Menschen tatsächlich tief berührt. Man beachte, daß letzteres zwar eine notwendige, jedoch keine ausreichende Voraussetzung für «Kunst» ist.)

Das Kunstwerk ist somit eine bildhafte und eher unbeabsichtigte Form von Erkenntnisvermittlung, – gegenüber der rationalen und reflektierten Erkenntnisvermittlung, die in der Wissenschaft erstrebt wird.³ Im Kunstwerk bekommen kollektiv unbewußte Tendenzen eine anschauliche Gestalt, und zwar durch das «Medium» des Künstlers. Der Künstler hat sozusagen einen direkten Verkehr mit dem Unbewußten, wobei er gleichwohl nicht oder nur teilweise nach Willkür aus dem Brunnen der Inspiration schöpfen kann: vielmehr entfaltet sich das Kunstwerk unaufgefordert in ihm, wobei der Künstler selbst den schöpferischen Prozeß fördern, vernachlässigen oder ihm entgegenwirken, ihn jedoch nicht bewußt zu erschaffen vermag.

Kehren wir zurück zu Eichendorffs Gedicht *Sehnsucht*. Jemand aus der Wirklichkeit hätte den Inhalt dieses Gedichtes träumen können. Es hätte im Grunde genommen ein jeder, für den der Inhalt dieses Gedichtes eine besondere Bedeutung hat, diese Bildersequenz träumen können. Wir werden im nachfolgenden das Gedicht interpretieren, als handele es sich um einen kollektiven Traum, d.h. um einen Traum mit kollektivem Sinn und kollektiver Bedeutung.

³ Genau diese Unterscheidung zwischen Kunst, die auf spontane und mimetische, d.h. bildhafte, Art und Weise (oft) Wahrheit ausdrückt, und Wissenschaft, worin geplant und argumentativ nach Wahrheit gesucht wird, ist auch in der platonischen und aristotelischen Kunsttheorie von großer Wichtigkeit. Siehe zu diesem Thema Kardaun 1993.

III

Fangen wir mit der ersten Strophe an. (Die subtile Art und Weise, wie das Gedicht aufgebaut ist, sowie die vielen Kreuzverbindungen verhindern nicht, daß die einzelnen Strophen jede für sich eine Einheit bilden.)⁴

Zeile 1-2: Es schienen so golden die Sterne,
 Am Fenster ich einsam stand

Das Gedicht fängt mit zwei auf den ersten Blick etwas unzusammenhängenden Hauptsätzen an. Nicht zuletzt weil der erste Hauptsatz von dem zweiten nur durch ein Komma und nicht durch einen Punkt getrennt ist, liegt es dennoch auf der Hand, daß die beiden Mitteilungen in enger Beziehung zueinander stehen: wir haben ein lyrisches Subjekt, das sich einsam fühlt und vom Fenster aus die goldenen Sterne betrachtet, wenn auch das Betrachten an sich nicht explizit erwähnt wird. Ob es nun aber die Einsamkeit ist, die das Ich dazu veranlaßt, sich der Betrachtung der Sterne zu widmen, oder ob die Einsamkeit des Ich irgendwie dadurch verursacht wird, daß das Ich auf den schönen, aber unerreichbaren Sternenhimmel fixiert ist, läßt sich aufgrund der ersten zwei Zeilen nicht entscheiden.

Auch der Gegensatz zwischen dem Ensemble der betrachteten Sterne und dem einsamen Ich soll nicht außer Acht gelassen werden: möglicherweise hat die im Tifel thematisierte Schnsucht ihren Grund darin, daß das einsame Ich an einer Kollektivität teilhaben möchte. Die Kollektivität der Sterne ist für einen Menschen allerdings nur wenig versprechend.

Die symbolische Bedeutung der goldenen Sterne ist etwas sehr Altes und weit Verbreitetes. Sterne sind nach menschlichem Ermessen unvergänglich. Anhand der Sterne kann man sich orientieren; sie strahlen in der Nacht. Das Dunkel der Nacht wird zwar bezeichnenderweise im Gedicht nicht genannt – das Ich achtet nur auf die leuchtenden Sterne –, ist jedoch als Hintergrund der Sterne logischerweise inbegriffen. Ohne Sterne ist die Nacht eine unübersichtliche Masse. Das Dunkel der Nacht symbolisiert von jeher die unheimliche, dem bewußten Erkennen grundsätzlich unzugängliche, ruchlose Seite der Natur oder des Unbewußten. Die Sternbilder symbolisieren im Gegensatz dazu die Grundstrukturen des Unbewußten. Die Ordnung, in der sie konstelliert sind, stellt die Ordnung der Inhalte des kollektiven Unbewußten dar: eine schöne, abstrakte, zeitlose Ordnung, die für alle Menschen gleich und im Prinzip erkennbar, wenn auch nicht beeinflussbar ist.

Die Inhalte des Unbewußten befinden sich immer zwischen zwei Polen: das rein Instinktive, Dunkle, Ungeordnete, Normlose, Vitale, Sich-Immer-Wandelnde auf der einen und das rein Geistige, Klare, Geordnete, Strukturierende, Unveränderliche auf der anderen Seite. Die Sterne symbolisieren den geistigen Pol, oder den geistigen Aspekt, des Unbewußten, und zwar das hoch über der Erde schwebende, absolut Geistige, das nie mit der Welt der praktischen Erfahrung in Berührung kommen kann.

Dieses absolut Geistige ist hier zudem mit dem Epitheton «golden» ausgestattet. In Zusammenhang mit den Sternen ist mit «golden» sicherlich in erster Linie «leuchtend» gemeint: die Sterne schaffen Klarheit, das Bewußtsein kann von ihnen erleuchtet werden. Wenn wir das Wort «golden» hingegen wörtlich auffassen, so deutet es auf Wert, Perfektion, Unvergänglichkeit, Schönheit, Eleganz. Andererseits ist Gold aber auch kalt und leblos.

⁴ Instruktive, sich eher auf die formalen Aspekte des Gedichtes beziehende Überlegungen finden sich u.a. in Seidlin 1978². Formale Aspekte eines Kunstwerkes können selbstverständlich ebensoviel oder sogar mehr archetypische Aussagekraft besitzen als die mehr inhaltlichen. Dennoch werden sie in der jungianischen Literaturforschung bis dahin relativ wenig beachtet. Das dürfte seinen Grund u.a. darin haben, daß Jung selber, wie Freud, der Meinung war, daß die künstlerische Gestaltung im Gegensatz zum «Inhalt» eines Kunstwerkes zum Bereich der Ästhetik und nicht zum Bereich der Psychologie gehöre. Damit zusammenhängend wird auch dem musikalischen Kunstwerk nur selten *qua tale* eine tiefenpsychologische Betrachtung gewidmet. Neben der allgemeinen Frage, wie die Musik tiefenpsychologisch aufzufassen sei, beschäftigt man sich zwar gerne z.B. mit Analysen von Operntexten oder mit Überlegungen über das Innenleben irgendeines Komponisten; die musikalische Aussagekraft eines Werkes jedoch wird kaum zum Thema gemacht, obwohl gerade etwa die jungianische Forschung der Zahlensymbolik hier Anhaltspunkte bieten könnte.

Das Ich fühlt sich dabei einsam. «Einsam» hat immer eine negative Begleitvorstellung: dem Ich fehlt etwas. Oskar Seidlin weist darauf hin, daß die Einsamkeit des Ich durch die merkwürdige Wortfolge «ich einsam» noch betont wird.⁵ Die Ich-Figur nennt sich selbst einsam, weiß also, daß es mehr gibt als nur die beschränkte eigene Welt und der unerreichbare Sternenhimmel. Vielleicht weiß sie in diesem Moment aber noch nicht, *was* ihr fehlt. (Und das ist genau, was der romantische Begriff «Sehnsucht» ausdrückt; denn wenn man weiß, was einem fehlt, versucht man vielleicht den Mangel zu beheben oder man läßt es sein, aber ohne daß das eine oder das andere romantisch-melancholische Sehnsucht hervorrufen muß.)

Dann erscheint das Posthorn. Das Posthorn ist an sich ein eher prosaisches Signalinstrument. Es hat nicht die märchenhafte, archetypische Qualität der goldenen Sterne (oder der Paläste im Mondenschein usw., die weiter im Gedicht auftreten). Innerhalb der Logik des Gedichtes ist der Schall des Posthorns ein realer Klang. Er ruft die Ich-Figur vom melancholischen Sinnieren in eine mögliche Realität hinein.

Andererseits war die Postkutsche aber auch ein Reisemittel, und die Assoziation «Reisemöglichkeit» ist hier offenbar gemeint, wie aus den Zeilen 7-8 hervorgeht, und zwar «Reisemöglichkeit» in ihrem abenteuerlich-belebenden Aspekt: das Posthorn appelliert hier wohlgerne nicht an Gefühle des Abschiednehmenmüssens, sondern deutet auf die Möglichkeit, tatsächlich die Koffer zu packen, in die Welt zu ziehen und den eigenen Erlebnisraum zu vergrößern.

Zeile 5-8:

Das Herz mir im Leib entbrennte,
Da hab' ich mir heimlich gedacht:
Ach, wer da mitreisen könnte
In der prächtigen Sommernacht!

Allerdings nur hypothetisch: Die Ich-Figur würde *im Irrealis* gerne mit dem Postwagen mitreisen (Zeile 6-7), und dieser Wunsch ist zudem noch heimlich. Sie möchte offenbar entweder sich selbst oder anderen nicht eingestehen, daß sie eine Reise machen möchte. Die Ich-Figur wäre zwar an sich geneigt, sich der Vergrößerung ihrer Erfahrungswelt zuzuwenden, aber nicht in der Wirklichkeit. Die Reise ist genauso realitätsfern wie die Beziehung zu den Sternen. Nicht nur rührt sich die Ich-Figur nicht vom Fleck, sie hat auch gar nicht die Absicht dies zu tun.

289

Zeile 8:

In der prächtigen Sommernacht!

Im Sommer ist die Natur reich und milde: das Unbewußte ist vielversprechend und einladend. Die prächtige Sommernacht erfüllt die Ich-Figur mit Sehnsucht nach dem, was ihr fehlt, und der Zeitpunkt, eine Individuationsreise anzufangen, scheint günstig, aber sie unternimmt keine Aktivität.

Diese Zeile wiederholt sich am Ende der letzten Strophe (Zeile 24). Auch dort hat der Sommer aus jungianischer Sicht symbolischen Wert, aber aufgrund des veränderten Kontextes einen etwas anderen als hier.

Die beiden letzten Strophen enthalten Reisebilder landschaftlicher Art, die – in den Worten Seidlins - «nicht beschrieben und besungen, sondern in dem worteigensten Sinne er-sungen sind».⁶ Der Ich-Figur werden in der zweiten und dritten Strophe nacheinander zwei unterschiedliche Tableaus vorgeführt.

9-16:

Zwei junge Gesellen gingen
Vorüber am Bergeshang,
Ich hörte im Wandern sie singen
Die stille Gegend entlang:
Von schwindelnden Felsenschlülften,
Wo die Wälder rauschen so sacht,
Von Quellen, die von den Klüften
Sich stürzen in die Waldesnacht.

Das Ich hört, was die jungen Gesellen ihrer eigenen Vorstellung nach erleben könnten. Die Jünglinge machen sich auf die Reise, um die Erfahrungen zu sammeln, die dem Ich fehlen. Nicht das Bewußtsein selbst, sondern ich-fremde, abgespaltene Teile der Persönlichkeit erweitern ihren Horizont bzw. widmen sich der Individuation. Dabei haben sie vermutlich kein genau abgestecktes Ziel. Sie gehen einfach freudig auf die Wanderschaft und je weniger fest umrissen, desto größer die Erwartungen. Die Phantasie bewegt sich in archetypischen Bahnen: die schwindelnden Felsenschlülften, rauschenden Wälder, hinabstürzenden Quellen, in der dritten Strophe auch dämmernden Lauben und mondübergossenen Paläste mit lauschenden Mädchen, die die Wandergesellen sich ausmalen; das alles mutet unwirklich, jedenfalls sehr unkonkret an.

Die Unternehmungslust der beiden Wandergesellen steht in grellem Kontrast zu der Passivität des sekundär begeisterten, aber *de facto* unbeweglichen Ich. Die Ich-Figur gibt ja die von ihr begehrte Reise auf, noch ehe sie sie angefangen hat.

Die beiden jungen Männer stellen symbolisch den Archetypus des *puer aeternus* oder des «Ewigen Jünglings», d.h. die ewig junge Kraft der Selbsterneuerung, dar. Das Ich ist einsam, unerfüllt und resigniert, wohingegen es im Unbewußten eine begeisterte *puer aeternus*-Gesinnung gibt (was nicht heißen soll, daß das lyrische Subjekt des Gedichtes also einen Greis darstellen soll: ob das «reale» Ich des Gedichtes alt oder jung, männlich oder weiblich ist, läßt sich aufgrund der im Gedicht enthaltenen Angaben nicht feststellen, wohl aber daß die Geisteshaltung der Ich-Figur der der aktionsfreudigen jungen Gesellen entgegengesetzt ist).

Der Archetypus des ewigen Jünglings erscheint in der Form zweier Burschen. Auf konkreter Ebene betrachtet kann die Tatsache, daß die Burschen zu zweit sind, auf ihre noch kollektive Lebensanschauung deuten. Wir haben es dann aber mit der gewöhnlichen Zwei, die jede beliebige Mehrzahl hätte sein können, zu tun: die Burschen ziehen lieber mit mehreren als allein in die Welt.

Symbolisch ist die Zahl Zwei ein Hinweis darauf, daß dasjenige, was von den jungen Gesellen dargestellt wird, die Schwelle zum Bewußtsein berührt und vom Bewußtsein Anerkennung verlangt. Die Zwei ist oft mit dem Prinzip des Bewußtwerdens verbunden. Bewußtsein hat mit wählen zu

⁶ Seidlin 1978, 57.

In dieser dritten Strophe ist eine überfeine, ästhetische Welt gezeichnet (mit Palästen im Mondenschein und so weiter), die aber schon im Verfall ist. Es handelt sich um zumindest halbverlassene Paläste; denn die Gärten werden nicht mehr gepflegt. Diese Welt wird langsam wieder vom Unbewußten in Besitz genommen. Sie verfällt dem Unbewußten, verliert ihre Kultur, nachdem sie einst florierte. Die menschliche Bewohnerschaft zieht sich allmählich aus ihr zurück.

Die reine Ästhetik ruft leicht Entgegengesetztes hervor, in diesem Fall das vegetative Leben, das die Kultur zu überwuchern und wieder zurückzuerobern beginnt. Das basale Leben wurde und wird anscheinend zu wenig erfahren, daher zwingt es sich auf.

Es ist die Welt der Anima, die hier gezeichnet ist. Eine Welt, die von Mondenschein übergossen ist. Der Mond ist eines der archetypischsten Symbole der Anima. Außerdem sind die *einzig* erwähnten Bewohnerinnen dieser lunaren, märchenhaften Spukpaläste «Mädchen», – im unbestimmten Plural, was darauf hindeutet, daß die Anima noch kollektiv und unentwickelt ist: es handelt sich ja nicht um bestimmte Mädchen mit individuellen Eigenschaften, sondern nur ganz allgemein um kollektive jugendliche Weiblichkeit. Diese soll am Fenster lauschen, «wann der Lauten Klang erwacht».

Die Frage ist jetzt natürlich, was es denn mit der Welt der Anima auf sich hat. Welche Rolle spielt sie in dem von den beiden Wandergesellen geschilderten Phantasievorgang? Schauen wir uns die letzten vier Zeilen genauer an.

21-24: Wo die Mädchen am Fenster lauschen,
 Wann der Lauten Klang erwacht
 Und die Brunnen verschlafen rauschen
 In der prächtigen Sommernacht.

Die Konjunktion «wann» ist doppeldeutig. Zum ersten kann sie als synonyme Nebenform von «wenn» aufgefaßt werden, d.h. daß die Mädchen am Fenster lauschen, nur wenn oder sobald der Lauten Klang erwacht. Aber «wann» kann natürlich auch heißen: «wann», im Sinne von «wann endlich»: die Mädchen lauschen am Fenster in der Hoffnung, endlich feststellen zu können, daß jemand für sie gekommen ist. An den Mädchen soll es nicht liegen: die warten jede Nacht, aber es geschieht nichts. Sie hören nur die Brunnen, die verschlafen rauschen.

Ich würde diese letzte Variante vorziehen: die ätherische, etwas geisterhafte Anima, die noch mit dem Mond verknüpft ist und – aufgrund des unbestimmten Plurals – sich noch nicht zu etwas Persönlichem entwickelt hat, möchte endlich erlöst, d.h. aus der Latenzphase heraus in das Leben aufgenommen werden. Aber die unzuverlässigen Prinzen zeigen sich nicht, die Erwartung wird nicht erfüllt, und das Leben schläft weiter.

Wie in den Zeilen 15-16 verliert sich auch hier das Lebenswasser ins Unbewußte, nur nicht so stürmisch. Es rauscht verschlafen in der Nacht, wird nicht benutzt, erzeugt kein Leben. Alles wirkt tot und gespenstisch.

Zur Symbolik des Sommers in der letzten Zeile: der Sommer stellt im Jahreszyklus einen Höhepunkt dar, jedenfalls in Nord- und Mittel-Europa. Hier: der Höhepunkt des Lebens ist voll elegant gestalteter Vergängnis. Das Leben wird nicht ganz gelebt, alles bleibt bei einem ästhetischen Nichtberühren der Wirklichkeit. Die höfische Minne, auf die hier angespielt wird, ist so fein und so wenig vulgär, daß sie nicht einmal stattfindet. Es bleibt bei der Möglichkeit eines Kontaktes. Das Leben wird ebensowenig berührt, wie die unerreichbaren Sterne am Himmel.

IV

Vielleicht darf ich das Ganze zusammenfassen. In den ersten zwei Zeilen ist die Diskrepanz zwischen den unerreichbaren Sternen und dem einsamen Ich gezeichnet. Gleich zu Beginn ist der Gegensatz zwischen Bewußtem und Unbewußtem als Thema gesetzt.

Das Bewußtsein fühlt sich isoliert, weiß aber nichts Besseres zu tun als sehnsüchtig zu den goldenen Sternen hinaufzuschauen. Das bringt natürlich nichts; denn das ist eine leblose Fixiertheit

auf den Geist. Es handelt sich um eine psychische Konstellation der Verdrängung des Konkret-Erdhaften, wobei nie etwas in die Praxis des Lebens hineingebracht werden kann und es somit auch keine Entwicklung gibt.

Die Ich-Figur ist nur auf den klaren, geistigen Pol der Skala der menschlichen Möglichkeiten fixiert. Das wirkliche Leben bewegt sich jedoch zwischen den beiden Polen, zwischen der Natur auf der einen und dem menschlichen Geist auf der anderen Seite.

Schon aus den ersten zwei Zeilen wissen wir, daß es ein Übermaß an eleganten Betrachtungen, dafür aber gleichzeitig einen schmerzhaften Mangel an Leben gibt. Die entgegengesetzte Einseitigkeit gehört natürlich auch zu den menschlichen Möglichkeiten: derbe, vulgäre Sinnlichkeit ohne Geist, d.h. ein Leben, das sich ausschließlich auf der Instinktebene abspielt, nur schlafen, essen und Nachwuchs bekommen. Aber hier handelt es sich um eine Einseitigkeit geistiger Art, um einen «Mangel an Vulgarität»: das Ich ergötzt sich in der Betrachtung der Lebensmöglichkeiten und läßt es bei dieser Aktivität bewenden. Das ergibt eine unbewußte Sehnsucht, eine Melancholie: die Verbindung mit der Instinktebene ist verlorengegangen, deshalb ist das Leben schal und öde. Das Ich ist vom Leben abgeschnitten, das konkrete Leben fehlt.

In einer virtuellen Reise, die nur der Möglichkeit nach vorhanden ist, die nur gedacht, jedoch nicht realisiert wird – es ist eine «Reise an sich», losgelöst von allem Körperlichen – wird die dem Bewußtsein fehlende, dunkle, *de facto* weibliche Seite der Psyche erforscht. Diese Seite der Psyche taucht visionsartig auf, in zweierlei Form: 1) als ungebändigte Natur in der zweiten Strophe und 2) als illusionäre Traumwelt (die Welt einer ätherischen Anima, die in einem Geisterschloß wohnt und wieder zu verschwinden droht) in der dritten. Der Mutterkomplex bleibt unentwickelte Natur, die Anima wartet vergebens auf Erlösung. Das Ich läßt es bei der Betrachtung der Möglichkeit der Integration des fehlenden weiblichen Prinzips bewenden.

Wer oder was ist nun aber diese Ich-Figur? Innerhalb des Gedichtes gibt es zu der Identität der Ich-Figur keine näheren Angaben, und das Wissen um diese Identität wird vom Leser-Rezipienten an sich auch nicht gebraucht. Wie ich glaube, werden die meisten Leser die Ich-Figur am ehesten mit einem Mann identifizieren. Adorno z.B. spricht ganz einfach von «ihm», wenn er die Ich-Figur meint.⁷

Um so bemerkenswerter ist es, daß das Gedicht im Kontext des Romans *Dichter und ihre Gesellen* gesungen wird von Fiametta, der italienischen Marchesentochter und späteren Gattin des Dichters Fortunat. Sie singt es im dritten Buch, Kap. 24, und zwar aus Sehnsucht nach ihrer Heimat, aus der ein unglückliches Schicksal sie vertrieben hat. Als sie es beendet hat, verbirgt sie ihr Gesicht an Fortunats Knien und weint bitterlich, woraufhin Fortunat ihr zuflüstert: «Wir reisen wieder hin!». ⁸

Die abstrakte Erzählinstanz eines Gedichtes soll natürlich weder mit dem Autor noch mit dem oder der Vortragenden verwechselt werden, aber immerhin deutet die Einbettung in den Zusammenhang des Romantextes darauf hin, daß Eichendorff selbst die Ich-Figur nicht unbedingt mit einem Mann identifizierte.

Die Tatsache, daß es die Fiametta ist, die das Lied der Sehnsucht singt, könnte für uns einen Hinweis auf einen möglichen kulturhistorischen Zusammenhang enthalten. Wolfgang Frühwald führt aus, daß «die italienische Szenerie in Eichendorffs Gedicht *Sehnsucht* nicht so sehr einen geographischen Ort, ein reales Italien meint, das der seit 1831 in Berlin lebende Autor nie gesehen hat, sondern ein Land der Sehnsucht und der Poesie, das – wie es bei Wackenroder/Tieck heißt – “gelobte Land der Kunst”, die “Kunstheimat”, die “in allen Träumen erscheint”»,⁹ und sogar, daß das Gedicht auch unabhängig vom Kontext des Romans erkennbar sei «als Poesie der Poesie,

⁷ Adorno 1957/1974, 86.

⁸ Rudolf von Gottschall (Hrsg.) *Joseph Freiherrn von Eichendorffs Werke in vier Bänden*, Leipzig 1901, Bd. 3, 251.

⁹ Frühwald 1984, 382.

geprägt von den Grundsituationen spätrömantischer Lyrik. Ohne daß Wort und Begriff der Sehnsucht im Gedichttext selbst erscheinen, ist das Gedicht als Ganzes Ausdruck einer elementaren Sehnsucht nach Verwandlung und Bewegung, gefaßt im Bild der Reise und der Wanderschaft».¹⁰

Die Fiametta ist eine typische Anima-Figur. Sie ist die ausländische, d.h. relativ unbewußte Künstler-Anima des (romantischen) deutschen Dichters Fortunat, eine an sich sehr lebensfrohe Anima, die aber zur Heimat der Kunst, d.h. zum Unbewußten, zurückgehen will und muß, um neu belebt zu werden. Am Ende des Romans wird angedeutet, daß Fortunat sie tatsächlich wieder zurückführen wird, aber im Rahmen des Handlungsverlaufs findet dieses Ereignis nicht mehr statt.

Das stimmt weitgehend überein mit der Situation, in der die Literatur der Spätrömantik verkehrte. Wie sehr man Eichendorffs dichterischen Qualitäten auch hochschätzen mag, so hatte doch die Romantik zu der Zeit, da das Gedicht *Sehnsucht* entstand, ihre Quellen vorläufig eher erschöpft. Der Roman *Dichter und ihre Gesellen* wurde von Zeitgenossen schon beim Erscheinen für altmodisch erachtet. Die Annahme liegt nahe, daß die romantische Dichtung selber zu dieser Zeit der Erneuerung bedurfte, und zwar insbesondere der Integration des Erdhaften und Konkreten. Einigermaßen unfreundlich von Hermann Schneider in Worte gefaßt: «Die Romantik der "Meister" – Nachfolge bleibt noch bis in die 30er Jahre am Leben, wo Eichendorff und Immermann sie bis hart an den Rand des Erträglichen treiben.»¹¹ Oder wie der Zeitgenosse Wolfgang Menzel zu Eichendorff bemerkt: «Überall wiederholen sich bei ihm die zartesten Bilder und Töne unserer besten romantischen Dichter, aber Eichendorff selbst tritt uns nicht in festumrissener Originalität entgegen. [...] Es sind da überall hübsche romantische Anklänge und Anfänge, aber nichts ist durchgeführt.»¹²

Sogar Eichendorff selber mußte erkennen, daß die zeitgenössische Romantik aus irgendeinem Grund nicht mehr wirksam war, wiewohl er sich optimistisch zeigt. In seiner 1857, dem Jahre seines Todes, erschienenen Arbeit *Geschichte der poetischen Literatur Deutschlands* schreibt er: «Bei dem unverwüsthchen Ernste der Nation wird in Deutschland über kurz oder lang eine, der Romantik *in ihren ursprünglichen Hauptrichtungen* mehr oder minder verwandte Reaction sich geltend machen, nachdem jene Revolution, immer breiter die Waffen durchdringend, einstweilen die Romantiker übergerannt, und uns zum Ersatz nichts Anderes als die vorlängst abgespielte Aufklärerei, nur mit veränderten Redensarten, wiedergebracht hat.»¹³

Ob man das Gedicht nun aber in seinem kulturhistorischen Kontext oder als selbständiges Kunstwerk betrachten will: es handelt sich um eine virtuelle Individuationsreise, die offenbar dazu dienen soll, die Stagnation einer allmählich außer Beziehung geratenen Betrachtungsweise zu beheben. Das Subjekt dieser virtuellen Reise ist einer allzu unwirklichen, überfeinen Geisteshaltung verfallen, fühlt sich daher unerfüllt und sehnt sich unwissentlich nach dem ihm fehlenden konkreten Leben.

Der Individuationsimpuls ist da, in Form der beiden Wandergesellen, die in die Welt ziehen wollen, und die Individuationsreise wird vom dazu aufgeforderten Subjekt auch auf passive Art und Weise als Möglichkeit in Betracht gezogen und in Gedanken miterlebt. Die Möglichkeit wird jedoch in keinerlei Weise in die Tat umgesetzt, ja der Versuch dazu wird nicht einmal unternommen. Wirkliche Erneuerung bleibt daher aus. Alles spielt sich ausschließlich in der Phantasie ab, unter einem schönen Sternenhimmel in einer prächtigen Sommernacht.¹⁴

¹⁰ Frühwald 1984, 385-386.

¹¹ Schneider 1946, 91.

¹² Menzel 1859, 354-355.

¹³ Eichendorff 1857/1866³, 230-231.

¹⁴ Ich bedanke mich gerne bei Prof. Dr. Wiel Kusters für seine wertvollen Bemerkungen zu einer früheren Fassung dieses Aufsatzes und bei Dr. H.-P. Zehrfeld für einige liebenswürdig erteilte sprachliche Korrekturen.

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