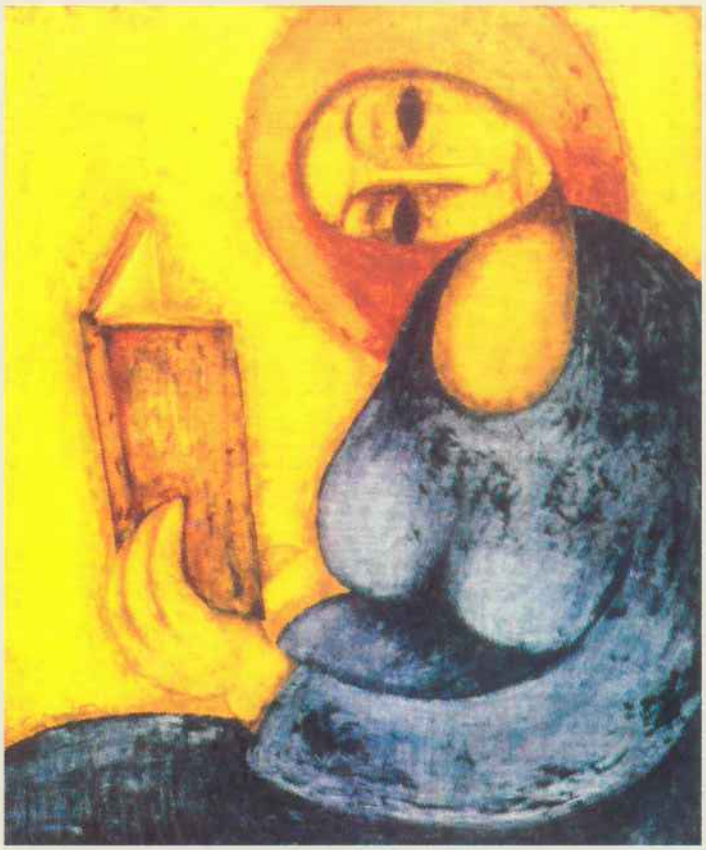
LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS



Proceedings of the

Eighteenth International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis

Nicosia (Cyprus) • May • 2001

Edited by **Frederico Pereira**

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

Cover plate: *«The Book»*, by Xanthos Hadjisotiriou

Photocomposed by *Instituto Superior de Psicologia Aplicada* – Lisboa

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

Depósito Legal n.º 182532/02

ISBN 972-8400-44-6

2002

EIGHTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON

LITERATURE AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

Edited by FREDERICO PEREIRA

Nicosia
(Cyprus)
May ♦ 2001

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

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PAPERS

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 3-27

A comparative study on literary and freudian text processing (*)

LÁSZLÓ HALÁSZ (**)

In two papers I wrote about some Freudian texts as fictive literary and historiographical texts not only metaphorically (Halász, 1992, 1996, including the relevant literature). But even in these Freud starts from the fundamental phenomena and mechanisms discovered by himself, and in his opinion these are parts of science. Thus, my interest in literary-artistic characteristics of Freudian texts does not wish to play off psychoanalytic hermeneutics against empirical psychoanalysis.

While some scholars in the humanities are rather tolerant towards Freud's unusual position between fiction and nonfiction, narration and nonnarration, and are inclined to highly appreciate it, some others consider it totally unacceptable. Certainly, if we wish to know the extent to which we can speak of Freudianism's effect, and especially its literary-artistic related areas beyond the circle of experts whose work it is to set forth their own standpoints, some empirical study is necessary.

In one of my former studies psychology and education undergraduates' knowledge about psychoanalysis and their opinion regarding the role of psychoanalysis in psychology, sociology, historiography, literary theory and culture in general, moreover regarding Freud's and psychoanalysis's relationship to fiction, artistic knowledge on the psyche, literature, pathology, fashion and on the activity of a writer, of a scholar and of a story-teller were examined. The subjects in general and the better-informed psychologists to be in particular saw no significant contradiction in thinking of Freud as a great scholar and as a great writer. Thus, they connected these two items the most closely with each other. The well-informed undergraduates and those who had acquired their knowledge from literature were able to tolerate Freud's peculiar position between science and hermeneutics, between nonfiction and fiction to the greatest degree (Halász, 1999).

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

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In another study the main question was what happened when well-motivated secondary-school students before their matriculation examinations processed Freudian texts which were unfamiliar to them. In the interests of operationalisation we have considered Freud's work somewhat simplifying it so that its pieces or parts basically satisfy the criteria of a scientific product in so far as they are special texts built on contradiction-free abstract conceptual-logical thinking able to grasp universally valid, general connections (rules, trends, mechanisms). Other Freudian products or parts are, however, much closer to literary fictions, if the stress is on creating a good, interesting, believable and illuminating story, on portraying individual forms, situations and events. They are vividly dramatic, they want to go to the generalizable, literally in an exemplary: example-giving and allusive way. We have used well-understandable Freudian texts which represent both kinds of text. Two texts of 260-260 words represent the scientific text-type. The narrative-literary text-type is represented by two other texts of similar length. Following a thorough (and repeated) reading the subjects'task was to choose the items out of a list of aims and motives of reading which were fulfilled by the given text, to choose the items out of another list which characterised the most important features of the given text, specifying three key words of the text, specifying the «genre» and judging the quality of the text. Despite the fact that the texts and their authors were unfamiliar to the naive subjects, the two sorts of texts were sharply separated from each other by their responses in every respect (Halász, 2001).

Considering that Freudian texts are usually appreciated literary narrative in honorific meaning, in two further studies, which I am now presenting, I have compared some Freudian texts with literary and nonliterary narratives.

STUDY 1

METHOD

Material

First I have used five short, in themselves meaningful and well-understandable text extracts about death. That is, a scientific-expository text as a nonliterary nonnarative nonfiction, an autobiographical text either in the original 1st person or to check the possible effect of the 1st-person narration, a rewritten 3rd person version as a (non)literary narrative (non)fiction, a novel text as a literary narrative fiction and a newspaper report as a nonliterary narrative nonfiction (The possible variations of literariness, fiction and narration see Ryan, 1991:1-2).

Profound mourning, the reaction to the loss of someone who is loved, contains the same painful frame of mind, the same loss of interest in the outside world, (...) the same loss of capacity to adopt any new object of love (which would mean replacing him) and the same turning away from any activity that is not connected with thoughts of him. (...) This inhibition and circumscription of the ego is the expression of an exclusive devotion to mourning.

(Expository text from Sigmund Freud: Mourning and Melancholia. Freud, S.: *On Metapsychology: The Theory of Psychoanalysis.* Pelican 11, 1984, p. 252.)

By one of the dark ways behind the official consciousness my father's death has affected me profoundly. I had treasured him highly and had understood him exactly. With his peculiar mixture of deep wisdom and fantastic lightness, he had meant very much in my life. He had passed his time when he died, but inside me the occasion of his death has reawakened all my early feelings. Now I feel quite uprooted.

[1st-person narration was written by Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess in a letter (1896), quoted in (and translated) by E. Jones: *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud*, vol. 1, p. 324.]

By one of the dark ways behind the official consciousness his father's death has affected him profoundly. He had treasured him highly and had understood him exactly. With his peculiar mixture of deep wisdom and fantastic lightness, he had meant very much in his son's life. He had passed his time when he died, but inside him the occasion of his death has reawakened all his early feelings. Now he feels quite uprooted.

[3rd-person narration was rewritten by Sigmund Freud's 1st-person narration]

He stood, facing us, on the tow-path. Then quite deliberately, for a matter of several seconds, he turned to look the other way. He was hoping that all this was not happening. He was hoping that no drowned body had floated one bright summer's morning against his sluice-gate. He was hoping that if he turned his back, counted ten, whispered a covert entreaty, it would go away.

[From Graham Swift's *Waterland*, p. 28. The sentence 'I know what he was doing.' was removed to avoid inferential 'clueing' in relation to other aspects of the investigation. In the original it occurred between sentences 2 and 3 below.]

In many places the water was no more than three feet deep but the mud underfoot was thick and glutinous and threatened to suck men and machines under.

Luis Fernandez, a rescue worker, said: «There were a lot of alligators and snakes in there and a lot of the debris is settling into the muck.» He and other emergency workers were distressed when they came across a family photograph album and baby clothes.

[From *The Independent*, 13/5/96: Phil Davison reports on the grim search in 'The River of Grass'.]

Subjects

50 well-motivated secondary-school students yet to take their matriculation examinations (average age 171/2, 23 males and 27 females) took part in the study.

Procedure

The subjects read thoroughly, and if they wished reread, all four unfamiliar texts. (About half of them – 27 – read the autobiographical text in the 1st, the other half – 23 – in the 3rd-person narration.) The texts were always presented only in themselves, without any designation or any contextual information. Following the reading of a text, the subject's tasks were to judge the given text by a six-item semantic differential (complex-simple, meaningless-meaningful, original-banal, familiar-unfamiliar, static-dynamic, imaginary-non imaginary) on seven-point scales (to enumerate the emotions which the protagonist(s) experienced (from the text or as the subjects wished) (to underline the emotions which the subject felt during reading on a twelve-item list (I was happy, I was surprised, I was fascinated, I was interested in, I was upset, I was stimulated, it made me think, it released me, it bored me, it excited me, it liberated me, it repelled me); and finally, after rereading all the texts, to categorise each of them – using a capital letter featuring on the page of the given text – into one text-type as follows: scientific-expository text, report, autobiographical document, literary narrative, transition between them.

The order of the texts, the questionnaires and even the items were at random, except the last questionnaire in which only the order of the items was at random.

RESULTS

Semantic differential

The scales «behaved» rather differently. The range was quite high on the scale of imaginary-non imaginary, while original-banal was extremely low, but meaningful-meaningless also was rather low. When the subjects judged the texts they could differentiate between them quite easily from the point of view of their imaginary, again they had serious difficulties to do this from the point of view of meaningfulness, and especially of originality (the differences based on t tests were mostly at level .001 and .01, sometimes .05) (Figures 1-6).

As compared to the other texts the report and the literary narrative were the most imaginary, the most dynamic, the most simple, the less meaningful, and the literary narrative was the most unfamiliar. At the same time, the scientific-expository text together the two autobiographical texts were the least imaginary, the most static, the most familiar, the most complex, the most meaningful. The literary narrative and the report were usually close to each other and were distant from the scientific-expository text. The two autobiographical texts were basically judged as identical; they were less imaginary, less dynamic and the most meaningful than the literary narrative and the report, and less complex than the scientific expository text.

The scientific-expository text had had remarkable correlations (at .01 or .001 level), especially with the two autobiographical texts along the dimensions of the imaginary, dynamism, familiarity, meaningfulness, and even originality (with one of them). At the same time, the scientific-expository text had correlations at the same level with the literary narrative along the dimensions of complexity and dynamism. Beyond these the literary narrative had similar correlations with the report along the dimensions of the imaginary, complexity and originality as a negative one, the same negative correlation with the autobiography 1st person, and with the autobiography 3rd person from the point of view of dynamism. Beyond the already mentioned correlations the report had with the autobiography 3rd-person along the dimensions of complexity and the imaginary as a negative one. Thus, the organisation of judgements was rather similar between the scientific-expository and the autobiographical texts along the dimensions (except complexity), while the relationship between the scientific-expository and the literary, literary and report, report and autobiographical texts was more limited.

Protagonist(s)' emotions

Although the autobiographical 1st person aroused the greatest average number of the protagonist's/protagonists' emotions, the difference was not significant in any case. On the whole, no significant differences could be found between the texts from that point of view (computed by sign test). And although the autobiography in both versions aroused the greatest proportions of emotions of different content, the difference was below the level of significance. The literary narrative and the report aroused a greater number of emotions not literally given in the text than did the scientific-expository text. The trend was similar in the case of autobiography in both versions vs. scientific-expository text but the difference was below the level of significance. It is all too obvious that the proportion of the protagonist's/protagonists' negative emotions was much higher than that of the positive ones with each text (computed by a test of differences between proportions). But this proportion was especially striking with the scientific-expository text, while the distribution of negative emotions between basic emotions, loneliness and indifference was clear with each text (Table 1).

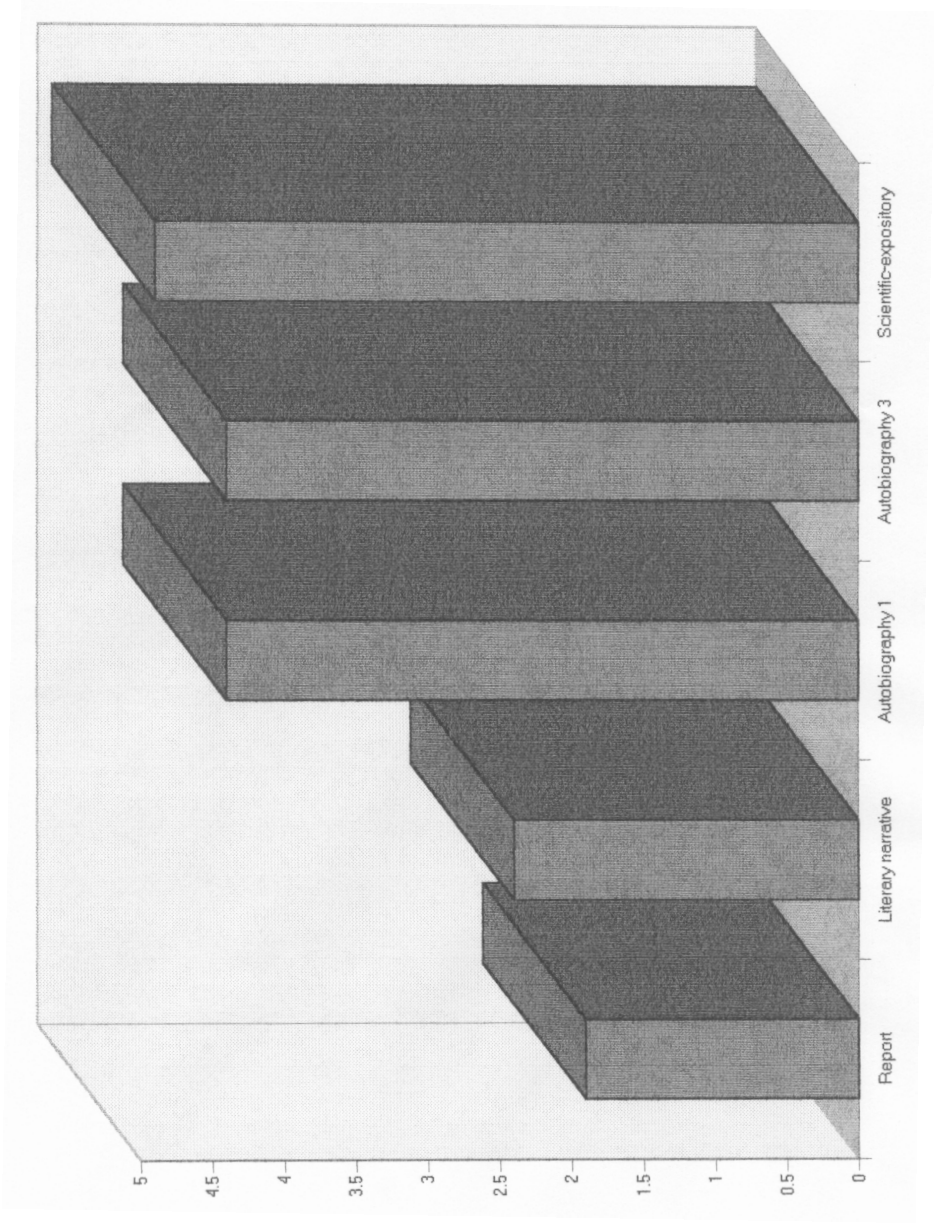
Readers' emotions

It made me think, I was interested in, I was surprised were the most frequent emotions. The other 9 emotions of the list did not reach one-third, even usually one-fourth of the subjects with none of the texts. The great majority of the subjects made me think with Freud's texts, while only a

minority did so with the literary narrative and the report (Figure 7). Again the majority was interested in the report and the two autobiographical texts, and even half of them in the literary narrative, and more than one-third in the scientific-expository text (Figure 8). The difference between the report, the autobiographical text in 3rd person and the literary. Moreover scientific-expository texts significant, usually at level .001. More than two-thirds of the subjects were surprised by the literary narrative, but only one-third or less by all the other texts (Figure 9). On the whole the literary narrative had the highest (average frequency 24%) and the scientific-expository text the lowest (average frequency 18%) emotional effect.

FIGURE 1

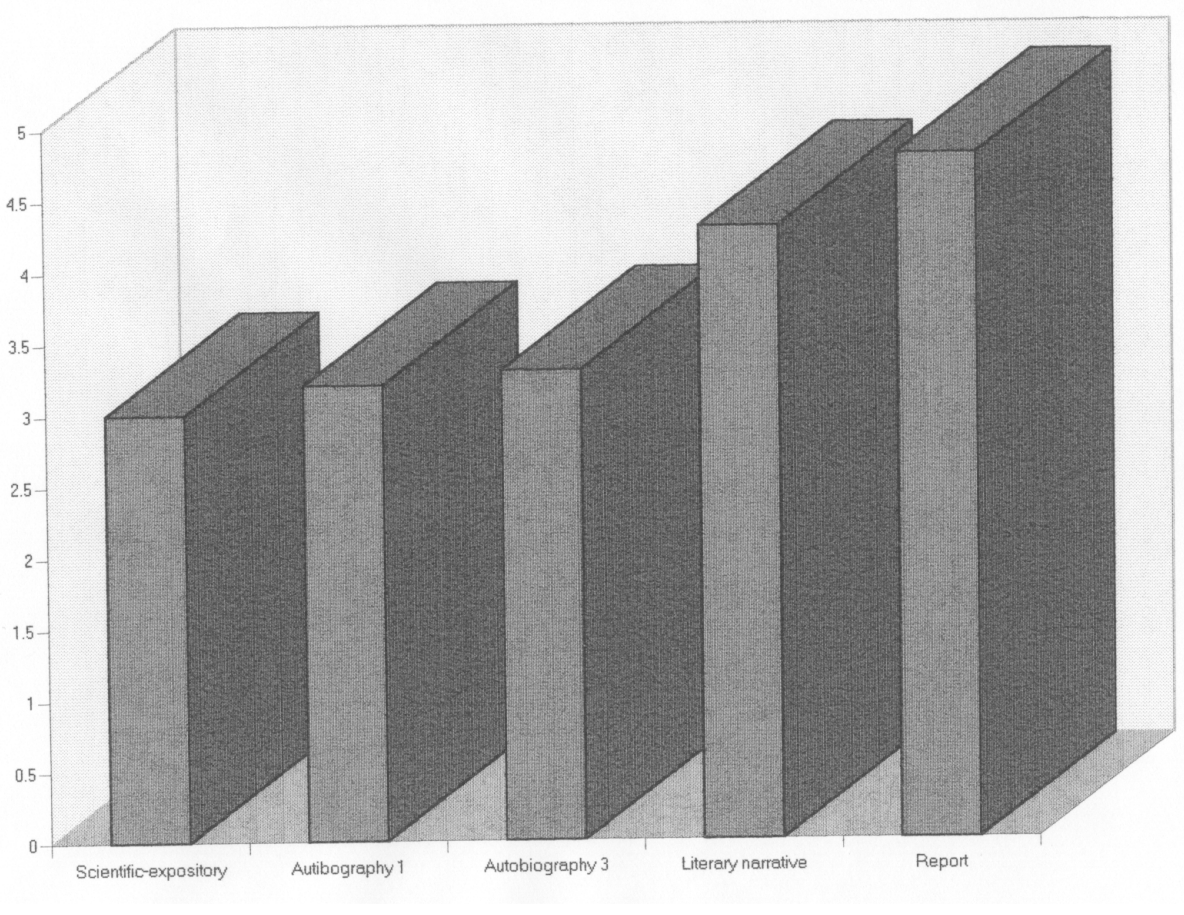
The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of imaginary – non imaginary



Lower score indicates that the text is more imaginary

FIGURE 2

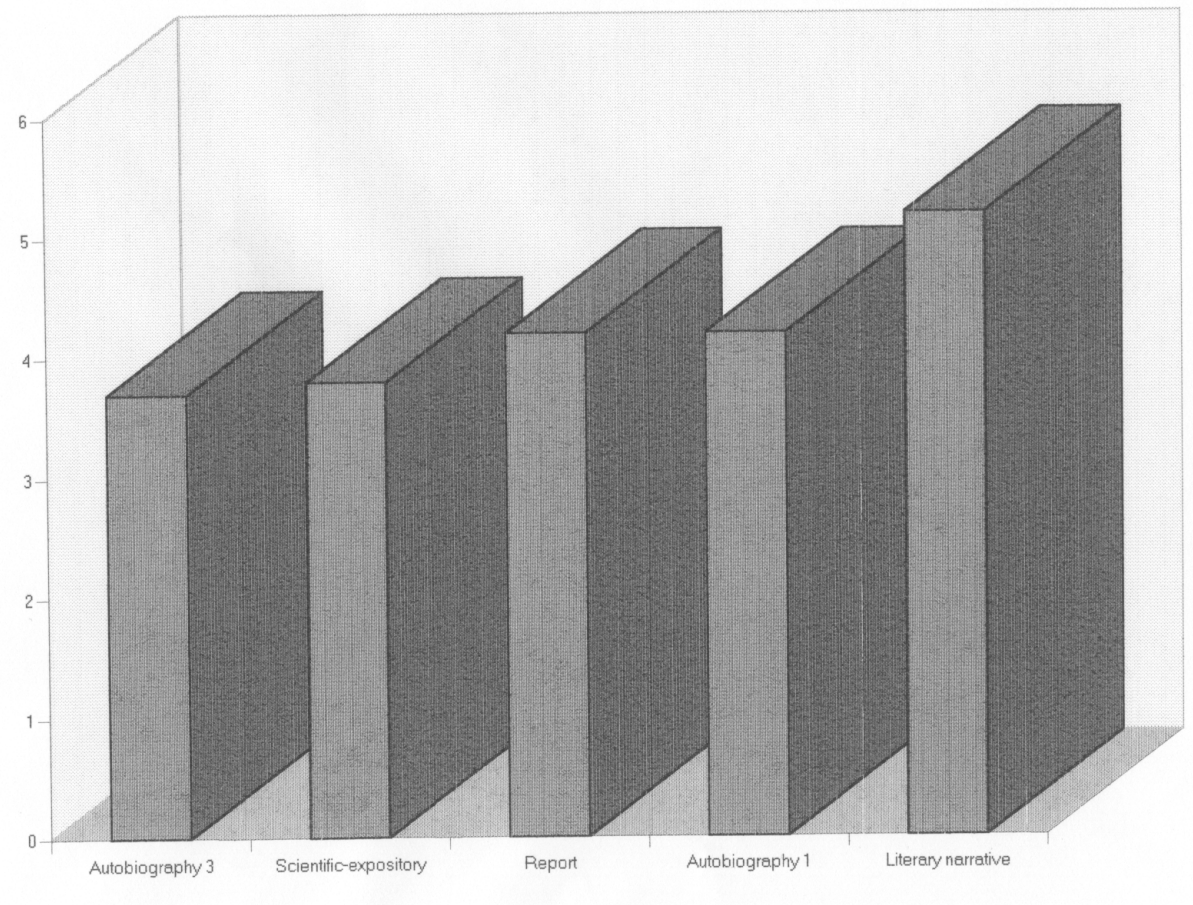
The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of istatic – dynamic



Lower score indicates that the text is more static

FIGURE 3

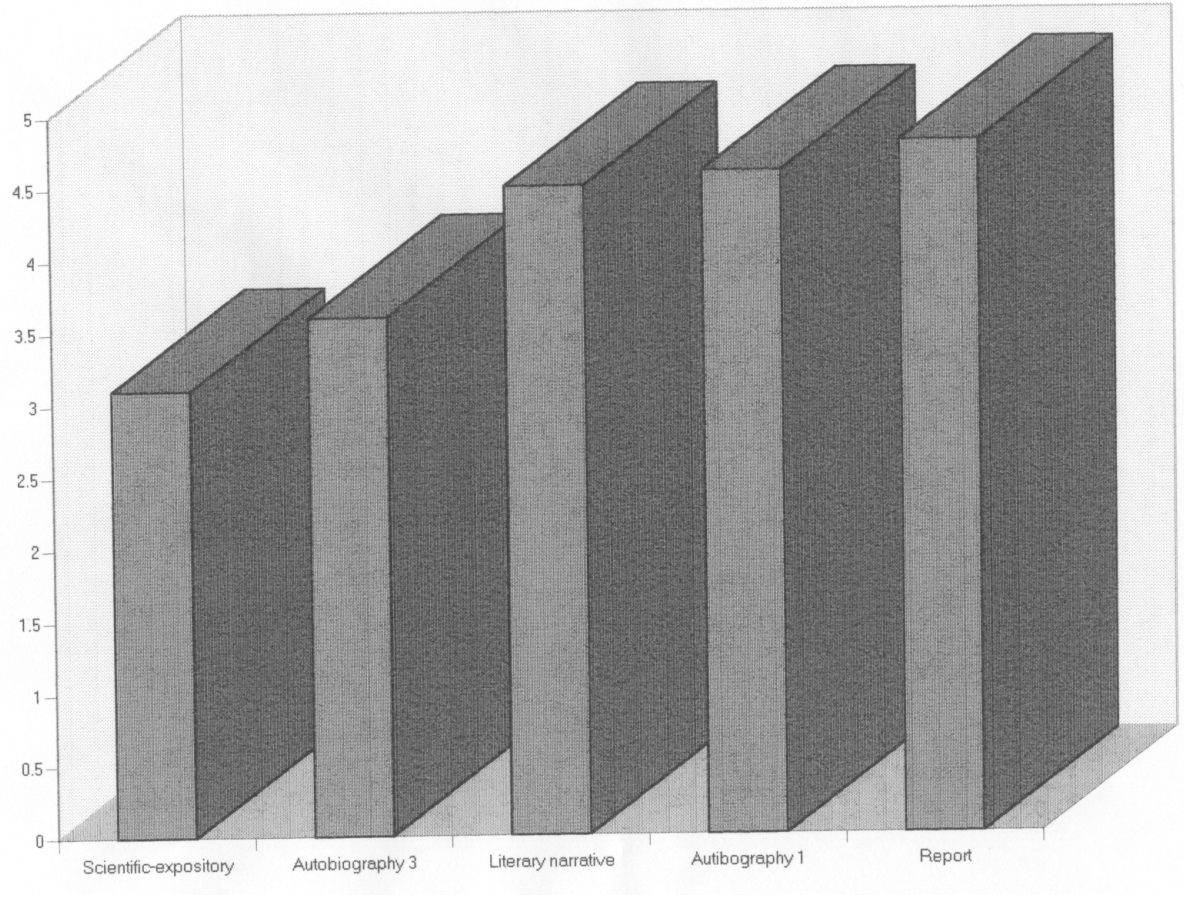
The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of familiar – unfamiliar



Lower score indicates that the text is more familiar

FIGURE 4

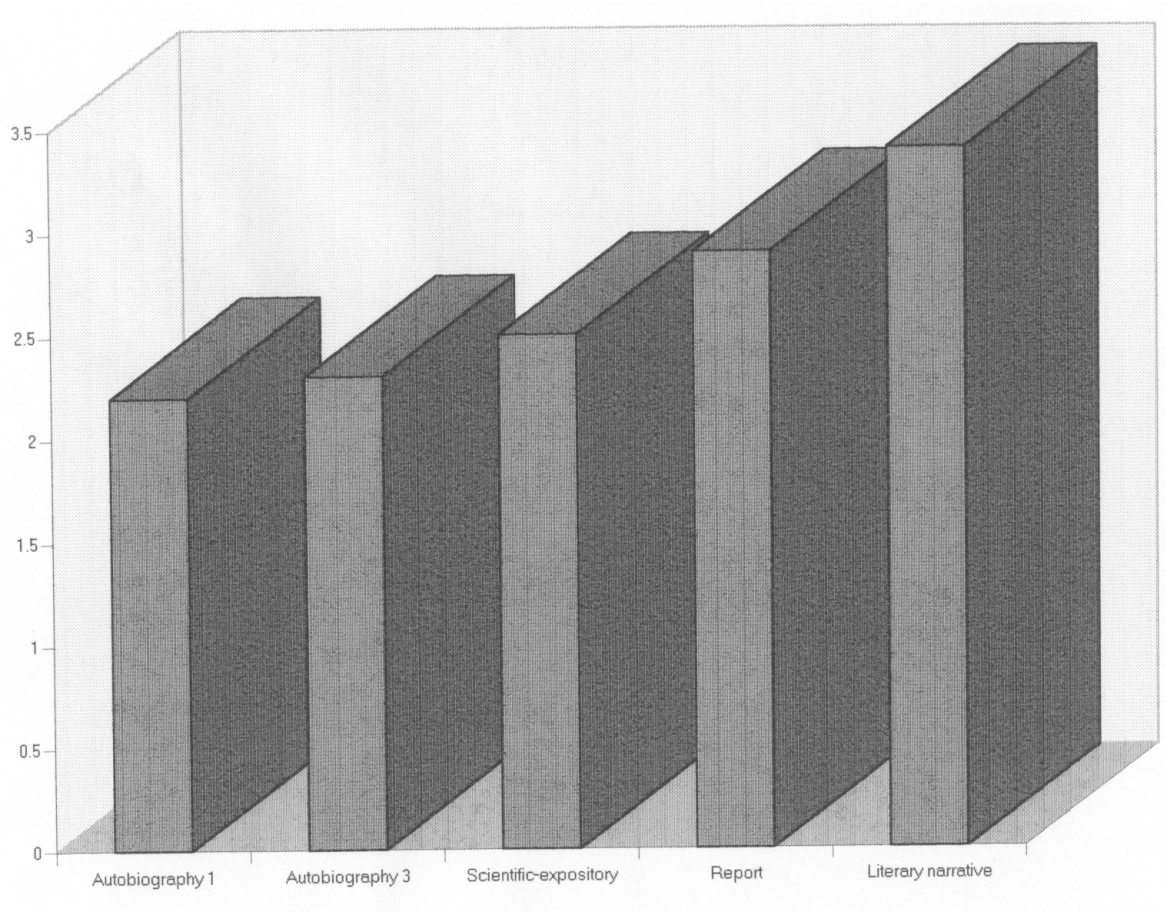
The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of fcomplex – simple



Lower score indicates that the text is more complex

FIGURE 5

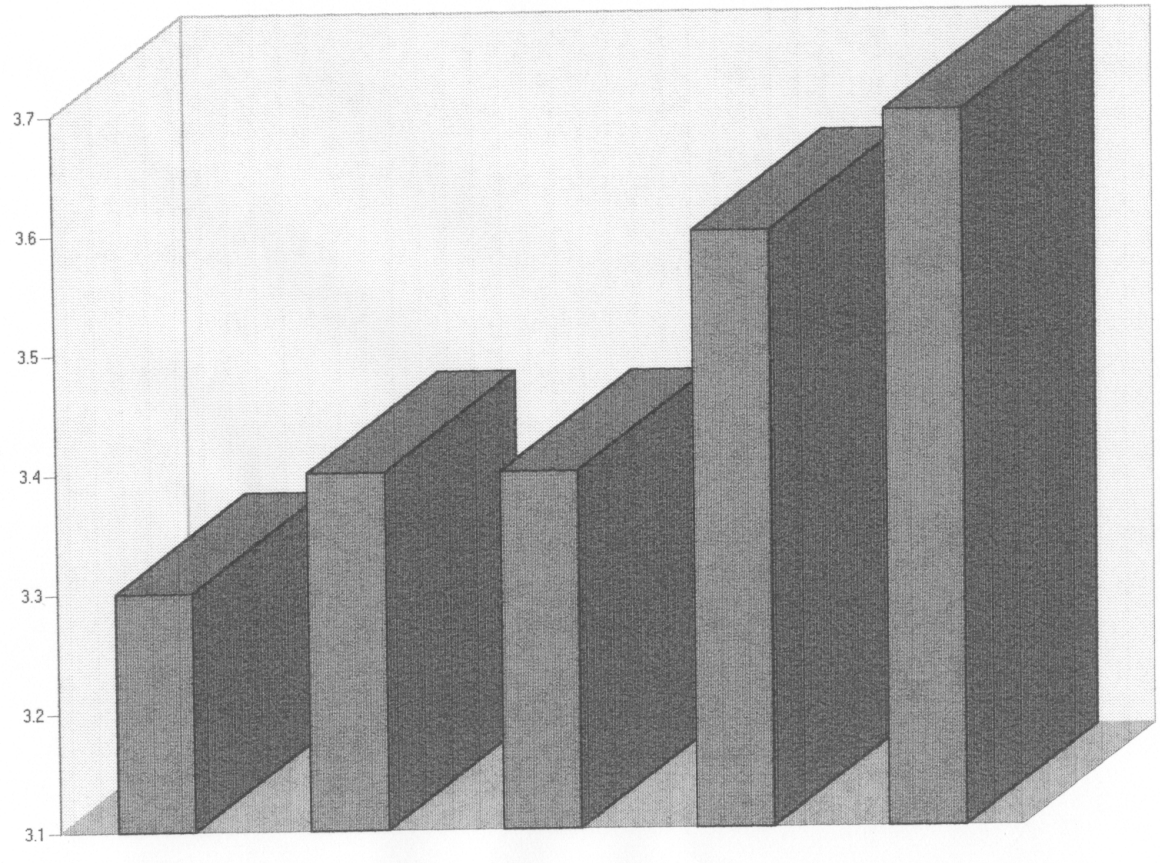
The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of meaningful – meaningless



Lower score indicates that the text is more meaningful

FIGURE 6

The average scores of judging the texts from the point of view of original – banal



Lower score indicates that the text is more original

TABLE 1

The most important data relating protagonist(s)' emotions

The total number and average per subjects of the response items

Scientific-expository		Report		Autobiography 1		Autobiography 3		Literay narrative	
220	4.4	201	4.0	128	4.7	102	4.4	196	3.9

The proportions of different contents of emotions as compared to total responses

25%	27%	33%	34%	26%

The proportions of emotions not given in the text as compared to total responses

70%	88%	78%	77%	85%

The proportions of major categories of emotions as compared to total responses

Scientific-expository	
Basic negative: pain-distress-hopelessness-sadness-despair	35%
Indifference: want-emptiness-helplessness	23%
Loneliness: loss of people-loss of world-isolation	21%
Basic positive: love-attachment-devotion	10%
Report	
Basic negative: despair-sadness-fear	50%
Positive social: sympathy-pity-regret	27%
Autobiography 1st person	
Basic negative: sadness-pain-uprootedness-want	58%
Basic positive: love-attachment-high esteem	22%
Autobiography 3rd person	
Basic Negative: uprootedness-distress-want	69%
Basic positive: love-admiration-high esteem	20%
Literary narrative	
Basic negative: fear-dread-sadness-despair	54%
Basic positive: hope-love	16%

FIGURE 7
It made me think

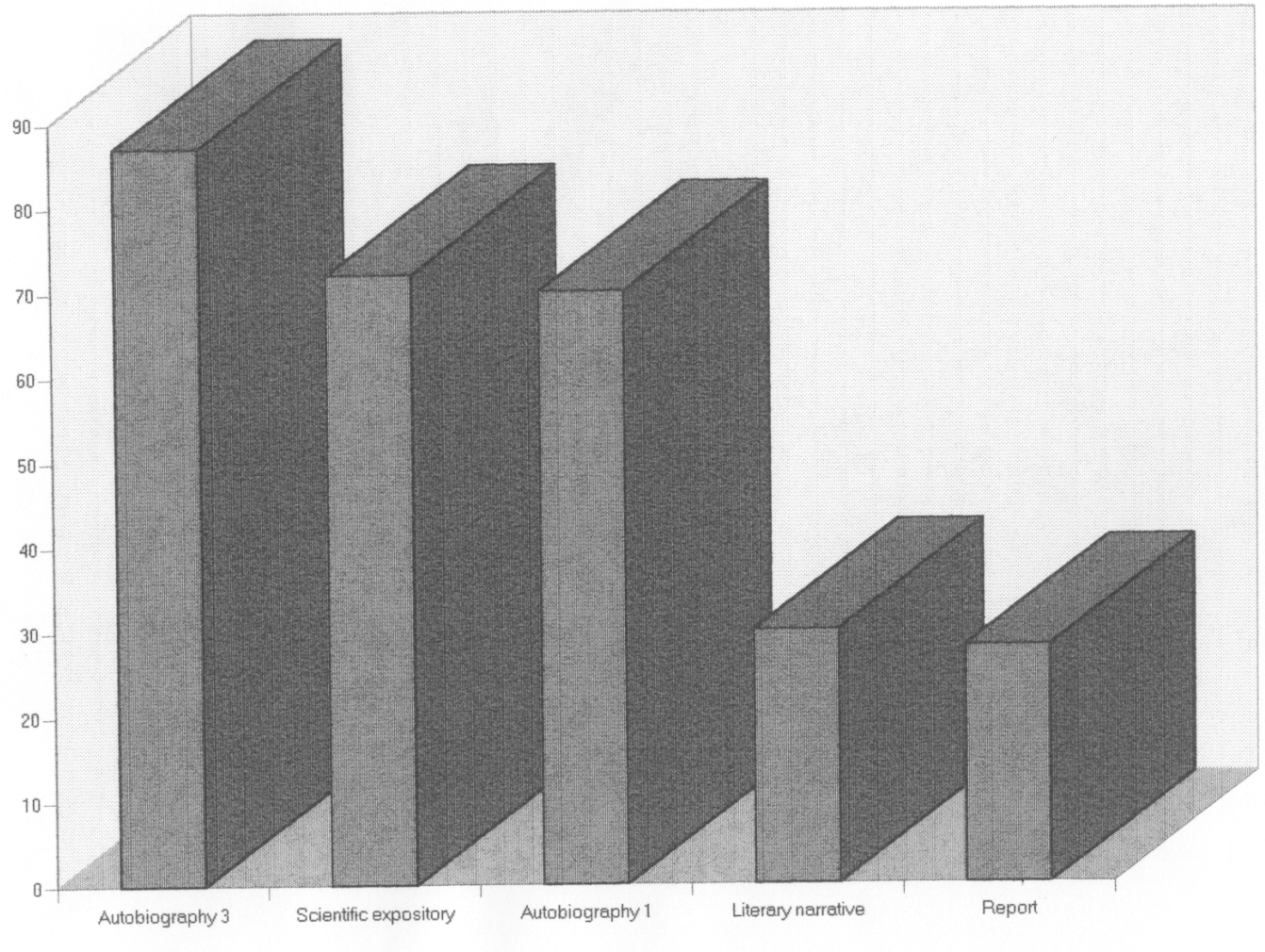


FIGURE 8
I was interested in

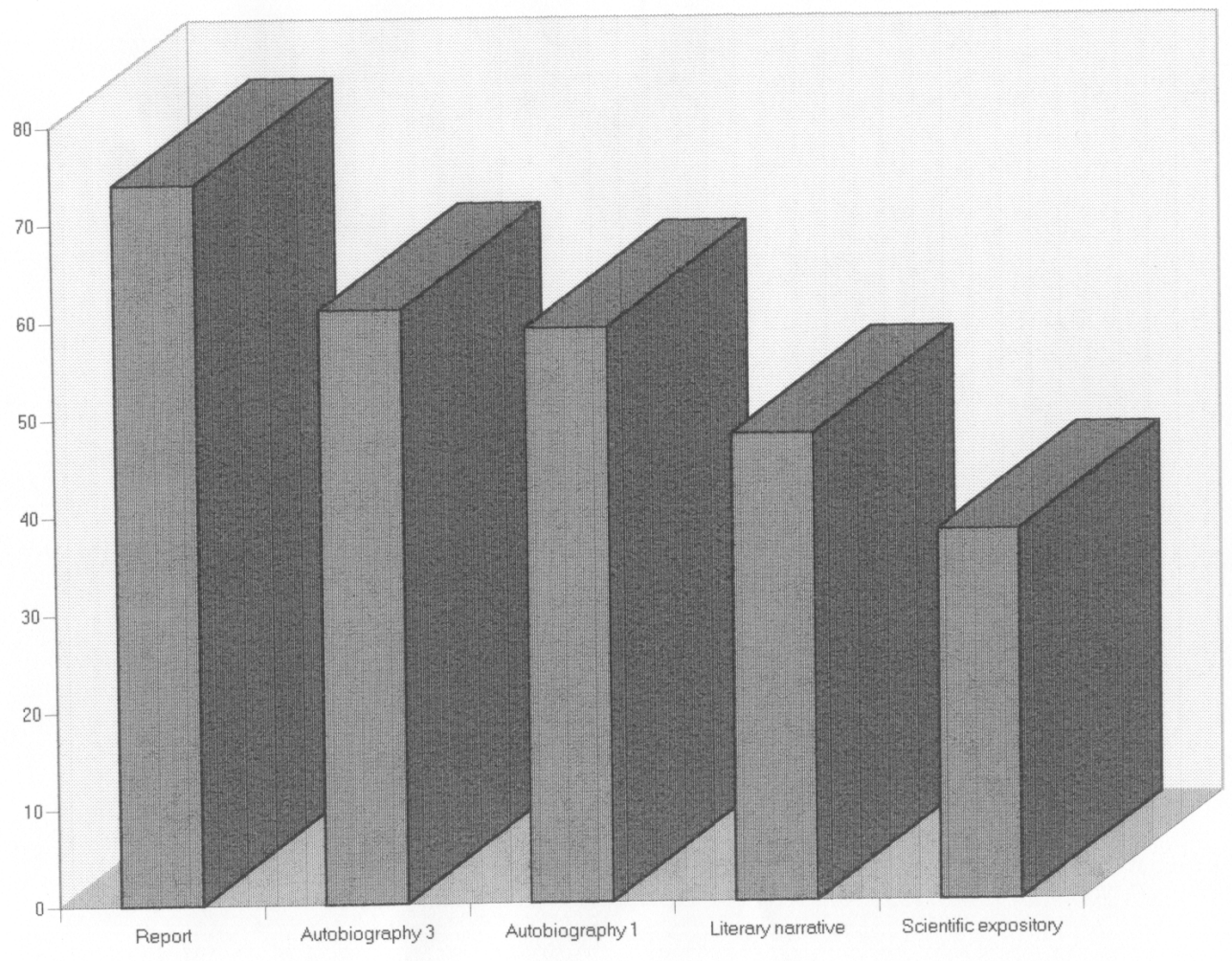
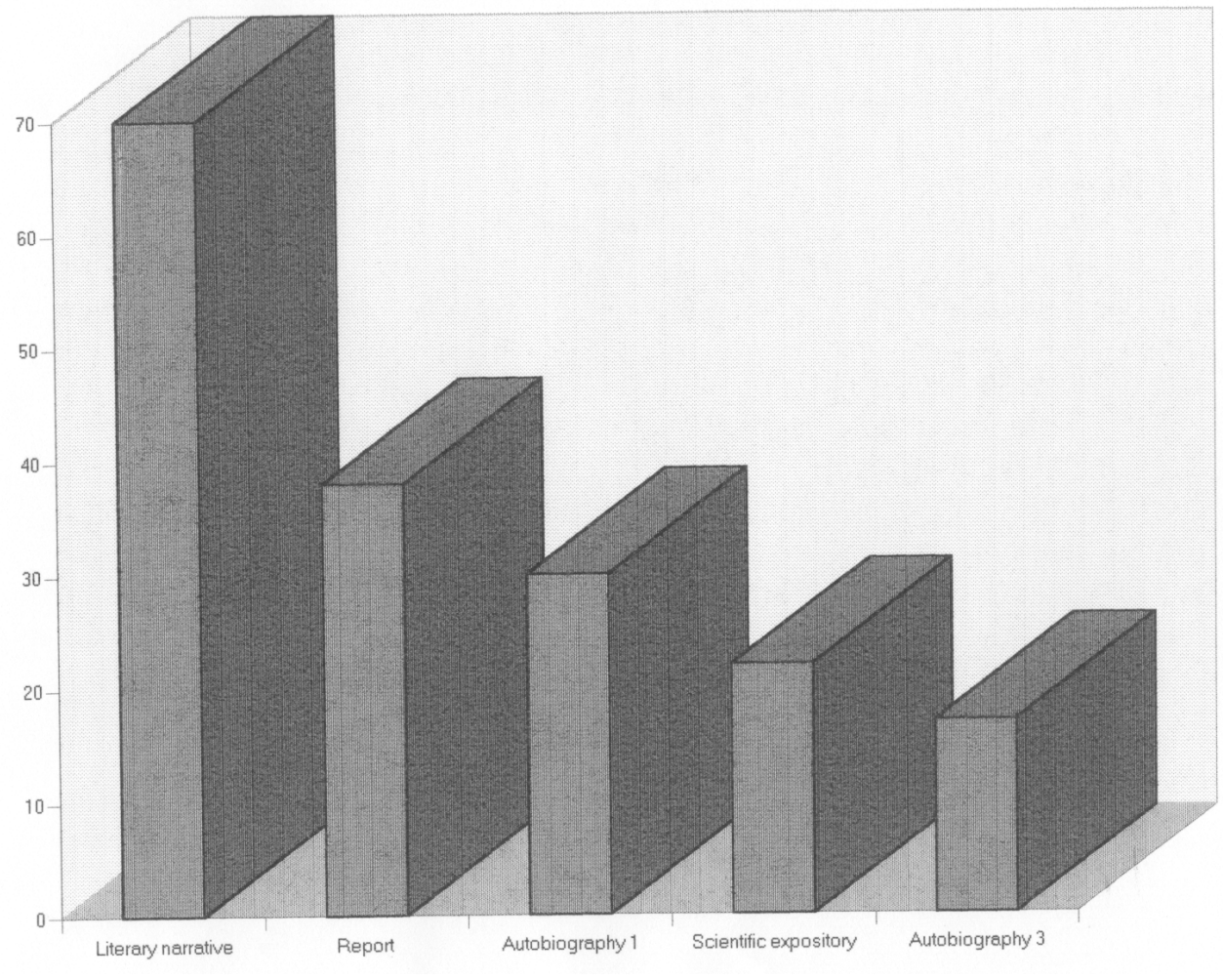


FIGURE 9
I was surprised



There were only few significant differences between females and males. The former ones were more stimulated by the scientific-expository text ($p<.03$), more upset by the report ($p<.05$), were less surprised ($p<.02$) and not fascinated by the autobiographical 1st person ($p<.05$) than the latter, and were not released by the literary narrative at all ($p<.05$). But the females were usually somewhat more stimulated and upset by all the other texts than were the males although these differences were below the level of significance.

Categorization of the text-types

A clear majority of the subjects could identify the correct text-type with each text. At the same time, it turned out that the subjects able to read the autobiographical text in its original form (in the 1st person) had no difficulty in identifying its text-type, while the same text in the 3rd person represented a serious difficulty (Table 2). And in that case this text was often categorized as a literary one. Anyway, more than one-third of the subjects could identify all the four texts correctly and one-quarter of them could identify a maximum of two texts correctly. There was no difference between females and males.

TABLE 2
Frequencies of categories

	Correct categorisation	None of them	Something else	p*
Scientific-expository	41	8	1 (Literary narrative)	.001
Report	37	11	2 (Autobiography)	.01
Autobiography 1st person	23**	2	2 (Report 1, Scientific-expository 1)	.001
Autobiography 3rd person	10***	9	4 (Report 1, Literary narrative 3)	n.s.
Literary narrative	41****	2	7 (Autobiography 4, Scientific-expository 2, Report 1)	.001
Transition between Literary narrative and Scientific-expository text			11 (Report 2, Literary narrative 3, Scientific-expository 3, Autobiography 3)	

* by sign test
** Out of the same subjects 1 categorised Literary narrative and 1 Report as Autobiography, too,
*** Out of the same subjects 1 categorised Literary narrative and 1 Report as Autobiography, too. Anyway, computing the added data of the autobiographical texts, the correct categorisation was significant at level .05.
**** Out of the same subjects 10 categorised Autobiography (out of them 7 who read it in 3rd-person), another 6 Report and 1 Scientific-expository text as a Literary narrative, too.

DISCUSSION

Scientists often write personal letters and autobiographical confessions. Yet most scientists keep such personal writings separate from their scientific texts. Their personal experiences are not seen as part of their scientific work even if they help us to understand how they arrived at their conclusions. However, Freud's correspondence, direct and indirect autobiographical confessions and scientific works are closely interwoven. The narratives of personal experience are neither illustrations nor background information to clarify the scientific works: the expository-scientific and narrative-literary discourse modes are manifestations of the same life material and vision. The direct organizing role of an author's personal theme and phantasies in her/his work is quite natural

in arts, but not in science. Although the shortness and unfamiliarity of the text-extracts (and their authors) presented to the subjects could have brought about a serious difficulty when categorizing them, the subjects were able to identify the correct text-types to a convincingly high degree. The organization of conditions for the study meant that the subjects could rely on nothing but the texts themselves. Even so, laconic passages gave satisfactory cues as to the given text-type for naive readers like the subjects. At the same time, it was clear that the primary cue for an autobiographical text was its manner of presentation in the 1st person. That is why the version rewritten into the 3rd person was categorized only partly as an autobiography and partly as a literary narrative. Anyway, the mistake went both ways: when the subjects were unable to categorize the literary narrative correctly, they were willing to see it first as an autobiography. As a matter of fact, owing to the close relationship between autobiography and literary narrative in general, this mistaken categorization was not too wrong. For up until the last part of the study the subjects processed the texts without the necessity of realizing text-types: their responses were not consequences of their commitment to a category.

In fact, despite the differences mentioned in advance, the two autobiographical texts produced almost identical average scores on the semantic differential scales; the literary narrative and the report had quite similar and rather different ones respectively from the scientific-expository text. By all means, the texts could be separated into two groups: the literary narrative and the report vs. Freud's texts. The first group was more imaginary, dynamic, simple, and less meaningful than the second. At the same time, the unfamiliarity of the literary narrative differed not only from the less unfamiliarity of the second group, but from that of the report. And as for complexity, the autobiographical texts were closer to the other texts than to the scientific-expository text. One cannot ascertain which text received the most positive and which the most negative average scores. While imaginary and dynamic could be considered positive attributes, the same texts were less meaningful, which was certainly a negative attribute. Although complexity is an important value in the eyes of experts, when naive readers found a text simpler than another, this often means that this text was more understandable for them than the other. And understandability is one of the most important features in their eyes.

The correlations of the semantic scales showed that a close relationship could be found between the judgments of Freudian texts, although their text-types were rather different (and the subjects also found it so without knowing who their author was), yet almost two decades passed between the writing of the autobiographical document and that of the scientific-expository text. When a subject judged one of these texts to be imaginary (or nonimaginary), dynamic (or static), meaningful (or meaningless), familiar (or unfamiliar) and original (or banal), one judged the other text more or less similarly (the average scores showed it, indeed). Out of the six scales only one: complexity (or simplicity), behaved differently to these three texts. That is, with the exception of this attribute the subjects became conscious of some kinship between these texts as to their point and cognitive style. Between the other texts only rather a fragmentary relationship could be found through some of the attributes of imaginary, complex and dynamic.

Enumerating the protagonist's/protagonists' emotions, the scientific-expository text aroused the highest number of negative emotions, and at the same time the lowest number of not literally given emotions. This effect can be explained by the inherent nature of the text: it was the most abstract and explicit, unambiguously specifying the negative emotions and giving less opportunity for involvement in an individual's fate. Focusing on the reader's own emotions about the text, it is obvious that the cognitive-intellectual emotions were dominant with each text, but in a different proportion. For instance, surprise was quite typical in the case of the literary narrative reader, interest in the case of the report and the autobiographical text reader, and meditation in the case of the scientific-expository text reader. But in accordance with the overall emotional level which was the higher with the literary narrative readers than with the scientific-expository text readers, the effect of involvement (assigning higher proportions of both positive and negative emotions in all) was more significant in case of a literary than of a scientific text. A literary text usually describes

the protagonist and his circumstances in a more dramatic, vivid and richly detailed way than a scientific-expository one. It arouses to a greater extent the reader's empathy with the protagonist's inner world and his circumstances.

STUDY 2

METHOD

Material

The basic material of my second study was Freud's famous paper about Leonardo. In this the key component is Leonardo's relationship with his mother. Freud put on record that he used a «discovery» in Mereshkovsky's biographical novel (1912), namely that the latter's identification of a certain Katherine as Leonardo's mother. Although Freud (1985:197) mentioned that according to an expert this person was only a maid-servant, he took his lead from the Russian writer, having said that the novelist's interpretation «cannot be put to the proof, but it can claim so much inner probability» that it could be accepted «as correct».

I have used some parts of Freud's text and some parts of Mereshkovsky's of similar subject-matter and length (about 1700-1700 words, i.e. I could now check the effect of relatively long texts. In view of their length I refrain from giving here the texts). Each deals with two themes. The first is Leonardo and Mona Lisa, the second Leonardo as a researcher-inventor. Narratologically, however, the differences between the texts are significant. At the beginning Freud presents a short narrative taken from Leonardo himself; then Freud comments in a narrative form on the relationship between the baby Leonardo and his mother, preparing the way for the painting of a Freudian story about *Mona Lisa* and *St Anne with Two Others* (the Madonna and child). The reader's attention is directed either to Leonardo, or to Mona Lisa, or to *Mona Lisa*, then to *St Anne*..., or to Leonardo's mother, or rather to his two mothers, i.e., to the interaction between Leonardo and the others. Finally, the interpretation of the enigmatic smile follows, a surprising but convincing explanation embedded in a story instead of a long description and speculation. The second part deals with the interaction between Leonardo and his father to explain Leonardo's infantilism, playfulness and instinct for discovery. The text has 13 passages; each is a tiny narrative and its hero is always Leonardo. This part of the text is less spectacular and less rich in happenings than the first. The narrator's hypotheses and commentaries appear more obviously. With rare exceptions the whole text is presented in the 3rd person singular by an omniscient narrator.

In the opposition to this, in the first part of Mereshkovsky's text the happenings take place from the point of view of Leonardo's student, briefly interrupted by Leonardo's inner speech; then only Leonardo and Mona Lisa remain on the scene. In their dialogues Leonardo's point of view is dominant, reflecting their relationship and his situation. In the second part Leonardo's point of view determines how he reacts, either in the first or third person singular, to his student's delirious words: the latter had moratally injured himself having tested a half-ready flying apparatus.

Subjects

69 well-motivated secondary-school students yet to take their school matriculation examinations (average age 17 1/2; 23 males, 27 females) took part in the study. (No subject was identical with an earlier one.)

Procedure

The texts were unfamiliar for the subjects. Half of the subjects read one, the other half the other text. After a thorough reading of the first part, the subjects judged on seven-point scales the degree to which the Leonardo in the text was good-bad, enchanting-repulsive, emotionally rich-emotionally impoverished; the degree to which they gained insight into Leonardo's feeling and thinking, the degree to which had they been Leonardo, they would have behaved as he behaved, the degree to which they felt admiration for Leonardo, the degree to which they felt pity towards him, the degree to which they were surprised by the text; and the degree to which the content of the text was nonfiction-fiction; and the degree to which the text was readable-unreadable.

Then following the second part they replied to the same questions again, and decided whether the full text was of «one genre» or of «two or more genres». According to the instructions, a text was of one genre if it fitted into just one given category, for instance into drama and nothing else. A text was of two or more genres if it consisted of a combination of a minimum two genres, for instance drama and report. When the subjects underlined either one genre or two or more genres, they could choose drama, essay, novel, dissertation, report, or short story, depending on their earlier responses: the one given category or a composite of two or more categories.

The order of the texts, the questionnaires and even the items were at random, except the last questionnaire in which only the order of the items was at random.

RESULTS

Judging Leonardo

Freud's Leonardo was judged following the first part to be better ($p<.05$) and richer in emotion ($p<.005$) than following the second one. Mereshkovsky's Leonardo was also judged to be emotionally richer following the first part ($p<.03$) than following the second one. The average scores between the two texts did not differ significantly (Figures 10-11).

There were no significant differences between the first and second parts with any of the texts with regard to insight, imagination, admiration, pity, surprise, and there were no any significant differences between the corresponding items of the two texts. Of the five items surprise received a significantly higher score with Freud's text following both parts. Although the average scores of surprise were not significantly different between the two texts, those of Freud's text were higher in both cases; at the same time the standard deviations were significantly lower ($p<.05$) (Figures 12-13).

Judging the texts

Freud's text following the first part was less readable and fictional than Mereshkovsky's ($p<.05$), following the second part the difference was not significant, but the trend was similar (Figure 14).

Categorizing the texts

With Freud's text essay and dissertation were correct out of the alternatives based on a narrow (rigid) categorization. In case of one genre the frequencies of responses between correct and incorrect categories did not differ significantly (Table 3). But based on a wider categorization, novel and short story were acceptable as well. In case of one genre the frequencies of responses between correct and incorrect categories differed significantly ($p<.05$). The correct responses were in the majority. Based on a narrow categorization in case of two or more genres, the correct and incorrect categories did not differ significantly between the frequencies of responses; based on a

wider categorization the difference was strikingly significant ($p<.001$). The correct responses were in the majority. And, the proportion of narrative and expository texts did not differ significantly.

FIGURE 10
Judging Freud's Leonardo

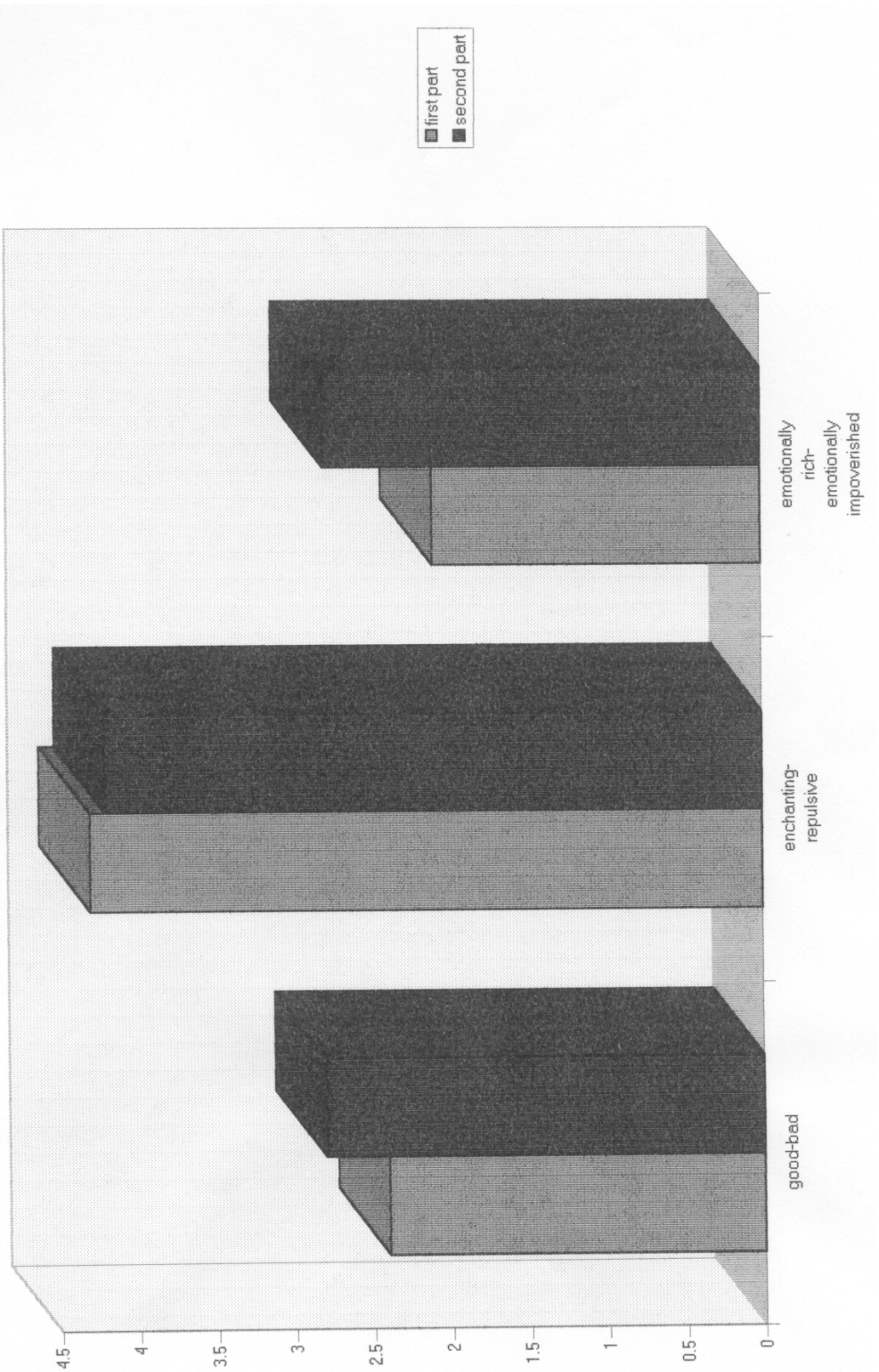


FIGURE 11
Judging Mereshkovsky's Leonardo

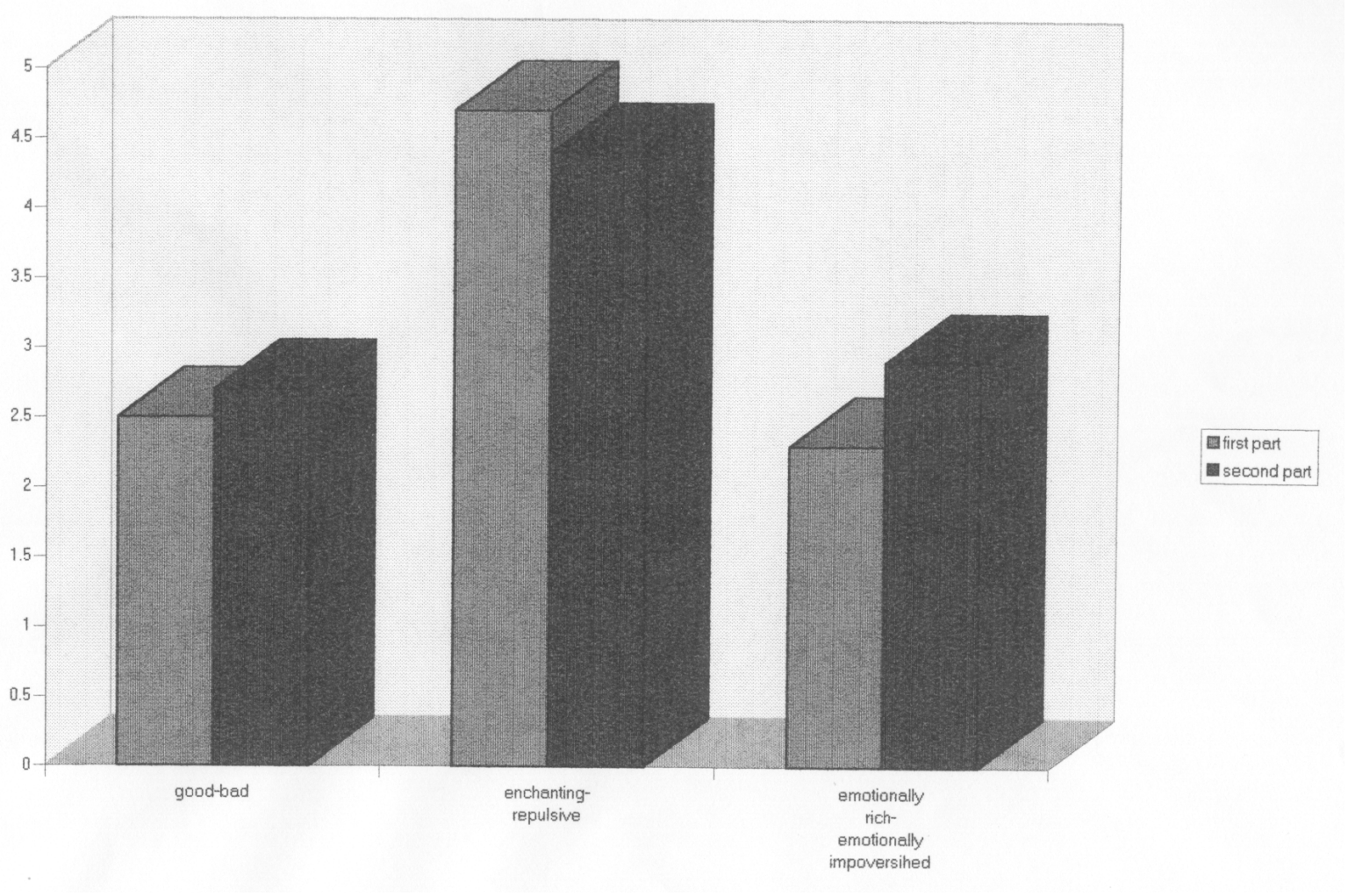


FIGURE 12

Judging the empathic situations and emotions aroused by Freud's Leonardo

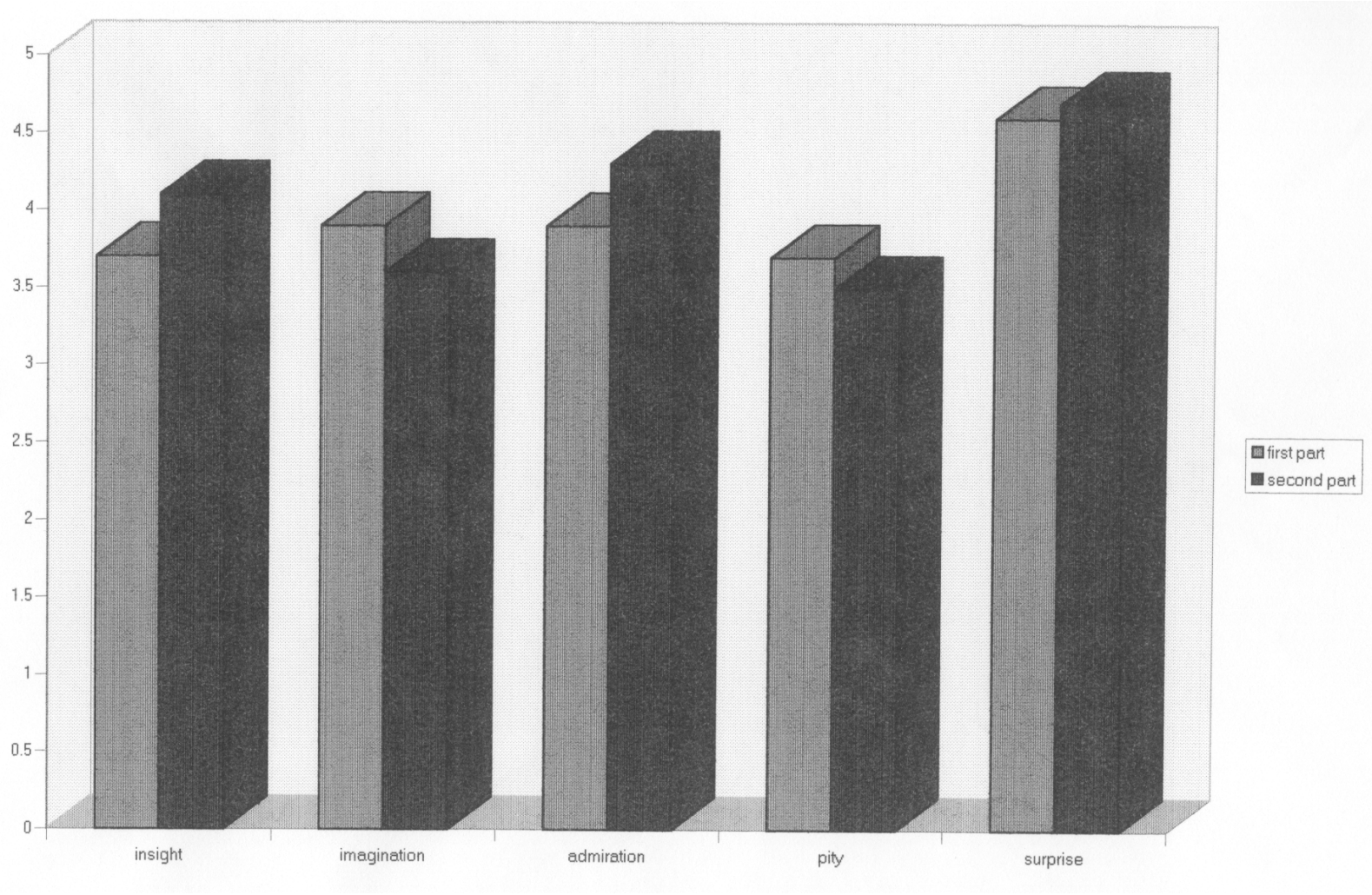


FIGURE 13

Judging the empathic situations and emotions aroused by Mereshkovsky's Leonardo

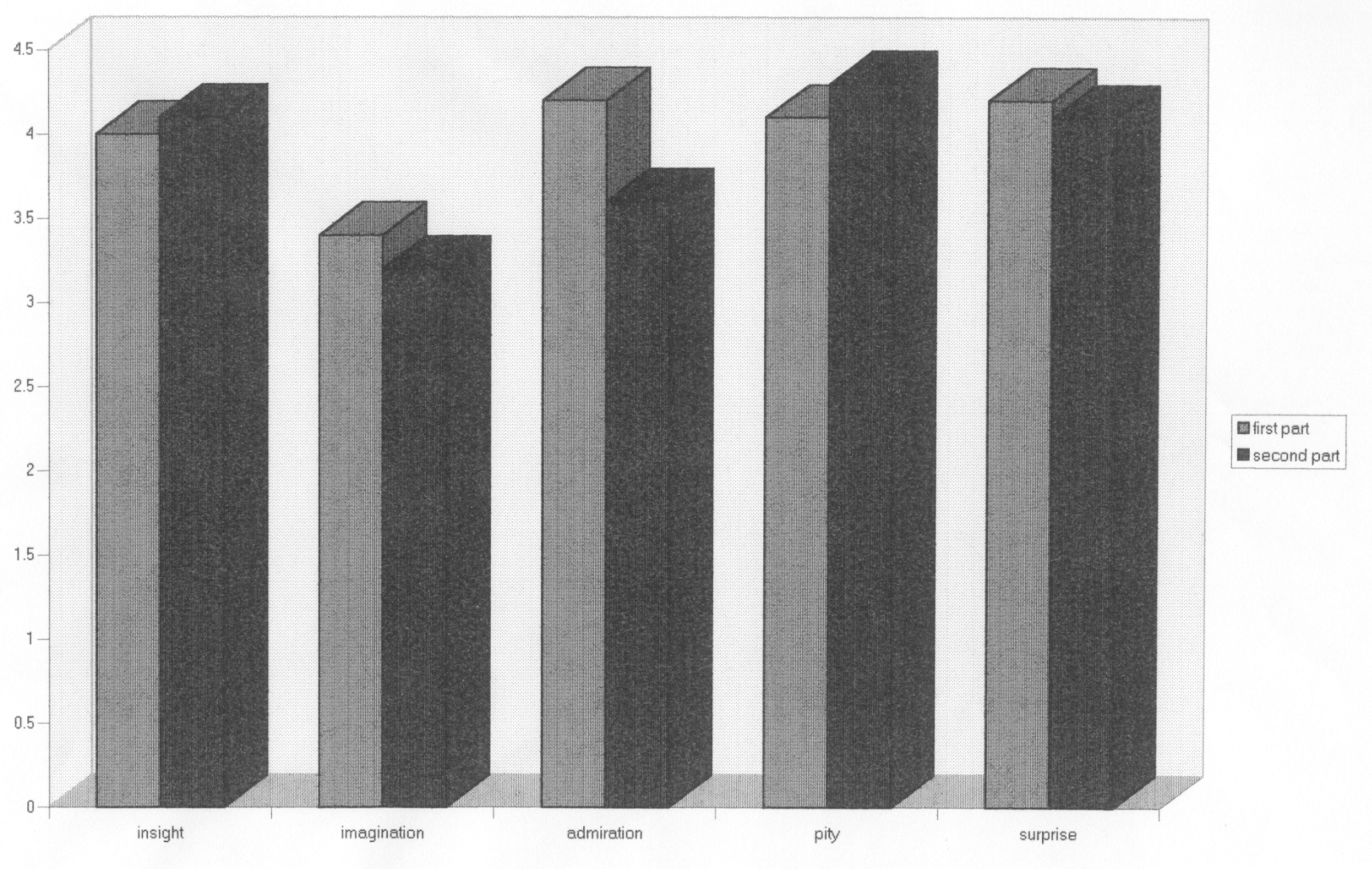


FIGURE 14
Judging Freud's text

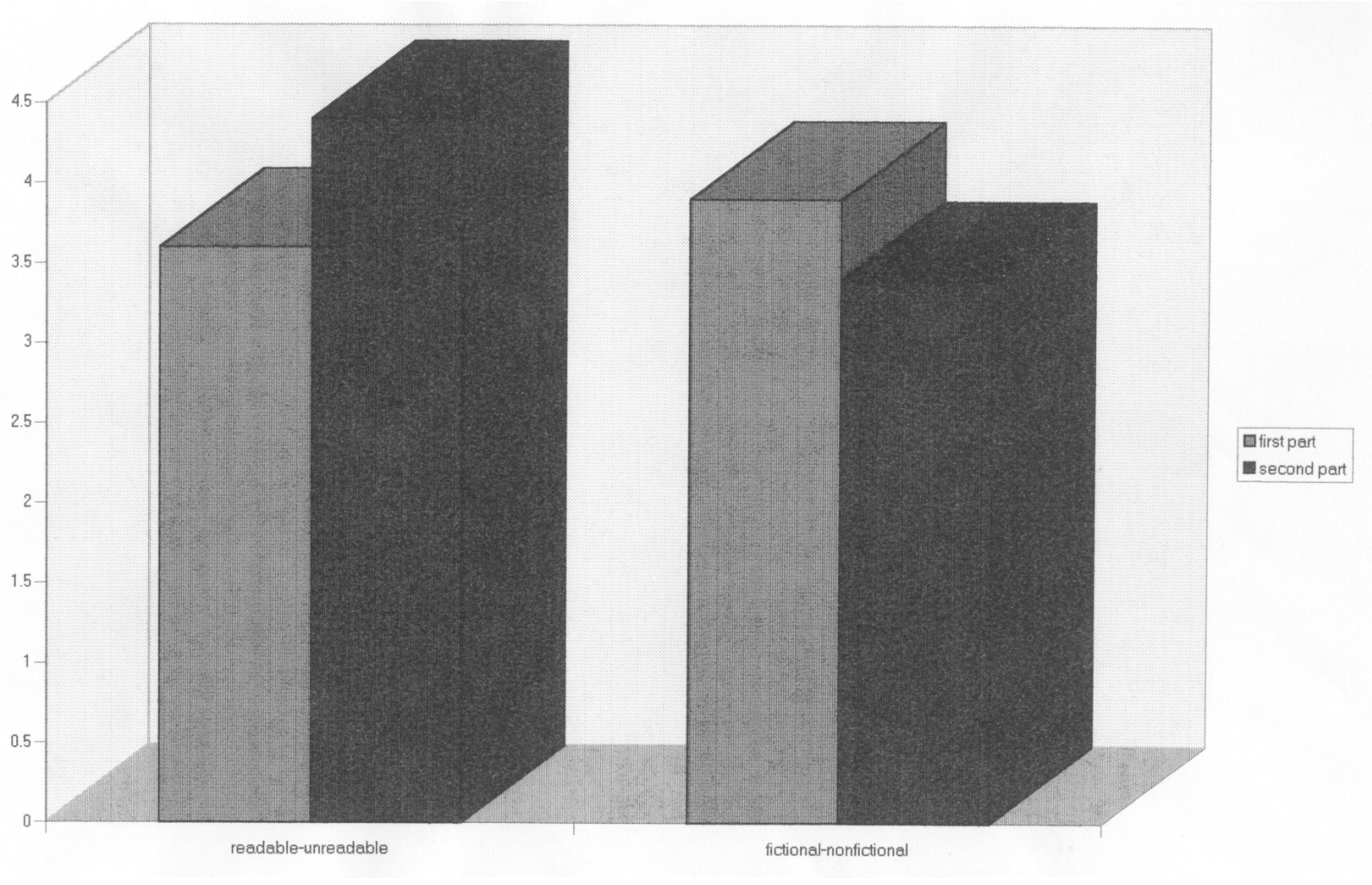


TABLE 3
Frequencies of categories

Freud's text

	One genre	Two or more genres	Total
Novel	0	4	4
Short story	3	20	23
Dissertation	5	17	22
Essay	1	12	13
Report	1	1	2
Drama	0	1	1
Total	**10**	**55**	**65**

Mereshkovsky's text

	One genre	Two or more genres	Total
Novel	7	11	18
Short story	8	15	23
Dissertation	0	6	6
Essay	0	5	5
Report	0	1	1
Drama	0	5	5
Total	**15**	**43**	**58**

With Mereshkovsky's texts, short story and novel categories were acceptable. In case of one genre the frequencies of responses between correct and incorrect categories were significant ($p<.001$). The correct responses were in a striking majority. In case of two or more genres the correct and incorrect categories between the frequencies of responses were not significant, but computing all the correct and incorrect responses, the difference was significant. The correct responses were in the majority ($p<.05$). The proportion of narrative categories was decisive as compared to that of the others.

The total frequency of responses could not be shown by any difference between the two texts, but the inner proportions were strikingly different. With Freud's text, short story and novel amounted to 41 per cent, with Mereshkovsky's 71 per cent of the total frequency; the proportion of dissertation and essay was 54 per cent as compared to 19 per cent.

DISCUSSION

Although the given text and their author were unfamiliar for the readers and although they did not know that some fellow-students were reading another text, the readers of the two texts judged Leonardo as a protagonist, the empathic situation aroused by Leonardo, and the emotions produced (their strength) rather similarly. Their judgments also resembled each other in that Leonardo as a protagonist and the texts themselves were judged more favourably in the first part than in the second one. And it was common to both groups that the important item of the correlations between their judgments was the insight into Leonardo's feelings and thinking. This was usually correlated with other items.

In the background of the similarities account should be taken of the fact that the average scores for the readability and fictionality of Freud's text also were remarkable; nevertheless these traits were more significant with Mereshkovsky's narratologically more varied and more digestible text. At the same time, the surprise aroused by Freud's text was greater. The number of correlations, i.e., the connections of the items with Mereskovsky's text was also greater, which showed that the judging of the inner pattern of that text was more consistent than that of Freud's.

The task of categorization with Freud's text was more difficult than that with Mereshkovsky's. Freud's text was of two or more genres. While with Mereskovsky's text the frequency of the responses which categorized it as an expository text as opposed to a literary narrative was relatively small, with Freud's text the frequency of expository genre categorization was much greater, although the proportion of narrative genre categorization was not lower. In spite of the fact that Mereshkovsky's text was identified as a literary narrative by its readers to a greater extent than the Freudian text by its readers, the readers of Freud's text also saw is as a literary narrative to a significant degree. That is, without any hint they perceived that Freud's text was a mixed type which satisfied the demands of various genres not usually fitting in with each other. It cannot be said that the subjects who read Freud's text categorized it incorrectly to a greater extent than did the readers of the Mereshkovsky text.

At the end of his *Leonardo* Freud remarked: «If in making these statements I have provoked the criticism, even from friends of psychoanalysis and from those who are experts in it, that I have merely written a psychoanalytical novel, I shall reply that I am far from overestimating the certainty of these results» (Freud, 1985:228). As a matter of fact, our results showed that not only the friends/experts judged his work to be a literary narrative, but that our naive readers were also able to see his work an expository-scientific text. Maybe Freud would not be dissatisfied by these findings.

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Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 29-33

Forms of fantasy

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Among the manifold studies on the works of Franz Kafka that appear annually, one, in 1999, attracted much attention because of the daring ideas it was defending. In his book *Kafka Concrete: The Traumatism a Life*, Gerhard Rieck[1] shows how, behind numerous scenes and numerous themes of these works, and underlying many ideas that the author develops, we can find back, transformed, condensed, hidden, a scene, always the same. This scene Kafka makes one of the central pieces of his famous *Letter* to his Father: the one of the little boy who during the night annoys his parents by incessantly asking for water, and who, for that reason, is put outside the house, on a balcony, by an angry father. Rieck succeeds in showing to his readers that this scene of the balcony, recognisible as an original variant of the Oedipal situation, is indeed omnipresent in Kafka's writings. It appears as a primitive layer of this work, which comes regularly – or obsessionally – to surface.

Reading or hearing these ideas one should perhaps not too quickly speak of simplism or reduction. For the presence of such a substratum doesn't prevent the existence, visible or invisible, of others substrata of the same or another nature. Above all it doesn't prevent the existence, very well visible, of all the dramas, paradoxes and mysteries which are so characteristic of Kafka's works and which made it become one of the main emblems of the tragedies of modern times. Gerhard Rieck's discovery reminds us in the first place of the importance of fantasy for our psychical world. In the beginning was fantasy. This is true in daily life, and even more so when we are involved in literature or another form of art, which are after all the most elaborate products of that psychic life. In fantasy we recognise the origin, the bearer and the motor of our psychical reality. Fantasy articulates the human drives or instincts whether we are concerned with life or death instincts. As a matter of fact, that what we call 'desire' is a drive which has already been transformed into an inner scene.

Like the human heart which never stops pumping blood through the body, our brain never stops making symbols, and this in two ways: first an endless stream of images, a film that indeed never comes to an end, not even when we are asleep, and secondly, at another more 'abstract' level, with more inner distance, the words and their play which revive the recollection of those images.

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[1] Gerhard Rieck, *Kafka konkret. Das Trauma ein Leben. Wiederholungsmotive im Werk als Grundlage einer psychologischen Deutung*, Würzburg, Königshausen & Neumann, 1999.

But fantasy always comes first and that's why Freud gives such an importance, in his *Traumdeutung*, to the crucial scenes of the beginning of our lives. We find their recollection, in one form or another, in the imaginary of each human being and in many works of art. I am coming now to what is essential: When we study from nearby the nature of fantasy, of desire, and of the transference deriving from them, all three so decisive in our inner life, we end up with some rather surprising conclusions. The major conclusion is that, from a structural point of view, there are only two big families of fantasies: in the first group of fantasies, the ego, or its substitute in the inner scene tries to be united or to be separated with someone else. Dreams of eating and drinking, love or friendship, dreams of life and death: everything concerning the body, its pleasure and its displeasure, and the happiness and unhappiness originating from it, our feelings of security or insecurity: all this is governed by the fantasy of a greater or lesser proximity and of its contrary, separation. With these fantasies, we are nearly always on familiar ground, the unfamiliar, the other as unknown to us, being kept at a safe distance. The second group of fantasies, on the contrary, although it has also its beginnings in known country, does not recede from the unknown, from the unknown other. The ego in these scenarios likes to be confronted with others. He asks them questions, examines them, tries to imitate, to dominate or to submit them. Consequently this kind of fantasy pursues another aim: the ego of the inner scene does no longer want the proximity or the removal of others, but the lessons they can give to him and the use he can make of them. The laws that govern these fantasies are laws of resemblance and of aggression. Our dreams of grandeur and misery, of war and peace, of success and failure belong to this category. It may seem rather amazing, but proximity and resemblance, those two structures of which the first is more corporal and spacial, the second more spiritual and temporal, form the entire range of possibilities of our imaginary world. That's why the dichotomy they present contains in itself the two most important dichotomies of our existence: *body and soul*, and *space and time*. By extension we can also recognise an analogy in it with the two axes on which Roman Jakobson places the essential functions of human language: the metonymous axis and the metaphorical axis, movements which also refer to phenomena of proximity and resemblance. Here we are at the very heart of our psychical functioning, where imagination and language bring about analogous ways of proceeding. The procedures of our imagination make us move; those of our speech, thanks to the distance they create to the images of the mind, make it possible for us to dominate them. But both of them take place inside the two registers: proximity and resemblance, or their contraries. However, references to 'metonymy' and 'metaphor' in the imaginary field must be distinguished from those with the same name in the study of language. The analogy between the two may be obvious, but dealing with fantasy and imagination, these principles do have a much larger scale or field than the more clearly circumscribed metonymy and metaphor in stylistic perspectives.

We should also not forget that these two inner movements, 'metonymy' and 'metaphor', cannot exist separately. Like time and space, or body and soul, metonymy and metaphor not only complement but need each other, and are always intertwined. Every metonymous creation – creation of the same, the known – hides a metaphor, in which it originates as a symbol, all symbolisation being metaforical in its essence. Inversely, the metaphorical dynamic, where the same opens up and receives difference, needs immediately metonymies in order to assert itself and to continue. The significance, for example, of Kafka's balcony scene, where the child keeps his parents awake by his whining for water, is first of all metonymous: little Frantz wants his parents, chiefly his mother. However, the story as a whole figures as a metaphor of the hostiliy of the child, the writer, towards his insensitive father. The father is no longer a model but an anti-model. Most litterary fantasies offer this double character where the game of proximity and that of imitation alternate. Nearly always one of the two dominates. Understanding how the writer plays with the metonymous and metaforical possiblities of imagination and language is often illuminating.

Let us call to witness an other giant of literature and open Proust's *Remembrances of Things Past*, at the beginning. Here the narrator recalls at great length the memory of two walks that, as a

child, he used to make with his parents, in two opposite directions, to Méséglise, 'le côté de chez Swann', the name of the father of the girl he is dreaming of, and to Guermantes, 'le côté de Guermantes', where lives the Duchess of Guermantes, who represents to the little boy the image of the ideal mother. Recalling those two walks, the reader realises that these pages announce the big themes of the novel: all the mystery and ambiguity surrounding the confrontation of aristocracy and bourgeoisie, of heterosexuality and homosexuality, and, of course, of past and present. The reader may also make another discovery, a rather striking one in our perspective: each walk has its own imaginary climate. The Guermantes-side is dominated by a metonymous atmosphere, whereas in the Swann-side we breathe an atmosphere which might be called metaforic.

Nearly all the landscapes and all the episodes the narrator evokes during the Guermantes walk create in the reader a desire of nearness and intimacy, or the fear to loose them. The woman he would like to join is the mother of his dreams, the Duchess of Guermantes, living in her beautiful unaccessible castle at the horizon. In Proust's description, which is like a picture of a summer landscape bathing in peace and harmony, every detail is working towards the creation of this atmosphere. The narrator shows us, for instance, the figure of a solitary woman, who, he imagines, has been abandoned by her husband. Elsewhere, at the riverside, he meets a group of children who are dipping boxes into the water, in a very 'maternal' game called, 'the container and its contents'. Even the farms he passes by during this walk, pressed close together as they are, seem to be looking for nearness and intimacy. Therefore, when, at the end of all this, the narrator reveals us, very cheerfully, the big discovery he made going in the direction of Guermantes, namely his wish to become a writer, it is the result of his successful attempt to describe this same longing for proximity in the movements he discovers in the three towers of a nearby village. From his viewpoint high on a carriage, next to the driver, these three towers get nearer and then further away from each other, coming together and separating again. In all these pages, it is true, the metaphor appears at different levels, however the imaginaton behind the text as a whole is chiefly metonymous, showing us exclusively scenes of proximity and remoteness. During the walk on the Guermantes side, the desire that inspires the imagination of the narrator is the desire of the same, and the near, which is typical of the maternal world, and translates one of the big obsessions of the author.

When after that we watch more closely the other walk, going to Méséglise, on the Swann-side, we are confronted with three episodes: the first meeting of the young hero with Gilberte, the girl with whom he falls in love and who is going to remain one of the main characters of the novel, then the spell that is cast over the narrator when he contemplates the hawthorns along the road. The final and longest episode is the first homosexual scene in the book, which the young Marcel glimpses through the open window of the daughter of the composer Vinteuil. In all three episodes the imagination of the author is captivated by the desire to know or to conquer the different worlds with which he is confronted. The longing for nearness – for 'the same', as we called it, that we we saw during the walk to Guermantes, is not entirely absent, but now, a different, 'metaphorical' desire is the moving spirit. Nature, sexuality, the artistic life in its manifold appearences are here worlds full of mystery into which the youngster, and the narrator who is holding his hand, want to penetrate. The heart of the matter, of the mystery, is of course Woman. Whilst the Guermantes-side presents itself above all as a celebration of maternal intimacy, here, at the Swann-side women are much more a series of enigmas who turn the narrator down, leaving him on his own. Gilberte does this by making an obscene gesture, which the unexperienced boy cannot comprehend, the country girl he would like to meet, by not appearing, and the daughter of the composer by having a good time with her lesbian girlfriend. Proust makes this list of refusals even more complete by chosing this moment to relate the supreme disloyalty of a human being in the eyes of a child, the death of aunt Léonie, the hostess of his family in Combray. Towards women the young boy has the same mixture of feelings of admiration and frustration as towards the hawthorns: both show him the cruelty of their thorns. That's probably why at the end of this walk we witness one of the masturbation scenes that Proust included in his book. Whereas Guermantes can be seen as the side

of the mother, Méséglise, where the boy goes around in the company of his father and grandfather, is presented by Proust as the territory of the father. The two figures that inspire the story of the walk are Swann, and Vinteuil, both in their roles as fathers with daughters. The Swann walk can also be seen as a – hidden – metaphor of masculine homosexuality, which is for Proust one of the main themes he wants to present: the boy is refused entrance to the domain of the father, whose biggest treasure is his daughter.

All this confirms that the two faces – metonymous and metaphorical – of our inner reality have the features of the mother and the father who gave us life, a life which always carries their watermarks. The way we handle those marks, playing with the two poles of our being, in daily life but also in our ideologic or artistic achievements, has the pattern Freud recognised in the archetype of the Oedipal situation or complex. In our experience of fantasy as well as of reality, this twofold desire forms the framework of our psychic life, our identity, our style: Both fantasy and language enable us to fill up the empty space that we call 'ego' and that results from the separation with the mother, with images and words. In the same time we operate in a paternal way, metaphorically replacing the world we have lost by other, more or less similar things and images. Doing so we remedy at least partly the 'castration' which is the fate of everyone of us. This 'Oedipal' constellation is the origin of our psychical life and of the creations emanating from it.

To elucidate this let us open another book, this time an English classic from the eighteenth century, Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*. It is a delightful and rightly famous work, written aroud 1767, its completion was interrupted by the death of the author. Sterne describes a trip in France - mostly the North of the country, Paris and Versailles. It encompasses a series of adventures, amorous and others. Narration, conversation and comment are all governed by the laws of free association. It is fascinating to see how this book treats and in a very special way the two types of fantasy we are concerned with: on the one hand the 'metonymous' fantasy, the narrator repeatedly seeking the proximity of women with whom he falls in love and leaves after a short while, on the other hand the 'metaphorical' fantasy, when he meets men, some of them admirable in his eyes, some other despicable. The alternation of these two kinds of encounter form the framework of Sterne's novel. Proust presents the two fantasies as successive episodes, Sterne on the contrary creates a structure of intertwining fantasies.

During his encounters with women, Sterne's sentimental traveller characteristically experiences not their specific nature, their 'difference' from other women, but the eternal feminine, which each of them represents to a superior degree. Whether she is a lady of the aristocracy or a needlewoman, a servant or a landlady, an operasinger or even a personage of one of his former novels, the scenario, always presented with a smile and never without some irony, remains the same: all women are perfect, adorable, the narrator is always in love with them, touches even, ever so briefly, their wonderful skin, and then shows us her departure. Those first delicious touches or carresses of the body seem to suffice to the traveller. Here is one, amusing example among many others of the writer being obsessed with scenarios of proximity and separation:

> I fear, in this interval, I must have made some slight efforts towards a closer compression of her hand, from a subtle sensation I felt in the palm of my own - not as if she was going to withdraw hers – but, as if she thought about it – and I had infallibly lost it a second time, had not instinct rather than reason directed me to the last resource in these dangers – to hold it loosely, and in a manner as if I was every moment going to release it, of myself; so she let it continue. [Penguin, 42-43]

This sort of description, full of wit and subtlety, reappears at each of the many amorous encounters the narrator has during his trip. Obsession with never obtained intimacy thus dominates this unfinished novel, the last sentence of which – something unique in the history of literature – littteraly passes this frustration on to the reader: The narrator is busy telling us how, in the middle

of the night, the 'fille de chambre' – the chambermaid – who is staying in the same room of the hostel, approaches his bed so closely «that when I stretched out my hand, I caught hold of the fille de chambre's – .» With these words the manuscript actually comes to an end, and the reader is free to guess which part of the feminine body might be meant here.

It is possible to recognise behind the frequency of this kind of scene inspired by amorous uncertainty, the maternal axis of the fantasy life of the author. His narrator presents himself like someone to whom love remained above all a risky business – the danger of separation being too present in it –, someone who, rather than the real thing, henceforth prefered to place his life in service of fantasy in literature. This choice is confirmed by the paternal axis of the writer's fantasy, where others are objects of aggression or identification and imitation, and where the narrator gives nearly all the place to marginal characters, beggars or impoverished nobleman. What all these characters share are their skills to talk, to tell stories, and also their total lack of aggression. Here, the metaphorical fantasy plays with everything that concerns the art of speaking and writing, the big model being Shakespeare himself. As a matter of fact the narrator of *A Sentimental Journey* adopts the name of the most marginal but not most unknown personage of Shakespeare: Yorick, the fool of the king of Denmark, whose skull is contemplated by Hamlet at the cemetery. The vision of the marginal figures and story-tellers, being henceforth models of wisdom, shows in an even better way than that of the maternal and feminine proximity, the lively character of this *Sentimental Journey*. Once more literature, the richness of its stories, the happiness of its style, seem to repair the loss that exists at the origin of human enterprise.

My last example is concerned with the two great fictions or visions that underlie the theological world of the Occidental, mainly Judeo-Christian, civilisation. Religious desires of proximity, protection, comfort and help, form the metonymous field where thrives the idea of God the Father, a Father with many maternal characteristics. In the metaphorical field with which it is intertwined we see the central desire of a Messiah, a Saviour, the ideal human being, someone who is going to be the model of all mankind. Christian theology has even gone further in this metaphorical field, designating Jesus as the Messiah. It also speaks of a Holy Spirit as a third divine being coming forth from the relationship between Jesus and his God. However strange this idea may appear, in our perspective it fits as a profound intuition, since this theological scheme of a holy trinity is the perfect copy of the human mind in its creativity. Like that divine Spirit, the human spirit is in fact a third inner distance, towards the first, the metonymous distance of what we have called the world of the mother, and towards the second, the metaphorical distance of the world of the father. As an 'ego', our spirit acquires identity and freedom by making choices and creating relations between these two fields of desire that are the core of its being. Forms of fantasy, forms of vision are really 'in the beginning', they are the beginning.

The processes which I have tried to describe are of course much more complex. They are made possible due to a certain number of mechanisms which govern our imagination and that have been explored at great length by Freud and his successors: memory and transference, but also a series of secondary mechanisms, such as identification, condensation and displacement. We find all these back in language as the main analogous faculty with which imagination shares its realm. Without language, fantasy would not exist as human fantasy, a free and creative fantasy. To exist, the imaginary needs words, just as words postulate the existence of fantasy. Together, they form what we call our psychical or inner reality. Together they invite us to go on telling stories, that is having an identity, a style and, with a little bit of luck, an art of living.

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 35-40

Concerning Hesiod's allegorical model of totality thought (Zeus), pre-thought (Prometheus) and after-thought (Epimetheus) – As precursors to Freud's triads of Superego, Ego, and Id; and to consciousness, pre-consciousness and the unconscious: An essay

CHARLOTTE ANN FRICK (*)

The Greek Hesiod was a poet, oral redactor and farmer out of 8th century (B. C. E.) Greece. He was and has generally been considered to be Homer's contemporary (although there is some scholarly disagreement on that point in terms of exact years) with Homer being the most well-known of the two bards. However, Hans Blumenberg in his text *Work On Myth* has said of the two that in Western culture «Homer and Hesiod are our first, and, at the same time, most lasting authors of fundamental mythical patterns» (151).

Whether one agrees with that hypothesis or not, Blumenberg believed and has postulated that myths survive because of the structural human innate ideas buried within them and their assertion of universal experiences for humans as have many important mythographers and psychologists like Freud (whom felt that his complexes were universal). Furthermore, Blumenberg felt that the underlying structures of myth (with any allegorical attendant aspects) are of a psychological and cognitive nature.

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Hesiod's text the *Theogony* displays and represents a genealogy of the gods and goddesses of the religion of his day, and one allegorical aspect of this rendering (including most importantly his Zeus-Prometheus-Epimetheus Fire allegory) will be the brief but thorough focus of this short paper. Hesiod's other attributed text, *The Works and Days* relates to the every day life ways of the Greek population of his era, including himself. Hesiod considered himself to be inspired and considered that the well-known Greek muses influenced him with glorious song (his poems and renderings); in short the stories of the gods were «breathed» into him.

If a writer could transport Hesiod in a time-machine into our own era, allowing him to see what other authors had made of his texts, I dare say that he would be quite astonished to see that researchers, writers and other artists had made much of his own few words as they appeared in his texts. No doubt, if he were alive today, the humble farmer and bard would draw further inspiration from both the research and interpretive work of at least four scholars including but not limited to Hans Blumenberg (particularly to his *Work on Myth*); from Thomas Kuhn (particularly to his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* as well as to his essay, *The Essential Tension: Tradition and Innovation in Scientific Research*); from the work of Angus Fletcher (*Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* and from *The Color of the Modern Mind: Conjectures on Thinking in Literature*); and from Merlin Donald's work (particularly his *Origins of the Modern Mind: Three Stages in the Evolution of Culture and Cognition*).

While this essay on Hesiod and his influences has an interest in some aspects of poetic presentation (poetics), it will briefly address, as implicitly and explicitly as possible, the structural linkages to later historical texts which evolved from his earlier ones with a particular focus on Hesiod's mind allegory represented by the gods (and characters) related to Totality Thought (Zeus); Forethought or Fore Knowledge (Prometheus); and After Thought (Epimentheus) particularly as the characters were related to Fire in relationship to human kind, as a power source, and as a symbolic form of knowledge.

The great conflict in Hesiod's text among these gods (who were cousins to Zeus and brothers to one another) was what to do with fire and who had a right to it. Zeus wanted to deprive humans of the use of fire; and most notably, Prometheus did not wish to deprive humans of fire. To Prometheus, fire was both pragmatic and divine in terms of its practical uses and in terms of its symbolic meaning as thought itself, an eternal flame and a genetic imprint. Therefore, Prometheus had to engage in subterfuge to fool Zeus (or Totality Thought) to his own disapproval of withholding fire from humans. In the Freudian sense, it was as if there was an internal struggle within mentation between Super-ego (Zeus), Ego (Prometheus) and the Id force (represented by After Thought or Epimetheus). Usurping aspects of thought for humans was a defeat for the Super-ego and a tremendous one-up step for ego development within civilization, and would lead to the lowering of Zeus's ultimate status to demise.

In Freud's important and interpretative essay *The Acquisition and Control of Fire* (1932), Freud makes it clear that he knew of Prometheus as a «cultural hero who was still a god» although within that essay he does not acknowledge knowing the implications of the name Prometheus (as a part of the different aspects of mentation and that god's link to the Triad to include Zeus, his cousin, and Epimetheus, Prometheus' brother). However, Freud felt that in giving fire to humans, Prometheus was renouncing instincts and «helping for the purposes of civilization». In giving fire, full blown to humans, Prometheus would be punished with hostility and aggressiveness from Zeus, that amazing Super-ego force. The giving of punishment to Prometheus symbolically plunges Prometheus into the realm of guilt, for which he suffers for many years within Hesiod's text (by a torturous and magical process of the destruction and regeneration of his liver). Freud further felt that giving fire to humans was a «positive phallic transference», which included passion and love symbolically for humans.

Possibly Hesiod in his time-machine wanderings would be most flattered by the attention of Freud to the issues of his Ancient texts. However, he would have been astonished, too, at the

number of other authors of literature (besides the philosophers of thought and psychology already mentioned) who paid homage to his renderings. These included but were not limited to the Aeschylean reuses of the constructs of Zeus-Prometheus-Epimetheus-Fire in Aeschylus' *Promethei*, in his *Prometheus Bound* and within the fragmentary remains of his *Prometheus Unbound*, out of fifth-century, B. C. E., as well as to the later Nineteenth- and Twentieth-century British and American proponents of the theme. These other texts and their authors most notably include Mary Shelley in her *Victor Frankenstein, A Modern Prometheus*; to Percy Shelly's *Prometheus Bound* and to his general interests in light and love in his other poems; to partial remnants of the use of the triadic thought motif in Charles Kingsley's *The Water Babies*; to Robert Bridges poetic and dramatic mask called *Prometheus the Firegiver* as well as in the light and fire images of his odes and poems; to aspects of the rewritten kindled-fire scenes in James Joyce's *Stephen Hero, A Portrait of the Artist As A Young Man* and within his *Ulysses*; and to the more abstracted mentions in the work of Lord George Gordon Byron's early poem, *Fragments of School Exercises, From the Prometheus Vinctus of Prometheus*, to his later poem entitled *Prometheus and Napoleon* with two verses extant, to his poem *Prometheus* as well as to his Promethean impulses in his work *Manfred*. Salman Rushdie includes brief aspects of the Promethean fire theme in his first book *Grimus* (a science fiction novel) which is juxtaposed briefly against Eastern myths. The Americans, in part, include James Russell Lowell in his poem *Prometheus* as well as Robert Lowell with his «rebound Promethean theme» in his play *Derived from Aeschylus: Prometheus Bound*. Eric Alfred Havelock had earlier in his own earlier translation of the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus promoted his own interpretation of Prometheus as *an intellectual being and as a model for other intellectuals who suffer the slings-and-arrows of misfortune for being intellectuals in what would often appear to be a non intellectual world order*. Additionally, scientists within the most modern period of the Twentieth-century would view the Prometheus myth as an important metaphor for ideas and for themselves within their work.

This short paper does not propose an interest per se in structural semiotics (although they may appear implicitly), but proposes instead an interest in a more fundamental and traditional sense of structure such as is represented within paradigm models of linear and non-linear repetitions; aspects of framework in areas such as meta linguistics; skeletal language constructions as seen, for instance, in the work of the Russian formalists, including the noted Roman Jakobson in his odyssey from Moscow to Prague, to Denmark and then into the United States; in the comparative cultural work of Joseph Campbell and Stith Tompson; to the psychological to include Sigmund Freud among many; briefly to the work of the new critics; and briefly too within the aegis of aspects of some critical theory to include reader-response and new historicism.

All of these texts reconstruct, reform, reinterpret, and even reinvent the Hesiod text to some degree, presenting transformations *but using the themes of the fire allegory and the allegory of mind in their fullest dimensions.* Whether or not the transformations or reconstructions of the later authors surpass the original is dependent upon one's individual sense or interpretation of either personal or formal aesthetics (or both), and the transcendental for that matter. However, Hesiod's texts and renderings, though considered to be primitive by some individuals, have interests in cognition, the arts, morality, law, politics, sociology and psychology, conflict resolution, and a number of other significant issues (including love and aesthetics) which are the core and body of the history of ideas in Literature. The repetitions of these interests in mind and its development in terms of its linkages to god-mind and human mind and their consequent developments over time in other works of literature, link aspects of mind and its consequences to all disciplines of inquiry – including the humanities, the sciences and the social sciences as well as to the distant literary and cultural ancestors in the West. Finally, the Hesiod construct and framework seems to be played out in the postmodern period, with minimal repetitions in the 1960s and beyond. However, my own Promethean poem called *A Musing, With the Help of Io*, was published in the spring of 2000 in my book *Love Air, Occasional Lyrics and Poems of the Heart* (47).

This paper proposes that Hesiod is an important and paradigmatic generator of much of the projected cultural past and present in relationship to this theme, our important cognitive Classical and Ancient strains. Because his structural framework is the construction upon which later authors built, it is acknowledged to be a portentous framework because of the adornments to his texts, and the reconstructions and transformations already briefly noted for those who have interests in matters of a literary, scientific or critical nature which are latent in Hesiod's work and which are symbolically presented by him. Because of historical changes in all areas of human inquiry, however, there are accretions to knowledge which make these transformation of the original paradigm all the more interesting for readers who look at texts from the earliest literary, historical epochs. The allegory which is discussed herein has been drawn from a gathering of mythic materials. It is the allegory within the myth which draws particular attention because of the hidden or latent meanings which cannot be discussed completely. As Angus Fletcher has noted in his book *Colors of Mind: Conjectures on Thinking in Literature*:

> In literature, perhaps the most obvious carrier of thought is likely to be an allegory or some kind. The ancient Greeks denoted an intellective, cognitive purpose when they called allegory *hypnoia*, or under thought. Allegories could carry meanings hidden beneath the superficial sense of the text. The question that concerns me is: does the thinking process, expressed in an allegory, invoke the concept of literary secrecy, or literary silence? (94)

Perhaps the silence of thought, or notions buried within the silence of this particular allegory are as provocative as the narratively received and perceived notions which have been part of the public discourse on the topic. For instance, Prometheus as an allegorical character has most often been called a «rebel» as if that notion carried some totally satisfactory explication within it. This paper will further briefly explore more of the associative complexity of the Promethean character drawing on some interpretive work which has already been produced concerning this god Prometheus and his equally god-like forebears to help us humans to appreciate his insight and inner light. These gods may have had something to tell us about ourselves, our potential under meanings, and our interests in our symbolic and metaphoric primordial, cultural past.

To the postmodern mind, that this allegory is part of a mythic representation only heightens interest for mythographers, allegorists, folklorists, anthropologists and those like minded others. As Merlin Donald notes in his *Origins of the Modern Mind: Three Stages in the Evolution of Culture and Cognition*:

> The social consequences of mythic integration were evident at the cultural level: narratives gave events contextual meaning for individuals. In Paleolithic cultures, as in aboriginal cultures in general, the entire scenario of human life gains its perceived importance from myth; decisions are influenced by myth; and the place of every object, animal, plant, and social custom is set in myth. Myth governs the collective mind. This remains essentially true today, even in modern post-industrial cultures, at least in the realm of the social values. (268)

Decoding this allegory within the myths, looking at the open secrets, silent as they may be is the purpose of this paper. Now, through the use of the theme, these open secrets or under meanings from the original paradigm make the remnants less secretive and yet voiced in another quiet way, through the aegis of the written word.

Segments of this theme are rendered into aspects of thought, justice and fire, in general as aspects within cultural, historical allegory. Angus Fletcher (in 1964) clearly identified and detailed other uses of the theme in his text *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode*. Additionally, in 1970, Don Cameron Allen discussed more uses of the theme in his important survey of literature *Mysteriously Meant*. Allen's text details the Medieval and Renaissance reception to earlier redactions of

the theme in hagiographies related to Phoenecian and Hebrew texts. Although discussions of other perceived and recorded Promethean explications are widely available, several stand out: for instance, there are *Shelley's Mythmaking* by Harold Bloom and *The Promethean Politics of Milton, Blake, and Shelley* by Linda Lewis who briefly discusses Mary Shelley's text *Frankenstein* in an Afterward to that text. (I share agreement concerning several interpretative issues with her on that particular text in a thesis that I wrote in 1985.)

The gods in this essay are viewed as human psychic projections, veritable ideas or ideographs which correspond to metaphors and other figurative forms of language which evoke meaning, feeling and ideas, therefore. Herein, too, the characters are viewed on a literal level as well as a figurative level within a narrative, albeit a religious one, to realize the full importance of the text in as many structural ways as possible while trying to keep an interest in the moral, philosophical and psychological issues first raised, if but hermeneutically within Hesiod's rendering of the Greek gods. With Prometheus going against the nature of «totality thought» (Zeus), the central importance of monarchical thought was deconstructed and the nature and importance of different kinds of thought was reconstructed for mind. Within the Classical world view, Zeus was considered to be the personification and allegorical figure for totality thought. Like a supreme Super Ego (which can often be tyrannical), his sense of justice was of primary importance because he was seen as the arbitrator for morality in the early Classical world. Separating Zeus' personal vision from his social vision within Hesiod's narrative is an imperative, just as it was an imperative for Prometheus to so do as a character within Hesiod's narrative. Some of Zeus' thought was defined textually by Hesiod (or so it would seem) as totally destructive to humanity symbolically. Since Zeus was at the pinnacle of power, he became the enemy to humankind at some subjective level to them and to other figures within the pantheon who disagreed on that point.

Hugh Lloyd-Jones in his *The Justice of Zeus* states of justice in Homer's *Iliad* (an historically resonant work for Hesiod) that justice is always concerned with Zeus in his connections with men:

> Zeus in Homer possesses three of the later functions closely associated with that of protecting justice; he is the protector of oaths (Horkos), protector of Strangers and the law of host and guest (Seinios) and protector of suppliants (Hikesios). (5)

Additionally, given to us in the provocative discourse of his book *Hesiod and the Language of Poetry*, Pietro Pucci states that justice in Homer is posed by analogy as that which is «straight» in contra-position with that which is «crooked» (injustice). These aspects of justice and injustice are allegorized and personified (in a sense philosophically) into the projected nature of the actors of the pantheon and the characters already discussed herein, staged and identified.

Therefore, injustice does not change the nature of justice per se, but it leaves itself open to retaliation (in a personified sense) from justice. Furthermore, injustice becomes capable of imploding upon itself and metaphorically becomes its own «worst enemy» (45-50). We might wish to compare or suppose that this reaction within one's self today (on a slightly more abstract level) to be an analogy to what has been defined as guilt within being or consciousness (in its many splendorous segments) as part of the incorporation of what has been considered «crooked» in the past.

However, in Hesiod, Pucci continues, justice is pre-Platonic and clearly seems more related to a sense of morality (45-50). Thus, by inference, one might note that Zeus represents justice and injustice; and his knowledge of both justice and injustice make him both a good figure and an evil (or crooked) one simultaneously. Responsible for the punishment of the evil doing and evildoers, his predominant identification would seem to be toward the good end of this inherent-seeming spectrum. To note this dual quality of Zeus is to also note its trifocal or synthetic inference, as well. That is, based on his knowledge of good and evil, he is persuaded into action or to a synthetic position which leads to his own self destruction, therefore. That is because in Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, Zeus is also portrayed as a force of agitation or action (whether psychological or biological as extended into human nature) which lead to synthesis, and, in this case, his own

demise, or the demise of Totality Thought as supreme master of Ego and Id. Like a father with an uncontrollable temper, Zeus needed some taming. The quality of Zeus's judgment, and Totality Thought in general, is always open to debate. Prometheus as Prescient Thought, or Forethought, takes up the debate rather well on behalf of humanity helping to develop solid ego sensibility. For these few reasons, Hesiod's narrative words have helped to illuminate the discourse related to aspects of mind often in relationship to its internal relevant segments and its figurative and literal fire/flame as inspiration.

Centuries later, the French psychoanalyst Gaston Bachelard would profoundly note concerning fire as a symbol the following loving, poetic point:

> Le feu est ultra-vivant. Le feu est intime et il est universel. Il vit dans notre coeur. Il vit dans le ciel. Il mont des profoundeurs de la substance et s'offre come un amour. (19)
>
> (Fire is the ultimate of life. Fire is both intimate and universal. It lives in our hearts. It exists in the heavens. This like the profoundest of substance is offered as love. [My own translation])

Bachelard even goes so far as to name «le complexe de Promethee» in his connections with images of fire metaphorically as «le complexe d'Oedipe de la vie intellectuelle», that is linking the Prometheus complex as the Oedipus complex within intellectual life. At first, Bachelard's intellectual leap might seem far in time from the celebration of Prometheus as an Attic fire divinity. Today just saying the words Prometheus and Oedipus fill our minds with potential images and allusions, if not illusions, too, without any more descriptive language being necessary to those most familiar with the history of the texts and their inherent metaphoric relevancies to ourselves.

The literary historicist and critic Denis Donaghue says broadly in his text *Thieves of Fire* that:

> My interest in the transmission of the Promethean myth is incidental to another interest, that of recognizing the hero in the imagination of certain writers who may or may not claim him directly. I am interested in describing a certain kind of imagination as Promethean. Let us assume that we are in a world dear to Stevens, where men having taken the place of gods and demi-gods, think their own imagination divine, with consequences not yet exhausted...
>
> We are concerned with imagination which in one degree or another having taken the place of Prometheus. If we have seen Prometheus dispelled in mid air, we have also seen his spirit in the imagination of certain writers, and the proof is in their style, their way of addressing themselves to reality. (34)

Additionally, the literary critic Harold Bloom in his book *Shelley's Mythmaking* acknowledges that Prometheus as a construct is a part of all of our psyches (106). The turn away from Zeus as Totality Thought to Prometheus as Forethought and Foreknowledge casts the world in a most constructive mode not as Epimetheus or as an After Thought but with a solid verve of intentionality. Thus do consciousness, pre-consciousness and unconsciousness become formulated and used to the constructive ends of human ego development.

Hesiod seems clearly on the side of Zeus in his textual presentations as a participant in the religion of his own Grecian historical epoch; but he makes a presentation of all sides of issues, and particularly those of the two most important allegorical thought figures, Zeus and Prometheus. His own historical bias aside, and, not as an After Thought or in Epimetheus, if Hesiod were sitting beside one of us now, removed from his time-machine, despite his possible disappointment in the ascendency of Prometheus as a solid player over Zeus in power and outcome in later written primary texts and secondary ones (as well as within conceptual thinking within the history of mind), one of us might turn to him and say, «Good job, Hesiod. Thank you so very much».

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 41-50

The return of the repressed: Salvador Dali's anamorphic paintings

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The point of departure for this study is the effort to understand the underlying motivations giving rise to the series of double, and even multiple images created by Salvador Dali over a considerable period of his career. At the outset of this investigation, it quickly became apparent that it would not be sufficient to interrogate the artist himself. Dali frequently claimed not to know the real meaning of his own paintings, «which does not mean that they lack meaning, but, on the contrary, that they escape a simply intuitive, logical analysis, because they are so complex, coherent, and spontaneous» (1968).

The painting that contains a double image, or a second, implicit message, hiding behind the explicit one, seemed to suggest one of two interrelated psychoanalytic concepts: either regression with its need to return to a pleasurable experience of unfixed ego-boundaries, or the notion of the 'return of the repressed', which is one of Freud's favorite proofs for the importance of the unconscious. Dali's anamorphic paintings appeared therefore as a promising subject of investigation into the meaning the *déjà vu*.

During the Mannerist period anamorphosis was used especially in the genre of painting called «*Vanitas*», where the still life collection of objects indicating the noblest of man's pursuits: books, musical instruments, scientific apparatus, includes something not immediately identifiable because it calls for another point of view. However this mysterious blob, if seen from the proper position, turns out to be the death's head that mocks all man's efforts. Look at Holbein's *The Ambassadors* figures 1 and 2. Lacan referred to this painting in his *Seminar XI* on the *Four Fundamental Concepts of the Unconscious*.

Dali read Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* as early as 1922, and that reading justified for him his own propensity to convey specific memories through involuntary, unconscious images; that

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technique would become the basis for his contributions of the major elements in the seminal Surrealist film *Un Chien andalou*.

Figure 3 is the original double painting. It's origin, as recounted by Dali, is in a post card he found fortuitously which showed an African village. However, since Dali was obsessed with Picasso at the time, he saw in the image a portrait by Picasso. When Dali showed the image to André Breton, the Surrealist leader, who was at the time wholly occupied by his own obsession with Sade, Breton saw a portrait of the Divine Marquis. In this example it seems clear that Dali's paranoia, and Breton's perhaps as well, projects interior struggle onto the exterior world. As we shall see however, in the case of Dali, the problem is really one of an inability to distinguish between interior and exterior, between me and not me.

When Dali later turns to anamorphosis, it is via the play of perspective popular in Mannerist art. See figure 4 *Paranoiac-Astral Image* 1934. Here perspective is manipulated to create a dreamlike atmosphere: in this composition, the figures co-exist on a plane, yet the difference in their shadows would seem to indicate that they issue from different time zones. There is something uncanny about this image as it betrays the ignorance of the unconscious regarding all that pertains to time. That Dali referred to Mannerist anamorphosis in his skull elongations is well corroborated by a curious line engraving entitled *Soft Skulls and Cranial Harps* (1935) and figure 5 *Myself at the Age of Ten When I Was the Grasshopper Child (Castraton Complex)*, 1933.

In Dali's view, unconscious does not signify unintelligent: the effect of the rebus or distortion is similar to reflections in a distorting mirror. Dali shared with Mannerist scholars and artists an enchantment with erudite games, scientific inventions and optical diversions. In later years these interests focused on the effort to attain 3-dimensional effects and holograms.

In this paper, I will most often limit my remarks to the production of the early 30's, that is the Surrealist period and the possible fruits of Dali's friendship with Jacques Lacan. What interests me is the way that, for Dali, this interest in double images is linked to his theoretical developments on paranoia. In one of his earliest theoretical and poetic texts *La Femme visible*, which dates from 1930, Dali explains his method of paranoia-criticism, although the term itself will only be used in 1933 in his text on the interpretation of Millet's *Angelus*. This is what Dali writes in *La Femme visible*: «Paranoia makes use of the external world to validate an obsessional idea, with the disturbing peculiarity of making the reality of this idea valid for others.» (12).

In the case of the paranoiac interpretation of the *Tragic Myth of Millet's Angelus*, Dali begins with the initial delirious phenomenon, consisting of a sudden emergence in his mind of a clear visual image of Millet's Angelus, which, without any apparent modification, still appears to him charged with a «latent intentionality» that had made this pictorial work the «most troubling, enigmatic, dense and rich in unconscious thoughts that had ever existed» (*Mythe tragique* 17). This statement is followed by descriptions of phenomena «generated around the obsessive image», which Dali entitles «secondary» delirious phenomena. These descriptions are followed in their turn by critical or «paranoiac-critical» considerations or interpretations of these phenomena. One thing is apparent from the outset: Dali insists upon the complete adherence to his theory. This means that he will not give any subjective or psychological foundations for his reactions to Millet's painting. Dali begins with the initial delirious phenomenon that already subsumes all the secondary delirious phenomena and, in fact, the whole interpretation: «The interpretation of the Angelus that was to follow or, rather, my future attempt at such an interpretation, was already 'present' and 'evident' within it» (17). The critical activity is part and parcel of the delirious phenomenon. Dali makes it clear that we are not in presence of an interpretive gesture that evolved over time but, rather, with the slow revelation of a systematization that would «coexist with the kernel itself of the delirious ideas and would be consubstantial with them. The delirious idea would appear to carry within itself the germ and structure of the systemization» (27).

Dali describes a series of secondary phenomena all pertaining to the *Angelus* image in one way or another. One of them is the «experimental» fantasy in which he tries to imagine partially

dipping the Angelus painting in a bucket containing lukewarm milk. Like Dali's other fantasies, this one is accompanied by a feeling of mental confusion and anxiety. While at the time he experienced the fantasy, he had no idea what part of the painting would be plunged in, he is certain at the time of the writing, that it would be the part depicting the man. Interestingly enough, he consulted Jacques Lacan on the question and assures the reader that Lacan validated this hypothesis.

Dali sees the *Angelus* as a depiction of sexual cannibalism with the woman in the position of the female praying mantis thought to devour the male after copulation. The fantasy involving milk reveals that the devouring female is also a maternal figure. Dali recognizes that submersion in milk implies being drowned in the «maternal element, in the maternal tepidness», a sensation combining pleasure and warmth with a feeling of dread. Gala, he admits, occupies in fact the place of his mother, to whom he owed his terror of the sexual act and his belief that it would result in his total annihilation. Dali ascribes this fear to a «false memory» of his mother sucking or devouring his penis (57). «The submersion of the man in the *Angelus*, in other words, of *me* in the maternal milk, can only be interpreted… as an expression of the fear of being absorbed, annihilated, eaten by the mother.» The *Angelus* reveals, for Dali, the obsession with the devouring of the male by the female following mating, which he sees as the «maternal variant of the immense and atrocious myth of Saturn, of Abraham, of the Eternal Father with Jesus Christ and of William Tell, all devouring their own sons» (89).

Dali's method of paranoiac-critical interpretation involves the belief that the painting's message, its latent content is transferred to its manifest content in a dreamlike fashion, as manifested by the mechanisms of condensation, substitution, and displacement (79). Yet his interpretation is not in fact a psychoanalytic one. Dali himself admits that his efforts illuminate only a minute part of the real contents of the *Angelus*, and that he awaited eagerly the results of other methods to corroborate his own, especially psychoanalytic investigations, «which will make use of factors totally unknown to me such as Millet's own life (of which I know nothing at all)…» (91).

Rather than applying psychoanalytic tools to the interpretation of the painter's message, Dali uses the work of art as a looking glass to enable him to contemplate his own obsessions. Several critics have noted that since the painter was closely associated with Lacan in the early 1930s, Dali may well have been exposed to the theory of the mirror stage, probably in its embryonic form. According to Lacan's early essay on the «Mirror Stage», during the first six months of life, the infant has no sense of himself as a whole and separate being and perceives himself as a collection of sensations. Seeing himself in the mirror, the infant contrasts the wholeness of this specular image with his own sense of «*corps morcelé* (fragmented body)». This involves an identification with an image, or imago, whose function is «to establish a relation between the organism and its reality – or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*» (*Ecrits: A Selection* 4). Anyone familiar with the body image in Dali's work as a whole, will not fail to see the relevance of this theme for his imagination.

Dali knows that his paranoiac-critical structure depends on an association of elements which could appear arbitrary were it not for the obsessive idea that relates them. Consequently, it implies a convergence of inner human necessity – the obsessive idea – and the external existence of a whole context. In the framework of Surrealist thought in the 1930's, this is, of course, the *hasard objectif* or objective chance, as Dali points out in his study of the *Angelus* (59).

In the Prologue for *Le Mythe tragique*, Dali relates how, following the X-ray examination of Millet's painting that supposedly corroborated his intuition that the painter had originally introduced into the composition a child's coffin, Gala told him: «If the results prove it, this will be quite marvelous; but if the whole book were nothing but pure construction of the mind, this would be sublime!» (9). Even though the Prologue belongs to a later period, the tendency to consider paranoia-criticism not so much as an instrument for unraveling objective truth but rather as a mental construction constituting a truth of its own, is quite discernible in Dali's earlier work,

noticeably in his shorter writings where there is not elaborate structure of associations as in the *Angelus* study (Finkelstein, 217).

True paranoiac images are, in Dali's eyes, the images of concrete irrationality, defined by him in *The Conquest of the Irrational* (Chapter 13) as «authentically unknown images», images that are «unexplainable and irreducible either by systems of logical intuition or by rational mechanisms», and that go beyond the domain of «psychoanalyzable representations» (60). Concrete examples of such images were given in *Le Mythe tragique* and since one rarely encounters such images, Dali felt the need to transcribe them right away in order to make subsequent use of them in his paintings.

True paranoiac images, images of «concrete irrationality», have no meaning in themselves, and their sense lies in their being part of a system of analogies and relations. Here it is interesting to note a fundamental difference between Dali and Breton. Alquié asserts that Breton «never quite gives in to the irrationality of images»; he never abandons the need to uncover the sense in any automatic productions and prefers the Freudian conception of the psychoanalyzable product of madness (*Philosophy* 131). In Dali's theory, on the other hand, the imagination is a concept very much underplayed, because it is not the imaginative faculty that realizes the images, but the paranoiac one.

The work of Marcel Duchamp with his ready-mades, may be considered the immediate model for Dali's object constructions. These surrealist objects belong to this discussion of double images in that they problematize a familiar object giving it a double meaning. Both Dali and Duchamp offer similar «imaginary solutions» to the enigma of time, chance and existence. Dali's objects quite often exist, not so much as actually realized objects, but rather as proposals or speculations whose purpose falls between theory and rhetoric. *Aphrodisiac Jacket* (1936) and figure 6 *Venus de Milo with Drawers* (1936) are examples comparable to Méret Oppenheimer's *Déjeuner en fourrures* (figure 7).

In one of his autobiographical texts, *The Secret Life*, Dali recounts the following episode.

The scene is Paris during the period of the shooting of *Un Chien andalou*. In his hotel room, on the point of getting up, Dali notices that an insect which he had spotted the night before on the ceiling is no longer there. He shakes the sheets and looks all over himself suddenly taken by the fear that the animal (a tick) might have dropped on him during the night. He then discovers it, with the help of a mirror, stuck to his back. Horrified, overcome by repulsion, Dali tries to pull the vermin out, but he is incapable of doing so. Dali describes his efforts and the effects of his phobic reactions with his habitual attention to detail:

I shut my eyes, I gritted my teeth, prepared to endure anything if only I could get rid of that minute nightmare which was paralyzing me. I took the tick between my thumb and forefinger and squeezed the point where it joined my skin with the cutting pincer of my fingernails… The tick was so solidly attached to me that I did not succeed in loosening it even a little. It was as if it was formed of my own flesh, as if it constituted an inherent and already inseparable part of my own body; as if, suddenly, instead of an insect it had become a terrifying germ of a tiny embryo of a Siamese twin-brother that was in the process of growing out of my back, like the most apocalyptic and infernal disease (1949, 214).

The scene becomes hallucinatory and eventually turns into an «orgy of blood» – when Dali, «with a savagery proportionate… to [his] terror» (1949, 214), takes a blade to separate the tick from his skin. On the verge of fainting, the room spattered with his blood, Dali manages to reach the reception bell and is finally saved by the hotel manager and a doctor who reveal to him the truth of the situation. The artist's hypochondriac imagination had taken for a tick a small mole. Instead of an alien parasite, he had been trying to extract a piece of his own skin.

The preceding scene, in a manner typical of Dali, proceeds from pathos to comedy. In the interests of time, I will not give other examples of this same phobic reaction of repulsion. In order to come closer to an understanding of the mechanisms in play in this passage, it will be helpful to

turn to Julia Kristeva's theorization of the abject. Characterized by its shapelessness, its inconsistency and ambiguity, the abject represents that which the subject must reject in order to clearly define his being. It is not so much uncleanliness as lack of identifiable contours. In Freud's words, the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*) is, in reality, nothing new or alien, but something which is familiar and old-established in the mind and which has become alienated from it only through the process of repression» (Freud 1919, 241). Analogously, Kristeva's abject is that which reminds the subject of his very first attempts to demarcate himself from the maternal entity, which draws him back to a pre-identity stage in which the «I» is still struggling to become separate by means of language. For human language provides the means of differentiating, and thereby separating self and other. Language allows the conceptualization of fundamental differences: life is not death, inside is not outside; parent is not child; male is not female.

When confronted with the anamorphic object, and more particularly with the double image, that is to say with the object which defies this digitalizing property inherent in language, the object which maintains an allegiance to both mutually exclusive categories, Dali confesses that he feels himself near fainting. This fainting or «fading» of the subject is not without certain, very striking pleasurable connotations.

It is my contention, then that Salvador Dali is fascinated by the possibilities of the anamorphic painting because of a personal psychic benefit that he hopes to draw from its creation and contemplation.

In an effort to focus on the nature of that psychic benefit, I propose the examination of Dali's 1937 poem «The Metamorphosis of Narcissus», a text accompanying an anamorphic painting of the same name. Because the painting had been intended by Dali to be accompanied by a recorded vocal reading of the poem, we should look to that poem for information on its meaning. In fact the poem postulates the poet's rebirth as the doubled being Dali-Gala. In the painting, a mysterious egg-shaped object, which could be suggestive of the skull of earlier anamorphic paintings, is now given a new meaning. It is indeed an egg, or bulb, or «chrysalis». Yet it is also a head, it is a head that bursts open to reveal the «flower, the new Narcissus, Gala – my narcissus» (1971, 100).

Dali's mythologizing, recalls the ideal of the androgyne as he imagines a complete being, which is the combination of Dali and Gala. This fantasy may have received confirmation from Dali's reading of Freud who speculates about the development of the ego suggesting that an «infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from the external world as the source of the sensations flowing in upon him» (1930, 67).

I believe however that by considering this idiosyncratic myth of Narcissus in the light of the theory of paranoia-criticism, we will see another possibility. In his doctoral thesis, *De la psychose paranoïaque…*, which dates from 1932, Lacan produces a reading of paranoia which reinforces that of Dali. Paranoia is a systematic reading of the world according to a singular, obsessional idea. Lacan describes this type of psychosis, underlining its coherence, for this is a structure that permits an immediate apprehension of the world and of the self. Any object entering the visual field is instantaneously endowed with an entirely personal meaning. The obsession, which Lacan calls «the iterative identification of the object», tends to repeat itself because it is the projection of an event, or a person, from the past, or else, it is even a double for the subject himself. Delirium then seizes the object to integrate it into a chain of images linked to the central obsessive thought. Thus the double image is always **a return** to a previous perception.

Lacan demonstrates that the victims his patient Aimée attacked and wanted to destroy were but an exteriorized ideal of herself. «Quelle est en effet pour Aimée la valeur représentative de ses persécutrices? Femmes de lettres, actrices, femmes du monde, elles représentent l'image que se fait Aimée de la femme qui, à un degré quelconque, jouit de la liberté et du pouvoir sociaux.» And he adds: «Mais là éclate l'identité imaginaire des thèmes de grandeur et des thèmes de persécution: ce type de femmes; c'est exactement ce qu'elle-même rêve de devenir. La même image qui représente son idéal est aussi l'objet de sa haine» (Lacan 1975, 253). Actresses, writers, poets, Aimée's

persecutors represent a certain ideal of independence and social influence which she herself dreams of achieving. In other words, the patient's paranoiac rage and murderous attacks can be considered as desperate attempts to occupy the place of another (the other) with whom she identifies, to displace the other from that place in which she herself wants to be.

If Dali's paranoia-criticism reveals an overwhelming fear of feminine sexuality, a hesitation as to his own gender identity and a choice of iterative, rather than definitive patterns of behavior and of imagery, Dali's double images reinforce this portrait of a psychic structure in which the artist sees himself mirrored in the ideal woman. Thus the anamorphic paintings evoke a veritable return to the boundriless state of oneness with the preverbal mother: a state of remembered bliss, but also of anxiety since its limits can never be fixed. In Dali's world, what you see is never what you get. The notion of the «return of the repressed» thus explains the spontaneous and irrepressible nature of his images; it also explains why, in spite of all the pages he himself wrote, Dali was always unable to understand them.

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FIGURE 1

FIGURE 2

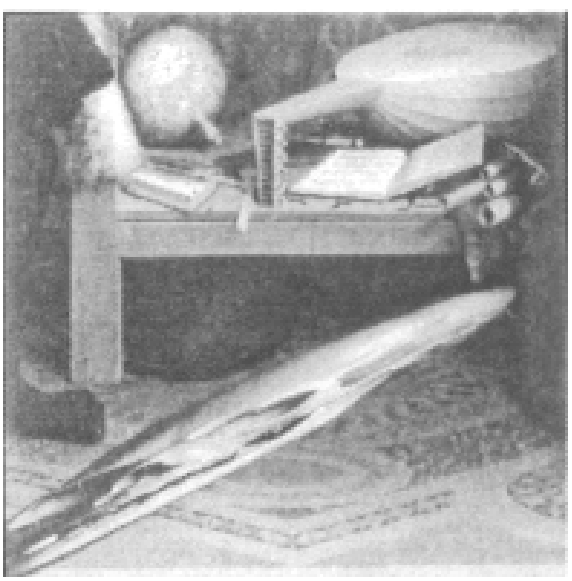

FIGURE 3

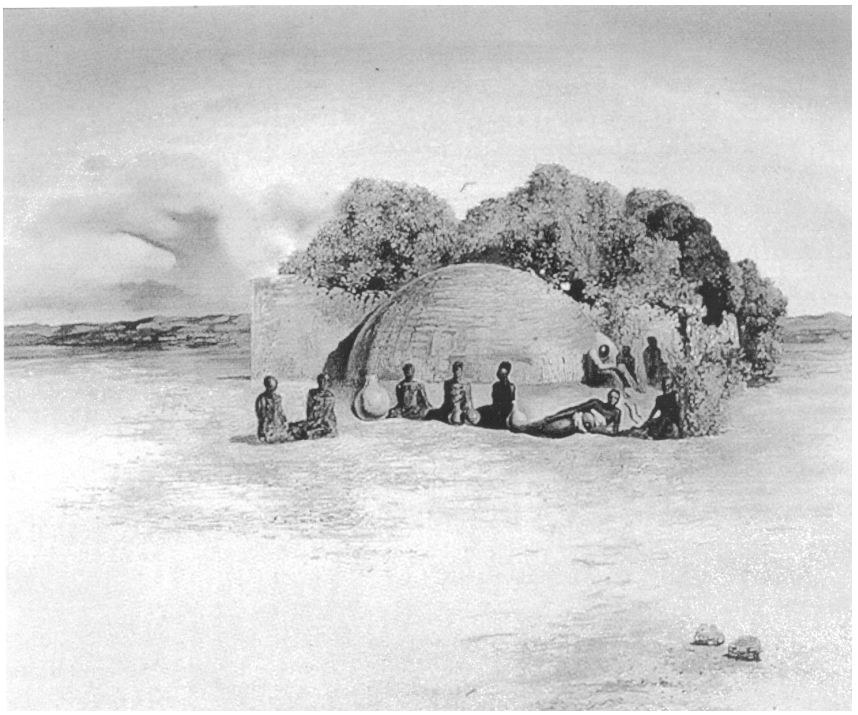

FIGURE 4

FIGURE 5

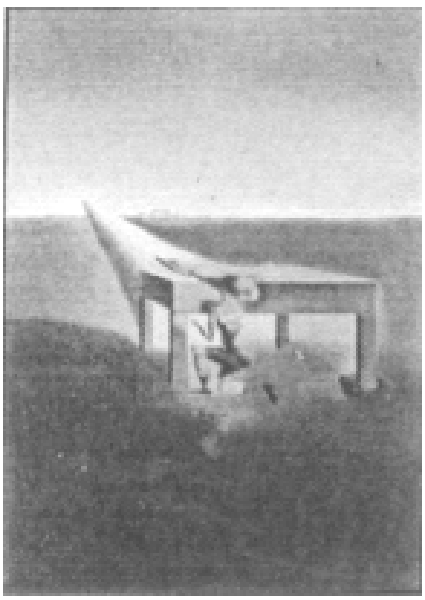

FIGURE 6

FIGURE 7

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 51-57

How poets communicate

FRANCIS CARTIER (*)

This is your poet speaking. Prepare for rarified air ahead, with occasional verbulence.

JULIET…

Juliet Capulet, later Juliet Montague, asks Romeo, «What's in a name?» It is one of literature's most poignant examples of dramatic irony. Because the entire tragedy hinges on how much names can matter.

PHLOGISTON…

It seems obvious that fire releases something from whatever's burning. Medieval alchemists named that something *phlogiston*. Their many efforts to weigh phlogiston failed. When they eventually managed to capture and weigh the total products of combustion, the ashes, smoke, etc., they turned out to be actually heavier than the matter before it was burned. Incredible! But phlogiston theory was tenacious. Phlogiston just *had* to exist; after all, they had a *name* for it! Rather than abandon the enigmatic construct, they felt forced to accept the absurdity that phlogiston must have negative weight.

Lavoisier eventually explained combustion as oxidation. The additional mass was oxygen drawn from the air. In other words, phlogiston turned out to be merely the absence of oxygen, and phlogiston theory died.

Psychological constructs, too, can become cumbersome corpses, like schizophrenia, which superceded dementia praecox, which superceded demonic possession. Or sometimes constructs don't die, but get too crippled to rove productively just by the names we burden them with. Consider «creativity». It just has to exist. After all, we have a name for it.

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GRAMMAR…

In high school we learned about the «parts of speech». The parts of speech are nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, gerunds, and some others we'll ignore here. The parts of speech work in our minds, and on our minds, in wondrous and often inscrutably subtle ways.

The gerund is among my favorites of the Parts of Speech because you can use it as a noun while preserving its essentially predicative meaning. The relevant examples here are the gerunds *creating* and *communicating*.

Another curious, seldom-examined rule of English grammar is that a noun in front of another noun instantly becomes an adjective, as in *fuel pump*. It works, furthermore, to turn whole strings of nouns into adjectives, as in *automobile fuel pump installation*. (By the way, not all languages permit that. For example, Vietnamese doesn't, which may have contributed to our losing that war. But that's a story for another time.) English also lets us turn adjectives into nouns.

REIFICATION…

The root of the word *reification* is the Latin *res* meaning *thing*. By *reification* we turn an adjective or a verb into a noun. This is a mixed blessing. It has permitted us to take a construct like communication, which, on careful thought, really ought to be labeled with a verb, and thing-ify it as though we could productively consider it to be an entity, like something we can reach out and touch. Well, it's **not** a thing; it's a process. If we were to restrict ourselves to using it only as a predicate, we'd be continually reminded that we need a subject and object for our assertions. It liberates the mind of the theorist remarkably to eschew and shun the noun *communication* and use only verbs for that construct.

Reification also traps us into supposing that we can, with impunity, transmogrify adverbs and adjectives into nouns. So our language habits delude us into supposing that, because we have the adjective creative, we can productively think about its reification, *creativity*, as a *thing*, perhaps a trait.

OCCAM'S RAZOR…

Back in the 50s, while developing a course in problem solving for Air Force officers, I researched a profusion and confusion of definitions of *creativity*. I began to think that, like phlogiston, creativity doesn't exist at all except as the absence of something else.

Perhaps the aptitude for devising innovative ideas is merely the *lack* of inhibiting factors. Perhaps there is no such thing as creative thinking, there is only thinking. But instances of real thinking are so rare that, when we encounter one, we feel the need to celebrate it with a special adjective. After all, a substantial proportion of the population goes through life, often happily and productively, without ever thinking at all. I'm reminded here of Thomas Edison's observation: «There are no ends to which the human mind will go to avoid thinking.»

UNTHINKING…

Several things promote unthinking.

First. Habits, traditions and routines. I include corporate and university policies here. Irving Lorge defined a policy as a preconceived solution to a problem that hasn't occurred yet. A tradition, of course, is just a policy that has been around so long that we've forgotten who established it. Habits, including language habits, are things we do unthinkingly. That's why habits are safe and efficient… and seem so even in instances when they're counterproductive. Speaking of traditions, while I was a

Professor of Communication at The Air University at Maxwell Air Force Base, I learned its marvelous motto: *Proficimus more irretenti*, Latin for, «Progress unhindered by tradition». Great, huh? But why did the Air Force choose to express it in a dead, fossilized language? Tradition!

Second. Having a single solution to all problems. Some people unthinkingly try to solve every problem with money, others always use aggression, and others depend solely on charm, or on committees. Sometimes, their single-minded solution works, which gives it powerful variable reinforcement, and perpetuates that narrow, inflexible mind-set. My favorite example of that is the construct «operant conditioning».

Third. The English words *obvious* and *is*. You use the word *obvious* when you have no intention of giving any thought to something. You often use *is* when you have reified an essentially predicative construct and also believe you are describing that non-entity, when what you are really doing is merely giving your definition or re-definition of an English word. These two words are extraordinarily cunning, tenacious, and nearly impregnable restraints to real thinking. I urge you to ferret out others like them.

Fourth. Social pressures. Big subject. I'll mention only that few people have the guts to even think, let alone say, that the Emperor has no clothes on.

THEORY CONSTRUCTION…

It often helps immeasurably to ask a theoretical question in the simplest imaginable words. Mednik understood that back in 1962 when he asked himself how it was possible for a human mind to get a new idea. I'll quote his answer.

> To create consists of making new combinations of associative elements which are useful.... Among chosen combinations the most fertile will often be those formed of elements drawn from domains which are far apart.

Let me repeat Mednik's second sentence:

> Among chosen combinations the most fertile will often be those formed of elements drawn from domains which are far apart.

What Mednik means, of course, is, «from domains which *earlier seemed* irrelevant to each other». And clinical psychologist Bruce Compas of University of Vermont recently said: «I find that the best ideas for my research, and the largest gains I've made in my own thinking, have come when I read way outside of clinical psychology.»

Now let me repeat Mednik's first sentence. «To create consists of making new combinations of associative elements which are useful.» I was excited when I read that because those are nearly the exact same words that Kenneth Harwood and I had written in the *Journal of Communication* in 1953.

It turns out, surprisingly, that the processes by which a person gets a new idea, either by discovering it through one's own inner musings and perceptions, or by learning through listening, reading or observing, are virtually identical. It is by discovering a relevance between two or more ideas that were not previously recognized as relevant to each other. The only difference is that, in the case of invention, the new relevance is internally invoked, and in the case of learning it is evoked.

Teachers teach only by evoking new relevances between ideas that each student must already have available in memory. You knew that, of course. We've all said that we have to start teaching where the student is. Each student must have the building blocks for constructing a new idea. I'll demonstrate by trying to teach you the mathematical theory of the closing lemma. Given any diffeomorphism f of the unit sphere with an irrational rotation number, there is another diffeomorphism of the unit sphere, which is arbitrarily close to f and has a rational rotation number.

Got that? Why not? Your memory doesn't have the building blocks necessary to discover any new associations.

When a teacher manipulates the students' memories skillfully to make them discover a new association, the students often have the impression that they discovered a new fact or idea on their own. And that perception is totally right. They always, invariably, have to discover it on their own. There is **no other way** they can acquire an idea they didn't have before.

Now hear Albert Einstein: «Creativity is combinatorial play.»

The immense mystery is how and why a learner or inventor or a poet happens to perceive this new relevance when the two older ideas are combined in his or her consciousness. There has to be a third idea or factor working here which I believe to be a special motivation. I'll come back to that, but first let's turn to…

INFORMATION THEORY…

Claude Shannon's mathematical theory of information says, very roughly, that, when the probability of signal A being followed immediately by signal B is 100%, signal B provides no information. (I started to say it provides no *new* information, but Shannon would object to that as redundant. By his definition, it is a signal's low probability that makes it information.) The information burden of signal B is inversely proportional to its probability. In other words, the more improbable it is, the more information it carries. You are, of course, associating that with what S. A. Mednik and Bruce Compas said about remote associations.

ATTENTION…

All your sensory systems are constantly searching for information. 100% of the time. Even when you're asleep. Evolution built that into you for survival. On the other side of that coin are habituation and adaptation, which are also evolutionary survival mechanisms. For example, you normally ignore the continual nervous signals telling your brain that you have shoes on. If you feel a rock in your shoe, that's information and you pay attention to it. Another example: For 47 years, I slept unwittingly through my wife's loud snoring but would awaken instantly if she whispered, «Honey».

You tend to ignore signals that apparently bear no useful information. Remember what Mednik said?

«To create consists of making new combinations of associative elements which are useful.»

USEFUL…

The inventor has lurking somewhere in his or her mind a specific motivation to find information that might be useful to solving his present problem. So has the student, whose lurking motivation for useful information is mostly passing the final exam. And so has the poet, whose lurking motivation for useful information is mostly, to use Maslow's term, self-actualization.

It is that lurking motivation to find useful information that comes into play in recognizing the relevance between two known ideas and forming the new association between them.

ROBERT FROST…

Hey, finally we get to the question, «How do poets communicate?» Well, that's what I've been telling you. Just like everyone else, the poet manipulates your attention to your existing

memories (constructs, if you like) to make you see something new – or see it anew. The poet has some extraordinary ways to do those things. Perhaps the most important is the metaphor. Listen to Robert Frost. «There are many things I have found myself saying about poetry, but the chiefest of these is that it is metaphor, saying one thing and meaning another, saying one thing in terms of another.» Thus spake Frost.

METAPHOR…

Now, consider what a metaphor is. It places two previously unrelated ideas together in your mind so that you discover a new association. There are frozen metaphors in English such as *high taxes* and *speaking softly*. Our words, *art* and *metaphor* are themselves frozen metaphors. *Art* is from the Latin [arz] meaning, «to join together» and *metaphor* means «to carry between». Frozen metaphors. But the poet delights us with new metaphors. I like to think of those as *fluid* metaphors, somewhat analogous to the construct of fluid intelligence. Some poems are, in their entirety, a single metaphor. The best poets, moreover, communicate with us to music – the musical meter and sounds in the language.

Edgar Allen Poe was a master composer of that music. His meter and sounds are subtle metaphors. Poe loved the sound of OR for its evocation of a mood. Listen. «Like those Nicæne barks of yore that gently, o'er a perfumed sea, the weary, wayworn wanderer bore to his own native shore.»

And Poe's raven doesn't say merely *never* but *never m o r e*. (That is so mood-evoking that it doesn't even occur to us that a real raven would croak **nevermore**.)

Walt Whitman, on a sandy beach, tells us «the word the sea whispered me». «Death, death, death, death, death.» That's symphonic English.

Lately, I've been engrossed in poems of mathematics and science, for two reasons. First, they promise a reconciliation of the two cultures, humanists vs. scientists, that C. P. Snow declared to be irreconcilable in his 1967 book. Second, they are excellent examples of how a modern poet contrives remote associations and also of how the reader must have the required knowledge to make the associations the poet wants to evoke. One of my favorites is Edna St. Vincent Millay's poem about geometry. No one before had recognized the beauty in Euclid, the great geometry teacher.

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.
Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,
And lay them prone upon the earth and cease
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere
In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese
Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release
From dusty bondage into luminous air.
O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,
When first the shaft into his vision shone
Of light anatomized! Euclid alone
Has looked on Beauty bare. Fortunate they
Who, though once only and then but far away,
Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.

Beautiful! But of course Millay knew nothing then about Einstein's later contributions to physics, the photon and cosmology. So I wrote this sonnet in reply.

Ah, Euclid, Miss Millay, may've seen Her bare,
But flat as any paper doll. Or might

Have glimpsed Her full-round statue, but his light
Flashed but Her stance; no «shifting lineage» there!
'Twas Einstein fractured light to tinier-than-air
Glittering smithereens. Then She sped nigh
To point beyond the distant-curving sky
To where he read the star-bright words: c^2.
Einstein turned a number-scribbled page,
Glanced point-blank into infinity,
Added a new dimension, and chanced to see,
Far clearer than from Euclid's angled cage,
How Beauty moves. He danced with Her! So near
He felt Her warm breath hushing at his ear.

Nineteenth century poets could evoke rich associations by referring to Apollo or Venus. We can't do that now because Venus is no longer thought of as the goddess of love, but as a frigid planet. Now, some poets write for those who understand modern physics and the mathematics of orbital mechanics. 21st century poets believe that those who know nothing of these things are not properly citizens of the 21st century. You do, of course, because you learned them in high school physics.

I'll remind you, though. The gravitational pull of the earth's mass is expressed in the acceleration of 32 feet per second per second.

Any object orbiting the earth is actually in free fall toward earth at that acceleration rate. The only reason it doesn't fall to the earth has to do with its velocity. I'll spare you the math, but I must mention that astrophysicists refer to that math as the «two-body problem». That term is irresistible to a 21st century poet. In just a moment, I'll show you what one poet did with it. Right after I summarize how poets communicate.

First: Just as everyone else must – as I've already described – by manipulating your attention to concepts you already have, making you discover new relevances.

Second: The poet lacks, or overrides, the powerful inhibitions, habits, etc., that prevent ordinary mortals from examining the obvious and talking about it.

Third: Poets are mostly motivated by seeking self-actualization. They talk to themselves and let us overhear it.

Fourth: They do it to music – the music that already lurks in the English language. So here's a poem about time and space and gravity and, well, you decide what else.

Free Fall

32'/sec/sec is irrelevant
To a body in free fall.
The mind can know the arithmetic,
Know the physics of gravitational attraction in both
Space and time,
Know of crystalline clocks and vectors
And acceleration rates.
The body in free fall knows
None of these
And feels in balance,
Stasis,
Suspension between Earth and Heaven.

The forces (per second per second)
Between orbited body and orbiting body
Determine with finely calculable certitude
Whether and when they remain separate entities, and
Whether and when,
Celebrated by sky fires and supersonic percussion,
They meet, as meteors find Earth.

In free fall
The body senses no direction,
Nor passage of invisible time,
Nor velocity relative to Earth,
But only its own unitary being.
And that is an illusion,
For it could not be in that trajectory
But for both fields of gravity,
Silent and inexorable.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

I no longer feel obligated to do conventional footnotes. I'm omitting here the well-known sources on «creativity» such as Feldhusen, Amabile, Sternberg, Csikszentmihalyi, etc., and adding some random thoughts.

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• Attributed to Emerson Pugh: If the brain were simple enough for us to understand it, we would be too simple to understand it.

• Francis Bacon (1561-1626): One of the greatest logical fallacies (his 1st idol of the tribe?) is «to suppose more order and regularity in nature than is really there». Bacon also said:
«Words introduce fallacies in two ways: first, some are names for nonexistent things yet supposed to exist simply because they have received a name; secondly, there are names hastily and unskillfully abstracted from a few objects and applied recklessly to all that have the faintest analogy with these objects, thus causing the grossest confusion.
Aristotle… thinks to explain by mere definition.»

• What I have called «unthinking» is called «mindlessness» in a provocative article by Harvard's Ellen Langer in the December 2000 issue of *Current Directions in Psychological Science*.

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 59-70

Moral absolutism vs. the creative spirit in *Mother Night*

BARBARA ANN HASSID (*)

[N]obody wants to be reminded how hard it is to reconcile the undeniable existence of evil – with His all-powerfulness or His all-goodness. The Devil would be the best way out as an excuse for God; in that way he would be playing the same part as an agent of economic discharge as the Jew does in the world of the Aryan ideal. But even so, one can hold God responsible for the existence of the Devil just as well as for the existence of the wickedness which the Devil embodies (Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, 79-80).

Invoking the subterranean world of a classic *film noir* script, *Mother Night* portrays the life of Howard Campbell, Jr., a German-American playwright whose «ambiguous» complicity with the Nazi regime precipitated a continuous flight from a haunted past. Not unlike the anti-heroes in noir films, Campbell's apocalyptic journey as a war «criminal» began quite by accident in Berlin. After the war, he escaped to the dark, «menacing» city of New York and attempted to live *incognito* in an attic apartment. Once neo-Nazis, American authorities and Russian agents discovered his whereabouts, Campbell chose to exchange «purgatory» in New York for a claustrophobic prison cell in Israel.

Cast as the «Confessions of Howard Campbell, Jr.», the novel opens on the eve of Campbell's trial by the State of Israel. The fictional present is 1961, the year that Adolf Eichmann was kidnapped in Buenos Aires and brought to trial in the district Court of Jerusalem. Campbell, along with Eichmann, has been indicted for «crimes against humanity». Following orders by Israeli

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authorities to document his war memoirs, Campbell weaves his «confessions» around three time frames: his life in Germany during World War II, his life in New York City after the war, and the time he spent in an Israeli prison.

Ostensibly the overriding concern in *Mother Night* is the guilt or innocence of the main protagonist Howard Campbell, Jr. However, Vonnegut skillfully undermines the possibility of rendering a clear verdict on Campbell's «complicity» in Nazi war crimes by calling into question the «guilt» or «innocence» of numerous sub-characters in the novel. This ploy lures the reader into Vonnegut's peculiar moral universe, where one is forced to confront neither villains nor heroes, but ambiguities of complicity and the murky border between «good» and «evil» in humankind. It is Vonnegut's fixation at this border, where he ultimately confronts the futility of creativity in the face of moral absolutism that is the compelling concern of this paper.

Campbell's memoirs begin with a terse autobiographical overview followed by a description of his bleak living quarters in an Israeli prison cell. He then launches into a litany of historical ironies suggesting that he is more concerned with the metaphysics of human evil than his impending death sentence.

> I am an American by birth, a Nazi by reputation, and a nationless person by inclination…. / I am surrounded by ancient history. Though the jail in which I rot is new, some of the stones in it, I'm told, were cut in the time of King Solomon. / And sometimes, when I look out through my cell window at the gay and brassy youth of the infant Republic of Israel, I feel that I and my war crimes are as ancient as Solomon's old gray stones. / How long ago that war, that Second World War was! How long ago the crimes in it! / How nearly forgotten it is, even by the Jews – the young Jews, that is. / One of the Jews who guards me here knows nothing about that war. He is not interested. His name is Arnold Marx…. He is only eighteen, which means Arnold was three when Hitler died, and nonexistent when my career as a war criminal began…. / Hazor, Arnold tells me, was a Canaanite city in northern Palestine that existed at least nineteen hundred years before Christ. About fourteen hundred years before Christ, Arnold tells me, an Israelite army captured Hazor, killed all forty thousand inhabitants, and burned it down. / «Solomon rebuilt the city,» said Arnold, «but in 732 B.C. Tiglath-pileser the Third burned it down again.» / «Who?» I said. / «Tiglath-pileser the Third,» said Arnold. «The Assyrian,» he said, giving my memory a nudge…. / «[I]t seems to me he really is somebody everybody ought to know about. He was probably the most remarkable man the Assyrians ever produced….» / «I'll bring you a book about him, if you like,» said Arnold. / «That's nice of you,» I said. «Maybe I'll get around to thinking about remarkable Assyrians later on. Right now my mind is pretty well occupied with remarkable Germans.» / «Like who?» he said. / «Oh, I've been thinking a lot lately about my old boss, Paul Joseph Goebbels,» I said. / Arnold looked at me blankly. / «Who?» he said. / And I felt the dust of the Holy Land creeping in to bury me, sensed how thick a dust-and-rubble blanket I would one day wear (17-19).

Reading this «history» lesson laced with black humor, we see Campbell peering into his own «heart of darkness», while at the same time examining the universal human capacity for violence and destruction. Freud too confronts these same compelling issues in *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

> The fateful question for the human species seems to me to be whether and to what extent their cultural development will succeed in mastering the disturbance of their communal life by the human instinct of human aggression and self-destruction. It may be that in this respect precisely the present time deserves special interest. Men have gained control over the forces of nature to such an extent that with their help they would have no difficulty in exterminating one another to the last man» (111-112).

In *The Future of An Illusion* Freud argued that religion, «the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity», will eventually be replaced by reason and the influence of scientific progress (55). That is, Freud hoped that morality's prohibitions against aggression would be based on «scientific» reason rather than neurotic religious beliefs. However, his optimism took a dramatic turn in *Civilization and Its Discontents* as he began to doubt that «reason» would ever ameliorate the antagonism between aggressive instincts and the demands of civilization.

Pointing to the Christian commandment that one should «love thy neighbor as thyself», Freud asserts that it is impossible to maintain a grandiose, universal love for a complete stranger just because he is «an inhabitant of this earth, like an insect, an earth-worm, or a grass-snake (66)….» By the judgement of one's very own reason, Freud argues, everyone will feel entitled to retain some love for himself. «What is the point», Freud asks, «of a precept enunciated with so much solemnity if its fulfillment cannot be recommended as reasonable (66-67)?»

Finding the commandment «love thine enemies» even more incomprehensible, Freud continues to argue that people are far too ready to deny the simple truth that men are not kind and gentle but creatures whose instinctual impulses are largely aggressive. Reminiscent of how Campbell began his memoirs by calling our attention to the history of human destructiveness, Freud asks:

> Who, in the face of all his experience of life and of history, will have the courage to dispute this assertion…? Anyone who calls to mind the atrocities committed during the racial migrations or the invasions of the Huns, or by the people known as Mongols under Jenghiz Khan and Tamerlane, or at the capture of Jerusalem by the pious Crusaders, or even, indeed, the horrors of the recent World War – anyone who calls these things to mind will have to bow humbly before the truth of this view (69).

Freud concludes that the aggressive instinct which we may recognize in ourselves as well as others is the most important factor which disrupts our relationships with our neighbor. Because this disruption causes the expenditure of so much energy, civilized society is always in danger of collapse. In case we have any «illusions» about the possibility that interest in common work and goals would prevail against our destructive behavior, Freud warns us both in Chapter V and in Chapter VII that «instinctual passions are stronger than reasonable interests (69)». To further undercut the preposterous ideal of universal love, Freud peppers his arguments with the black humor of the noted German poet Henrich Heine.

> Mine is a most peaceable disposition. My wishes are: a humble cottage with a thatched roof, but a good bed, good food, the freshest milk and butter, flowers before my window, and a few fine trees before my door; and if God wants to make my happiness complete, he will grant me the joy of seeing some six or seven of my enemies hanging from those trees. Before their death I shall, moved in my heart, forgive them all the wrong they did me in their lifetime. One must, it is true, forgive one's enemies – but not before they have been hanged (67-68).

Peter Gay tells us in his introduction to *Civilization and Its Discontents*, that Freud added yet another note of pessimism to the book's second publication issued in 1931. «Stung like other civilized observers by the stunning victory of Hitler's Nazi party in the German parliamentary elections of September 1930, Freud added a quizzical last sentence to *Das Unbehagen in der Kultur*, wondering whether in the great struggle between life and death, life would prevail after all. The jury is still out (xxiii).»

From the few details found in the Editor's Notes in *Mother Night*, the reader has yet another reminder that Vonnegut's dark view of the human condition parallels Freud's pessimism in *Civilization and Its Discontents*. Vonnegut tells us that the title *Mother Night* was Campbell's idea that he borrowed from a speech by Mephistopheles' in Goethe's *Faust*. In this speech, which takes

place in Faust's study, Mephistopheles appears disguised as a traveling scholar. When Faust inquires, «Who are you?» Mephistopheles responds:

> I am the spirit that negates. / And rightly so, for all that comes to be / Deserves to perish wretchedly; / 'Twere better nothing would begin. / Thus everything that your terms, sin, / Destruction, evil represent – / That is my proper element…. / The modest truth I speak to you. / While man, this tiny world of fools, is droll / Enough to think himself a whole, / I am a part of the part that once was everything, / Part of the darkness which gave birth to light, / That haughty light which envies mother night / Her ancient rank and place and would be king – / Yet it does not succeed: however it contend, / It sticks to bodies in the end. / It streams from bodies, it lends bodies beauty, / A body won't let it progress; / So it will not take long, I guess, / And with the bodies it will perish, too (ll. 1338-1358).

Faust retorts, telling Mephistopheles that he is «too weak for great destruction», and therefore has contented himself with creating havoc on a «minor scale (ll. 1360-1361)». Mephistopheles admits he is not getting too far because no matter how many men have died carrying the «haughty light» with them, thousands more spring up to take their place.

> And that accursed lot, the brood of beasts and / men, / One cannot hurt them anyhow. / How many have I buried now! / Yet always fresh new blood will circulate again. / Thus it goes on – I could rage in despair! / From water, earth, and even air, / A thousand seeds have ever grown / In warmth and cold and drought and mire! / If I had not reserved myself the fire, / I should have nothing of my own (ll. 1369-1378).

Mephistopheles withdraws from the debate once Faust warns him that he has underestimated the creative powers of Nature. Calling our attention to this exact speech in a footnote from *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud posits that «In Goethe's Mephistopheles we have a quite exceptionally convincing identification of the principle of evil with the destructive instinct (80)….» Freud further asserts that «The Devil himself names as his adversary, not what is holy and good, but Nature's power to create, to multiply life – that is, Eros (80)….»

Though one can only speculate on the meaning underlying Vonnegut's reference to the possible reign of «Mother Night», it could be inferred that for writers such as Vonnegut and his protagonist Campbell, «evil» or «the destructive instinct» ultimately succeed by extinguishing the creative spirit. Mephistopheles implies that «evil» for humankind ultimately resides in that «tiny world of fools» deluded by their belief that they are «whole», that they have knowledge of «absolute good» and «absolute evil». In turn, this moral absolutism, or the arrogant belief that «god» is on your side because «evil» exists as a distinct «otherness», extinguishes the possibility of creative thought. Though Mephistopheles regrets the tedious problem that «fresh new blood will circulate again (ll. 1372)», he wagers on man's arrogance to help him extinguish the «light» of creativity.

Heidegger underscores this very issue as he argues the impossibility of creativity operating within the constraints of moral absolutism which he refers to as a «total worldview». His arguments are particularly ironic in light of the fact that his highly distinctive philosophy was inextricably bound up with Nazi trajectories. Revealing one brief example of his own essentialist leanings, Heidegger wrote to his colleague Victor Schworer in 1929 that «[t]here is a pressing need for us to remember that we are faced with the choice of either bringing genuine autochthonous forces and educators into our German spiritual life, or finally abandoning it to the growing Judaization in the wider and narrower sense (Safranski, 255)».

If one compares this statement with the following argument, it becomes evident that Heidegger suffered from the same «moral schizophrenia» that afflicts many of Vonnegut's characters in *Mother Night*. Arguing that moral absolutists continuously reproduce themselves under the guise of «creativity», Heidegger asserts that moving beyond the «machinational» would necessarily result in the undoing of any absolutist ideology.

> [T]here arises here an unsurpassable difficulty, one that can never be removed either by adjustment or by excuse. The total worldview must close itself off from the opening of its ground and from engrounding the domain of its «creating»; that is, its creating can never arrive at what is its own-most way of being and become creating-beyond-itself, because thereby the total worldview would have to put itself into question. The consequence is that creating is replaced in advance by endless operations. The ways and risks that belong to what was once creating are arranged according to the machination's gigantic character, and the machinational gives the appearance of the liveliness of creating…. It should come as no surprise that, even though they are incompatible, total political belief as well as total Christian faith are nevertheless engaged in adjustment and tactics. For they share the same way of being. Because of their total posture, total political belief and total Christian faith are based upon renouncing essential decisions. Their struggle is not a creative one but rather «propaganda» and «apologetics» (Heidegger, 29).

Returning again to Vonnegut's impulse to undermine moral absolutism, we find in his satiric depiction of the Dresden massacre, appearing in the introduction to *Mother Night*, yet another example of how he disrupts the comfortable boundaries between the «good» guys and the «bad» guys of World War II.

> [T]he city was lovely, highly ornamented, like Paris, and untouched by war. It was supposedly an «open» city, not to be attacked since there were no troop concentrations or war industries there. / But high explosives were dropped on Dresden by American and British planes on the night of February 13, 1945, just about twenty-one years ago, as I now write. There were no particular targets for the bombs. The hope was that they would create a lot of kindling and drive firemen underground. / And then hundreds of thousands of tiny incendiaries were scattered over the kindling, like seeds on freshly turned loam. More bombs were dropped to keep firemen in their holes, and all the little fires grew, joined one another, became one apocalyptic flame. Hey presto; fire storm. It was the largest massacre in European history, by the way. And so what? / We didn't get to see the fire storm. We were in a cool meat-locker under a slaughterhouse with our six guards and ranks and ranks of dressed cadavers of cattle, pigs, horses, and sheep. We heard the bombs walking around up there. Now and then there would be a gentle shower of calcimine…. / The malt syrup factory was gone. Everything was gone but the cellars where 135,000 Hansels and Gretels had been baked like gingerbread men. So we were put to work as corpse miners, breaking into shelters, bringing bodies out. And I got to see many German types of all ages as death had found them, usually with valuables in their laps. Sometimes relatives would come to watch us dig. They were interesting, too. / So much for Nazis and me (vi.-vii.).

Questioning the possibility of his own moral ambiguity, Vonnegut adds: «If I'd been born in Germany, I suppose I would have *been* a Nazi, bopping Jews and gypsies and Poles around, leaving boots sticking out of snowbanks, warming myself with my secretly virtuous insides. So it goes» (vii.).

We come to further appreciate Vonnegut's interest in moral ambiguity through his protagonist Howard Campbell, Jr. who relates how the events in his life elapsed into a compromised career as a playwright and radio propagandist in Berlin. Explaining how he had moved to Germany in 1923 when his father was assigned to the General Electric Office in Berlin, Campbell notes that «[f]rom then on, my education, my friends, and my principal language were German (32)».

During the 1930's, Campbell tells us he became a playwright and married the famous German actress, Helga Noth. When his parents returned to the United States in 1939, he remained in Berlin believing that as a literary artist he could remain morally and politically «neutral» during the rise of the Nazi regime.

Reality began to disrupt Campbell's «neutrality» when he met U.S. intelligence agent Frank Wirtanen at the Tiergarten in Berlin. Wirtanen lured Campbell into U.S. intelligence service by reminding him how his plays reflected an admiration for «pure hearts and heroes» and how he loved of good and hated evil (41). Though Campbell's initial response was unequivocally negative, he eventually agreed to host a radio program in Berlin. There he spent the entire war broadcasting virulent anti-Semitic propaganda while simultaneously sending coded messages to Allied intelligence.

Like many of Vonnegut's characters who opt for escapist solutions when faced with moral dilemmas, Campbell continued to write romantic plays he considered «as political as chocolate eclairs (37)». In one of his romances, entitled *Das Reich der Zwei*, or «nation of two», we find Campbell indulging in an Oedipal fantasy in which he depicts a womb-like refuge for himself and his wife, Helga. In describing his attempt to live out this fantasy, Campbell reveals how art and love became his way of coping with the madness of the outside world.

> My Helga believed I meant the things I said about the races of man and the machines of history – and I was grateful. No matter what I was really, no matter what I really meant, uncritical love was what I needed – and my Helga was the angel who gave it to me. / Copiously…./ *Das Reich der Zwei*, the nation of two my Helga and I had – its territory, the territory we defended so jealously, didn't go much beyond the bounds of our great double bed…./ Oh, how we clung, my Helga and I – how *mindlessly* we clung! / We didn't listen to each other's words. We heard only the melodies in our voices. The things we listened for carried no more intelligence than the purrs and growls of big cats. / If we had listened for more, had thought about what we heard, what a nauseated couple we would have been! Away from the sovereign territory of our nation of two, we talked like the patriotic lunatics all around us…. / And when that nation ceased to be, I became what I am today and what I always will be, a stateless person» (43-44).

Campbell's yearning for wholeness and attachment to Helga as a libidinal displacement «object», begins to make sense as we learn about his relationship with a cold and indifferent mother.

> I had no brothers or sisters, and my father was seldom home. So I was for many years the principal companion of my mother. She was a beautiful, talented, morbid person. I think she was a drunk most of the time. I remember a time when she filled a saucer with a mixture of rubbing alcohol and table salt. She put the saucer on the kitchen table, turned out all the lights, and had me sit facing her across the table. / And then she touched off the mixture with a match. The flame was almost pure yellow, a sodium flame, and it made her look like a corpse to me, made me look like a corpse to her. / «There-» she said, «that's what we'll look like when we're dead.» / This queer demonstration not only scared me; it scared her, too…. From that moment on I ceased to be her companion. From that moment on she hardly spoke to me – cut me dead, I'm sure, out of fear of doing or saying something even crazier (32).

Through Campbell's oedipal yearnings for Helga, resulting from a ruptured relationship with his mother, Vonnegut projects his own deeply ambivalent feelings and guilt regarding his own mother's suicide. According to critic Kathryn Hume, who discusses a brief account of this event, «Vonnegut enlisted in the army and became an infantry combat scout. He obtained leave from the army to visit his parents on Mother's Day, 1944; but the night before his arrival, his mother took a fatal dose of sleeping pills» (Hume, 209).

Josephine Hendin argues that Campbell suffers from schizoid fragmentation due to «the void left by a human parent's withdrawal» or «the irreplaceable woman» (36), while Jerome Klinkowitz writes that Campbell's schizophrenic leanings are derived from his desire to protect the integrity of a self while living in a chaotic world. «Faced with the pressures of Nazi Germany, Campbell takes a solace not unusual in Western culture: he retreats first to art, and then to love (86).»

Though one could typify Campbell's behavior as symptomatic of «schizophrenia», it is useful to note how Campbell invokes the term with a touch of black humor in order to excuse the virulent tone of his radio propaganda. Defining «schizophrenia» as «that simple and widespread boon to modern mankind», he responds sardonically to his own moral ambiguity (133). In addition we learn from Campbell's memoirs the degree to which he reveled in his dual role as a spy and a Nazi propagandist.

> He [Frank Wirtanen] didn't mention the best reason for expecting me to go on and be a spy. The best reason was that I was a ham. As a spy of the sort he described, I would have an opportunity for some pretty grand acting. I would fool everyone with my brilliant interpretation of a Nazi, inside and out. / And I *did* fool everybody. I began to strut like Hitler's right-hand man, and nobody saw the honest me I hid so deep inside» (41).

Leonard Mustazza asserts that «[Campbell] has long found the world to be a mad and corrupt place in which he takes little direct interest. In his own eyes at least, he is like the blameless Noah in that he considers himself sane while those around him are mad; and he remains sane, he believes, by simply refusing to participate in the external world, only in the well-ordered and just world of his own artistic creation (24)».

Campbell's confessions, however, reveal an attitude toward the Third Reich that was ambiguous rather than disdainful, and that he was in fact, as morally compromised as the famous German actor Hendrik Hofgen in Klaus Mann's *Mephisto*. Both Campbell and Hofgen moved with apparent ease into a Faustian relationship with the Nazi Party in order to advance their theatrical careers and social status. But what is particularly intriguing about Campbell is his impulse to satirize his ambiguous relationship with his Nazi admirers while Hofgen convulses and sobs with pangs of guilt. Taking refuge in black humor rather than in his own artistic creations, Campbell continuously underscores his overarching concern with the unsettled boundaries between «good» and «evil» in humankind rather than his disdain for injustice in the world.

> My wife never knew I was a spy…. / My telling her wouldn't have made her love me less. My telling her wouldn't have put me I any danger…. / My Helga believed that I meant the nutty things I said on the radio, said at parties. We were always going to parties. / We were a very popular couple, gay and patriotic. People used to say that we cheered them up, made them want to go on. And Helga didn't go through the war simply looking decorative, either. She entertained the troops, often within the sound of enemy guns (43). / It wasn't that Helga and I were crazy about Nazis. I can't say, on the other hand, that we hated them. They were a big enthusiastic part of our audience, important people in the society in which we lived. / They were people. / Only in retrospect can I think of them as trailing slime behind. / To be frank – I can't think of them as doing that even now. I knew them too well as people, worked too hard in my time for their trust and applause. / Too hard. / Amen. / Too hard (39).

Later, after listening to fifteen minutes of anti-Semitic invectives from one of his old wartime radio broadcasts, Campbell reveals again his impulse to take refuge in black humor.

> I can hardly deny that I said them. All I can say is that I didn't believe them, that I knew full well what ignorant, destructive, obscenely jocular things I was saying. / The experience of sitting there in the dark, hearing the things I'd said, didn't shock me. It might be helpful in my defense to say that I broke into a cold sweat, or some such nonsense. But I've always known what I did. I've always been able to live with what I did (133).

Raising the most provocative issue in his memoirs, Campbell writes: «I had hoped, as a broadcaster, to be merely ludicrous, but this is a hard world to be ludicrous in, with so many human beings so reluctant to laugh, so incapable of thought, so eager to believe and snarl and hate. So

many people *wanted* to believe me (120)!» Looking more closely at a portion of one of Campbell's wartime broadcasts helps us to more fully appreciate his frustration.

> You folks at home, you parents and relatives of boys at the front – I want you to think of all the Jews you know. I want you to think hard about them. / Now then -let me ask you, is the war making them richer or poorer? Do they eat better or worse than you do? Do they seem to have more or less gasoline than you do? / I already know what the answers to all those questions are, and so will you, if you'll open your eyes and think for a minute (132).

Because this passage is so exceptionally rich in black humor, one feels compelled to ask along with Campbell how is it possible that no one in his Berlin audience nor in his neo-Nazi audience appreciated his «obscene jocularity?» In other words, why didn't anyone get the joke?

Critic Robert Scholes comments on the importance of «getting the joke» in his essay on the use of black humor by modern writers such as Vonnegut. Scholes notes that the specific style of Black Humor modern writers use should not be undervalued simply because it is different in tone than traditional literary satire. These writers he notes, celebrate the «humanizing quality of laughter» rather than the reforming value of traditional literary satire. That is, these writers are concerned about how one should respond to life rather than how one could change it. Scholes writes, «What man must learn is neither scorn nor resignation, say the Black Humorists, but how to take a joke. How should one take a joke? The best response is neither acquiescence nor bitterness. It is first of all a matter of perception. One must 'get' the joke (44)».

In light of Scholes' insights, we can now ask an even more pertinent question. What is it about the humanizing quality of laughter that eludes Campbell's audience, and many of Vonnegut's critics for that matter? Freud notes in *Jokes and Their Relationship to the Unconscious*, that humour, «the highest of the defensive processes», can transform pain into pleasure (233). This transformation seems to parallel what Scholes calls the humanizing quality of laughter, or what Freud called «broken humor-the humour that smiles through tears (232)». Freud's offers insight into why people are unable to «get» a joke in his following hypotheses on the psychical process underlying human laughter.

> It is easy to divine the characteristic of jokes on which the difference in their hearers' reaction to them depends. In the one case the joke is an end in itself and serves no particular aim, in the other case it does serve such an aim – it becomes *tendentious*. Only jokes that have a purpose run the risk of meeting with people who do not want to listen to them (90)…. / In laughter, therefore, on our hypothesis, the conditions are present under which a sum of psychical energy which has hitherto been used for cathexis is allowed free discharge. And since laughter – not all laughter, it is true, but certainly laughter at a joke – is an indication of pleasure, we shall be inclined to relate this pleasure to the lifting of the cathexis which has previously been present…. [T]he hearer of the joke laughs with the quota of psychical energy which has become free through the lifting of the inhibitory cathexis; we might say that he laughs this quota off (148-149).

> [1] The first of these conditions lays down one of the necessary qualifications of the third person as hearer of the joke. It is essential that he should be in sufficient psychical accord with the first person to possess the same internal inhibitions which the joke-work has overcome in the latter…. He must be able as a matter of habit to erect in himself the same inhibition which the first person's joke has overcome, so that, as soon as he hears the joke, the readiness for this inhibition will compulsively or automatically awaken…. / [2] The second condition for making free discharge possible - that the liberated energy shall be prevented from being used in any other way – seems very much the more important. It provides the theoretical explanation of the uncertainty of the effect of jokes when the thoughts expressed in a joke arouse powerfully exciting ideas in the hearer; in that case the question whether the purposes of the joke agree with or contradict the circle of

> thoughts by which the hearer is dominated will decide whether his attention will remain with the joking process or be withdrawn from it (150-151).

Freud's analysis of «tendentious» jokes renders a possible answer as to why Campbell's «obscene jocularity» was lost on both his Berlin audience and his neo-Nazi fans in New York known as the Iron Guard of the White Sons of the American Constitution. For it can be surmised that the discharge of an «inhibitory cathexis» in Campbell's audience was impeded by the fact that too much of their psychical energy was invested (cathected) in unmitigated hatred and narcissistic fantasies. For both groups hatred was ego-structuring and thus at the very core of their identity.

In Nazi Germany, this identity was reinforced by the self-deceptive ideology of the Aryan ideal, specifically in the effective slogan «*der Schicksalskampf des deutschen Volkes*» or «the battle of destiny for the German people». According to Hannah Arendt, this slogan, coined by either Hitler or Goebbels, made self-deception easier for three reasons: «[I]t suggested, first that the war was no war; second, that it was started by destiny and not by Germany; and, third, that it was a matter of life and death for the Germans, who must annihilate their enemies or be annihilated (52)».

However, as Freud reminds us throughout *Civilization and Its Discontents*, the underlying drive necessitating the Germans' narcissistic claims of racial purity and fantasies about the Aryan ideal was aggression. That is, anti-Semitism and Nazi ideology were not the cause but rather the excuse for the violent destruction of others. Journalists Adam Le Bor and Roger Boyes, address this very issue in *Seduced by Hitler*, where they examine the ideological rectitude of «ordinary» Germans during the Third Reich.

> Much of the appeal of Nazism was that it removed many of the constraints, both legal and moral, that govern behavior across every sector of society. For many individuals, this often had little to do with furthering the triumph of Nazi ideology itself. Rather, Nazi principles could be invoked as a means of, and justification for, settling personal grievances and satisfying personal greed. In one sense, the Third Reich was a kind of macabre wish-fulfillment factory where an individual's basest desires could be met, for everyone from an uneducated peasant tilling his fields to a sophisticated international banker. Even if by any normal standard these wishes were deeply immoral, as long as they fell into the parameters of the Third Reich, it was open season on everyone from business competitors to unwanted rivals in love, as the case of the Konigsberg shopgirl, in love with her boss, who denounced his wife for passing food to a Jewish friend (320).

> There was… no inevitability of punishment for the ordinary German for the countless acts of nonconformity…. The Gestapo was small. The Gestapo – the *Geheimstaatspolizei* – had 40,00 officials watching a country of eighty million (3). In a local community, there was no shortage of denunciations from neighbors, janitors, or jealous rivals (5). In fact, so numerous were the denunciations on trivial and personal matters – such as disputes between neighbors that had no relation at all to either national security or Jewish matters – that in 1934 the Interior Ministry demanded that those who made «thoughtless, invalid complaints» be prosecuted themselves (4).

In order to further understand why so many Germans in the Third Reich as well as members of the Neo-Nazi Iron Guard in New York found Campbell's radio propaganda so appealing, but not «funny», it is useful to look through the lens of reader response theory. Norman Holland, in the preface to his seminal book on reader response, notes that: «Advertising and propaganda pose the question, How does literature teach? more directly than any respectable literature can (*The Dynamics of Literary Response*, xiv.).»

The central principle of Holland's theory is that «identity re-creates itself, or, to put it another way, style – in the sense of personal style – creates itself. That is, all of us, as we read, use the literary work to symbolize and finally to replicate ourselves. We work out through the text our

own characteristic patterns of desire and adaptation. We interact with the work, making it part of our own psychic economy and making ourselves part of the literary work – as we interpret it. For, always, this principle prevails: identity re-creates itself (*PMLA*, 816-817).»

By extrapolating ideas from Holland's theory, though by no means fully utilizing it, one could argue that Campbell's German audiences derived «pleasure» from propaganda by re-creating and justifying their own personal destructive fantasies and drives. This same psychical process also explains the activities of the Iron Guard of the White sons of the American Constitution, especially their passion for Campbell's old radio broadcasts and his articles in their paper *The White Christian Minutemen*.

In their leader Dr. Lionel J. D. Jones, we can detect further evidence of destructive fantasies operating under the guise of racist and patriotic ideology. After being arrested by government officials, Jones pleaded for his freedom so he could continue to pursue enemies of the Republic. «Everything we do is to make the country stronger! Join with us, and let's go after the people who are trying to make it weaker!… / The Jews! The Catholics! The Negroes! The Orientals! The Unitarians! The foreign-born, who don't have any understanding of democracy, who play right into the hands of the socialists, the communists, the anarchists, the anti-Christ and the Jews (161)!

Despite his hatred of Blacks and Catholics, Jones included in his close political circle Robert Sterling Wilson, «the Black Fuehrer of Harlem», and the Catholic priest Father Keeley. The «Black Fuehrer» informed Campbell that during the war he was on the side of «colored folks» and therefore chose to work as a spy for the Japanese. Warning Campbell about the wrath of colored people who are going to take over the world, he declared that colored people would soon have hydrogen bombs all of their own. He further noted that it was now Japan's turn to drop one on China. When Campbell inquires why colored people were going to drop the bomb on other colored people the «Black Fuehrer» responds: 'Who ever told you a Chinaman was a colored man (74)?'

For those readers who might find Vonnegut's black humor gravitating towards *reductio ad absurdum*, one only needs to recall that the Nazis were also flexible about racial «purity» when it suited them. During World War II they reclassified the Japanese as «honorary Aryans» (Le Bor, 329), and in 1942 they forged an alliance with Hajj Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, in order to create a Muslim legion to fight alongside German troops (Roth, 296). Furthermore, Vonnegut's characterization of the Rev. Lionel J.D. Jones serves as a perfect prototype for the Rev. Jerry Falwell who recently expounded on the tragic events of September 11, 2001.

> God continues to lift the curtain and allow the enemies of America to give us probably what we deserve…. The abortionists have got to bear some burden for this because God will not be mocked. And when we destroy 40 million little innocent babies, we make God mad. I really believe that the pagans, and the abortionists, and the feminists, and the gays and the lesbians who are actively trying to make that an alternative lifestyle, the ACLU, People for the American Way – all of them who have tried to secularize America – I point the finger in their face and say, «You helped this happen (Harris, C3)».

Though Campbell devotes a large portion of his memoirs to satirizing his neo-Nazi admirers, the lion's share of his biting wit is aimed at Bernard O'Hare, an American Lieutenant. Unaware of Campbell's intelligence work for the U.S. army, O'Hare captured Campbell at the end of the war and forced him to view dead bodies at the Nazi death camp in Ohrdruf. Years later, after a relentless pursuit in New York City he found Campbell in his attic apartment and attempted to kill him. In this section of the memoirs, entitled «St. George and the Dragon», we learn that O'Hare's «patriotic» rage had its origins in failed career aspirations, a dead-end marriage, too many children, and the collapse of several business ventures. After shoving O'Hare down the stairwell, Campbell denounces the underlying drive that fuels his patriotic zeal. «There are plenty of good reasons for fighting… but no good reason ever to hate without reservation…. Where's evil? It's that large part of every man that wants to hate without limit, that wants to hate with God on his side. It's that part of every man that finds all kinds of ugliness so attractive (181).»

Campbell's relentless invectives against the moral absolutists of the world underscore Freud's fear that for a vast number of people hatred is comforting and ego-structuring. Noting that men cannot easily give up the «satisfaction of this inclination to aggression (72)», Freud argues that all moral absolutists require above all else, complementary enemies. «When once the Apostle Paul had posited universal love between men as the foundation of his Christian community, extreme intolerance on the part of Christendom towards those who remained outside it became the inevitable consequence…. Neither was it an unaccountable chance that the dream of a Germanic world-dominion called for anti-Semitism as its complement; and it is intelligible that the attempt to establish a new, communist civilization in Russia should find its psychological support in the persecution of the bourgeois. One only wonders what the Soviets will do after they have wiped out their bourgeois (Freud, *Civilization*, 72-73).»

At the close of the novel, it is these very moral absolutists Freud discusses that desperately pursue Campbell as their «complementary» enemy. After he narrowly escapes being kidnapped by Russian spies and arrested by American authorities, Campbell finds his new «freedom» outside the Empire State Building unbearable.

> It was not guilt that froze me. I had taught myself never to feel guilt. It was not a ghastly sense of loss that froze me. I had taught myself to covet nothing. / It was not a loathing of death that froze me. I had taught myself to think of death as a friend…. / What froze me was the fact that I had absolutely no reason to move in any direction. What had made me move through so many dead and pointless years was curiosity. / Now even that had flickered out» (167).

In the end, Campbell's decision to turn himself in to the Israeli authorities is motivated far less by a crisis of conscience than by a crisis of imagination. The creative-spirit that was once Campbell's entire *raison d'être* demands to be realized in and throughout the myriad shades of good and evil, and yet it is precisely these shades that the blinding light of moral absolutism denies a showing. Once Frank Wirtanen offers to testify under oath that Campbell served as an American agent in Berlin during the war, Campbell can only respond: «So I am about to be a free man again, to wander where I please. / I find the prospect nauseating (192).»

Campbell chooses instead to offer us an ominous warning concerning this grand, modern world of which, in less «conscious» moments, we are all so fond. Clearly, he intends to caution us that the very essence of modern existence, that mysterious energy that drives modernity to disclose its world in black and white, may undermine and potentially annihilate the very humanity it pretends to serve so well. Unfortunately, if Campbell's assessment of modernity is at all accurate, it is quite possible that his warning will go unheeded. As the fool, his lesson is a difficult one, for he holds up a mirror reflecting aspects of human nature no one wants to see. Like Yorick in Hamlet's Denmark and the fool in Lear's kingdom, Campbell's world cannot accept the humanizing quality of satire that redeems tragedy and serves as a foil to the absolutist theologies humans construct. What remains to be seen is whether, in his final human act, Campbell provides the only realistic solution: «Goodbye, cruel world (192)!»

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Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 71-77

Sylvia's Vampires, Ted's «Dreamers»

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«I'd seen a play where the heroine was possessed by a dybbuk [demon soul of a dead person], and when the dybbuk spoke from her mouth its voice sounded so cavernous and deep you couldn't tell whether it was a man or a woman.» – Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar* (1971).

«Dying
Is an art, like everything else.
I do it exceptionally well.» – Sylvia Plath, «Lady Lazarus», quoted by Tomas Eloy Martinez as an epigraph to *Santa Evita* (1995).

«If I've killed one man, I've killed two –
The vampire who said he was you
And drank my blood for a year,
Seven years, if you want to know.
Daddy, you can lie back now.

There's a stake in your fat black heart . . .» – Sylvia Plath, «Daddy» (1962).

«Each of us was the stake
Impaling the other» – «9 Willow Street» – Ted Hughes, *Birthday Letters* (1998, 72).

If the meaning of a story can be found in its intertexts and aftertexts, it is similar to the way the latent content of hysteria makes itself known in its delayed effects. Psychoanalysis calls this effect «*Nachtraglich*», a mechanism according to which events become meaningful only as reactivated by memory after time has passed. My purpose here is to examine after effects in the form of revisions of Poe's 1838 short story «Ligeia» and to examine intertexts of Ted Hughes's *Birthday Letters* (1998).

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Eva Peron's death (of cancer), in 1952, contributed to the downward spiral of her husband's political fortunes. Although «Evita» (as she was popularly known) had virtually co-governed Argentina during the first six years of Juan Peron's presidency, her will to become his Vice President was blocked by the Argentine army. In death, Eva Peron became more than ever «Santa Evita», her corpse treated as a sacred relic. When Juan Peron, out of power and out of favor in Argentina, fled to Spain in 1960, he arranged to have Evita's coffin reside there with him. This arrangement lasted after Peron married Isabel Martinez in 1961. A magician who had joined Peron's entourage performed in Spain a ritual in which the second Mrs. Peron lay atop the coffin of the first; Juan believed Isabel could thus receive a soul transfer from the sainted dead. This ritual accomplished, the Perons returned to Argentina; and Juan Peron made a comeback to presidential power, with Isabel ultimately fulfilling Eva's old wish – the second Presidential wife became Argentina's Vice President. When Juan died of a heart attack in 1974, his widow assumed the presidency.

This story, especially in its theme of psychic transfer of the soul of the idealized first wife into the body of the second, has been told before - not as political history, but as fiction. Poe's 1838 story «Ligeia», recounts how the intense will of the narrator's transcendently-perfect, departed first wife turns the body of the material girl he then marries into a vehicle for the reincarnation of the undead woman for whom he longs.

A version of this narrative of spousal mourning and metaphysical possession has been told in literary history as well. When Sylvia Plath gassed herself by putting her head into an oven in 1963, her husband was on his way to Spain, home of his ancestors, where he had honeymooned with Sylvia in 1956, and where he «felt at home» but where, he said, Sylvia was panicked by «the Goya funeral grin» (*BL*, p. 39) of the Spanish cult of the dead. Ted's companion on his Spanish escape was Assia Wevill, a German refugee whose father was a Jew and whose mother was a Protestant. Sylvia and Ted had first met Assia when she came with her husband David Wevill to see about taking possession of the Hughes's London flat, on Chalcot Square, given up so the Hugheses could move to Devon, where Assia and her husband subsequently visited them. According to Hughes's poem «Dreamers», Assia was Sylvia's idealized fantasy self, the embodiment of Plath's own imaginary Jewishness and idealized European cultural background. Having occupied Sylvia's former London home, Assia soon took over Sylvia's husband as well. Assia and Ted became the parents of a daughter, named Shura, in 1967. While Ted had moved on to another lover, in 1969, Assia gassed Shura and herself to death in a London flat, an act that implies her identification with, or sense of possession by, Sylvia Plath.

Hughes's poem «Dreamers», printed as one of his birthday letters to the dead Sylvia, represents as inevitable Assia's appearance in their lives during an impasse in the Hughes's marriage. London legends report that Sylvia herself claimed to have conjured Assia up, a fulfillment perhaps of her sense that Ted would betray her. This claim of a self-fulfilling prophecy, recently relayed by Erica Wagner's *Ariel's Gift*, provides a sample of how the politics of story-telling figure in Plath-Hughes scholarship. In 1989, giving Plath's friend Suzette Macedo as the source, Ted's sister Olwyn made this same claim – saying Sylvia had dreamed up Assia. Whether or not Sylvia said she had dreamed up Assia, it is notable that in 1958, Plath had written, «Liz Taylor is getting Eddie Fisher away from Debbie Reynolds who appears cherubic, round-faced, wronged, in pincurls and houserobe – Mike Todd barely cold. How odd these events affect one so. Why? Analogies? ... No criticism or nagging. Shut eyes to dirty hair, ragged nails. He is a genius. I his wife» (Kukil, ed., p. 420).

When Ted Hughes left her in 1962, Sylvia was in a situation analogous to her mother's when Otto Plath died in 1940, leaving her (for Lady Death, as Sylvia later construed it). A widow with two young children to support, Aurelia Plath returned with her children to live with her own mother, a fate the husband-less Sylvia wished to avoid at all costs. (*LH*, 468-9, October 16, 1962, states that Sylvia found the idea of returning to America unthinkable [though that is exactly what

her American psychiatrist Ruth Beuscher had recommended that she do]). Plath, whose journal indicates how much she wanted to avoid the role of abandoned wife, turned into Electra on the Aurelia path.

Rather than be of the company of «that great, vacant estate» of «Widow» (*CP*, ed. Hughes, p. 164), Plath made her husband a widower, proceeding as if to revise the script of Poe's «Ligeia». Aurelia Plath had been a widow possessed, as the Hugheses apparently saw it, by her husband, who in turn possessed his daughter, and then her daughter's husband. Plath, in the role of dead Ligeia, avoided her mother's role of widow/abandoned woman by leaving Ted a widower with two children. By committing suicide, Plath provided Assia Wevill with a model for dying and Hughes with a muse and an addressee beyond the grave. Plath left her own two small children with a single parent just as she herself and her younger brother Warren had been left when Aurelia Plath became a widow. Though the mythology of Ted and Sylvia always points to her identification of Ted with her father Otto Plath, Sylvia herself, in Otto's role, abandoned the world of the living. she in death put Ted into the role of the widow Aurelia.

BIRTHDAY LETTERS

Ted Hughes's *Birthday Letters*, written in the confessional mode of Sylvia Plath, feed off her inspiration and reply to her works. Caroline Fraser calls the book «a literary footnote to his wife's far greater work» (2000). Addressed to his dead wife, the Letters explicitly set forth the poet's view that Plath's ancestry doomed herlife, destroyed her marriage, almost destroyed her husband, and then fed on his being after her death.

Ted believed Sylvia was possessed by her father, who thereby came to possess her husband. In the Plath-Hughes marriage, Otto Plath was imagined to be haunting the pair from what Abraham and Torok have taught us to recognize as an intrapsychic and interpersonal vault – a shared, unconscious repository of unarticulated ancestral horrors. As Sylvia's survivor, Ted imagines the hand of his dead first wife «held/ By endless darkness» (44) as the poet-survivor drinks from her deathly stillness (45). In «55 Eltisley» (the Cambridge, England address where the Hugheses moved after they married), the poet recounts how he took possession of their first shared home, which had been vacated by a widow:

> She had left the last blood of her husband
> Staining a pillow. Their whole story
> Hung – a miasma – round that stain.
> ... I studied the blood.
> Was it mouth-blood, or ear-blood,
> Or the blood of a head-wound, after some fall?
> I took possession before
> Anything of ours had reconditioned
> That crypt of old griefs and its stale gas
> Of a dead husband. I claimed our first home
> Alone and slept in it alone,
> Only *trying not to inhale the ghost*
> *That clung on in the breath of the bed*. (*BL*, 1998, 49, my italics)

Images of difficult breathing and enclosed, airless spaces pervade *Birthday Letters* – «screams / That sucked the oxygen out of both of us» (149); oxygen emptied into a jug of coins to be given to Plath's mother; a gas chamber, a bell jar, crypts, casket, coffin, graves, tunnel-groove, Plath's paperweight heirloom filled with snow (her rosebud). In «55 Eltisley», the new husband tries not to breathe in the stale spirit of the dead man whose home he is occupying. He wants to avoid the spirit of the place, to ward off a fear of a compulsion to repeat.

In «Dreamers», the woman who took over Sylvia's place in London spends her first night in Sylvia's new home in Devon:

> We didn't find her-she found us.
> She sniffed us out. The Fate she carried
> Sniffed us out
> And assembled us, inert ingredients
> For its experiment. The Fable she carried
> Requisitioned you and me and her,
> Puppets for its performance.
>
> She fascinated you. Her eyes caressed you,
> Melted a weeping glitter at you.
> Her German the dark undercurrent
> In her Kensington jeweller's elocution
> Was your ancestral Black Forest whisper -
> Edged with a greasy, death-camp, soot-softness.
> When she suddenly rounded her eyeballs,
> Popped them, strangled, she shocked you.
> It was her mock surprise.
> But you saw hanged women choke, dumb, through her,
> And when she listened, watching you, through smoke,
> Her black-ringed gray iris, slightly unnatural,
> Was Black Forest wolf, a witch's daughter
> Out of Grimm.
>
> Warily you cultivated her,
> Her Jewishness, her many-blooded beauty,
> As if your dream of your dream-self stood there,
> A glittering blackness, Europe's mystical jewel.
> A creature from beyond the fringe of your desk-lamp.
> Who was this Lilith of abortions
> Touching the hair of your children
> With tiger-painted nails?
>
> Her speech Harrod's, Hitler's mutilations
> Kept you company, weeding the onions.
> An ex-Nazi Youth Sabra. Her father
> Doctor to the Bolshoi Ballet.
>
> She was helpless too.
> None of us could wake up.
> Nightmare looked out at the poppies.
> She sat there, in her soot-wet mascara,
> In flame-orange silks, in gold bracelets,
> Slightly filthy with erotic mystery -
> A German
> Russian Israeli with the gaze of a demon
> Between curtains of black Mongolian hair.
>
> After a single night under our roof
> She told her dream. A giant fish, a pike

Had a globed, golden eye, and in that eye
A throbbing human foetus –
You were astonished, maybe envious.

I refused to interpret. I saw
The dreamer in her
Had fallen in love with me and she did not know it.
That moment the dreamer in me
Fell in love with her, and I knew it. (*BL*, p. 157-158)

This exotic German Jew of «many-blooded beauty» bears comparison with the Lady Ligeia in Poe's 1838 tale. Ligeia, met in the Rhineland, is of ancient European origin, with a Hebraic nose, Homeric «hyacinthine» tresses, and eyes fuller than «the gazelle eyes of the tribe of the valley of Nourjahad» (fabled African, mentioned in Mary Shelley's story «The Mortal Immortal»). Ligeia's raven-black hair – glossy, luxuriant, and naturally curling – compares to Ted's Halloween other woman's «curtains of black Mongolian hair». Like Ligeia, the German dreamer is fascinating; she has an exciting undercurrent in her speech; and her eyes are slightly unnatural. Ligeia has brilliant black orbs for eyes, and «far over them, hung lashes of great length» (178); Ted's other woman has the gaze of a demon and she wears «soot-wet mascara». Whereas Ligeia's eyes are remarkable for their size and intensity of expression, the eyes of the other woman are those of a Black Forest wolf, a witch's daughter. Ligeia's beauty has the «radiance of an opium dream» (176); the other woman has the sinister glamour of Grimm fairy tales. The Lady Ligeia is «most violently prey to the tumultuous vultures of stern passion» (179); the other woman is «slightly filthy with erotic mystery». Ligeia leads «to the goal of a wisdom too divinely precious not to be forbidden» (180); the other woman comes from beyond the fringe of book knowledge. Her father a (Russian Jewish) Doctor to the Bolshoi Ballet, the other woman has a high-culture background, as had Ligeia.

Although Assia Wevill's mother was a German Protestant, the language in «Dreamers» can be read to suggest that for the speaker she is a stereotypical «dirty Jew» (Bundtzen). Her «Kensington jeweller's elocution» and her status as «glittering blackness, Europe's mystical jewel» suggest her relationship to Jewish traders in diamonds and to stereotypical associations of Jews with usury and filthy lucre. The exotic woman is «greasy» and «slightly filthy» with a «glittering blackness» and «soot-wet mascara». The exotic seductress not only trails clouds of smoke from the Nazi crematoria, notes Bundtzen (2001), but also the stereotypical filth of anti-Semitism. She's Lilith from the Apocrypha. The poem implies that Plath is fascinated with dirty otherness. Though the speaker of «Dreamers» concludes from the other woman's dream that she has unconsciously fallen in love with the speaker, the seductress's caressing, glittering eyes in the poem seem focused instead on Sylvia as an object of desire or envy. Plath fancied herself part Jewish, but it was the German father in her that Ted hated and with whom he was obsessed and who he believed possessed not only Sylvia but her husband and their home. «Dreamers», iterating the word «Jew» in «jeweller» and «jewel», suggests that it was with Assia's European «Jewishness» that Ted fell in love. Her «mystical» aura connects Assia with Ted's mother, from whom he absorbed his superstitions.

Poe, a self-made intellectual in what he regarded as a Philistine America, looked to Europe for class, culture and inspiration; he wrote himself into cultural history with a beautiful dead woman as his most poetical subject. Plath, a naive and ambitious American of the mid-twentieth century, sought what Ted calls «pedigree dreams» (*BL*, p. 34) in Europe as the place of art, deep truth and wisdom. Ted for his part had loved in her the America that helped to rescue drab England from the Nazis; but what glowed into his focus «was blood... through the tattooed blazon of an eagle.... Germany's eagle/ Bleeding up through your American eagle» (*BL*, p. 78).

In «Ligeia», in a ebony-filled bridal chamber evoking the Egyptian cult of the dead, a grieving, imaginative widower, a budding transcendentalist intellectual with a rich, drugged fantasy life, having elaborately surrounded himself with an aestheticized, bizarre and exotic gloom, half-

Gothic, half-Druidical, dreams to life a poem his wife had made him memorize, thus willing the return of his mortal-immortal beloved, turning her posthumous will into body, reversing a golden-haired woman of a materialistic family into a Dark Lady. In «Dreamers», a darkly glittering Lilith wrapped in Fable fixes fates by telling her dream. In Poe's tale, the ebony-tressed woman of mixed blood is the idealized wife, and the golden Lady Rowena of Tremaine is the successor who provides in death a medium for revivification of the dark lady. In the Hughes saga, the golden girl was the young Plath, who in her demands for modern gadgets and bourgeois comforts seems to have been a gold-loving materialist, though she liked to imagine herself as a gypsy and a Jew, the image of the woman her husband turned out to prefer to her.

Between the Poe and the Hughes-Plath-Wevill tale of uncanny return there are important differences: Ligeia has no paternal name and her husband does not recall when or where he met her, as if she simply had always been there, time out of mind, as a mother is for an infant. Sylvia, on the other hand, had not only a patronym but, to her husband's imagination, an excess of pedigree (her Germanic ancestry; her *summa cum laude* degree from Smith College, and her studies at Cambridge University). Nevertheless, the sense of a dead muse revivifying herself by feeding on her survivor and her successor, and the sense of a poetic marriage that is a fable larger than the life of an individual or of one generation joins these three gothic marriage tales – the Perons', «Ligeia», and the Plath-Hughes-Wevill disaster.

In a reading known to Plath from her undergraduate days, D. H. Lawrence interpreted Ligeia as a vampire. His concern was with what he took to be the excessively intellectual knowledge Poe's narrator has of Ligeia, who seems to be all eyes and mind, with very little blood. There are, however, «three or four drops of a brilliant and ruby colored fluid» that appear to spring from the atmosphere of the Lady Rowena's sick chamber and fall into the wine she drinks before her death throes. Perhaps the opium-dreaming, grief-crazed narrator poisons his wife's wine, materializing his fantasy that if he hates his second wife enough, he can brings the first one back; or maybe this scene can be construed as a sort of blood transfusion allowing Ligeia to take possession of the waning Rowena. Ligeia herself is emaciated in her illness, comparable to «The Ancient Mariner's Death-in-Life woman» who haunts and inspires *Birthday Letters*. Marble-like in appearance and accruing numerous classical allusions in description, Ligeia, whose name rhymes with «idea», seems to represent for her gothic intellectual narrator the glory of Greece, the grandeur of Rome, and all the mystery and glamour of the old European world for an American living during a time when people used to lament the absence of inspiring ruins in the young Republic. «Ligeia» can thus be read as an American's version of how a beloved spiritual past can be brought into the hateful material present – through philosophical studies, drugs, interior decoration, and imaginative melancholia. If we take seriously Lawrence's detection of vampirism in this tale, as Plath herself apparently did, we can read Ligeia's vampirism as an image of the spiritual past rising from a crypt in her widower's psyche to devour the material present, as in the melancholia of failed mourning, in which a survivor remains attached to the incorporated dead and so removes himself from capacity to participate with pleasure in the ongoingness of life without the dead dear one, or, perhaps, as in the way literary inspiration, striving for the symbolic, draws on a deep past to shape new versions of an old story.

NOTES

Sylvia Plath's copy of D. H. Lawrence, *Studies in American Literature* is in the Mortimer Rare Book Room, Smith College, inscribed «SP, April 24, 1953. Given upon receipt of a message connoting a new phase – I'm proud! MB» [Marcia Brown, Plath's roommate at Smith, who

presented the book upon Plath's return to college from hospital stay after a suicide attempt]. Among Plath's underlinings in Lawrence's chapter on Poe is this passage: «It is easy to see why each man kills the things he loves. To know a living things is to kill it. You have to kill a thing to know it satisfactorily. For this reason, the desirous consciousness, the SPIRIT, is a vampire.» Next to this passage, Plath wrote, «If you dissect a bird…». One may perhaps connect this «murder to dissect, to know» theme to Ted Hughes's ritual «scrying» – a way of telling fortunes by examining the entrails of sacrificed animals. A story of Ted slavering over a dissected hare he had hit with his car and killed appears in Janet Malcolm, *The Silent Woman*, p. 170.

The May 6, 2001 Manchester *Guardian* reveals Hughes's 1960s love affair and unacknowledged child with Brenda Hedden, described by Assia Wevill «as my real enemy» and an «emaciated» Marilyn Monroe. In the context of the Ancient Mariner emaciated «Death-in-life» woman haunting *Birthday Letters* (Sylvia Plath), one may wonder what vampire-like psychodynamics made yet another woman in love with Ted Hughes appear to Assia to be emaciated. Hedden reports herself in 2001 as still suffering from the aftermath of her 1960s love affair with Ted Hughes, sounding like yet another rival/possessor who ended up being possessed. Hedden, identified only as «Y» in Janet Malcolm's *The Silent Woman* (1993), appears to be the source of the account of Hughes slavering over the entrails of a dead rabbit. The May 6, 2001 *Guardian* article revealing Ted Hughes's affair with Hedden quotes Elizabeth Sigmund: «He used to have two or three [affairs] on the go at any time. One of the women involved said to me that Ted told her he wanted to 'get inside her dream'.» Lynda Bundtzen has compared Ted's desire in this regard to the way bloodletting gains Dracula access into the minds of Lucy and Mina in Bram Stoker's novel (personal communication, 2001).

Ted's first book *Hawk in the Rain* (1957), dedicated «To Sylvia», introduces imagery of the source of wit in underwordly, inspirational, vampiric power in the poem titled «Vampire» (44).

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Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 79-83

Seducer with identity-envy: Modern consciousness confronts the dis-order of multiculturalism

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Albert Cohen is a Greek-born, French-educated, Swiss-national twentieth-century author. His multicultural background plays an important role in his fictional and autobiographical texts, imposing a particularly debilitating burden on Solal, the principal protagonist of his fictional works such as *Solal* and *Belle du Seigneur*. Cohen's protagonist, who thrives on seducing vulnerable, angelic women explains his motive in the simplest of terms: «Tu l'aimes, et tu veux qu'elle t'aime ... Eh bien alors séduis» (428). [You love her and you want her to love you so seduce]. What seems to be quite simple on the surface soon proves to be almost insurmountably complex. Albeit a self-proclaimed Don Juan, Solal admits to taking little pleasure in his pursuit of love. His methods of seduction appear more like orchestrated attacks on an enemy. Filled with suspicion and mistrust, he often approaches his target using disguises and trickery. Interestingly enough he is fully aware of the inherent contradictions in his unhappy existence, the explanation for which he clearly lays out in his philosophy on the illusion of love.

To justify his reasoning, Solal recalls another well-known seducer with whom he inadvertently empathizes, Vronsky. The seducer of Anna Karenina, according to Solal was, like himself, victimized by the illusion of love. However, if we were to examine the cases of these two men we would notice that, contrary to Solal's claim, they are quite different, distinguished by one factor – their perception of the universe. The orderly world that Vronsky knew, transforms into the modern world of dis-order that Solal encounters. With its amalgamation of different cultures, ethnic backgrounds and identities, the modern world often affects a sense of chaotic fragmentation and fracturing in the individual, who longs for unity and predictability. Therein lays the challenge for Cohen's protagonist.

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In my discussion, I will examine the social and cultural challenges of multiculturalism in modern Europe through the experience of the donjuanesque protagonist in Albert Cohen's texts. I will focus on the fragmentation, resulting from a sense of estrangement, reflected in the nature of Solal's interaction with the world and the people around him, most apparent in his relationships with women. Ironically, the multi-dimensional complexity of Solal's struggle becomes even more poignant when contrasted to the relatively banal experience of Vronsky, the very person with whom he identifies.

Tolstoy's protagonist is a Russian aristocratic man, from an aristocratic family who is well «on his way»[1] (vol. 18, p. 48) to establishing his career as an officer. A detailed description of the hierarchy of the aristocratic circle, places Vronsky in one of its tiers (vol. 18, p. 134). He has been and continues to be a member of an intact community with a common set of rules, goals and beliefs. As a male in this social group, he embraces the doctrine propagated and supported by his peers. His interactions with the world and the people surrounding him reflect a confidence in his sense of belonging and in validity of his self. For example, in his conversation with his childhood friend Serpukhovsky, the latter reveals to him that the main obstacle to a man's career is a woman. «It is difficult to love a woman and do anything» (vol. 18, p. 329), instructs the General. This conversation follows almost immediately after Vronsky is faced with the decision between abandoning his military career and a full commitment to Anna. He chooses the former admitting that his primary goal in life is «self-advancement» (vol. 18, p. 323). Vronsky is encouraged and reassured by the exchange with his childhood friend because his perceptions about the world are shared and reaffirmed by those who surround him. There is a sense of order and predictability for Tolstoy's protagonist.

The same is true of his relationship with Anna, a woman who belongs to the same circle of people. His seduction of Anna, albeit disruptive to certain members of the community and to him emotionally, even leading him to a feeble suicide attempt, does not cause a collapse of his entire social network, nor does it fragment the unity from which he emerges. Even when he and Anna move away, he meets with the same people or friends of the same people he spent time with before his involvement with her. His community, his sense of belonging, remains intact throughout. I believe that this factor alone makes this seducer's experience, less psychologically and emotionally traumatic than the chaotic experience of Cohen's modern seducer.

Solal experiences none of the uniformity which envelopes Vronsky. The seducer of the modern world struggles in vain even from his early childhood to reconcile contrasts. He is born into chaos and it is in chaos that he will exist his entire life, confronting not only the other, which he knows considers him different, but also contradictory forces within his fragmented psyche.

He was born on a Greek island into a Jewish ghetto, segregated from its Greek neighbors. Just like in Vronsky's case this was a unified group of people with a shared set of values and rules. Had Solal, with his magnificent good looks, stayed within this enclosed social group, perhaps his experience, albeit in a Jewish setting, would have been quite similar to Vronsky's. However, this was not the case. The first experience to shatter a sense of unity for Solal was a pogrom, which ravaged his community when he was ten years old. He witnessed many relatives and neighbors of his community massacred. The vivid images imprinted unto the child's mind the first pattern for difference. An other comes into existence, an other that considers him loathsome. Had he remained in his community, he would have been able to reconcile this contrast as us and them. Surrounded by people just like him who shared the experience with him, he would have been provided with a sense of belonging along with a mutual set of beliefs to rationalize the trauma. Instead, the facility of movement within the modern world inspires the modern seducer to explore. Solal leaves not only his family but the secluded Greek island as well.

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[1] All translations from the text of Anna Karenina are mine.

At twenty-one years of age, Solal, barely out of adolescence, plunges into the European scene, living sometimes in Switzerland and other times in France. He naturally feels estranged and alone in the midst of a completely foreign, fast-paced, modern world, so different from the tight-nit group of the Greek island to which he is accustomed. He is convinced that he is not accepted, because he is an outsider, in spite of the great success that he manages to achieve. The unhealed psychological wound caused by the pogrom during his early childhood, further aggravates his sense of alienation. Don Juan «a besoin d'être aimé» (*BdS*, p. 344) [needs to be loved] Solal cries with anguish. He realizes, however, that if the Gentiles would never accept him, his experience in the modern world also makes it impossible for him to reintegrate into his former secluded Jewish community. Without a social network, his perception of plenitude and unity within and with the world that surrounds him disintegrate.

Haunted by the idea that he is «seul toujours» (*BdS*, p. 345), [always alone] he becomes a psychologically fragmented individual whose concept of self and validity of life lose meaning, and whose psyche is swamped by a sense of lack; an individual incapable of interacting in a positive way with the other. «Séparation d'avec les autres, même d'avec ceux qu'il aime» (*BdS*, p. 389m). [Separation from the other even from those he loves]. This also includes the women he falls in love with. He is self-destructive, suspicious, and manipulative. His splendid good looks, eagerness to please, and generosity, however, allow him to charm his way into the hearts of beautiful women. To create some semblance of acceptance and belonging, this Don Juan «régnera donc sur les femmes, sa nation» (*BdS*, p. 345) [will rule over women, his nation] and for him the tricks of seduction «sont indispensable pour qu'elles l'aiment» (*BdS*, p. 344). [Are indispensable for them to love him]. The consequences of Solal's confrontation with the European society become tragic both to him and to the women he seduces.

Solal penetrates into the arena of high society through women with connections to influential males. In the novel *Solal*, his first conquest is Adrienne, a wealthy married woman, ten years his senior, whom he met as a child in Greece at thirteen years of age. He robs a stranger and buys expensive clothes to transform himself for the seduction scene. He quickly acquires what he desires and Adrienne not only takes him as her lover, but convinces M. de Maussane to give him a post in government. While Adrienne is arranging his place in high society, Solal falls in love with Aude, the daughter of M. de Maussane. He decides to trade in his mistress, who at twenty-nine is beginning to show signs of aging, for the younger Aude. Adrienne later commits suicide by throwing herself under a train.

When M. de Maussane sends his new protégé on his first official mission, Solal manages to seduce the wife of an official, Lady Normand, whose one strategically placed phone call acquires Solal a promotion that will impress Aude upon his return. Solal will marry Aude later, but as all of his romantic relationships, this one will disintegrate. He will abandon her and reunite with her on several occasions, he will consider stabbing her with a knife while she is asleep but instead will kill himself and then, miraculously, resurrect to ride off on his white horse towards «d'autre vies et d'autres femmes» (*Solal*, p. 359). [other lives and other women]. Because of his abuse of Aude, he alienates himself from the Maussane family, and has to find another route to regain success.

In the novel *Belle du Seigneur*, Isolde, a much older married Hungarian countess is his next conquest. After she helps him acquire another post in government, Solal abandons her when he falls in love with the younger Ariane. Isolde, later commits suicide and the familiar pattern of emotional and psychological torment evolves in his relationship with Ariane. This time, however, it takes a particularly violent turn when, before the predictable suicide, there is a period when Solal abuses his lover physically.

It is useful to note that to seduce Ariane, Solal again wears a disguise, one of an old decrepit man. He climbs into her bedroom window in the middle of the night and proceeds to seduce her in the hopes that she will overlook his physical ugliness and fall for his beautiful speech of love, which reveals his inner beauty. Ariane, however, is so terrified that she throws a glass at his brow,

causing him to bleed. Solal, is infuriated at Ariane's lack of insight, he takes off his disguise and vows that at his next attempt he will seduce her as the female that she has shown herself to be. Several days later, he lures her into his apartment under false pretences. After a long speech, where, as he executes his scheme of seduction, even as he reveals to her the details of his successful plan, the reader should not be surprised that Ariane becomes his.

Solal's negative interaction with Gentile women has several dimensions. We understand the role of disguises, when we consider the significance of contrasts to the protagonist's existence. He feels rejected by the environment in which he lives, seducing women indigenous to this hostile environment. The disguise challenges women to see him in another way, to see beyond his identity. Likewise, his physical self is an obstacle because he suspects that women from this society are attracted to his appearance, while secretly horrified by his Jewish origin. This dimension of fragmentation leads him to develop an entire philosophy on the contrast between physical and spiritual attractions.

Solal believes that there are two kinds of love. Its most common form exists in the Gentile community where, women, as animals, are attracted to the most powerful male in the group. A more sacred, spiritual love, he claims exists in a Jewish couple, whose marriage is based on religious ideals. In his romantic relationships, Solal sees himself as an object of his lover's carnal desire, and even more tragically, a projection of her instinctive search for a dominant male in a society that values power. This is where he erroneously compares himself to Vronsky.

Foreseeing his own inevitably ill-fated romantic involvement, Solal laments Vronsky's ignorance in his relationship with the «raffoleuse de vie animale [...] qui [...] aime le corps de l'imbécile Wronsky et c'est tout» (*BdS*, p. 408). [lover of animal life who loves the body of the imbecile Vronsky and that is all]. In spite of Solal's insightful philosophy, he is remiss in sympathizing with Vronsky. The Russian seducer who emerges from homology and inclusion will never feel that Anna's love is superficial and is a mere disguise for hate. His sense of unity and belonging shelter him from these nefarious suspicions about the other and altogether prevent him from experiencing the world in the kind of contrasts inherent in Solal's fragmented psyche.

Contradictions are also present in the goals Solal seeks. Hostility towards the pursued woman is inevitable when the apparent object of pursuit cannot bring Solal the fulfillment for which he longs. Julia Kristeva writes in *Histoire d'amour* that Don Juan's «partners are markers of his construction; while he desires them he does not cathect them as autonomous objects but as stages of his own construction» (193). His expectations of fulfillment eventually lead to disenchantment and anger. Whereupon he turns his anger on the one who did not provide what was promised.

Solal explains his strategy for seducing which, predictably, illustrates characteristics he himself recognizes as being contradictory. «Fort mais vulnerable, méprisant mais complimenteur, respectueux mais sexuel» (*BdS*, p. 435). [Strong but vulnerable, hateful but complimentary, respectful but sexual]. He insists that, from his experience, even the most seemingly proud, dignified, noble and angelic of women would fall for this act and in fact longs to be seduced in just this kind of brutal manner by the most powerful male in the group. He resents having to play out these contradictions for women, concluding that for this reason he has little respect for them because «lorsqu'il le voudra, hélas, cette convenable et sociable sera sienne» (*BdS*, pp. 335-336), «cuite et tu peux la manger à la sauce tristesse» (*BdS*, p. 387). [When he wants, alas, she will be his, cooked, and you can eat her with a sauce of sadness]. Love, then, for the modern seducer, is the ultimate delusion in a chain of contrasts because it is necessarily linked with its direct opposite, abjectness for the object of desire.

The character of Solal bears the fruit and the burden of the diversity of the modern world, which invites him in but, never embraces him. He belongs nowhere, with no one, not physically, not morally, not religiously and not philosophically. In a universe torn by contradictions, he finds himself grasping futilely to reassemble the fragments and to recreate meaning. For Solal, unlike for Vronsky, seduction is a plan of attack, he studies, he orchestrates elaborate schemes, and often

makes use of disguises and trickery. He is filled with suspicion and mistrust, invariably adapting morose conclusions concerning love, which he projects unto Vronsky. There is no alleviating Solal's distress because such is the state of this complex and multi-layered modern consciousness in an ever-compounding dis-order of the multicultural world.

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Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 85-92

Mourning with Job: A psychoanalytic exploration

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«I read this book as it were with my heart...
You surely have read Job?
Read him, read him over and over again...
Because everything about him is so human.»

Kierkegaard

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Job is the troublesome sphinx of the *Old Testament*. It sticks in the craw of the Judeo-Christian tradition as a would-be introject that can neither be incorporated into religious standards, nor successfully repressed or expelled. There has been no Judeo-Christian Oedipus, that sphinx-buster of Greco-Roman cosmology, to solve the riddle of *The Book of Job*, thereby removing or resolving its troublesome power. Freud, that great twentieth century sphinx-buster bravely confronted clinical, religious, cultural, and philosophical riddles, but he did not take on *The Book of Job*.

In fact, Freud's account of one of the functions of religion is that it addresses the need to convince ourselves, in the mist to the chaos, disorder, and danger of the universe, that there is a benevolent Providence who has infused the world with a moral order and an after-life. There is no doubt that this is one of the tasks or religion but, at least in this sense, *The Book of Job* is a decidedly rebellious and anti-religious work. Job's suffering does not emerge from a moral order or a benevolent Providence.

A Review of the psychoanalytic literature about *The Book of Job* is surprisingly sparce. Goitein (1954), one of the earliest explorers, sees the fundamental issues of *The Book of Job* as the

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attunement to reason in a senate world, the constructive role of doubt, and the human urge to search into the unconscious. Within *The Book of Job*, Goitein sees a religious metaphor of the Freudian, dual, instinctual energies – libido-thanatos, or anabolism-catabolism. Unlike most psychoanalytic and theological explorers, Goitein considers the role of the majesty of the universe and its parallel majesty in poetry, as somehow central to the solution of the riddle of *The Book of Job*.

In Reid's (1973) exploration, both the role of the terrible majesty of the universe, and its parallel in poetry, are ignored. His major contribution is to explore the degree to which the principles in *The Book of Job*, Job, God and, the three counselor-friends, can fit into the structures of ego, superego, and ineffectual reason.

Renik (1991) sees in *The Book of Job* an opportunity to view adaptation to trauma in an individual who, in spite of his essential goodness, is still suffering. He also finds in it a useful clinical reminder that «when a thorough investigation of unconscious guilt fails to produce the desired results, then it is time to look elsewhere». This is reasonable advice which Job's friend-counselors, along with many current mental health professionals ignore. Blaming the victim is an exercise which is as common in therapy as it was in *The Book of Job*, and is as counter productive.

Renik sees the relationship between Job and God as central and argues that God, in spite of his obvious neglect and abuse, actually loves Job, and that Job, in spite of his complaints, objections, and wishes of never having been formed in his mother's womb – which is a less-than-subtle curse of God, loves God. Perhaps it's a love story, but in his protests about love, Renik seems to provide a Pollyanna cover for God's neglect of, and hostility against, Job and for Job's fury against, and condemnation of, God.

Jung's *Answer to Job* (1960) is striking in that it is a theological treatise rather than a psychological one. In Jung's clear, but theologically peculiar thesis, God, before his experiences with Job, had failed to «consult his omniscience: and failed to realize what Satan was doing. In a view that has God, not only out of touch with him omniscience, but intellectually, Job provides for God a form of remedial education. In a view which turns Christian theology upside-down, Jung has God envolve as a result of His iniquities toward Job. This is in striking contrast to the central theme in Christian theology which is that Christ, as the man-God, came to expiate Adam's sin against God.

The present essay explores *The Book of Job* from three intersecting perspectives. It reviews the context and structure of the text, the dynamic conflicts imposed on Job by God's actions, and the multiple view of God which are the combined results of the demands of the texts and psychoanalytic insights.

THE STORY

Once in the land of Uz, there was an unusually righteous man named Job. Despite the innumberable tests of God, Job remained his loyal, obedient servant. This well known folktale of the times begins in the celestial court where God is conversing with one of his angels, the Adversary, whose job it is to find transgressions in the world. God points out the magnificence of his servant Job and the Adversary suggests that such righteousness might be compromised if Job was not so hedged in by good fortune.

Job had great wealth, status in the community, land, cattle and many healthy children. God makes a wager with the Adversary and despite the calamities and the enormity of the deprivation thrust upon Job – the destruction of his land, cattle, children, loss of status in his community and boils on his skin – Job does not curse God. Instead he insists – «Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there, the Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.» (Job 1:21) God wins the bet. But what type of victory is won by torturing a loyal servant. Perhaps God did not win.

Job's folktale example of loyal but passive religiosity is turned on its head with the opening lines of chapter 3 when Job curses the day of his birth. (Could this also be a curse on God?)

> Perish the day on which I was born,
> And the night it was announced,
> A male has been conceived:
> May that day be darkness:
> May God above have no concern for it:
> May light not shine on it; (Job 3:3-4)

This angry tirade begins the central dense poetic core of *The Book of Job*. The poetry is framed by the folktale in the prologue and epilogue. As a reader we are no longer protected by the seeming order and control of the celestial court nor by the allegorical ambiance of the folktale. Instead we are plunged into the suffering and trauma of a real live person, very familiar to ourselves. The Job poet/ author makes a new demand upon his readers and invites our imagination to join with his through the meanderings of Job's pain and suffering highlighted by only occasional glimpses of hope.

As practitioners of the analytic attitude, this resonates with our «evenly suspended attention» (Freud, 1912) and the opportunity for two unconscious minds to meet; one of them suffering and confused and the other open to receive and in attempting to understand, to provide some amelioration.

The psychoanalytic perspective reminds us that there is no correct solution to the problems proposed by our poet/author – nor is there meant to be. Instead we are encouraged to break through the confines of our knowledge and to hold onto multiple and contradictory perspectives. We are offered an experience with Job, and an opportunity to contemplate innumerable hypotheses, knowing that all behavior is multi-determined. Likewise, we offer our patients, in the words of Frieda Fromm Reichman, an experience rather than an explanation, and the ability to tolerate ambiguity and uncertainty in life.

THE STRUCTURE

The Book of Job is part of the Hebrew Scriptures consisting of the Five Books of Moses, the Prophets and the Writings or the Wisdom Literature. There are 13 books in the Writings. *The Book of Job* (written between 4-5 BC) is the third book following Psalms and Proverbs. It is the last time that God speaks in the Old Testament.

The Book of Job consists of a prose prologue and pose epilogue. These prose bookends contain the folktale. In between is the majority of the book. It consists of dialogues in verse between Job and his three comforters, a younger man, Elihu, and between Job and his God (the voice from the whirlwind). We change reality twice through levels of language – from the prologue to the poetry and then from the poetry to the prose epilogue or return to the folktale ending.

The dialogues are written in Hebraic verse which consists of a parallel structure.

> Does the rain have a father?
> Who begot the dewdrops (Job 38:28)
> Have you listened in at God's keyhole
> And crept away with his plans? (Job 15:8)

Even as we enter into the vortex of Job's suffering, feeling it from the emotional tones of the poetry, we are simultaneously offered the soothing rhythm and sounds of the wordplay. The delight of the poetry is a counterpoint to help us endure the pain, and reminds us that grace can be found in the expression of darkness and suffering. As we read the text, we join with the poet/author and Job in the contemplation of the ineffable in its glory and in its tragedy. As in the analytic setting, this

«being with» provides the «holding environment» to make pain palatable. One of the sub-texts of Job is that God creates Beauty to help us endure pain. Why else would God speak to the wonderment of creation in his response to Job. This will be addressed later in the paper.

All quotes used in this paper will be from the Jewish Publication Society unless otherwise noted.

PSYCHOANALYTIC COMPONENTS

Integrating *The Book of Job* we see the consistent utilization of dichotomies symbolic of the creative and destructive potentiality in man and the universe. The images of dark and light, the concept of a God that creates and destroys, the good and the bad, suffering and awe, God and the Adversary, and Job as a man of pious resignation vs. Job as the man of anger and possible blasphemy.

It is challenging to struggle simultaneously with anabolic processes of synthesis and catabolic processes of breakdown. Throughout the text we can see the complexity of our characters and especially Job as he vacillates in thought. While the comforters tend to accommodate, in a Piatetian sense, information into their already formed schemas of conventional wisdom, Job heroically struggles to break down his previous templates to accommodate new information and experience. This is what all patients in treatment have the opportunity to do when life experience shock their previously maintained beliefs.

The comforters are maligned as «cursed comforters», but this is only part of their character. It is true that they are not good therapists, even though they are the first therapists reported in Western culture. They come to Job as therapists focused on adjustment. They come with the «conventional wisdom» of the times – divine retribution. If you are good, good follows from God; if you are suffering, your must have sinned. They need a system of thought to ward off the danger that Joban calamities might befall them. Their philosophy is their defense mechanism. They do not show evidence of empathy despite their initial efforts at being kind. They do not maintain «neutrality» but rather respond in kind as Job gets angry and mocks them, they mock back. They are not good listeners. They have a difficult time being silent. They are advice givers.

In counterpoint, the comforters also are generous friends. They have come a long distance to be with a suffering human being. They are elders and the wise men of their communities. They mourn with him respectfully. They are community. In addition, they allow Job to maintain his life force, his vigor. As Job argues with them, Job is revitalized. Their encounter is infused with a life force. They keep him in dialogue with the world and allow his suffering to take form in language. They propel him in his search for meaning and explanation. His conflict is kept alive beating down the doors of despondency that might befall a man of less talent or with less community. It should be noted that Job even as he mocks them, never asks his counselors to leave.

JOB: THE MIND IN CONFLICT

I have become a brother to jackals (Job 30:29)

Even today, Job would be the envy of many. He was a wealthy pious man who tended to the poor and the widowed. He rose early in the morning to make burnt offerings for his children just in case they had sinned in their thoughts. He shunned evil and feared God. He followed Micah's dictum to «Do justice, love goodness, and walk modestly with your God» (Micah 6:8). When calamity after calamity befell him and he was straddled with multiple losses, he retained his integrity and had faith in his God. This is the Job that we see in the prose prologue.

As we move away from the folktale into the cycle of poetic dialogues, we see another Job, the brother to jackals with his lyre tuned to mourning (Job 30:31). His is a man caught in an internal

vortex of tumult; a model of the mind in conflict. His mood fluctuates from despondency and despair (Perish the day on which I was born, Job 3:3) to anger with only occasional glimpses of hope (I insist on arguing with God, Job 13:3). He is caught in grief, depression and in a posttraumatic scenario of horror for his afflictions are on all levels – the physical, the emotional, the cognitive, the spiritual and the interpersonal. In this drama, he deals with his emotional and cognitive confusion. He has lost faith in his belief system. He longs to understand his suffering. He hopes, to right this injustice by having his day in court with God.

> The arrows of the Almighty are in me;
> My spirit absorbs their poison. (Job 6:4)

Job quickly recognizes that his distress is caused by his God, and his tantrum turns from a brief initial concern with his own culpability to a steadfast knowledge in his own innocence and a fury and questioning of divine justice.

In addition to this audacious and despondent tirade at his God, Job also has moments of praise for the deity. This can be seen as a prefiguring of the voice from the whirlwind, for it is not only of the same content as God's argument but it is also in the same style.

> Who commands the sun not to shine
> Who seals up the stars
> Who by Himself spread out the heavens,
> And trod on the back of the sea;
> Who make the Bear and Orion,
> Pleiades, and the chambers of the south wind. (Job 12:7)

Job too expands upon the grandeur of nature which is a parallel foreshadowing of God's oratory.

> But ask the beasts, and they will teach you;
> The birds of the sky, they will tell you.
> Or speak to the earth, it will teach you;
> The fish of the sea, they will inform you. (Job 12:7)

Out writer has constructed a rich poetic flow of arguments which are frequently overlapping and repetitive. It allows us to feel like Job. We are also caught in a web of confusion. We ruminate. We meander down dark introspective caverns. We have only episodic visions of hope for Job, for all of humankind.

JOB'S RESOURCES

How was Job able to cope with these adversities? We know that he was a man of integrity. From his dialogues we know that he was able to use his cognitive skills to problem-solve and to argue. He was articulate and loquacious. He was not intimidated by the insults, accusations, and the mocking of his elders nor by the idea of encountering his God.

1. Job had access to the full range of his emotions. Within the same dialogue, he was able to move along the continuum from desolate despair with suicidal ideation to anger at both his comforters and God and onward to possibilities for resolution. He had hope.

2. Job was not alone. The cursed comforters despite their lack of attunement were with Job. Job also had his God as his steadfast anchor and despite the struggle between man and his divinity, the attachment remained.

MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES ON GOD

The Book of Job presents multiple and often contradictory perspectives of God. The reader is challenged to suspend the need to understand, and to both empathize with Job's plight and to pleasure in his struggle. Job like Sisyphus struggles to push his rock up the mountain. This process is reminiscent of Whitman's theme of diversity that requires maintaining contradictory positions.

> Do I contradict myself?
> Very well then I contradict myself,
> (I am large, I contain multitudes)

Whitman in *Leaves of Grass* is not only able to recognize the complexity of the self in its inevitable diversity and to applaud it, but also celebrates the majesty of nature and creation. *Leaves of Grass* resonates with *The Book of Job*.

The multiplicity of God images suggests the ineffable nature of God, his mystery and man's difficulty in understanding or conceptualizing his transcendent power. The open text suggests the rewards and challenges of attempting to explore the divine mystery.

1. The first image of God that appears in the prologue is a trickster, gambler or tester God who cohorts with the Adversary. It is a God who wants to win a bet despite the torture of his loyal servant.

For Job this is a fearsome and vengeful God who has the potential to lash down at him for his slightest transgression. His anxiety about his conduct as well as his thoughts detracted from his contentment in life even before God's afflictions.

2. The second image of God is one of divine retribution. Our poet/author is careful to present this pervasive view of traditional wisdom as one which can be debunked but also has merit. Good behavior frequently does lead to reward, but not always. This view of divine retribution is attacked throughout the poetic dialogues. Job knows that it does not fit his personal experience. The reader, through dramatic irony, knows that this is a test of God. It has nothing to do with Job's transgressions. However, in the epilogue the doctrine is returned to. There God rewards Job for his «truth» and punishes the comforters for their lack of truth.

Divine retribution is also used as an explanation for suffering. Bad deeds may lead to punishment. However, the wicked frequently prosper. This lack of correlation is one of the principal «why» questions which people hope to answer when reading *The Book of Job*, however it is left open. Job asks:

> Why do the wicked live on,
> Prosper and grow wealthy?
> Their children are with them always,
> And they see their children's children
> Their homes are secure, without fear
> They do not feel the rod of God. (Job 21:7-9)

Job comes to realize the universality of suffering, death, and destruction regardless of goodness or evil.

> He destroys the blameless and the guilty. (Job 9:22)

By necessity we die and lose everyone that we love, but the universe lives on. We come to understand that destruction and creation are partners in the life process. Job is dealing with his own mortality. So a text which initially begins with divine justice and morality, leads us to consider our mortality.

> There is hope for a tree;
> If it is cut down it will renew itself;

It shoots will not cease,
If its roots are old in the earth,
And its stump dies in the ground,
At the scent of water it will bud
And produce branches like a sapling.
But mortals languish and die:
Man expires: where is he? (Job 14:7-10)

3. The third image of God is that of a personal God who may hide but who can be sought and this is the pervasive image of God which Job holds onto for his «ontological mooring». He is the 'Watcher of men' and the potential soothing force. He has the therapeutic gaze and provides a sacred cocoon. This God is both benevolent and destructive but is with Job. Job never loses his internal representation of God despite how tortured he feels from his confusion. This is the parental therapeutic figure who combines the good mothering and the depriving faculty. This is the beloved who Job feels betrayed him; but Job believes that he is still cherished by his lover. God is carved on the palm of his hand, and Job's faith assures him that this love is reciprocal.

If I have sinner, what have I done to you,
Watcher of men? (Job 7:20)

Why do You hide Your face,
And treat me like an enemy? (Job 14:24)

But if I go East – He is not there:
West – I still do not perceive Him:
North – since He is concealed, I do not behold Him:
South – He is hidden, and I cannot see Him. (Job 23:8, 9)

Job is willing to deal with the negative aspects of God. What is important to him is to stay in relationship with his God. His request of God is to give him an explanation of the why of his suffering. What did he do wrong? He wants justice from his God.

I clothed myself in righteousness and it robed me:
Justice was my cloak and turban. (Job 29:14)

4. The fourth image of God is represented by Elihu. It blends the conception of God as one of divine retribution with that of a personal God who loves. The addition in this God imagine is the suggestion that God appears to man in dreams and visions.

5. The fifth image of God is the voice from the whirlwind. It is a God who refuses to address issues of morality. It is a force who speaks of power not justice, that raves about superiority, that is boastful and grand in his eloquence. It is an overpowering and silencing presence. This God may be «dodging» Job's request for an explanation of justice or he may be speaking of the only thing that he can – his creation. His opening line is harsh:

Who is this who darkens counsel (Job 38:2)
But then he reiterates Job's earlier words:
Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations?
Speak if you have understanding.
Do you know who fixed its dimensions
Or who measured it with a line?
Onto what were its bases sunk?
Who set its cornerstone
When the morning stars sang together

And all the divine beings shouted for joy? (Job 38:4-7)

The beauty of the language and the power of the imagery allow us to enter into a new realm of appreciation for the morning stars and for the complexity and marvel of the universe.

Can you tie cords to Pleiades
Or undo the reins of Orion? (Job 38:31)

Job foreshadows God's declarations of the glory of creation in his dialogues with the comforters. His thoughts prefigure God's. From an analytic perspective we can view the entire poetic text as the development of Job's thought which comes to a climax and possible resolution in the voice from the whirlwind. Job creates this God image, and finds comfort in the power of this potentiality despite his incomprehension of its nature.

This God image also speaks to the universality of destruction's partnership with creation for each species. It debunks an anthropocentric theology and expands the scope of God's concern to all of his creatures.

The wing of the ostrich beats joyously;
Are her pinions and plumage like the stork's?
She leaves her eggs on the ground,
Letting them warm in the dirt,
Forgetting they may be crushed underfoot,
Or trampled by a wild beast. (Job 39:13-15)

CONCLUSION – UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

The Book of Job is an invitation to play with paradox. It allows us to enjoy language as we wrestle with the most fundamental questions of life. It does not present any solutions. It allows us to take what we want and are able to digest. It remains open text.

The poetry is mimetic of the theme of creation. Like Abraham Joshua Heschel who prays for awe, we experience awe and wonderment, not just of creation, but also in the capacity of man to verbalize his pain and suffering. Like Spinoza we may find a bit of the divine in everything.

Many questions remain unanswered. Is there order in the universe? Is chaos and flux an inevitable part of order? Is there an answer to innocent suffering or to any suffering? What do we do in this brief life cycle with mortality facing us at every turn? How do we cope with suffering? How do we conceive of our God? Can he be both good and bad? How can he not be both good and bad when he is one and all? Can nature and beauty be an antidote to suffering when we realize that we are a part of an immense and glorious universe.

Clarice Lispector, the famed Brazilian writer, in her last novel *The Hour of the Star* portrays the life of a miserable, depleted woman named Macabea. The narrator ends with this quote:

> «Dear God, only now am I remembering that people die. Does that include me? Don't forget, in the meantime, that this is the season for strawberries. Yes.»

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Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 93-102

The paternal metaphor

ROBERT SILHOL (*)

Any reader of some chapters by Lacan, whether in *Ecrits* or in one of the volumes of *Le Séminaire*, and now in *Autres Ecrits*, recently published, stands a good chance of having come across the phrase «Name-of-the-Father», or at least across its equivalent: «the law of the Father», or even «the Order of the Law»[1].

It is indeed one of the central notions of lacanian theory. Lacan devoted many sessions of his famous «seminar» to it, and this is reported in several «chapters» of *Le Séminaire*, III, IV, V and VII, where he also uses the phrase «the paternal metaphor»[2].

Characteristically, as often with Lacan, and this is something often forgotten, he takes his cue from Freud, for it is in Freud that the first stage of this point of theory is to be found. Indeed, in «Group psychology and the Analysis of the Ego», *Standard Edition* XVIII, pages 69-143, written in 1921, Freud analyses the process of identification, and comments on the child's object choice, which, at a given moment, he remarks, is displaced from the mother to the father. Here are a few quotations which, in passing, show how truly freudian Lacan was.

> Identification is known to psychoanalysis as the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person. It plays a part in the early history of the Oedipus complex. A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to grow like him and be like him, and take his place everywhere. We may say simply that he takes his father as his ideal. (*Standard Edition* XVIII, p. 105)

> At the same time as this identification with the father, or a little later, the boy has begun to develop a true object-cathexis towards his mother according to the attachment [anaclitic] type. He then exhibits, therefore, two psychologically distinct ties: a straightforward sexual object-cathexis towards his mother and an identification with his father which takes him as a model. (Id.)

> It is easy to state in a formula the distinction between an identification with the father and the choice of the father as an object. In the first case one's father is what one would like to *be*, and in the second he is what one would like to *have*. (p. 106)

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[1] Not to speak of the «symbolic order» which is related to these phrases but calls for a specific discussion.

[2] *Le Séminaire*, Livre III, Paris, Seuil, 1981, chapters VI, VII; *Le Séminaire*, Livre IV, 1994, chapters XII, XXI; *Le Séminaire*, Livre V, 1998, chapters VII-XII.

> Identification with an object that is renounced or lost, as the substitute for that object – introjection of it into the ego – is indeed no longer a novelty to us. A process of that kind may sometimes be directly observed in small children. (p. 109)

And to conclude this long list of quotations let's remember Freud's interrogation about the object, when he mentions «[the] delicate question […] whether the object is put in the place of the ego or of the ego ideal.» (p. 114)

II

In a way, it is to this kind of question that Lacan is trying to give an answer.

It is not too difficult to interpret the theory of «the-Name-of-the-Father» as a sequel to Freud's analysis of the identification process, but we can also consider it as an answer to Freud's question about *Ich* and *Ich ideal*. Briefly, Lacan's «paternal metaphor» describes the replacement, substitution, of the mother by the father in the object choice of the child. I call this the «path» from M to F. It corresponds to what Lacan defines as «the function of the father»:

> Il s'agit du père en tant qu'il se fait préférer à la mère [...] dimension qui aboutit à la formation de l'idéal du moi [...]. Le père est devenu un objet préférable à la mère. (*Le Séminaire*, Livre V, p. 173)
>
> (The father comes here into the picture in as much as he manages [*il se fait*] to be more desirable than the mother.)

But we must not leave the other half – *c'est le cas de le dire!* – out of the theory, since the complete process also depends on the desire of the mother, or, rather, on what the child learns, discovers, of his or her mother's desire.

> [...] cette symbolisation primordiale ouvre tout de même à l'enfant cette dimension de ce que la mère peut désirer d'autre. (p.182)
>
> ([...] this primordial symbolisation nevertheless opens for the child this dimension of what the mother may desire other [than himself or herself].)

Obviously, sexual difference is given consideration here, and even a primordial role. With Freud, we had the Oedipal complex, then object relation with Melanie Klein, and we have now sexual difference with Lacan, Freud having already shown an interest in difference of course.

Quite simply then, let me repeat, the «paternal metaphor» is «the substitution of the father, in as much as this is a symbol for the mother». The fact that, strictly, it is not a metaphor but a metonymy, need not worry us too much[3]. What matters is that a displacement takes place, a displacement from the mother to the father in the child's object choice, or rather, and more clearly, a *substitution*. And the observation is of course linked with Lacan's interrogation about the person, the figure, of the father. What does it mean to be a father? This is indeed a question we find at the heart of many «Séminaires» session.

Now, what do we do with this (important) part of Lacanian theory? What are we to make of the substitution Lacan describes? But perhaps, before deciding whether we accept the theory and use it in analysis, we must be sure to understand the process properly. At this point, the best thing

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[3] It cannot strictly be called a metaphor from a linguistic point of view because what is being replaced (M) has no element of resemblance with what replaces it (F) (except perhaps the fact that they are both parents); rather, it corresponds to a metonymy, where the two elements have a point of contact, an element in common, but this is another story.

for me to do in order to make things as clear as possible is to explain how the «paternal metaphor» fits in Lacan's system as a whole.

III

The few points of theory I wish to clarify will be best «illustrated» by a few simple diagrams. This will take us, I hope, to the specific point where Lacan places the movement of the child from Mother to Father. I shall use two sets of diagram: A) first, from birth to the discovery by the child that his/her mother has another object than him/her, then, B) I will comment on Lacan's more difficult illustration of this passage from M to F.

A) Once upon a time, before birth, Mother and child were one. They probably were one also for a few days after the birth of the baby, even though, quite soon, the infant discovers absence, lack, the mother not always being here with him or her. At this stage, perhaps, the child may form the motion, however vaguely, that if she is not with him/her this means she is with someone else. Soon, in any case, what is experienced besides simply separation is the presence of a third party on the scene: voice or actual presence.

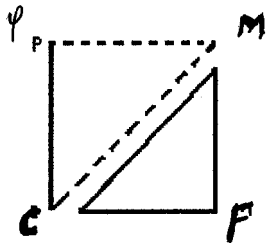
1) This

we can call the first manifestation of the «Name-of-the-Father», and, to make things quite clear, we can use the term «No», *non* – which in French sounds exactly like *nom*, name – use «*Non*», then, as more adequate at this early stage, although we can accept «name of the father» as a way Lacan had of insisting on the discovery by the infant of a third presence: father. (In fact, it is a bit more complex, and we shall see that the «Father» has to be designed by the Mother.) This is not a correction of Lacan's theory, but rather a clarification, for we must remember that, in 1957, what he was presenting in this seminar was mostly a theory in the making. Obviously, he thought of name, *le nom*, but there is nothing in the theory as it developed later on which prevents us from going from Name (*nom*) to No (*non*) and the pun, in fact, is quite lacanian. This is how the presence of the father can be «read» by the infant; and here is what the voice of the father is saying, the symbolical message the third person is sending to both mother and child: «You shall not reintegrate your product» – the quotation is from 1957 (*Le Séminaire*, Livre V, p. 202) –, the consequence for the child being something like: «You shall not remain in symbiosis with your mother», although this is not a quotation. That it is not exactly a quotation but the result of my interpretation comes from the fact that Lacan, at the particular stage of his demonstration, does not clearly distinguish what I shall call a «first level», according to the chronology, and what later on, more clearly, becomes oedipal, which I think should be considered as forming a second stage. In the same way, I don't think we should yet bring the «phallus» into the discussion, since this symbol is obviously related to the discovery by the child of a difference between the sexes.

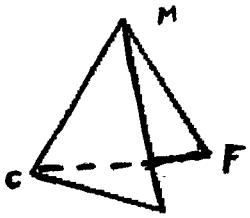
2) What we have witnessed so far is simply the passage from one (O) to two (⊲⁞⊳) wich of course could only come into existence because of a third factor: the absence of the mother and/or the presence of the father. This is the way humans enter triangulation, the way we go from two to three or, if you will, from «what was one» to three.

In a way, and this is not new, the pre-oedipal situation is already oedipal; it constitutes a structure on which the oedipal structure will easily establish itself. For of course the prohibition which took place in the first stage – and it was a separation – gives way to a second one: the mother is forbidden to the little boy by her possessor, and the father is forbidden to the little girl by the mother, this being a consequence of the «primal scene» from which, by definition, the infant, whatever its sex, is excluded.

3) Then comes, probably at the same time, but I think we must reserve a particular entry for this aspect of the primal scene, then comes the discovery of sexual difference and «castration» as its consequence. And here Lacan is quite unambiguous. Indeed, to the freudian triangle of the Oedipus complex, he adds a second triangle, in dotted lines, by which he illustrates the entrance of sexual difference – *he says of the phallus* – into the triangular situation. Placing the phallus in the fourth



corner of his diagram, he speaks of symmetry. I have imagined another diagram which, I think, perhaps renders the situation of the three characters involved more accurately, while the two triangles are also symmetrical.



It is on this «scene» *à quatre* that Lacan constructs his theory – convincing, I find – of the desire of the mother as imagined, or perhaps received, by the child. He calls it «*l'au-delà du désir de la mère*», meaning that for the infant the mother desires what she has not got and which is other than the child, beyond him/her that is. Now whether this is a correct reading of sexual difference by the child or not (He has it, She wants it) or simply a subtle rendering of the oedipal situation (She wants Him, not me) is open to discussion, but I think both readings do make sense.

4) Which brings us to a final stage, when the infant, because the father «has it», comes to identify with him,

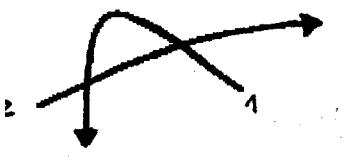
M ⟶ F

abandoning the mother as a model, or at least – this is my correction – no longer choosing her as the only possible model of identification. As you can see, we are back with Freud and his identification theory. I call this modification the passage or the path (*trajet*) from M to F, and this is where the two case histories I have chosen can be used as illustrations.

IV

Before looking at these two cases, however, I would like to point out that the passage from M to F forms the core of Lacan's important pages and diagrams in the same chapter of *Le Séminaire*, Livre V. It might be worth our while to examine these diagrams and reread these pages (177-203), because they form the basis of Lacan's very difficult «*Graphe*». These pages constitute an explanation of «*l'au-delà du désir de la mère*», and are closely related to Lacan's theory of the phallus.

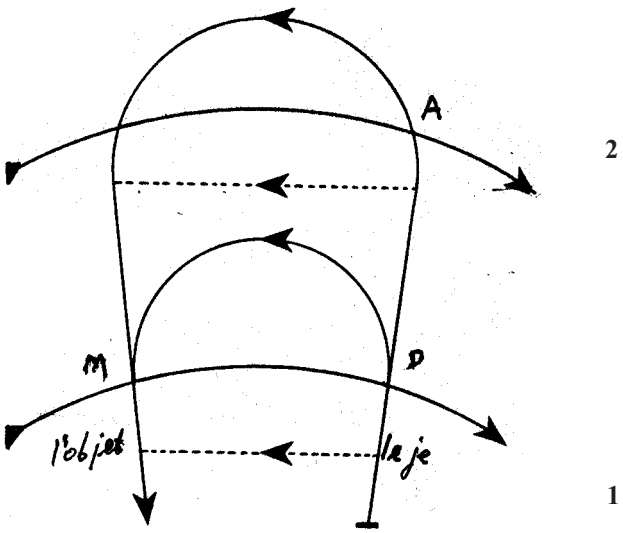
I shall begin with a single drawing which, in my opinion, bears no direct relationship with mother or phallus.



It is a diagram most readers of Lacan know, and it constitutes a brilliant illustration of the way speech (*la parole*) functions. Quite simply, it opposes the symbolical to the intentional, what «I think I say» to what, for psychoanalysis, «I symbolically say». The diagram – Lacan sometimes calls it «*le point de capiton*» – beautifully expresses how, for instance, a slip of the tongue works. Thus, if I say *face* instead of *place*, or *leg* instead of *peg*, we can assume that what I said in 2 was programmed in 1, and this does verify the anteriority of unconscious desire which, as it were, planned, unconsciously planned, what I then said in 2. (More precisely, it was on 1 that the possibility of substituting *face* to *place* was arranfged.) The final aspect of what is pronounced is only such because it can permit, and even can carry, what unconscious desire had to make manifest: the slip of the tongue which was no slip at all.

But of course, the  diagram is but a rendering of the fundamental structure of the freudian discovery: Cs/Ucs or M/L.

So far so good, I hope, but there is more, alas, for we are led to a second diagram, a more difficult variation on the above original version. It can be found in *Le Séminaire*, Livre V, pages 200 and 201.



Let me first explain it, and in fact paraphrase or repeat what Lacan himself says in *Le Séminaire*, Livre V. Then, we shall be in a better position to ask a few critical questions.

What we can straight away notice in the diagram is that it is divided into two separate parts; let's call them 1 and 2. Working our way up, we can now begin with the first line, the one which runs from «*le Je*» to «*l'objet*», at the bottom.

> Au point marqué Je, il n'y a encore rien, tout au moins en principe. La constitution du sujet comme Je du discours n'est pas encore du tout forcément différenciée, bien qu'elle soit déjà impliquée dès la première modulation signifiante. Il n'est pas forcé que le Je se désigne comme tel dans le discours pour en être le support. Dans une interjection, dans un commandement, *Viens*, dans un appel, *Vous*, il y a un Je, mais latent. Nous pourrions l'exprimer en ne mettant qu'une ligne de pointillés entre D et Je. De même, l'objet métonymique, en face, n'est pas encore constitué pour l'enfant. (p. 200)[4]

> (Where I is marked, there is nothing yet, at least in principle. The constitution of the subject as I is not yet necessarily differentiated, although it is already implied in the first sound uttered by the infant [the first signifying modulation]. The I does not have to appear as such in the utterance it sustains. In an interjection, in an order, *Come*, in a call, *You*, we have an I, but it is latent. We could be content to express this just with a dotted line between D and I. In the same way, the metonymic object, across, is not yet constituted for the infant.)

The line we are dealing with obviously stands for an I that is yet only latent, the infant, in fact, who has not become a «subject» in the eye of psychoanalysis, but I cannot help finding the accompanying explanation very confusing. In the two pages we are considering, indeed, this I (*Je*) is now attributed to the mother and now to the infant, and nowhere is the contradiction explained or

[4] Cf. «[…] c'est-à-dire du signifiant qui dans l'Autre en tant que lieu du signifiant est le signifiant de l'Autre en tant que lieu de la loi.» («Du traitement possible de la psychose».)

done away with. I quite realise we are given to understand that what takes place between mother and infant is an exchange, and that Lacan is insisting on including this into his diagram, but the confusion remains and I am left with the impression that the diagram does not do justice to the theory. In fact, this first line is a representation of the mirror stage – which is not mentioned as such, though (a ———— a' in the «schéma L») –, but its articulation with what happens when the father appears is not at all satisfactory. This part of the drawing adds to my confusion, and is far from helpful. What we can do, of course, is lay aside too literal a reading and interpret it. And then what we find is that it neatly points out the distinction that must be made between what I shall call the time of the *imaginaire* and the time of the *symbolique*, a *symbolique* that is not yet in effect; hence the phrase «*l'objet métonymique*». So that in the end there only remains one slight objection, since one may well suppose there must have been a time when the mother's desire was not *entirely* directed towards the father (in the desire to have a child, for instance, the choice of a father is obviously implied, even though this may be unconscious, but the child, whether as child-phallus or not, must also be taken into consideration). Also, perhaps, we can consider the whole thing as a reminder that mother and child were once ONE.

The distinction, in any case, is a good introduction to the second line of the diagram

and it becomes clear when we read that the «latency» (the word may not be quite appropriate, but we understand what is meant here) is met by the mother's desire – hence the dotted line that could have been added between «D» and «le Je» – whence a subject emerges.

> L'enfant reçoit donc en M le message brut du désir de la mère, tandis qu'en-dessous au niveau métonymique par rapport à ce que dit la mère, s'effectue son identification à l'objet de celle-ci. (p. 201)
>
> (The child therefore receives in M the raw material of the mother's desire, while below, at the metonymic level in relation to what the mother's says, the child identifies to the object of the latter.)

We have now come to what really constitutes the main element of this structure, the two arrows pointing different directions (second and third line) being easily read as a graphic illustration of the way the mother's desire programs the subject, the infant receiving the mother's message and no doubt using it to form its own message.

At this point, though, the confusion already met reappears, for Lacan, explaining what his first line (le je) stands for, seems to forget that his third line also illustrates an identification to the mother's desire. Indeed, if we correctly read what I have called the «core» of the diagram, ,

we already have here a representation of the relationship between mother and infant. Can we interpret this insistence, this redundancy – two lines that seem to represent the same relationship –, as an unconscious precaution, a way to acknowledge the mother's influence and/or the mirror stage just before introducing the father and his «law»? It is at this point, in any case, that the father is brought in.

> Ce second temps a pour pivot le moment où le père se fait sentir comme interdicteur. (id.)
>
> (This second stage hinges on the moment when the father makes himself felt as prohibitor.)

What happens now, then, is that the mother's message is, let us say, enriched, or perhaps altered, by the discourse, *la parole*, of the father. The M and D of the first level or stage have moved one «floor» up, and the father has now become the keeper of the law:

> A cette étape, le père intervient au titre de message pour la mère. (p. 202)
>
> (At this stage, the father stands for the message the mother receives.)

What we can question here, of course, is the place Lacan assigns to the father's intervention; is his commentary very clear? And I also have a question as to the meaning of the fourth line.

All the same, I have found the diagram helpful, if only because of the nature of the questions that remain. We can now see how the second half of the diagram, which represents the apparition of the father, and which Lacan labels «*l'au-delà du désir de la mère*», in fact corresponds to the passage from being (*être*) to a desire of having (*avoir*) which we found in Freud's «Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego» and with which we started. It is easy to draw a line from the D of the mother's desire to the A of the law of the father, and this completes the demonstration. The whole process could be summarised thus: after having been the «phallus» for the mother, a non-subject (*assujet*), the child finally – and this is a direct consequence of sexual difference – looks towards the father as a model (the little boy) or as one who can give «it» to her (the little girl).

What happens after this, at the second stage, 2, is described as a direct consequence of the father's arrival. A second diagram, on the next page, 201, reproduces the first one but with a difference, and we notice that «object», «I», «Message» and «Desire» have been moved up from 1 to 2, which is a way of representing – of insisting upon? – the father's role. «On the first stage of the Oedipus complex, the mother's desire was represented in its raw state» («*[...] à la première étape du complexe de l'Œdipe, le discours de la mère était saisi à l'état brut*»), while now, we are told, «the father's speech effectively bears upon [intervenes on] the mother's discourse» («*la parole du père intervient effectivement sur le disours de la mère*»), the father acting as a «message upon a message» (p. 202). This is what, Lacan explains, «the mother does of the father's discourse» («*ce que la mère fait de la parole du père*»). The father's role is therefore strongly marked here, strongly recorded, and it is true it must properly be acknowledged. What remains obscure in this page, however, is the chronology, as if the two stages of the intervention of the father had been confusedly wrapped into one: first, when the «father» inserted himself between «mother» and «infant», a name, a no, and second, the triangular situation having been thus obtained, when he had become the possessor of the mother. The confusion, no doubt, reveals a desire to give the father his due – as this can be remarked in the progression from 1 to 2 in the second diagram –, but such an insistence presents the disadvantage of not clearly defining the role of the mother. At least do we understand that she is the one who «designs» the father.

V

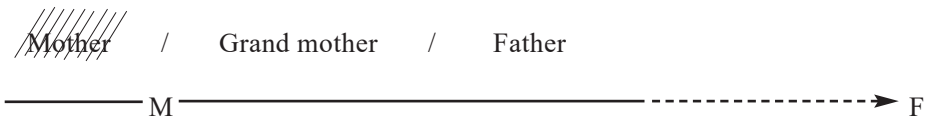
The two case histories I wish to review briefly might serve us as an illustration of the point of theory we have just studied.

A) A boy, as will be seen, identifies with his mother and this will constitute the dominant determination of his life. Not that he doesn't lead the life of a normal heterosexual male, but his constant insistence on his virility is telling us there is a problem here (he practices martial arts, is interested in guns and weapons of all sorts, and says, true or false, that he was a paratrooper when in the army). What the obvious trouble is, however, is that he has a problem with women. Soon after each of his many marriages – three legal ones and quite a few non-legal ones – he loses interest in sex and this, in the end, causes his companion to leave him. At the same time, he always insists on

his sexual power, and keeps looking for a new girl friend every time. Now, this man's, boy's, father was neither absent or devoid of *apparent* virility (it may be interesting to note he was a fairly good amateur boxer), but when one looks closely at the family scene, it is obvious the father was not at the proper place, not at the place of the one who, according to Lacan, is supposed to tell the law. Naturally, this father had said «No», soon after the boy's birth, for the latter was not a psychotic, but that seems to be as far as his role had gone. The mother was the one actually in charge, she was the one who was telling the law, the one who, to use Lacan's words page 208, «had the key of the situation». And because the father had not been in a position to tell the law, had not, it seems, shown deep down that he was the one who had «it», the child could not, or in any case did not, identify with him, therefore remaining locked in his identification with the mother who in the child's eyes had «it». Perhaps too much – I am adding this – of an object for the mother, he had not been able to see his relationship to her «dissolve», which would explain why he went through life as an image of her while unconsciously concealing this with his insistence on virility. Because the mother *was* the law, the passage from M to F had not taken place or, at least, the identification process had stopped before reaching F. There, I take it, was the source of the problem our subject had in his sentimental and sexual life. (As a matter of fact, he identified so much with the mother, put himself so much in a place similar to hers, that he would often compete with women, in the kitchen, for instance, or in what was connected with fashion, and after not why not, of course, except that he went about it with something of a rage (to be mother) that was often surprising.) Not having reached F, probably because there was no one there, all he had been allowed to do was to look for this F in M.

B) A little girl, probably not really wanted by her unmarried parents (a reaction not so infrequent as one might think) will be cared for by her grand mother and grand father after the first few months of her life and this for about two years when she went back with her parents who had had another child and married. During those two years, however, the parents would come to visit her at week ends – both were working – and it is important to mark that the father is said to have been proud of having a child and seemed very keen on her. The mother would probably have preferred to have a boy, and said so many years later. Apparently, the little girl grew up normally (as I said she went back to live with her parents when she was two or three), turned out to be a well brought up child, difficult in adolescence only, which again is fairly normal, and left home when she was twenty one, her education completed. She chose the same job as her father, who helped her to achieve the proper standard while at college, and from then on led an independent life. What must be noticed, however, is that under her «mature», calm, nice and poised appearance, she reveals herself insecure, unsure of herself, and does not have a clear image of what her identity is. She goes on through life protected by a strong defensive mask, and offers a good example of someone uniquely held together by the forces of her «ego». When, for one reason or other, this ego reveals unable to cope, she utterly collapses. (Once, in front of a photography of herself, she says: «That OK, but it's not me.») Also, although very feminine in appearance, she reveals herself, at times, as rather «virile». Here is a good example of this: she has men friends, and in her early twenties marries a nice boy – who may be not too energetic, or not energetic enough perhaps, passive in a way –, and she decides to have a child. According to her own terms, though, she does seem to have been the one who «made» the child to the other and not the other way round as is usually, and biologically, the case. From many details, it becomes obvious, indeed, that, unconsciously, in the couple, she was the male. She is not a homosexual, a female homosexual I mean, but in her love life she acts as the man. To make a long story short, she in fact identifies with her father (but what complicates matters, as we are going to see, is that the latter, in the parental couple, is not really, or entirely, the «man», and this in spite of appearances: he does not symbolically occupy the place of the father, which might explain why our subject has nevertheless maintained so

many feminine traits. In other words, her ambiguity might well be in the image of his.) This time, the passage from Mother to Father can thus be illustrated thus:



In the parental couple who brought her up «normally» after the first two years, the mother – as I have just remarked, in spite of appearances, for the father managed to keep an appearance of power – was the dominant force, the real source of power, directive, authoritative and obviously phallic. The child identified to a father who was only apparently masculine, himself, in fact strongly identified to his own mother. So that what we notice, as in the previous case, is a failure on the part of the father to occupy the place from where the law is given, is signified. All this, I find, does quite correspond to Lacan's theory about the place of the father in the parental couple.

Proceedings of the 18th International Conference on Literature and Psychoanalysis: 103-112

The neurosciences and the arts

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1

For a couple of decades now, I have been exploring certain new developments in the field of literature-and-psychology or, in general, the psychology of the arts. I believe something very profound has happened to the theory involved, *les sciences de l'homme*, as the French say, these «human sciences». I think we who study literature or art or philosophy or history are no longer studying just the various texts or techniques in our disciplines. I think we are now, as Mark Turner (1991) wisely insists, studying how the human mind works when we are doing literature or art or philosophy or history. What is art? also asks, What is mind?

When we raise these questions, we humanists are in much the same position as the neuroscientists. For them, too, the ultimate goal is the discovery of mind – What is it? How does it work? How did we get it? I think of neuroscience and the human sciences as like two very small human beings energetically tunneling in from opposite sides of a huge Alp. The neuroscientists tunnel in from the west, and the humanists from the east. I am afraid the neuroscientists on the west side of the Alp do not listen much to sounds of digging from the humanists on the east side. Humanists, however, listen very closely to the explanations by the neuroscientists, reading popular writers like Damasio (1999), Pinker (1999b), Edelman (1992), Ratey (2001), Gazzaniga (1992), and many others. Often the humanists in their eagerness jump the gun, claiming from popularizations of neuroscience firm knowledge despite the neuroscientists' careful labeling of their «big» ideas as speculation.

At any rate, the neuroscientists and we of the human sciences, even if we are divided into two groups, share the same hope. Although dwarfed by the mountain, we hope our diggings will meet in the middle of that huge Alp and there discover this mysterious, magical treasure, Mind. We hope.

2

From the human science side, Noam Chomsky and his group in the 1970s set out the basic reasoning when they began talking about Universal Grammar or UG (Chomsky, 1975). If all human languages share certain common grammatical practices, then that common grammar must somehow be built into our brains. If making sentences using subjects and verbs is something everybody does, then you must be able to infer something about the brain from that fact. In general,

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then, we in the human sciences, such as linguistics, can infer things about brain and mind from things that all human beings do. Grammar, for example, must be innate just as much as a four-chambered heart or a five-fingered hand.

From the neuroscience side, the tunnelers are digging more directly. Instead of inferring from all humans, they work from specialized populations, Vietnam veterans or left-handed people or victims of autism. The neuroscientists' strongest evidence comes from people with brain damage (from accidents, strokes, or tumors, for example). By comparing the sites which are damaged to the mental abilities that are impaired, the neuroscientist hopes to isolate the brain function corresponding to a given behavior.

In effect, the lesioned patient (or animal) provides the special case. To explore the consequences of that specialness, the neuroscientists create special experimental situations that do not correspond to ordinary life – «non-ecological» situations as the psychologists say. That is, after all, how you do experiments: with controlled conditions. Having found a certain mental process, they then try to model it and look for sites or systems in the brain that would correspond to the different elements in the process. My brief account, of course, grossly simplifies what neuroscientists do on their side of the Alp, but perhaps it will serve for our purposes.

Within that general framework of special populations and experimental conditions, explanations get very complicated indeed. Some rely simply on neuroanatomy, parts of the brain, as when the neurologists say that the right side of the brain tends to be the side that reasons holistically, while the left side deals with sequential processes. Neurophysiologists would go further, combining anatomical features into systems that connect typically, higher brain functions in the neocortex or outer limbic system to regions in the midbrain or pons. Neuropsychologists try to correlate behaviors, particularly in carefully orchestrated experimental situations, with regions or systems in the brain. Often their work takes the form of modeling a behavioral process, like speech, and using the behavior of people with lesions in certain areas to try to localize some part of that process.

Those systems and indeed 99% of neurons communicate with one another by means of neurotransmitters, and these are what neurochemists and neuropharmacologists study. Neurotransmitters are exceedingly complex. Estimates are that there are as many as 200 different neurotransmitters, only fifty of which have been investigated deeply. Also, a given neurotransmitter may act differently in different parts of the brain. And further, the brain talks to the body by means of hormones, and the body talks back to the brain using both hormones and neurotransmitters.

Finally there are explanations of developments or behaviors as expressions of genes (or, more properly, clusters of genes). We have genes that program us for this or that. It is important, however, to remember that any genetic explanation has to have two parts, because a gene only expresses in a certain environment. To explain a genetic phenomenon, one must point to the genes plus the environment that triggers the gene to express. Hence the claim that there is a «gene for violence» has to be unpacked. The claim means that there is a gene such that, one, if the individual has that gene and, two, if the individual grows up in a violent environment, the gene will adapt the individual to that environment. It will lower serotonin levels and lead to more violent responses to stimuli.

I see one curious difference in approach between the human sciences on the east side of the Alp and the neurosciences on the west. So far as the west side is concerned, in the course of two years of attending lectures and papers by neurologists, I can remember only two that dealt with children and both were about dyslexics, a special population. Often, in textbooks of brain science, no mention is made of children at all. Foetal development of brain, yes – there is a lot of discussion of foetal brains – but not children's brains. The humanist side of the Alp, however, shows considerable interest in children's patterns of development. The linguists and anthropologists on the east side of the Alp focus strongly on children's acquisition of language or metaphor or pretense and children's psychological development within a culture. Both are assumed, in this tradition, to have foundations in the brain.

As you can see, all this is very complicated. In the U.S.A., it takes four years of further study after the four years of medical school to qualify as a neurologist, and, even after that, there are

usually a series of fellowships with senior researchers before the tyro is ready to undertake independent research. As so often in psychological work, it is hard to draw general conclusions from highly specific procedures. As a result, the neuroscientific literature consists of very precise experiments and techniques with very tentative suggestions of their larger implications. Life is easier, if less reliable, on the humanists' side of the Alp, where we find linguists and anthropologists and theorists of literature. We are all too ready to jump to sweeping generalizations, expanding the neuroscientists' carefully circumscribed work to span the universals in human behavior.

3

In a way, Freud anticipated Chomsky's reasoning when he wrote the Project for a Scientific Psychology in 1895. Like Chomsky, he was trying to reason backward from universal human behaviors like dreams and symptoms and desire and satisfaction and inhibition to structures in the brain. Unfortunately, working in the 1890s, he did not have concepts with which to model these behaviors neurologically. At the time of the Project, the neuron was still a hypothesis, one that Freud accepted, to be sure, but one that many of his colleagues still did not. Further, it was not until the 1920s that Loewi and Dale established that it was by means of neurotransmitter molecules that neurons communicated with one another. Necessarily frustrated in his attempt, Freud never published the Project and turned to psychology. In his later writings, lacking electronic models, which would have served nicely, he had to resort to hydraulics, which proved at best a very clumsy analogy. He never gave up hoping, however, that someday biology and neurology would confirm his ideas.

There is another way to reason backward from human universals. This is evolutionary psychology, a development over the past few decades (Cosmides & Tooby, 1997). Some neuroscientists work in evolutionary psychology, and many more agree with its general principles. The argument is that anything all humans do must have been selected for in an evolutionary process.

We hominids – our branch of the primate order, pongid family – have been around for some five million years. But our particular species, *homo sapiens sapiens*, has only been around for about a hundred thousand years. So far as we know, there have been no evolutionary changes in our make-up in that time. For example, gossip. All humans talk about other humans; we gossip. It has been suggested that gossip serves for us the same purpose that grooming serves for other pongids. It helps us maintain a mental index of individuals that tells us who outranks whom, who is good for a favor, who is likely to be hostile, and so on, knowledge that enables us to survive in a social environment. Language for this purpose obviously conferred a tremendous evolutionary advantage on those primates that developed it. (But, one can ask, what advantage does poetry or fiction confer? Evidently some advantage, since all human cultures do these things.)

There is a particularly interesting branch of evolutionary theory called Baldwinian evolution, after the American psychologist James Mark Baldwin. Baldwin argued that social changes in, for example, technology could create changes in the genome. For example, as long as humans were in Africa as hunter-gatherers, if adults could not digest milk, that was a valuable trait. It may have protected against illness or death from stale or diseased milk. It certainly left more milk for the infants who needed it. As a result, people who had lactose intolerance would have more surviving offspring than people who didn't. Their genes would predominate. But, when people moved into Europe and began to cultivate herds of cattle, lactose intolerance would be a negative trait. People who could survive a famine on milk would have more offspring than people who could not tolerate lactose. Over time, people with lactose intolerance would be represented less and less in the gene population, and ultimately they would be almost gone from the genome itself. And it happened. European populations generally tolerate lactose and African populations generally do not. In effect, a cultural change led to a genetic change over a relatively fewer number of generations than

biological evolution requires. A technological change created the effect of a Lamarckian evolution without assuming the false genetic mechanisms Lamarck posited.

Baldwinian evolution may have something to say about literature. Is it possible that people who are skilled at certain cultural activities like dance or story-telling gain a favored position in the gene pool? Is it possible that we have poetry and drama because the genes that give rise to poets and actors are specially selected for in the world of *homo sapiens sapiens*? Ellen Dissanayake suggests that the arts develop our ability to make something special, to single one thing out from the stream of experience, and that this proto-artistic ability has evolutionary value.

4

On the humanists' side of the Alp, one powerful idea has been the development of X-Bar theory, with its suggestion of a universal grammar at least for phrase structures. Steven Pinker has a superb exposition of the theory in *The Language Instinct*, and that is what I am adapting here (S. Pinker, *The language instinct*, 1994, pp. 74-152).

Consider a noun phrase about Hillary Rodham Clinton, *the senator from New York from Arkansas.* The grammatical structure of the phrase consists of a header, «senator», which provides the organization for the rest of the phrase. The header «senator» takes an argument, a property that goes with it: being a senator includes being a senator representing some particular state, hence *the senator from New York*, header plus argument. *From New York* is essential, but one can also say inessential things about that senator, namely, that she really hails from Arkansas. This inessential fact is an «adjunct». Note how the meaning of the sentence changes if we say *the senator from Arkansas from New York*. Adjuncts cannot come between the header and its arguments. The form of the sentence determines its meaning.

Now consider a verb phrase: *I gave money to the senator in February*. Now it is the verb «gave» that is the header, and its arguments are what one gives and whom one gives it to, essential grammatical participants for the verb give. (The «I» is called a specifier and need not concern us here.) One argument is «money», and we would not put the adjunct «in February» between «gave» and «money». We would not say, *I gave in February money to the senator*. We might say *I gave money in February to the senator*, since the adjunct «in February» does not disrupt the header-argument connection.

The same rule applies to a prepositional phrase. In the phrase, «in February», the preposition «in» is the header and it requires an object, the argument, «*February*». We would not interrupt their connection by saying, in *I gave February*.

The rule applies even to word formation. In English, the rightmost affix is the header to a word like *psychoanalytic* from which I can coin an ideological term, *psychoanalyticism*. Rules similar to X-Bar rules prevent my saying *psychoanalytismic*.

In short, there is a single X-Bar rule in English that applies to verb, noun, and preposition phrases and to word formation, one rule. As it turns out, there are similar X-Bar rules for many other languages. English is an SVO language. That is, we normally arrange a sentence in the order, subject-verb-object, *I gave money*. Some other languages, like Turkic or Japanese, are SOV languages. The object comes before the verb, the header. It turns out that those languages do not have as we do, *prepositions* which precede their objects (header followed by argument). They have *postpositions*, which follow their objects (argument followed by header). But with that reversal the same X-Bar rules apply to postpositional phrases in those languages and also to noun and verb phrases.

Hence we get the claim of universal grammar. We can have the same rule with a switch from header first to header last to change the rule for English to the rule for Japanese. This is the basis for Chomsky's claim that we have something like eighty switches in our brains for language, which are set this way or that by the language environment in which we grow up. We inherit a set of linguistic tendencies or «principles» and a specific language experience sets the «parameters».

In a later book, *Words and Rules*, Pinker (1999a) explores the way we know how to inflect regular and irregular verbs and nouns. In English, we normally form the past tense by adding *-ed: help-helped, walk-walked*, and so on. How do we know that the past tense of *go* or *lead* or *drink* isn't formed that way? How do we know that we should use *drank* instead of *drinked*? In English, we normally form the plural of a noun by adding *-s*. How do we know that the plural of *man* is *men*, of *sheep* is *sheep*, of *mouse* is *mice*? How do we know that we should say *cans* and not *cen* or *houses* and not *hice*? Pinker suggests that we process regular and irregular forms in different brain systems. He further posits a system that looks at a word, *house*, say, then scans a list of irregulars in memory, does not find it, and then applies the regular rule. In a very tentative way, he suggests that the scanning of the list of irregulars takes place in the left temporal-parietal regions and the application of the rule for regular forms occurs in the left frontal lobe (Pinker, 1999a, pp. 267-68).

What, if anything, does all this have to do with literature? It suggests that the kind of play with language that we experience in poetry or «musical» prose involves the brain in a different kind of processing from the logical step-by-step sequential processing of language that neurology traditionally associates with the language centers like Broca's area, Wernicke's area, and the arcuate fasiculus. This special, «poetic» language must jump around in our brains in unusual ways, like a kind of exercise. Thus, there is evidence that we process initial consonants differently from final consonants and fricatives (|f|, |v|, and |z|) and affricates (as in eigh|th|) in a special place. English-speaking Broca's aphasics tend to omit grammatical morphemes, while German and Italian aphasics tend to substitute one grammatical morpheme for another (Taylor & Taylor, 1990, pp. 384-86). In general, it appears that we process the details of language (those that we play with in the sound effects of poetry) by many different systems in the brain. Poetry makes us exercise those different centers in unexpected or challenging ways. In that sense, the ability to do poetry or chant may confer an evolutionary advantage in the form of better linguistic skills for communication, persuasion, cheating, and so on.

5

Another group of linguists has put forward yet another claim to linguistic universality: metaphor. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have described metaphor as a process by which we use ideas about a source, something that we understand pretty well, to understand a target, something that we understand less well. The example they give (and the one everyone uses who expounds this theory) is the metaphorical mapping, LOVE IS A JOURNEY. From this mapping, we can generate metaphorical sentences like: We're *not getting anywhere* in this relationship. This relationship is *on the rocks*. We've *lost our way*. We've *come to a dead end*. We're spinning our wheels. We're *getting on* swimmingly. We're *headed for* the altar. Or that country-and-western song, «We're *driving in the fast lane on the freeway of love*». All of these enable us to talk about something complicated, love, in terms of something physical and visible and well understood, getting from here to there.

These «cognitive linguists» estimate that we do about 90% of our talking in this kind of metaphor. (Only those statements are non-metaphorical that do not go from one domain to another, from source to target, like, *This car has three wheels.*) Further, all known cultures make source-to-target metaphors this way.

Within this general framework of source-to-target mapping, one can distinguish «primary» and «secondary» metaphors. Secondary metaphors use sources from a particular culture like our fast lanes and freeways. Primary metaphors stem from universal human experiences, usually physical experiences, like up-down, fast-slow, hot-cold, near-far, balance-imbalance, and so on. Primary metaphors can and do occur in, apparently, all cultures.

If all cultures use this mapping, then this kind of metaphorical reasoning from source to target must be wired into our brains. Cognitive scientist Antonio Damasio (1999, p. 347n4) has suggested

that this concept of metaphor matches his insistence on an «embodied mind». That is, he argues, our core sense of self and, indeed, all our higher mental activities are based on the representation of the body in the brain. Hence, at a deep, physiological level, our most abstract thinking is grounded in bodily experience. In effect, our bodies are source domains for the various target domains of our cognitive processes. And Damasio can point to pathways in the brain that could be the basis for this kind of hard-wired metaphorical thinking. Very tentatively, Lakoff and his group have developed neural network simulations that mimic the metaphorical system of traveling from here to there along a path.

Whatever the brain embodiments of metaphor, understanding it as this kind of mapping from source to target opens up the possibility of the analysis of poems and stories. In *More than Cool Reason*, Lakoff and Mark Turner do superb analyses of a William Carlos Williams poem and a multitude of proverbs. It is here, I think, that we see the most direct connection so far between cognitive science and literary criticism.

6

Neuroscience extends toward literary interests yet another way: toward our emotional responses to texts both as individuals and, collectively, as an audience. In *Poems in Persons* (Holland, 1973; Holland, 2000), I wrote about collective responses. Looking at the commonality of audience reactions – everybody laughs, everybody boos – I suggested a mechanism. In a theater, to the physical play or film in front of any one member of the audience, are added the reactions of those around that individual, at least to the extent those reactions are visible: «They are laughing.» «They are moved.» «They are restless.» «They think this is awful.» These responses by the others around me license my own. They are saying, it's all right to laugh, it's all right to cry, it's all right to think this is a piece of trash. In psychoanalytic terms, I have my own defense mechanisms by which I relate to the work. But, in an audience, I fuse my defense mechanisms with the behavior of those around me. I borrow from them a license to do what they are doing, to laugh, to boo, to applaud, or to cry. In psychoanalytic jargon, I introject their response and merge it with my own.

Mel Brooks' great movie, *The Producers* (1968), illustrates the principle at work. The producers, hoping for a huge (and profitable) tax loss, have put on a musical comedy glorifying the Third Reich with songs like «Springtime for Hitler». At first the audience sits there in shocked, stunned, and stony silence. A few people indignantly walk out. Then someone laughs, then someone else, and finally the whole theater explodes in laughter. The audience has been provided a defense – treat this monstrosity as a joke – and, to their horror, the producers have a hit on their hands.

Peer opinions exercise a surprisingly powerful influence. Many experiments have shown that a group opinion will make an individual change even such black-and-white factual statements as the relative length of two lines. In the theater, producers and directors have sensed this for centuries and hired claques and catcallers and «canned» laughter accordingly.

Our brains are specialized for social behavior. We have «mirror neurons» that react the same way when we watch someone perform an action as when we perform it ourselves. In our brains, we are social animals, and, in a way, our minds are porous. The opinions – the psychic strategies, really – of others seep in and mingle with our own, changing and adapting our brain processes to theirs. We are built for intersubjectivity, for shared knowledge and shared feelings. Specifically, in the brain, the amygdala plus the orbital frontal cortex provide the components for a social brain system that means we will probably respond to an action on stage or screen as our fellow-humans do.

We do not limit our sociality to being in an audience. An individual reading at home alone feels emotional responses to a literary text. Why? We will all respond to certain situations in the real world with anger or sexual jealousy or desire or fear. Social situations evoke standard responses, with, of course, a lot of individual variation. Writers of fiction and poetry describe social situations in order to evoke emotions. A mirroring process in our brains guarantees that we will probably respond the same way to imaginings of those situations, to their fictional representation in words.

To an extent, we lend our minds to the novel we are reading or, perhaps more accurately, we introject its events and persons, feeling them as if they were our own experience.

At least we do that when we are «absorbed» or «engrossed» or «rapt». Coleridge's phrasing is classic: the «willing suspension of disbelief». Neuroscientist Leslie Brothers (1997), like such psychoanalysts as D. W. Winnicott or Donald Stern, suggests there is an archaic state in which we do not distinguish self from other. The psychoanalysts trace this kind of merging to early infancy when mother and infant are only half-separate. The baby-watcher Colwyn Trevarthen (Trevarthen, 1979) has described how a mother's baby-talk, as she leans over her infant, evokes the infant's responsive movements of arms and limbs in time to her phrasings. It is a «dance» in which the two partners are perfectly attuned to one another. That «dance» we sometimes recapture when we become «absorbed» in works of art.

7

Metaphor and emotional response are two literary concepts that may have a neurological basis. Style is another. As a literary critic, I'm acutely conscious of styles. With some writers, Hemingway, say, or Faulkner, you only have to read a few sentences to be able to say, That's Hemingway, that's Faulkner. We use this sense of recognition when we parody a writer, as in the well-known Ernest Hemingway contest held every year in Key West: who can write the best bad Hemingway sentence? We recognize styles in other arts as well, for example, music. Mozart or Beethoven or the Beatles – a few bars and you know whom you're listening to even if you don't know the particular piece of music.

We also read people in everyday life in terms of styles. We say things like, «Oh, that's just like Ken». Or, «Steve isn't himself today». In other words, we can see a recurring pattern in the way someone writes or talks or walks, and we see new behaviors against that previous pattern that we have recognized.

These styles are extremely persistent. Bernard Malamud once said to me, «Every novelist only writes one novel». Commenting on an exhibit of Willem de Kooning's late works, done when de Kooning's mind was deteriorating, neurologist Oliver Sacks wrote (1990): «Style is the deepest part of one's being, and may be preserved, almost to the last, in a dementia.» «Style, in short, is the deepest thing in one's being» (Sacks, 1974, p. 239n).

It is «style» in that sense that I wish to explore here. From the point of view of the human sciences, Heinz Lichtenstein (1961; 1977) has, I believe, provided the strongest way of approaching these patterns. Lichtenstein proposed thinking about a person's «style» as a pattern and variations on that pattern, like a theme and variations in music. You can – and we do – understand a person by formulating such a theme or themes, although rarely do we do it explicitly. We sense a pattern and then look at variations on it. As in music, one theme can have an infinite number of variations, but one will always be able to discern the theme underneath the variations. Unlike music, however, to understand human identities, one has to use words to formulate such a theme.

Lichtenstein suggested that each of us has an «identity theme», acquired in the early relationship between infant and mother (or «primary caregiver»). He argued that the early relation of primary caregiver and infant instilled this theme in the person. He gave a number of instances, and, in my own work, I have done the same (Holland 1975, pp. 67-112; 1982, pp. 143-171; 1989). The example of «Dr. Vincent» suggests the robust persistence of identity. Dr. Vincent (Holland, 1985, pp. 67-73) was a victim of Chinese brainwashing (reported by Robert Jay Lifton ([1961, pp. 33-59]). He had emigrated from France, choosing an isolated life, practicing in rural China and hunting in the wild, where he did not have to confide in anyone. I read his identity theme as: *To need is to give up one's insides*, a prospect he abhorred. Arrested and brainwashed into confession, he flipped inside out. He became a compulsive confessor, eagerly complying with the brainwashers.

Even after his release, he would pour out his feelings to anyone who would listen. It was as though a glove had been turned inside out: it went from left hand to right but remained a glove. That is, Vincent's centering theme, giving up his insides, remained central, but he flipped from not giving out to the opposite. Then, once he was released, he gradually returned to his old, isolated self.

Lichtenstein assumed that such an identity theme was somehow instilled in the brain through the early mother-child relationship. Writing in the1960s and '70s, however, he lacked either neurological or psychological backing. Recently, Allan Schore, a psychiatrist and psychoanalyst who has scoured the neurological literature, has provided support for Lichtenstein's ideas. Schore himself doesn't do brain research, but he has read and put together an astonishingly large body of neurological work. His book, *Affect Regulation and the Origin of the Self* (1994), contains some 2300 references (Schore, 1994).

From the outset, Schore says, maternal interactions regulate emotions. He draws on the baby-watchers, such as Colwyn Trevarthen (1979). Specifically, the mother serves as an external regulator of the neurochemicals in the infant's developing brain. Schore finds two critical developmental stages.

He situates the first critical period at the end of the first year of life. Maternal stimulation, particularly through gaze and experiences of joy and reunion as the child walks away and comes back – these experiences activate the sympathetic nervous system. They produce neuroendocrine changes, in Schore's technical language, innervation of orbitofrontal areas, particularly in the early maturing visuospatial right hemisphere. Specifically, these positive experiences create dopamine-releasing axons in the orbitofrontal cortex, and they encourage maturation of the ventral tegmental forebrain-midbrain circuit. Ascending subcortical axons form a neurochemical circuit of the limbic system, particularly the sympathetic ventral tegmental limbic circuit. The child acquires the capacity to form an interactive representational model that underlies an early functional system of affect regulation. In ordinary language, the child regulates its own positive emotions through recognition of the maternal face and the positive emotions in that face.

Schore theorizes a second critical period associated in the second year, say 14-16 months, with the onset of socialization procedures. At this time, the child experiences shame: Get your fingers out of the light socket! These experiences of shame, of feeling that you've done something wrong, lead to a different pattern of psychoneuroendocrine alterations. Schore sees an expansion of another limbic circuit; he names the parasympathetic lateral tegmental limbic circuit. This then gets wired into the orbitofrontal cortex, creating an inhibitory system. Schore's two stages correspond roughly to the traditional psychoanalytic concepts of an oral and an anal stage.

What Schore says these developments have created is a pattern of affect regulation. Now, affect regulation, it seems to me, is what regulates virtually all other brain processes. That is, the feeling you get after you look at something or hear something or eat something determines what you will do next. It seems to me that, in this pattern of affect regulation, Schore has proposed a neurological basis for what I, following Lichtenstein, have been calling a style or identity.

In my own mind, I combine that sense of a persistent identity theme with another strain of neuroscientific thought, the social brain that reacts in common with all other humans. In effect, then, the neuroscientists are providing the humanists with the neurology for explaining one of the most puzzling aspects of the literary process. We respond to an artistic or literary work to some extent as others do but to a considerable extent in an individual way. The neuroscientists offer, I hesitantly suggest, differing, but not contradictory, mechanisms for these two kinds of response. One would be the circuits Brothers associates with the social brain. The other would be the circuits Schore associates with the individual's pattern of affect regulation.

8

There is one last, large literary issue about which, it seems to me, neuroscience has something to say, the nature of our literary responses. As critics from time immemorial have pointed out, we

humans have two kinds of response to a text we are looking at literarily. In one, we are, perhaps, absorbed or rapt. We respond to situations or words or characters emotionally without much thinking about ourselves reacting (Schafer, 1968, pp. 101, 109-110). As described above, in section 6, we respond emotionally to social stimuli as other humans, indeed, as other primates might. In the other mode, we analyze, we interpret, we theorize the literary work. We respond intellectually, suppressing the emotional response. We are distinctively human, *homo sapiens sapiens* sapienting away.

I think these two different responses may come from a distinction we learned to draw very early in life. Among these baby-watching psychologists studying early infancy, there is some agreement that, very early on, at the age of 27 weeks (perhaps innately therefore), infants show that they can tell animate from inanimate objects (Premack & Premack, 1995; Leslie & Keeble, 1987). Babics distinguish animate from inanimate by whether moving objects' movements are caused internally or externally. Understanding internally caused movements leads via a «naïve psychology» to the social intelligence about such things as motives that we share with our primate kin. Understanding externally caused movements leads to a «naïve physics», including an idea of cause-and-effect. We may be born with these understandings in place, but they surely come into being at least within the first two years of life. They are, as you would therefore expect, hard to overturn.

In responding to literature, when we respond emotionally, we invoke our special perception of animate objects. We bring into play the emotional responses of fear or desire or anger that other primates would feel under similar circumstances. The line between self and other can blur (as I suggested in Holland, 1968, pp. 63-103), or we introject the behavior of the people around us in an audience, merging their defense mechanisms into our own (as I suggested in Holland, 1973, 2000, ch. 3).

Imagine the situation in a play or a movie, where you are part of an audience. You can be sitting back (as in Brecht's alienation-effect, smoking and watching, thinking about what you are seeing). Or you can be identified with a character and you can be taking in defense mechanisms from others in the audience. What happens when you are reading a book? You can be absorbed into the book, or you can be theorizing it, planning a critical article, say.

In other words, our relation to a literary work lies somewhere between our relation to animate and inanimate objects. One who experiences literature treats it as if it were an animate being with feelings and motives, internalizing those human attributes. One feels art and literature «in here». By contrast, the critic takes an analytic stance toward an object «out there», external to the self. This difference corresponds, it seems to me, to the distinction people drew in the eighteenth century, between wit (imagination, making unexpected combinations) and judgment, drawing distinctions, taking things apart, establishing boundaries. If I write in more twentieth-century terms, and write very, very loosely, the distinction corresponds to a right-brain reaction as contrasted to a left-brain reaction.

Clearly, in that sentence and indeed in all the above, I have been pushing the neuroscientists' careful step-by-step science as far as I can and probably farther than they would care to go. While the psychologists who watch babies see them distinguishing animate from inanimate objects, they have not found a basis in the brain for this. Similarly, while X-Bar structure or metaphor maybe universal, no one has isolated the brain mechanisms for them. So too, «mirror neurons» are probably not enough to generalize to a social brain. No one has confirmed the idea that basic circuits for affect regulation establish an identity in the first two years of life.

Nevertheless, looking from an investigator's overall perspective on the human sciences, I see the tunneling at opposite sides of that huge Alp of mind beginning to make connections that tell us about the arts. Deep down, I see a profound connection between my concerns, particularly literary criticism and theory, and the new knowledge being developed about the brain. What can I say, then, to my fellow literary theorists? Hey, come on and help us dig!

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