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List of papers presented at the
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BÓKAY, Antal («Bakhtin and Freud: Two Concepts of Literary Subjectivity»)
BOYD, Zelda («Idylls of the Cave: Sesame and Open Sesame in Ruskin's of King's Treasures»)
FARRELL, Kirby («Virginia Hamilton's *Sweet Whispers, Brother Rush* and the Case for a Radical Existential Criticism»)
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Introduction

In The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, *Thomas S. Kuhnargues that theories are not overthrown by contrary evidence but by new, more powerful theories. Nevertheless, although that may be true in most sciences, it does not seem to hold for psychoanalysis. The science of human subjectivity is not like other sciences, and the history of psychoanalysis in this century has been and continues to be marked by the (sometimes not-so-peaceful) co-existence of many different theories. Today, one finds adherents to various varieties of Freudianism, Jungianism, Lacanianism, object relations, self psychology, and third forcepsychology. One can view this proliferation of theories either as a chaos reflecting fundamental confusion or as a testimony to the multifaccted nature of human identity, which allows for diverse approaches: like the blind men attempting to describe the elephant, each has a partial truth to offer, but none can grasp the whole.*

The abundance of theories provides a rich smorgasbord for the contemporary critic of literature who is psychoanalytically inclined. Some are content with traditional ham on rye while theoretical Dagwoods pile their plates high with elaborate clubsandwiches. As the French like to say, Chacun a son goût *and* Avez vous du Grey Poupon*?*

We hope that you will find something in the following selected papers from the Seventh International Conference on Literature and Psychology, edited by Frederico Pereira, to stimulate your intellectual appetite. The essays represent almost the entire contemporary spectrum of approaches in the field: ego psychology, object relations, reader response, feminist psychoanalysis, postmodern psychoanalysis, Jungian, Lacanian and anti-Lacanian, and, at perhaps the cutting edge, the potential application of new findings in brain science to psychoanalysis.

This continuing series of international conferences began in the 1980s, sponsored by the Institute for the Psychological Study of the Arts (IPSA) at the University of Florida; the Center for the Psychological Study of the Arts, SUNY, Buffalo; the Program in Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Massachusetts, Amherst; Janus Pannonius University, Pécs, Hungary; The University of Paris VII (Charles V, Jussieux); and the University of Paris X (Nanterre). It has been held in Hungary, France, the United States, and Austria. The Seventh Conference, the first of the

1990s, took place July 6-9, 1990 at the University of Urbino, overlooking the splendid panorama of the Italian hill town. The Conference was co-chaired by Norman Holland and myself in Florida, assisted by Robert Silhol in France and Antal Bokay in Hungary, with the invaluable services of Professor Pino Paione in Urbino, whose Centro Internazionale di Semiotica e di Linguistica made the local arrangements.

The goal of these conferences has been to advance international exchange in the field of literature and psychology for the purpose of better understanding both literature and human identity, whether it be the identity of authors, literary characters, texts, cultures, groups of readers, or ourselves as men and women and as unique individuals. Participants, who included both literary scholars and mental health clinicians, came to the Seventh International from the United States, Canada, England, France, Portugal, Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, Hungary, and Israrel. It was a convivial and memorable gathering. The Renaissance heritage of Urbino seemed to inspire in us a renewal of both intellect and spirit.

Thomas C. Caramagno concludes his essay on the implications of recent findings in brain science by writing that, «whatever the outcome, our future model of the mind must include systems more complicated than Freud's or Lacan's simpler divisions.» That new model does not yet fully exist, but I believe that when it arrives, both clinicians and literary critics will still find ways to make it congruent with Freud. As we rapidly approach the twenty-first century, I strongly suspect that Freud will still be peering over our shoulders, probing our psyches and puffing hiscigar.

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ANTI - LACAN

Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Psychology and Literature: 3-10

The Trouble(s) with Lacan

NORMAN N. HOLLAND (*)

We can be quite blunt about it. There are three major troubles with Lacan: his linguistics, his psycholinguistics, and his idea of child development. Let me take them one by one.

Lacan's proclaimed «return to Freud» meant remedying Freud's failure to use «modern» linguistics. «Modern» linguistics for Lacan, however, means turn-of-the-century linguistics — specifically, Ferdinand de Saussure's.

Lacan's linguistic trouble is the whole business of signifiers and signifieds. For Saussure, *langue* consists of millions of signifiers signifying signifieds. For Saussure, signifier and signified are bound together in the sign, and a language consists of all its signs. There are many problems with this notion of language.

First of all, this is a dictionary conception of language. In effect, Saussure says language equals the dictionary — as though I could understand French by memorizing Larousse or, in Saussure's more sophisticated version, by memorizing all the binary polarities for all the words in the Larousse dictionary. Indeed, Saussure says as much: «Language exists in the form of a sum of impressions deposited in the brain of each member of a community, almost like a dictionary of which identical copies have been distributed to each individual» (Cours 38; Course 19).

I think that is a very primitive conception of language that really works at best for proper or common nouns, like Saussure's examples, *tree* and *horse*. But what do you do with open verbs like *go*, *do*, or prepositions like *in* or *on*, the kind of wordswhose «signifieds» go on for page after page in the OED?

This is a very weak and inadequate view of even the individual word. Let me give you an example. I can say,

I persuaded John's mother that John should go to college.

I can say,

I persuaded John's mother.

But I can't say,

I persuaded that John should go to college.

Why? Because it is a property of the verb *persuade* that it takes a noun phrase as object plus a noun clause (or some reduction of a noun clause). It cannot take the noun clause unless the noun phrase is also there. For us to use the verb *persuade* it has to have this

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marking. This marking, Chomsky shows, has to be in the lexicon for us to make sentences with that verb (Knowledge Part I). You can see a primitive form of this marking when our ordinary dictionaries mark a verb as transitive or intransitive or a noun as a proper noun. But Saussure doesn't even get to that level. Saussure's lexicon does not admit of such markings.

A much larger problem with Saussure's linguistics is that it cannot deal with sentences. As he wrote, «The sentence... belongs to speaking [*parole*], not to language [*langue*]» (Cours 172; Course 124). Once a language fact depends on individual freedom, we are in the realm of *parole*, and Saussure cannot deal with it.

In fact Saussure's linguistics cannot even deal with phrases. For example, how can you explain ambiguity? «The old men and women.» Does that mean the old men and the old women or only the old men but all the women? «The shooting of the hunters was terrible.» Are we talking about a tragedy or were the deer lucky? «John hit the ball, then Herbert.» Did Herbert come to bat or to grief? None of this will signification explain, because Saussure rules out any possibility of a deeper structure than the surface of words. «To think that there is an incorporeal syntax outside material units distributed in space would be a mistake», he concluded. The only structures in *langue*, he proclaimed, were pat phrases dictated by tradition, things like *Good morning* or *il y a* (Cours 191; Course 139).

In general, how can Saussure's dictionary conception of language model the way we combine words into sentences? How does it explain your ability to understand a sentence you have never heard before? Indeed, how do you deal with sentences at all? How do you deal with the fact that even very young children can create complicated sentences they have never heard before? And they can understand complex sentences they have never heard before.

You may well recognize those last questions. I am simply asking the same questions that Noam Chomsky asked about phrase-structure grammars thirty years ago. Lacan apparently tried to deal with this weakness in Saussure by adding to Saussure a linguistic idea of Roman Jakobson's. Enlarging on Saussure's brief and inconclusive remarks, Roman Jakobson helped out with two principles to account for sentences. It seems obvious that we make sentences by putting one word after another. First, «The man». Then «hit». Then «the». Then «ball». Seems. It seems equally obvious that at any given point in that process we can substitute other words. Instead of «The man», we could say «The woman», or «Herbert». Instead of «ball», we could substitute other nouns or phrases to produce, «The man hit the child», or «The man hit the nail on the head», or «The man hit the road». Then Lacan approximated Jakobson's metonymy (roughly, sequence) and metaphor (roughly, substitution) to Freud's «condensation» and «displacement», and in turn to other linguists' «syntagm» and «paradigm».

The trouble with Jakobson's system is that it doesn't account for the way we build sentences any more than Saussure's. Jakobson and Saussure are describing what Chomsky calls a «finite-state grammar». In such a grammar, «Sentences are generated by means of a series of choices made 'from left to right'; that is to say, after the first, or leftmost element has been selected, [the probability of] every subsequent choice is determined by the immediately preceding elements.» Chomsky proved in 1957 that grammars of this type could not in principle account for sentence production. That is, none could account for a sentence in which the selection of one element depends on the presence or absence of another element elsewhere in the sentence. Consider the pair of sentences in Chomsky's well-known example:

John is eager to please.
John is easy to please.

At first glance, they look as though they were built along Jakobsonian lines. Just substitute

«eager» for «easy». But the underlying meanings are quite different. In the first sentence, John is active, in the second, passive. In the first John is doing things, in the second John is being done for. But in the linguistic world of Saussure, Jakobson, and Lacan, linguistics would say the only difference between those two sentences is the difference between «eager» and «easy».

Saussure did not recognize that any formal account of language strong enough to deal with sentences and discourse (to say nothing of a psychological account of humans using language) has to include more systems than just a lexicon. It also (and most importantly) has to include the interactions among these different systems. Saussure's account of language deals only with surface features. Saussure has no way, for example, of declaring any sentence grammatical or non-grammatical. However a language is structured, it is not structured the way Saussure says it is, nor do Jakobson's metonymy and metaphor take us further.

That is the first «trouble with Lacan». Lacan goes wrong by relying (quite uncritically!) on Saussure's signifier-signified conception of language. It is understandable that Lacan, when he began to write in the 1930s, should learn Saussure's turn-of-the-century linguistics. But even at the end of his life he — and now his followers — write about signifiers and signifieds as though the Chomskyan revolution in linguistics had never happened. Contemporary literary theorists tirelessly quote Saussure. But why? Today's linguists no more use Saussure's model than today's physicists use the concept of phlogiston.

I do not mean to suggest that linguists have all adopted Chomsky's views. They are still controversial, and he would be the first to acknowledge that they are subject to revision in the light of further evidence. Linguists who reject Chomsky's ideas, however, are trying to offer alternatives or to go beyond Chomsky. They are not turning back to Saussure. My point is not that Chomsky is right, but that Saussure — and Lacan — are wrong.

Chomsky is not being unduly harsh when in *Language and Mind* he calls Saussure's linguistics an «impoverished and thoroughly inadequate conception of language» (20). A theory (like Saussure's) that language understanding is purely semantic, reports Mitchell Marcus, is «fundamentally inadequate to process the full range of natural language» and «held by no current researchers, to my knowledge» (254-55). In writing this essay, for example, I had trouble finding linguistic texts that even refer to Saussure. «Wrong on a grand scale», writes cognitive linguist Mark Turner (12) of Saussure's linguistics (12). And it has elicited wrong film and literary theory on a grand scale. One can find dozens of books of literary theory bogged down in signifiers and signifieds, but only a handful that refer to Chomsky.

It will be said — it has been said to me by Lacanian friends — that this objection to Lacan, that he uses an outmoded and false linguistics, does not count because Lacan only uses Saussure. Saussure is only a metaphor in Lacan's thinking.

I find this justification unconvincing for two reasons. First, it does not fit our use of metaphor. When we use a metaphor to understand something, we use something we understand well to understand something we understand less well. We take an idea from a well-understood «source domain» to understand a more puzzling «target domain». If I say LIFE IS A JOURNEY, I use something I am familiar with and understand quite well, journeys, to understand something more mysterious, life. I can then model difficulties in my life as obstacles in a path or choices as forks in a road, and so on. Even so simple a metaphor can become quite sophisticated as in Robert Frost's well-known lines,

> Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
> I took the one less traveled by,
> And that has made all the difference.

But this is not what Lacan does when he uses Saussure. He uses a still-mysterious subject, language, to understand a subject that Freud and many others have made understandable,

unconscious processes. Rather than clarify an opacity in psychoanalysis, he mas made it more opaque and esoteric.

Furthermore, his account of his source domain, language, is wrong.What happens to our use of a metaphor to explore an unknown if the source term is an error or an illusion? For example, suppose our original notion of journeys is that they are all in elevators, not across roads or toward destinations. What happens then even to a familiar metaphor like LIFE IS A JOURNEY? It stops making sense. Ideas of crossroads or destinations do not help us understand life at all. The same is true of Lacan's use of Saussure: it does not help us understand unconscious processes at all — or at least no better than Freud's and others' direct accounts.

It has also been said to me, particularly by French analysts who say that now Lacan has been «passed», that Lacan is only important in that he brought France to an awareness of psychoanalysis. He could not have done so except by using Saussure and the structural linguistics popular when Lacan began to make a difference in French intellectual life. I find this justification as odd as the other. We are to take Lacan seriously as a thinker because he is a popularizer? Further, to what kind of psychoanalysis has he led French psychoanalysis, some French psychoanalysts, that is? To a psychoanalysis which is more philosophy than psychology. To abstract and metaphysical reasoning far removed from clinical experience. And that brings me to Lacan's second trouble, his psycholinguistics.

Lacan presents psycholinguistic problems as well as linguistic. Even if Chomsky were all wrong, Lacan has made a still more fundamental error in psychologizing Saussure's account of language. Over and over again, Lacan claims that linguistic entities are in fact psychological entities. The most notorious instance where he converts a linguistic entity to a psychological one is, of course, with signifier and signified. Lacan identifies the signifier pretty closely with the conscious and Saussure's signified with Freud's unconscious. Then the linguistic *barre* that Saussure posited between signifier and signified Lacan equates with Freud's repression.

The essence of Freud's discovery of psychoanalysis is, Lacan writes,

> that the displacement of the signifier determines the subjects in their acts, in their destiny, in their refusals, their blind spots, their end and fate, their innate gifts and social acquisitions... without regard for character or sex, and that, willingly or not, everything that might be considered the stuff of psychology, kit and caboodle, will follow the path of the signifier (1956, 32; 1972, 60).

In effect, Lacan renders all psychic determinism as the single linguistic process of a signifier signifying other signifiers. Quite a role for a process that modern linguists doubt even exists!

What is fascinating to me about this maneuver is that it completely reverses the assumption that Saussure had to make when he started out to build his linguistics. Saussure knew that a psychological account of our use of language was beyond him or anybody else in the 1890s. As Saussure tells us at the beginning and end of his lectures, his aim was to model language in purely linguistic terms, free of psychology, sociology, or anthropology. «The true and unique object of linguistics is language studied in and for itself» (Cours 317; Course 232). He wanted a linguistics that would be independent of persons, that would account for language strictly as language, that would have nothing to do with real people.

For his purposes, he simply and briefly assumed an associationist psychology: «the psychological association of the [sound-]image with the corresponding concept.» (Cours 28; Course 12). Saussure deliberately dropped the human element out. Signifiers simply evoke signifieds automatically. In 1964 Chomsky noted (as I am doing) the links of this position to behaviorist psychology. «Radical behaviorist reductionism», he called it. Both

structural linguistics and behaviorist psychology avoid the notion of the autonomous individual.

Now comes Lacan, though, and creates it still more muddle by radically confusing levels. That is, Saussure was trying precisely *not* to say what goes on in your or my mind when we understand a word or make up a sentence. Lacan, however, applies Saussure's carefully apsychological theory to exactly what it avoided describing, namely what goes on in our minds.

Lacan substitutes signifying for association, memory, learning, and ultimately all other psychological processes. Lacan rests on a basic assumption that the signifier *does* things. The result is to create a psychoanalysis which is really, underneath, a radical stimulus-response behaviorism. The chain of signifiers, running along according to its own laws, determines the I, and the determinism is total, says Lacan.

This claim of Lacan's makes the philosophical error of using Saussure's formal description of language psychology as if it were an empirical one. He is also wrong on empirical grounds, however. That is, I cannot think of a serious psycholinguist who would agree with Saussure's or Lacan's account of the way we understand language. Instead, today's cognitive science shows that words do not simply imprint meanings on our minds, as Saussure thought. Words require considerable processing, for example, through schemata and feedback loops. Any elementary textbook in the psychology of reading or the psychology of language would make this clear. (For a sample of the literature in this field see, in the references below, Crowder; Dillon; Kintgen; Kolers; Laberge & Samuels; Meek; Smith; Spiro, Bruce, & Brewer; or Taylor & Taylor). The literature on the psychology of reading is very large, but, so far as I can see, it rests in recent years wholly on the concept of feedback or even more precisely defined processes applied by an active reader. The only justification for Saussure's and Lacan's idea that signifiers impose themselves on persons is the apparently compelling need of intellectuals to feel that the individual is not autonomous. Lacan's *linguisterie* is simply and unequivocally false by today's standards.

I have concentrated on Lacan's use of a false and outmoded linguistics, because it seems to me central to his system. But similar problems attach to another fundamental Lacanian concept: «the mirror stage».

The child, says Lacan, identifies with its mirror image — and Lacan insists on an actual mirror, not some «mirroring behavior» from a parent. That is how the child forms an ego (the illusion of autonomy). Lacan claims a uniform or continuing process from six to eighteen months. He claims that during this time the infant recognizes that the image in the mirror is an image of the infant himself. Lacan then goes on to claim that the infant makes a judgment, namely, that this image is unified and coherent, and that he is in control of it. Finally, Lacan claims that it is before language that the infant recognizes the image and makes the judgment that the image is more unified than he. Lacan writes of «This jubilant assumption of his specular image by the child at the *infans* stage, still sunk in his motor incapacity and nursling dependence... The I is precipitated in a primordial form, before... language restores to it... its function as subject» (1977, 1-2).

But what is the evidence for such a mirror stage? As usual, Lacan pays precious little attention to evidence. He cites a 1925 book by Wolfgang Köhler on the behavior of *chimpanzees*. He refers, without telling you what it is, to a philosopher, James Mark Baldwin's book on child development from 1903.

Now this may be reasonable for Lacan. After all, he was inventing the mirror stage in 1936, and he may not have had access to any better data. But what about Lacanians of today? I have yet to see a Lacanian refer to the careful videotapes of infant behavior by Daniel Stern (1971, 1974, 1977). Or Margaret Mahler's direct observation of nine infants' behavior with mirrors. Or indeed, the half-dozen or more of articles on infants' behavior

in front of mirrors that even a cursory search of *Psychological Abstracts* turns up (Amsterdam, Lewis 1985a, 1985b, Dixon, Gallup, Brooks-Gunn 1975, 1984, Kronen 1982).

When we look at these more sophisticated studies, we find that infants' behavior in front of mirrors is not a uniform process during the period from six to eighteen months, as Lacan claims. It is true that children uniformly show pleasure in playing with and responding to their own mirror images throughout the period from three to twenty-four months. What they respond pleasurably to is what is called «contingent behavior». That is, the child can make the image in the mirror move, the same way it enjoys swatting a mobile over its crib to make it move. Babies enjoy demonstrating that kind of power to cause consequences, and there is nothing illusory about such an ability. At age eight to nine months, the infant uses mirrors to reach for objects, for other people, and for itself. That is, the infant realizes that the image is an image, and it has some sense of the geometry of reflection. There are very precise experiments by Jeanne Brooks-Gunn and Michael Lewis, in which someone surreptitiously puts a rouge on the infant's nose. If the child touches its own nose when it sees the spot, then it knows the image in the mirror is an image of itself. Brooks-Gunn and Lewis's work shows that at fifteen months and not before, children begin to identify the image in the mirror as themselves. They then begin to exhibit self-conscious behavior, posing in front of the mirror, for example, not the jubiliation Lacan claims. In short, up to fifteen months, no children pass the rouge test, and by twenty-four months, all normal children have passed the rouge test.

This is quite a different picture from Lacan's. By the time children can recognize their mirror image as themselves, most of them have already started using language. Children seem nervous and self-conscious in front of this recognized image, not jubilant as Lacan claims. There is no evidence whatsoever that the child makes a judgment that this image is unified or in some sense more powerful or otherwise different from the child's self. Indeed, how could there be evidence for this? How could you get in the child's head and prove that it was making such a judgment? Anyway, how could the child see the image in the mirror as different from its self, for that is what the image is: an image of the child.

As for Lacan's notion of a mirror stage, then, the evidence runs rather the other way. As I say, perhaps Lacan knew no better in 1936. But why do present-day Lacanians go on quoting this mish-mash of conjecture and false evidence? The same question applies to Lacan's *linguisterie*. Why do Lacanians keep on talking about signifiers and signifieds and the system erected upon them? A simple look at the *Encyclopedia Brittannica* article on linguistics or any elementary textbook on linguistics or the psychology of reading would show that all this signifier-signified stuff is outmoded and wrong.

Let me leave you then with two things to remember. One, whenever you hear the terms signifier, signifying, or signified, in Saussure's sense, whenever you hear metaphor or metonymy in Jakobson's sense, you are dealing with an incorrect linguistics. You have found the weak point of the argument, and you can confidently attack it. To be sure, Saussure's all-or-nothing, sound-concept dichotomies have a certain modish appeal. They are certainly easier to understand than Chomsky's and post-Chomskyan models. But they are no substitute for the human element in explaining how we create and understand language. When Lacan gives to Saussure's formal model of language a psychological validity, Lacan builds his thinking on the idea of a self-running language, and finally that renders his thought profoundly anti-psychoanalytic.

That is the second thing I am asking you to remember, that Lacan is profoundly anti-psychoanalytic. He is a behaviorist. It is one thing for Saussure to drop out the human element. He did not want to try to do psychology. But what are we to say of a psychoanalyst who does not want to do psychology? And what can such a psychoanalysis contribute

to literature, philosophy, or, quite simply, our understanding of the world around and within us?

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Trouble in River City, or Lacan's «The Agency of the letter in the unconscious»

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As you all know, according to Freud, such phenomena as symptoms, dreams, daydreams, jokes, and slips of the tongue can lead us to unconscious material. So I'd like to begin my discussion of Lacan by sharing first a joke and then a daydream.

Several years ago, before Solidarity, when Polish jokes were still possible in the United States, there was a joke circulating that you may have heard: «What's the difference between an Italian-American Godfather and a Polish-American Godfather? The Italian Godfather makes you an offer you can't refuse; the Polish one makes you an offer you can't understand.» Keep that notion in the back of your mind for the length of this discussion: consider the Italian Godfather as Freud and the Polish one as Lacan.

So much for the joke. Now for the daydream. Let me confess that I have always seen Jacques Lacan as a song-and-dance man; I think he has a song in his heart. I envision him as the star of a Broadway musical comedy. A suitable role for him might be Professor Harold Hill, the Music Man, a glib city slicker traveling through small towns in the Midwest telling them they've got trouble, right here in River City, with a capital T, or maybe in his case, with an «objet petit a». And he's got the solution to their trouble; he sells them gleaning, expensive new band instruments and spiffy marching uniforms, promising he can turn their youngsters into fabulous musicians by Professor Hill's famous «think method». All they have to do is «think» what the notes signify, and *voilá*, seventy-six trombones.

But the bunko squad is hard on his heels. They want to drum him out of the profession for giving a bad name to travelling salesmen; he's already pulled this same Lacan game in fifteen different towns. Only one citizen of River City can see through his act: Marian the Librarian, a professor herself, in charge of all those books, some of which she's actually read. And she teaches piano; she knows her music and suspects this fast-talking slicker from out of town.

So the silver-tongued Professor Hill woos Miss Marian with a barrage of words, swearing by The Name of the Father he's been falsely defamed. He's sure it's just a misunderstanding, *méconnaissance*. But she replies, «I'm not Saussure.»

He pleads with her, «Just gaze deeply into my eyes as into a mirror and you'll see the truth.» And then he whispers in her ear her secret desire; he's the man who's going

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to give her what's she's always been yearning for: *jouissance*. She can't resist a man who talks dirty and talks French.

They embrace, and in the glorious finale the entire town gathers for the big parade down Main Street, led by the Professor and Marian, and the youngsters march, sporting their gorgeous new band uniforms and toting seventy-six trombones, with a hundred-and-ten cornets right behind. And they start to play by the «think method», and the music comes out a glorious cacophony in three registers: some real, some symbolic, but mostly imaginary.

So much by way of introductory joke and daydream. And now for something completely different.

«Le style», say the French, «c'est l'homme.» I am no expert on the works of Jacques Lacan and I am certainly no Lacanian. I am interested here, however, not in interpreting or evaluating the validity of his frequently baffling theories, his «think method», but in interpreting the man behind the theories by analyzing his characteristic style of argument.

Lacan was a complex, elusive individual. Like Freud, he was the abrasive, charismatic leader of a movement that has lasted beyond his lifetime and a man who founded a branch of contemporary psychoanalysis that continues to influence the mode of intellectual understanding of our time in fields including film, women's studies, and literary criticism. Certainly it's important to attempt to understand the character and intellectual style of this brilliant individual who has so affected our own intellectual style.

My investigation here is preliminary and my conclusions speculative. For purposes of brevity, I have chosen to focus on one key essay from Lacan's voluminous works, «The agency of the letter in the unconscious or reason since Freud» from *Écrits*, with occasional comparisons to *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*. But I assume, with Norman Holland, that each of us has a characteristic identity theme, a style of apprehending and of living our lives which shapes our reading and writing, and that that style can be glimpsed even in a fragment of text. So perhaps a close analysis of more of Lacan's writings or of his biography might bear out some of my tentative conclusions. Or perhaps I am revealing only my own method of reading rather than Lacan's and projecting my own prejudices and fantasies onto his text.

I am working here with flawed translations by Alan Sheridan; one reviewer says Sheridan «has got Lacan's prose out of French but barely into English» (Wollheim 36). Nevertheless, the vast majority of Lacan's American readers know him only in this translation.

Lacan's style is daunting. He argues not through clinical evidence and close reasoning but through playful, gnomic remarks, poetic metaphor, tossing out provocative theses and often leaving the links between ideas obscure. This has created a field day for his adherents, who are forced to interpret his remarks not so much as intellectual discourse but rather as poetry; thus all the arguments between Lacanians as to what he truly meant. So I too will read Lacan's text as both intellectual discourse and poem, and look at some of his rhetorical devices and characteristic words and metaphors.

Lacan in print is a complex character, and in the single essay «The agency» there are many different Lacans to attract or repel us. I am going to discuss a number of them: Lacan the Literary Critic, the Sadist, the Scientist, the Genius, the Prophet, the Master, the Seeker after Truth, the Liberator, The Rebel, The Snob, The Warrior, and finally, perhaps most significant of all, Lacan the Pisser.

Why has Lacan, a French psychiatrist, succeeded so well in making inroads among contemporary American literary critics? Perhaps because of his style they take him as one of their own. In «The agency of the letter», we sense immediately that we are in the presence of a highly cultured, learned speaker: there are plays on words in several languages, quotations from Freud in German, references to the linguistics of Jakobson and Saussure, and allusions to a wide variety of world literature, including Leonardo da Vinci, Swift, Victor Hugo,

Paul Valéry, St. Augustine, the Bible, Holderlin, and Kierkegaard, among others. The density of literary allusion and especially the *difficulty* of the style reassure contemporary literary critics. In literature and language departments over the past twenty years, difficult style — knotty syntax, a proliferation of newly minted jargon, and obscure allusions — has been taken as a guarantee of truth and brilliance. On the contrary, a clear, straightforward style becomes suspect, associated with simplemindedness. Sometimes we mistake pretentiousness for profundity, perhaps forgetting that Freud's writing, while as learned as Lacan's, is not difficult to grasp and has communicated clearly to millions, even in translation.

Granted, sometimes writing (such as philosophy or physics) must be difficult, and our efforts to struggle with it are eventually rewarded with understanding. But Lacan's ideas when summarized are not that difficult, so that his prose seems deliberately obscurantist, an attempt to baffle his audience. Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, author of *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis*, told me that Lacan's prose at first nauseated her, and that it has taken her years to begin to understand him.[1] Other expert Lacanians such as Jane Gallop and Shoshana Felman admit that they still do not understand Lacan, but they go on to see this frustrated understanding as not a *defect* in his writing but a *virtue*, as if somehow not understanding were the point of reading him.[2] Students to whom I have assigned Lacan have come away similarly frustrated. I would remind you of what Freud taught: trust your frustration. Pay attention to your feelings as you read Lacan. Why does he establish such a sadistic relationship to his readers? What is the baffling screen of his rhetoric denying us?

Dr. Ross McElroy, a psychiatrist at the University of Florida, once made a remark that stuck in my mind: «Remember that the patient frequently tries to do to you what was done to him.» By establishing himself as elusive master and us as frustrated students, is Lacan trying to relive or rectify a past object relationship, to do to us what was done to him? How do we transact this? How do we incorporate or defend against him? I can only begin to speculate about that here.

Let me give you two examples from «The agency» of what I see as Lacan's perverse difficulty; all I noted in the margin for each passage was a series of question marks:

> We can symbolize them by first:
>
> $$f(s...S')S \cong S(-)s$$
>
> that is to say, the metonymic structure, indicating that it is the connexion between signifier and signified that permits the elision in which the signifier installs the lack-of-being in the object relation, using the value of «reference back» possessed by signification in order to invest it with the desire aimed at the very lack it supports (164).

And second:

> Of course this limits me to being there in my being only in so far as I think that I am in my thought; just how far I actually think this concerns only myself and if I say it, interests no one (165).

I would be happy to be instructed in the possible meaning of these passages, but I simply want to note here a few aspects of his style.

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[1] I would especially like to thank Ellie Ragland-Sullivan, Henry Sullivan, Robert Silhol, David Willbern, and Norman Holland for their writings, lectures, or remarks in conversation for helping me to clarify my ideas about Lacan.

[2] Jane Gallop writes, «I have come to believe Lacan's text impossible to understand fully, impossible to master — and thus a particularly good illustration of everyone's inevitable castration in language»(20). See also Shoshana Felman, 21-44. William Kerrigan comments on Gallop and Felman, «It is defensible to say that 'frustrated understanding... is the effect of reading Lacan.' The argument becomes an excuse and an occasion for praise when it is assumed... that this effect was the author's intention»(999).

First, the former passage is rendered opaque by both knotty syntax and a very high level of abstraction. Abstractions such as «the signifier» are busily doing things to people, «installing» like plumbers a «lack-of-being» (whatever that is) in «the object relation» (which one? whose?). The characteristic movement in Lacan is always a displacement onto the symbolic, onto the sign. Language gets obscured by more language, until we lose track of what he is really supposed to be talking about: human beings, bodies, sexuality, and feelings, all the messy stuff of psychology — something we never lose sight of when reading Freud. In Lacan, people get turned into the bloodless «subject of a signifier».

Second, Lacan's mathematical formulas are guaranteed to snow most literary critics, who deal generally in vague, sloppy generalizations and are inordinately impressed with the appearance of scientific rigor. Well, two can play this game, so I hereby offer my own formulas (check the footnote for an explanation):[3]

$$T \cong P = P + O + O + L$$
$$T \cong P = \Psi(L)$$

Lacan is one writer who makes no bones about his genius. He reveals his grandiose self-concept not so much in «The agency» as in his other writings. For example, in *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, he compares his expulsion from the International Psychoanalytic Association to the excommunication of Spinoza and he also likens himself to Picasso: «I have never regarded myself as a researcher. As Picasso once said, to the shocked surprise of those around him — I do not seek, I find» (7).[4] Apart from Lacan's own desire to shock and surprise, the passage also reveals a strong streak of arrogance.

Despite his disregard for mere research, Lacan considers himself to know far more than others in his field, to his credit and their shame: «our approach will provide a contrast to those who boldly venture into the terrain with incomplete and flimsy references» (*Four Concepts* 19). His disregard for authority extends to most of his fellow psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, with the notable exception of Freud, whose name he constantly invokes and links with his own.

Lacan presents grandiose claims that he is the one real disciple who has understood Freud and will return us to the truth of Freud's discovery: «any technique that bases its claim on the mere psychological categorization of its object is not following this path, and this is the case of psychoanalysis today except in so far as we return to the Freudian discovery» («The agency» 174).

To paraphrase the Muslims: «There is no God but Freud, and Lacan is his prophet.» As prophet, Lacan sprinkles «The agency» with religious imagery. He mentions «the piety of a group of his [Saussure's] disciples» who transcribed Saussure's lectures and had them published (149), an obvious parallel to the piety of Lacan's own disciples. And he refers elsewhere in the essay to «the heresy», «the language of its devotees» (150), and «religious hypocrisy» (175).

As Prophet, Lacan is something of a Zen master, teaching via paradox: «I think where I am not, therefore I am where I do not think» and «I think of what I am where I do not think to think» (166). As with his mathematical formulas, this is an intimidating parlor game which is really quite easy to play. Let me supply a paradox of my own invention: «I am where I am not, which is why I am not here.» I encourage you to manufacture

[3] The first formula translates as: «Trouble (with a capital T) rhymes with P, which stands for POOL» (courtesy of Meredith Willson, *The Music Man* 30). The second formula means: «Trouble (with a capital T) rhymes with P, which stands for Psychoanalysis (according to Lacan).»

[4] See Crews on «Lacan's disdain for corroboration.» Lacan never bothers to verify Freud's concepts or his own through «clinical trial and error» (169).

your own pseudo-profound paradoxes *à la Lacan*; I'm certain you can quickly invent bafflegab just as puzzling as his.

Thus far I have dealt briefly with Lacan the Literary Critic, the Sadist, the Scientist, the Genius, and the Prophet. Perhaps underlying these disparate figures in «The agency» is Lacan the Master. The Master is the one who is going to reveal to us the Truth, and the Truth shall set us free. «True», «truth», and «truths» is repeated *nineteen times* in the essay, plus synonyms such as «veracity» (147) and «authentic» (171). In opposition to these words, «false» is repeated three times (147, 157, 173) and «error» three times (150, 153, 158), along with many related terms, including «méconnaissance», «misconstrued», «misunderstood», «confused», «confusing», «illusion», «deluded», «deceive», «dishonest», and «lie» (148, 150, 160, 162, 163, 164, 166, 172, 173, 174). As Seeker after Truth, Lacan seems to battle like Spenser's Knight against the Blatant Beast of Error, the thousand-headed monster. He says that his discourse is not intended for those of «false identity» (whatever that means) (147) and he dismisses «false» doctrines (157) and «the error of seeking the spirit in the letter» (158).

Lacan tries to win us over by persuading us that Freud is correct and sincere and that Lacan by association is equally correct and sincere; and furthermore, that Freud has been crucially misunderstood by all previous interpreters, who have strayed from «the truth» through self-delusion, errors, or deliberate deceit. If we grant Lacan his mastery, we do so because we suppose him alone to know the truth and all others to be confused or lying. Nevertheless, when anyone protests so much and so often that he alone is in possession of «the Truth», I begin to suspect that he is covering something up. I start to think of him as «Honest John Lacan», the used-car salesman, or the Reverend John Lacan telling us to send in those dollars if we believe in Jesus. And if you see a grandiose self-concept linked with conspiracy theories about the Band of Liars versus the Teller of Truth, you also begin to suspect something else: Paranoia.

In his rhetorical stance in «The agency», only Lacan the Liberator can free us from the misunderstanding of Freud which has cast us into mental servitude. Thus he prefaces the essay with a quotation from Leonardo da Vinci's «Of Children in Swaddling Clothes», with its image of «Women as well as men tightly bound with stout bonds around their arms and legs» (146). This establishes one of the major motifs of Lacan's essay, since «The Agency» is filled with references to «slave» (148), «auction block» (153), «servitude» (158, 167), «oppressive» (153), «bow» (167, 168), «imprisoned» (155), and «trap» (172). Opposed to the images of bondage are ones of freedom and mastery: «sovereign» (167, 175), «freed» (163), «liberation» (162), and, above all, «revolution» (149, 174).

There is an ambivalence, however, in the rhetoric of Lacan the Liberator, so that I question whether he really means to free us or simply to replace our bondage with another kind of servitude under his tutelage. In the introduction to «The agency», he mentions «the kind of tightening up that I like in order to leave the reader no way out than the way in, which I prefer to be difficult» (146). Lacan's ambivalent imagery of slavery and freedom reminds me of a passage in Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*:

> Then in my mind's eye I see the bronze statue of the college Founder, the cold Father symbol, his hands outstretched in the breathtaking gesture of lifting a veil that flutters in hard, metallic folds across the face of a kneeling slave; and I am standing puzzled, unable to decide whether the veil is really being lifted, or lowered more firmly into place; whether I am witnessing a revelation or a more efficient blinding (36).

Lacan the Liberator is intimately connected to Lacan the Rebel, the guerilla warrior eager to enlist us in his revolutionary cadre fighting on the side of Truth and Freedom.

He's a regular Nelson Mandela. Freudianism, says Lacan, «founded an intangible but radical revolution» (174), and linguistics too constitutes «a revolution in knowledge» (149). By linking the two, Lacan hopes to foment a new revolution.

He urges us to join him by promising us *difficulty* like Churchill offering blood, sweat, toil, and tears, or a Marine recruiter promising boot camp on Parris Island. Lacan as Snob flatters the reader by offering him or her entry into an elite, exclusive intellectual fraternity. His discourse, he announces, is not intended for those of «false identity» but only for «the most subtle minds» or «informed minds» (147). Later he questions «whether I wish to be heard by the mob or the few» (156). Lacan disdains the mob and, by making his remarks deliberately difficult, addresses only the few. He often refers slightingly to popular art — «burlesque» (156), «sheer buffoonery» (159), «comical legerdemain» (170), and «opera buffa» (173) — as if eager to distinguish his higher form of art.

Lacan is usually on the attack. His language is constantly filled with violent imagery from boxing or combat, surprising for an intellectual essay with such an austere title as «The agency of the letter in the unconscious or reason since Freud.» Lacan the Warrior uses in the one essay such terms as «ideological warfare» (152), «plan of battle» (172), «unequal battle» (175), «combat ritual» (172), «war is war» (165), «my little jab» (148), «low blow» (151), «fallen under the blow» (169), «Peter hits Paul» (154), «persecution» (158), «obscene, ferocious» (167), «kill» (158), «die» (167), «cutting» (161), «mutilate» (162), «demolished fragments» (168), «hacking to pieces» (172), and «annihilated» (157). One wonders whether one is reading Jacques Lacan or Conan the Barbarian. The aggression revealed in the language may help explain the emphasis in Lacan's theory on cutting, splits, lacks, and castration: His vision of people and of the world is not one of wholeness or integration but of mutilation.

Lacan's stance toward existence is aggressive and adversarial. In a fundamental sense, Lacan is *pissed* off at the world. This is the last Lacan I wish to speak of, Lacan the Pisser, the one who may explain all the others.

Perhaps the most revealing set of images in «The agency» center around two apparently unrelated concepts: urination and fire.

He spends two pages early in the essay concerned with urination. First he gives us a drawing of two doors, one labeled «Ladies» and the other «Gentlemen». The effect wittily illustrates his point about the slippage of the signified. But Lacan does not leave the point there. He goes on to elaborate half-jokingly on «the laws of urinary segregation» (151) and imagines the reactions of a short sighted person peering at the doors (presumably Lacan would congratulate himself on being the *opposite* of short sighted). Then, significantly, he gives us the only personal association of the entire essay, another joke connected with bathrooms, more toilet humor. He mentions a childhood memory of «the person whose word I most trust» (could it be Lacan himself, disguising his own recollection so as to distance himself from all this toilet humor?) (151). The recollection is a childhood memory (really a joke) about a little boy and girl arguing, based on the signs in the train station, over whether the train has stopped at the town of «Ladies» or «Gentlemen» (152). He is actually writing about the discovery of sexual difference, but in a typical Lacanian strategy, he moves away from the sexual to the symbolic, to language.

The references to urination do not cease there. A few paragraphs later, he talks about «indignation and scorn» which come «hissing out below» (152). The disguised metaphor seems to suggest for Lacan (as for many others) an unconscious connection between pissing and expressing disgust and scorn. To urinate on someone is to demean or degrade them. Not surprising then that Lacan says later on that «if you are a poet» (and Lacan certainly considers himself one of that highest form of being, a poet) «you will produce for your

own delight a continuous stream» (157). The stream is supposed to be one of «metaphors», but the concealed reference to urination seems to be there also.

Lacan's essay expresses both *delight* at his own metaphoric cleverness and *disgust and scorn* for his adversaries. Prodigious urination is a feat which both delights a child and can represent a release of his disgust and scorn. Here I am reminded of the notorious episode in Mailer's *Armies of the Night* in which he makes comic capital out of a «45-second piss.»

What then is the connection with all Lacan's metaphors of fire? These metaphors he does not have to disguise since fire is not as taboo a subject as urine. Throughout the essay he keeps referring to «the creative spark» of the metaphor (155, 157, 158, 166); it is perhaps the central image of «The Agency». And when he approaches Freud, he writes, «But haven't we felt for some time now, that, having followed the ways of the letter in search of Freudian truth, we are getting very warm indeed, that it is burning all about us?» (158) Such imagery of burning associated with Freud recurs in Lacan's writing. In *The Four Fundamental Concepts*, Lacan repeatedly cites Freud's dream, «Father can't you see I'm burning?»: «This sentence is itself a firebrand — of itself it brings fire where it falls» (*Four Concepts* 59).

These images of sparks and urine are perhaps connected, for he refers to the spark as «passing» («The agency» 166) and quotes Valéry's poem about a «shower of sparks» (155). The associations could be with passing water and golden showers.

But I need not strain so to make the connection. Freud provides it for us in his essay on «The Acquisition and Control of Fire», where he makes explicit the primitive connection between fire and urination and reinterprets the myth of Prometheus, the fire-bringer. According to Freud, «in order to gain control of fire, men had to renounce the homosexually-tinged desire to put it out with a stream of urine» (185), an odd idea which has since been corroborated by studies of the connection between bedwetting and pyromania (Holland 208). There may be some unconscious connection between the burning sensation associated with urination and the idea of an actual fire.

In *The I*, Norman Holland writes about the «projective» or «urethral character», who is impulsive, perhaps sadistic or self-assertive, ambitious and antisocial (207-08). The urethral character is concerned with mastery, personal power over self and world, and symbolizes primarily through abstractions. «Often they are charmers or manipulators, indifferent to the consequences for either the charmer or the charmed» (208). What do we have here except a sketch of Jacques Lacan the pied piper of the intellectuals? Where else is this malevolent charmer coming from who has so enraptured certain American literary critics? For me, the many aspects of Lacan suggested above — such as the Critic, the Sadist, the Genius, the Prophet, the Master, the Rebel, the Snob, and the Warrior — all cohere if we view him as a projective or urethral character: Lacan the firebrand.

To have said this is only a starting point. There must be millions of people with urethral tendencies as a strong component of their characters, and surely some of them must be authors, some even psychoanalysts. How do we account for the success of Lacan? I can only speculate. Perhaps it is that his «burning ambition» allows us to give vent to our own desires to command intellectual territory. We are willing to enter the labyrinth of his prose and submit to his sadistic mastery for the promise of entry into a revolutionary elite. The more difficult and torturous his prose, the more obscure, the more we commend ourselves at the end for having survived the Lacanian boot camp. Perhaps the slogan of his disciples should be similar to that of the U.S. Marines: «The Few. The Proud. The Lacanians.»

Although some may, through elaborate mental gymnastics, extract consolation from Lacan's bleak psychology and discover value in his intellectual system and his emphasis on The Word, I cannot understand a psychiatrist who seems anti-humanistic, who establishes

a sadistic stance toward others, and who seems to have little use for people.[5] I am sad and angry to see so many fellow critics falling for this Music Man, this Lacan Man. I do not think he has much to teach me, and I would not put myself as a patient in his hands.

In the final sentence of «The agency», Lacan announces that his purpose is «to rouse you to indignation» (175). He has certainly succeeded in my case, except that instead of directing my indignation against the targets he intended, I have turned it against the author of *Écrits*. How do I feel about Lacan? You might say I'm *pissed off*.

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[5] See Kerrigan: «Few readers of Lacan doubt that whatever else be said of the imperial expositor enthroned in his texts he is for sure, to put the language of the streets on it, a sonuvabitch» (998-99). «In Lacan, there are no people, just theory» (1002).

AMERICAN LITERATURE

Proceedings of the 7th International Conference on Psychology and Literature: 21-26

The Patterns of Narcissism in Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden* (*)

ERIK NAKJAVANI (**)

«C'est la fontaine perilleuse,
Tant amere et tant venimeuse
Qu'el tua le bel Narcisus
Quant il se mirait iquisus.»

Jean de Meung — *Le Roman de la Rose* (1. 20409 ff.)

«come specchio l'uno a l'autro rende.»

Dante — *Purgattorio* XV, 75

A close reading of some of Hemingway's short stories and novels would reveal that they offer ample evidence of fictional explorations of perversions. For the sake of precision and consistency, I use here the term «perversion» in a strictly psychoanalytic sense as «Deviation from the 'normal' sexual act when this is defined as coitus with a person of the opposite sex directed towards the achievement of orgasm by means of genital penetration» (Laplanche and Pontalis, 306). I include in this category Hemingway's short stories such as «Mr. and Mrs. Elliot», «A Simple Inquiry», «The Sea Change», «The Mother of A Queen», «Homage to Switzerland», and «A Lack of Passion». These stories probe overtly or covertly either homosexuality or lesbianism. It would also comprise novels such as *The Sun Also Rises*, *To Have and Have not*, and *For Whom the Bells Tolls*, which deal partially but significantly with various modes of sexual perversions. It is, however, in the posthumously published novel *The Garden of Eden* that Hemingway most extensively treats the theme of androgyny, bisexuality, and, above all, in my opinion, narcissism.

My thesis in this paper is that narcissism is the constitutive element of what may be considered as sexual perversion in Hemingway's fiction as a whole. Since our allotted time

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is limited, I only offer the novel *The Garden of Eden* as an example that, I believe, justifies my thesis and offers a general model for further study.

We are all aware of the Neo-Freudian theories of narcissism, particularly those advanced by Heinz Kohut and Otto Kernberg. Here I adhere more or less to Freud's definition, so aptly encapsulated by Jean Laplanche, that «narcissism is a libidinal investment of the self, a love of the self... which occurs... through a libidinal cathexis of the ego... [and] is inseparable from the very constitution of human ego» (67). I believe this adherence is consistent with what remains of Freud in definitions of narcissism offered by Kohut, and particularly by Kernberg.

The myth of androgyny has so far constituted the main critical foci of Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden*; indeed of his entire work and personality, if one follows the line of analysis initiated by Kenneth Lynn (*Hemingway*) and more recently by Mark Spilka (*Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny*). But no attempt has yet been made to read the myth of androgyny in its connection with Hemingway's work in the context of its adjacent phenomenon of bisexuality and its subjacent and foundational phenomenon of narcissism. In what follows, I delineate briefly the boundaries of androgyny, bisexuality, bisexual fantasy, and narcissism in the light of myth and psychoanalysis. Subsequently, I shall establish a relationship between them, showing how narcissism emerges as the original psychic matrix of them within psychoanalysis. Finally, I apply this constitutive definition of narcissism as a critical model to the two main characters in *The Garden of Eden*, Catherine and her husband David Bourne, and a secondary character, Marita.

I

Let us begin with androgyny. As a myth, «The Hidden River of Androgyny» — as Carolyn Heilbrun has pointed out by this title and also the content of the first chapter of her work *Toward A Recognition of Androgyny*(3-45) — has no doubt run through human history. In her analysis of the various myths of androgyny, Marie Delcourt also finds an ancient androgynous dialectic that synthesizes all primary binary elements such as body and spirit, and heaven and earth (124). More specifically, the myth of androgyny — from Greek andro (male) and gyn (female) — posits itself as the ground of the possibility of the simultaneous integration of the male and female characteristics in human species.

However, as integrative and reparative as the myth of androgyny appears to both these writers, for psychoanalysis, it remains a problematic myth, and a troubling psychosexual mode of being. Psychoanalytic theory and practice equate the androgynous fantasy as an asexual psychic construct, and regard it as a refusal of sexual identity, as a desire to return sexually to zero degree, and, finally, as a struggle to escape the neurosis that results from asking the question, «Am I man or woman?» (Schneiderman, 59).

The French psychoanalyst André Green, designates the androgynous individual as «*le genre neutre*» («neuter gender») in his treatise *Narcissisme de vie, narcissisme de mort* (214-221). Since psychoanalysis identifies sexuality with sexual difference, it regards androgyny as the effacement of identity. Following Green's formulation of primary narcissism as a model and extending it to the problematic of androgyny, in what one may call the economics, or even better, the curious mathematics of androgyny, $1+(-1)=0$. In other words, androgynous fantasy begins by incorporating the Other into One by making the additive quality of the operation in reality subtractive in order to attain the zero degree of sexuality or asexuality. Quite obviously, its aim is to efface the concept of gender distinctions. Adhering to the same logic, feminist critic Elaine Showalter refers to the myth of androgyny as «the sphere of the exile and the eunuch» (285).

Psychoanalytic theory also establishes a close connection between androgyny and narcissism.

Elaborating on Freud's definition of narcissism, Green defines it in its psychoanalytic context as «the desire for oneness, a unitary Utopia, an ideal totalization that everything finally puts in question: primarily, the unconscious» (55).[1] Defined as such, narcissism and androgyny approximate one another. The former precedes the latter and subsumes it as its psychic foundation.

It would seem to me that the only basic difference between the two psychic structures as such would be in the impossible mathematics of their libidinal investment: $1+1=1$ in narcissism rather than 0, as is the case of the androgyne. Put differently, the additive psychic process never takes place. What appears to be a phenomenon of psychic assimilation is no more than a devouring of the Other, a psychic act of appropriation of the other by a form of psychic cannibalism. The whole psychic operation here is one of regression from object-libido to the narcissistic substrate.

As Green has shown, androgyny and narcissism also join one another on the plane of another myth, that of the Phoenix, which is «androgyne, self-generating and immortal» (220). Thus androgyny is a call back to the completeness, self-sufficiency, and inaccessibility of primary narcissism.

In distinction to androgyny, psychoanalysis defines bisexuality as an ensemble of assimilative erotic male-female fantasies and practices. It would appear that bisexuality accepts responsibility for the profound heterosexuality of the human species, both in fantasy and practice. Its goal is the successive fulfillment and enjoyment of the differentiated male and female sexual potentialities in one and the same person. By definition, unfailingly, in the mathematics of bisexuality $1+1=2$, but within the same individual ego — which represents at the same time double idealization and identification in self-love or self-regard [*Selbstachtung*], as Freud referred to it in his essay «On Narcissism» (AGS, 121). Hence its basic connection with secondary narcissism.

Freud has also shown in *The Ego and the Id*, prior to the Oedipus complex, there is identification with the father and the movement of libido toward the mother (21). But as Green reminds us, psychoanalysis declares that «every individual, whatever his [or her] sexual identity... combines within him the sexuality of both his [or her] progenitors» (OPM, 263). Green is in agreement with Freud, who equally writes of the «unmistakably bisexual disposition» of the human animal (CID, 52, nº 3). Freud further adds that «... if we assume it as a fact that each individual seeks to satisfy both male and female wishes in his sexual life, we are prepared for the possibility that those [two sets of] demands are not fulfilled by the same object, and that they interfere with each other unless they can be kept apart and each impulse guided into a particular channel that is suited to it» (CID, 52).

Consequently, bisexuality doubles the number of binary narcissistic idealizations and identifications. In a letter to Fliess, Freud stated that «I am accustoming myself to the idea of regarding every sexual act as a process in which four persons are involved» (Origins, 289); which, incidentally, provides the basis for a phenomenology of bisexuality. This sexual combination roughly approximates Carl Jung's anima and animus archetypes, and, in its narcissistic implications, Jacques Lacan's well known «le stade du miroire» or «mirror stage» (*Ecrits*, 93-100). As medical psychologist John Money points out, «we are all, in a literal sense, bisexual» (33). Nonetheless, psychoanalysis also regards bisexual practice, the effort to be alternately and successfully both completely male and completely female alternatively, as fraught with tension, frustration and failure[2]. Freud himself admits that «The theory of bisexuality is still surrounded by many obscurities...» (CID, 52). In

[1] All translation from André Green's *Narcissisme de vie, narcissisme de mort* are mine.

[2] For a case history of the difficulties encountered by analysts see *Narcissisme de vie, narcissisme de mort*, pp. 214-218.

Shakespeare's language: «Thus I play in one person many people/And none contended...» (Richard II V, 5, 31).[3]

II

Now let us apply the preceding definitions to the triangular relationship between Catherine Bourne, her husband David, and a girl called Marita in *The Garden of Eden*. It would seem to me significant to point out that such an application presupposes the general theoretical notion of the text as a space of unlimited readings. Accordingly, I consider *The Garden of Eden* as a particular, if unusually radical, example of this notion. For me, the three existing manuscripts of the novel constitute: first, the writer's own readings of his story in the process of telling it; then the posthumous publication of the novel, which, in itself, makes up an extensive selective reading of the original texts — this time by an editor. Any valid critical model — even if applied partially, as I intend to do — needs to deal simultaneously with the published text and, at least, with the holograph of the longest version of the novel, from which Tom Jenks, the editor, culled the published manuscript.

The published version of *The Garden of Eden* traces the events during the honeymoon of a young couple, David Bourne, a writer, and his wife Catherine Bourne in Grau du Roi (on the French Mediterranean), Biarritz, Hendaye, Madrid, and, finally, la Napoule, near Cannes. Catherine develops bisexual fantasies during this time, gets progressively shorter boyish haircuts, successively bleaches her hair almost silver white, and engages in bisexual fantasies and practices with David. The exact nature of their bisexual practices remains unclear and becomes a subject of speculation and interpretation by the reader. In la Napoule, Catherine's bisexual fantasies take on a distinctly lesbian turn and result in a ménage-à--trois that involves a younger woman, Marita, with whom Catherine has fallen in love. Eventually, Catherine suffers a nervous-breakdown and in a fit of jealousy burns David's unfinished manuscript, causing David to develop a writer's block. Afterward, she leaves David and goes to Paris. David overcomes his inability to write, finishes a short story about an elephant hunt during the Maji-Maji rebellion in the 1900s, in which he comes to grips with the memory of his father. The novel ends as a new heterosexual love story between David and Marita begins.

I would say that the most easily discernible shared characteristic of Catherine, David and Marita in the novel is their narcissism. Much of what may be called the erotics, dietetics and even esthetics of the parts of the novel which highlight these characters derive from their states of primary or secondary narcissism.

On the level of primary narcissism, there seems to be an equation of the body and ego or the self in this novel, in the broadest sense of these two entities. An instrument of sexual or gustatory gratification; an object of hypnotic fascination, clothed or naked, lovingly observed, appreciated, touched, and described; admired in its reflections in the other's eyes, in water and in mirrors; a subject of contemplation in sunlight, refracting surfaces, or aglow in darkness; a mode of sculptured flesh admired on land or in water; a corporeal space radically transformed in fantasy or in reality; the body makes itself manifest as an inescapable domain of desire and primary narcissistic preoccupation in *The Garden of Eden*.

Aptly condensed by Paul Ricoeur, Freud believed that «All our love-objects... are patterned on two archaic objects, the mother who bore us, nursed and cared for us, and our own body; anaclitic choice or narcissistic choice, our desire has, so to speak, no other choice» (445-446). The truth of the primary narcissism becomes manifest in the descriptive

[3] Quoted by André Green in an epilogue to *Narcissisme de vie, narcissisme de mort*, p. 8.

discourse that depicts David, Catherine and Marita as characters in *The Garden of Eden*. The body in this novel bears the indelible mark of the body as narcissistic object choice.

Catherine, David and Marita, in varying degrees, but through similar means, make this domain their own. But it is Catherine for whom narcissism gradually acquires the dimensions of a plenum. She convinces herself that «There is nothing except through yourself» (53). She remains hopelessly immured within the prison of her luxurious narcissistic fantasy life — a prison that offers at the same time both isolation and protection. «When you live outside yourself», states Catherine, «it is all dangerous. Maybe I'd better go back into our world, your and my world that I made up» (54). So Catherine's initial forays into bisexual fantasy and its accompanying physical transformations and unnamed practice(s) are permeated with a comforting narcissism.

In Grau du Roi, the first phase of Catherine's bisexual fantasies begins and results in the cropping of her hair as «short as a boy's» (GE 14-15) and the new way of making love to David, which is hinted at but remains unnamed. Her fantasies of being alternately girl and boy grow in intensity until they transform themselves into androgyny in la Napoule. There are the well-known repeated cutting and bleaching of her hair, the unusual deepening of her tan, her insistence on David's getting his hair bleached and cropped, because, she claims, «I want us to be just the same» (176). However, after getting his hair cut short and bleached to look exactly like Catherine's, David refuses to share her new androgynous fantasy and is astonished that he could have taken part in such a «silly» enterprise. «We did», answers Catherine, and ominously adds, «... we're damned now. I was and now you are» (178).

Catherine's growing androgynous fantasies generate her obsessive interest in publishing the history of the development of them that David is writing, which he refers to as «narrative». In this respect, one may say that she develops a kind of narratophilia. «She is a great publisher now», Marita observes. But she does so at the expense of burning, in a narcissistic rage, all other stories David has written in the same period. Furthermore, Marita accurately reports that «she's [Catherine has] given up sex. It doesn't interest her anymore. She doesn't know how it could ever have meant anything to her. But she may decide to have an affair with a woman if she ever takes it up again. There's quite a bit about another woman» (GE, 190-91). In the light of the discussion in part I of this paper, this outcome would not have been totally as unpredictable as it might have sounded otherwise.

I would suggest that psychoanalysis would regard her reported bisexuality, androgyny, troilism, and eventual homophilia in accordance with her fundamental narcissism (both primary and secondary). It would appear that the narcissist's inner voice constantly pleads: «Love the other only inasmuch as the other is also like you are and, therefore, as lovable as you are.» So for the narcissist and the androgyne, homophilia is no more than a preference for that which resembles the unified seductive self.

David shares Catherine's nascent bisexual fantasies, seemingly without much lasting effect. He feels no threat until her fantasies are no longer merely bisexual. However, David's narcissism is somewhat attenuated by his devotion to writing and the esthetic principles which he has set for himself as a writer. His esthetics of creative writing appears to be his saving grace. «I'm good on other people and on technical and tactical things», explains David to Marita. «... nobody knows about himself when he is really involved. Yourself isn't worth considering» (GE, 184). His advice to Catherine is, «Look at things and listen and feel» (54); in other words, go beyond the confines of the narcissistic self. Referring to his bisexual fantasy life with Catherine, he remarks, «This nonsense that we do is fun although I don't know how much of it is nonsense and how much is serious» (31). But he remains heterosexual, even homophobic. He balks at kissing Catherine when her fantasy about being a boy requires that he too play the role of a boy (67). David's friend, Colonel John Boyle, tells him: «Remember everything is right until it's wrong. You'll know when

it's wrong» (65). And David does know. Catherine's androgyny seems to delineate the final limit of David's own intersexual fantasies, beyond which he will not venture.

Initially, at least, one may characterize Marita as the practicing bisexual in the trio. Her psychic development moves counter to that of Catherine's; that is to say, it progresses from bisexuality to a growing heterosexuality. This tendency is perhaps due to her slightly younger age and to the lesser degree of narcissism in her psychic make-up. Marita's previous bisexuality and her burgeoning heterosexual interest in David render her immune to a full--blown narcissism and, therefore, androgyny. When accused by Catherine as being a «gamin», she replies «Perhaps I'm a gamin» (GE, 192). However, she goes on to say, «But I'm also more of a woman than you are Catherine» (GE, 192). At this stage, one may regard Marita as developing from ambisexuality to heterosexuality.

I suspect that for Hemingway's characters all aspiration to psychic oneness eventually fails to render whole and entire the broken landscape of their psyche, even in androgynous fantasy. Emerging from narcissism and joined by bisexuality, the dream of androgyny, too, fails in Hemingway's Garden of Eden. It becomes a nocturnal dream whose logical conclusion is the brutal waking up to diurnal reality of universal existential separation and aloneness. Hemingway's world is presided over not by the triumphant Phoenix but rather by the inconsolably lonely Narcissus, forever observing a seductive self-generated ideal beyond attainment.

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«Abjection» in Ernest Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*

DONALD VANOUSE (*)

«There are so many sorts of hunger. In the spring there are more. But that's gone now. Memory is hunger.»
Hadley (56—7)

«Everything good and bad left an emptiness when it stopped.»
Ernest (62)

In his memoir of life in Paris during the years 1921-1926, Hemingway explores issues which are clarified by Julia Kristeva's *Powers of Herror: An Essay on Abjection*. Throughout *A Moveable Feast*, Hemingway is concerned with relationships between what Kristeva calls «the clean and proper body» and the objects of need and desire. Furthermore, Hemingway indicates that responses to sex, food, alcohol and money encode analogues to the disciplines and hungers of the artist.

A Moveable Feast is a depiction of the modern, post-theocratic relationship between the creative self and the boundaries externalizing the abject which are, nevertheless, understood as a symbolic construct by which the self is known.

The memoir is not, however, simply the counterpointing of Hemingway's purity with the appetites and indulgences of those who are a part of his literary circle. The memoir explores the issues of need and want and desire. It is, in fact, a kind of compendium of appetites expressed and satisfied, of exquisite hungers, and of structures by which the needs and desires of the flesh are comprehended and the relations to the abject become visible: the self is glimpsed in the grief of a struggle at the uncertain borders of personal and artistic identity.

The opening chapter of the memoir «A Good Cafe on the Place St. Michel» introduces the theme of the clean and the unclean through depictions of two Parisian cafes.

The second paragraph of the book begins with an image of the abject: «The Cafe

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des Amateurs was the cesspool of the rue Mouffetard» (3). Hemingway develops this image with descriptions of the «squat toilets» of the neighborhood, the stench of the cesspools, and the brown and saffron trucks which pumped out the cesspools at night. Even in this immersion in the abject, however, there is a disconcerting beauty: «in the moonlight», he writes, the tank-wagons «wheeled and horse-drawn cylinders looked like Braque paintings» (4). Art in this instance appears to be what can be made of the encounter with abjection.

Hemingway then returns to comment on the Cafe as a human cesspool:

> No one emptied the Cafe des Amateurs, though, and its yellowed poster stating the terms and penalties of the law against public drunkenness was as flyblown and disregarded as its clients were constant and ill-smelling. (4)

The Cafe des Amateurs is slovenly with dirt and drunks and disregarded words. It seems to provide an image of the abject as that-which-can-be-left-outside the self or left behind when Hemingway walks through the rain to the «good cafe» on the Place St. Michel.

Once there, he drinks cafe au lait and works comfortably, writing about boyhood on a rainy, cold and windy autumn day in Upper Michigan. The «pleasant cafe, warm clean and friendly» (5), provides an environment which enables the «transplanted» writer to recreate the events and emotions of the earlier environment. A pretty girl with «rain freshened skin» enters the cafe and provides a muse-like presence, exciting him with an image of loveliness, desired and possessed by him as an artist, as he himself is possessed by his pencil and his writing. As he is concluding the Michigan story, he orders a drink because «the boys were drinking and this made me thirsty» (5). He feels «the good Martinique run warm [his] body and [his] spirit.»

Later, when discussing the over-stimulations and poisonings by alcohol which overcame Scott Fitzgerald, Hemingway states, «My training was never to drink after dinner nor before I wrote nor while I was writing» (174). The sacramental rum St. James, taken while he was writing «The Three Day Blow», violates his training, blurs the clear boundary between the abject and the clean and proper self of artistic achievement. In the story, the boys are drinking to blur their emotions and evade the meaning of their actions, particulary in regard to Nick's breaking-off of his relationship to Marjorie. Touching the place of their defilement seems to become, in Kristeva's terms, a «casting within himself the scalpel that carries out his separations» (8).

The memoir identifies the catastrophes in the structures by which the abject is maintained at the boundary of the self where creative space is possible.

After Hemingway quits working as a journalist, for example, there is a valorization of hunger. Not only does he insist that his perceptions are intensified by missing a meal, but he speculates that Cezanne must have been very hungry to have seen the world as he does in his magnificent paintings (69). Furthermore, being hungry is linked to the «lean» style which Hemingway was achieving in his fiction (96), and hunger is projected or discovered in his characterizations:

> I found that many of the people I wrote about had very strong appetites and a great taste and desire for food, and most of them were looking forward to having a drink. (101)

The writer's denials intensify his sensitivity to the hungers of his characters. At this point, Hemingway wrote «Big Two-Hearted River», a story in which Nick Adams attempts to cleanse himself of the war with a ritualized meal of freshly-caught trout.

Nevertheless, Hemingway calls himself a «dirty phony saint and martyr» after admitting his hunger to Sylvia Beach (72), and many instances of eating and drinking in *A Moveable Feast* expose corrupting or corrupted appetites.

Examples extend from the *eau de vie* which «loosened» the tongue at Gertrude Stein's(14),

through Fort Maddox Ford's absent-mindedness about what he was ordered to drink (84-5), to the extremes of disorientation in Scott Fitzgerald's eating and drinking throughout the memoir. A vivid linking of eating and corruption occurs when Hemingway recalls the two-dozen oysters Ernest Walsh ordered at an expensive cafe:

> I was wondering if he ate the flat oysters in the way the whores in Kansas City, who were marked for death always wished to swallow semen as a sovereign remedy against the con. (126)

Walsh is tubercular (has the con), and he is a manipulative and treacherous confidence--man. Indulging therapeutically in the expensive oysters marks his corruption.

Even the movements in space so characteristic of Hemingway's life appear to have been tactics for separating the self from the abject, for creating a boundary. In the first chapter, Hemingway defines the aesthetic technique which he calls «transplanting» of himself so that an earlier environment can be comprehended, delineated, written. Upper Michigan can be written about in Paris, and Paris, when it is known well enough, can be written «away from Paris», and «that was how it turned out eventually» (7). The increasing difficulty of such separations is indicated, however, in Mary Hemingway's prefatory note:

> Ernest started writing this book in Cuba in the autumn of 1957, worked on it in Ketchem, Idaho in the winter of 1958-1959, took it with him to Spain when we went there in April, 1959, and brought it back with him to Cuba and then to Ketchem in the late fall. He finished the book in the spring of 1960 in Cuba.

He then made some revisions in Ketchem in the fall of 1960. Such a pace of movement and continued creation could identify the writing as a casual element in a peripatetic life. But it seems likely that these «transplanting» are increasingly desperate separations expressive of what Kristeva identifies as «one by whom the abject exists»:

> A deviser of territories, languages, works, the *deject* never stops demarcating his universe whose fluid confines — for they are constituted of a non-object, the abject — constantly question his solidity and impel him to start afresh. A tireless builder, the deject is in short a stray. (8)

At the end of the first chapter, Hemingway and Hadley leave the autumnal «sadness of the city» of Paris for the clean, fresh snow of the mountains. This trip seems to parallel the trip to the mountains at the very end of the book. But at the end of the memoir, Hemingway's marriage to Hadley is destroyed by the corrupting influence of the rich people who followed them to the mountains. «Under the charm of these rich», he writes, «I was as trusting and stupid as a bird dog who wants to go out with any man with a gun, or a trained pig at a circus who has finally found someone who loves and appreciates him for himself alone» (209). The imagery indicates a «stray[ing] into the territories of the animal» (Kristeva, 12) by which the self become abject. In these last pages of the book, Hemingway returns to the theme exemplified in the defilements of the Cafe des Amateurs. He describes his reading to the rich from his manuscript novel as a collapse of his «functioning as a professional», and he uses the phrase twice in two sentences in a pattern of emphasis he learned from Gertrude Stein. This collapse of the clean and proper self corresponds to the defilements show in the portraits of other members of his literary circle in Paris.

This immersion in defilement and loss is not merely the result of the treacherous charm and self-indulgence which the wealthy Murphys bring to the mountains. Even before the «pilot fish» (John dos Passos) had brought the rich intruders, Pauline Pfeiffer had infiltrated the Hemingway household and the marriage. The narrative mentions this fact only after describing the corrupting influence of the rich. Kristeva observes,

> ... braided, woven and ambivalent, a heterogeneous flux marks out a territory that I can call my own because the Other having dwelt in me as *alter ego* points it out to me through loathing. (10)

Such a braided and interwoven relationship to the voice of the indwelling other also appears in the shifts in pronoun form which occur throughout the memoir. Most events are presented in the first person. But frequently, at nodes of thematic intensity, the narrative point-of-view shifts to the third person. The first such shift in pronoun form in the memoir presents a response to writer's block: «Do not worry. *You* have always written before and *you* will write now. All *you* have to do is write one true sentence. Write the truest sentence that *you* know» (12, Emphasis added). This marking of the proper territory of the self (by the indwelling Other) insists that writer's block results from an attempt to ignore or evade the truth.

A long passage on the «learning» achieved at the horse races is more direct as an expression of loathing. It concludes, «*You* knew many people finally, jockeys and trainers and owners and too many horses and too many things» (62, Emphasis added). At the racetrack, he learned not only that the horses were drugged with stimulants, but that his own involvement with the races had become a corrupt addiction to gambling. The third person pronoun is a technique for defining the self in loathing of the abject.

At the end of the memoir, the last instance of the third person pronoun describes the effects of the love-triangle including himself, Hadley and Pauline:

> So *you* live day by day and enjoy what *you* have and do not worry. *You* lie and hate it and it destroys *you* and every day is more dangerous, but *you* live day to day as in a war. (210, Emphasis added)

The pronoun provides a place to stand in defining the self overcome by abjection.

Hemingway's portraits of members of his literary circle have outraged some reviewers, but the portraits are similar to his depictions of his own struggles in demarcating a clean and proper self. It appears, in fact, that his portrayals of others constitute an exploration of the emotions at the center of his own being. Kristeva quotes a pertinent idea from Freud's *Totem and Taboo*: «... creative writers... externalize in the form of separate individuals the opposing instinctual impulses struggling within them» (61). Even though they are not allegorical separations, the portraits in *A Moveable Feast* appear to be symbolic constructs for expressing Hemingway's inner struggles.

Such a purpose is indicated in Hemingway's reporting of a conversation with Ernest Walsh. It insists upon a number of shared identity-boundaries:

> «I don't think I deserve [the $1,000 prize] Ernest, I said, enjoying using my own name that I hated to him. Besides, Ernest, it would not be ethical, Ernest.» ... «It's a name we must both live up to. You see what I mean, Ernest.»

The hatred of his own name is only one level of the abjection which Hemingway identifies. The dialogue refers, also, to the corrupting power of money and the theme of betrayal. Kristeva says, «Abjection is immoral, sinister, scheming and shady: a terror that dissembles, a hatred that smiles... a friend who stabs you» (4). Walsh, the con man, inhabits this space. Hemingway had been accused of betraying his friends in *The Sun Also Rises* (Brian, 55-6), and he no doubt anticipated the accusations of betrayal which would follow publication of *A Moveable Feast*.

In depicting his relationship to Gertrude Stein, he identifies some of his most important emotional and artistic boundaries. He is offended by her use of the term «Lost Generation», for example, because it is linked to drunkenness and, also, because it encodes an implicit

entrapment in an historical abjection. Equally important, Stein admonishes Hemingway to avoid what she calls the «inaccrochable» in his stories:

> «It is like a picture that a painter paints and then he cannot hang it when he has a show and nobody will buy it because they cannot hang it either.»
>
> «But what if it is not dirty but it is only that you are trying to use words that can make the story come true and that you must use them...»
>
> «... You mustn't write anything that is a *inaccrochable*. There is no point in it. It's wrong and it's silly.» (15)

This is a dialogue upon the relationship of the abject to the subject matter and language of literature. For Hemingway, such topics and words are inescapable and central to his art. Even his depictions of his friends must acknowledge the actual stresses and griefs of their psychological and artistic lives.

The issues and techniques in the memoir are further clarified by Hemingway's comments on the psychological power which he found in Dostoyevsky's writing:

> ... there were things... so true they changed you as you read them; frailty and madness, wickedness and saintliness and the insanity of gambling were there to know as you know the landscapes and the roads in Turgenev... (133)

These are the very issues which he addresses in the memoir: the frailty and madness of Scott and Zelda, the odd saintliness of Ezra Pound, the wickedness of Ford Maddox Ford and Ernest Walsh, and the «insanity of gambling» in his own addiction to the horse races. Evan Shipman observes that Dostoyevsky's writing is messy, however, and he warns Hemingway against seeing Dostoyevsky as a model. Hemingway replies, «I'm trying to do it so it will make it without you knowing it, and so the more you read it, the more there will be»(138). The effectiveness of Hemingway's memoir results from a chastening of the melodrama and extravagance of Dostoyevsky while exploring similar psychological issues.

Julia Kristeva finds a profound resonance in the literature which emerges from the modern encounter with the abject:

> The artistic experience,... rooted in the abject it utters and by the same token purifies, appears as the essential element in religiosity. That is perhaps why it is destined to survive the collapse of the historical forms of religions. (17)

Kristeva's discussion of «abjection» helps to provide glimpses of the structure by which Hemingway's movements across the boundaries between literature and life, between ritualism and nihilism can be more fully understood. To the peasants in the high mountains after he had grown his beard, Hemingway was known as «the Black Kirsch-drinking Christ»(206). This image, like the religious allusion in the title of the memoir, indicates Hemingway's purpose in this intimate and revealing narrative. He is defining the psychological sources of his art: the place where desire and the forbidden meet in a struggle that cannot be resolved by religious rite or taboo.

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Tender is The Night ou le viol de l'enfant

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La nuit, souvent, en psychanalyse, peut s'interpréter comme un signe d'absence, de délaissement, d'abandon. Absence de l'objet d'amour, désarroi du sujet, solitude de l'enfant que la mère a laissé.

Que dire de ce titre donc, déjà, où «tendre» est accolé à «nuit»? Contredit-il l'hypothèse freudienne ou, au contraire, pouvons-nous y voir un mouvement de déni qui tente de cacher ce que «nuit» pourrait rappeler de triste et de désagréable?

Le titre du roman, on le sait, fut emprunté à Keats et quatre vers de l'«Ode to a Nightingale» sont cités par Fitzgerald en épigraphe:

> Already with thee tender is the night;
> .....
> But here there is no light,
> Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
> Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

Nous y repérons «mais ici il n'y a pas de lumière», qui peut nous être confirmation que «nuit» et frustration vont de pair, et nous faisons surtout la remarque que l'emprunt à Keats fut incomplet. Il manque en effet deux vers à l'épigraphe de Fitzgerald:

> And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne
> Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays.

Cette omission est-elle significative et si oui comment s'articule-t-elle au déni dont je viens de faire l'hypothèse? Peut-on dire déjà qu'entre ces deux mouvements s'établit un équilibre où une mère refusante (night, no light) et majestueuse (Queen-Moon) se trouve à son tour inconsciemment exclue du tableau? Dès le départ, en tout cas, serait donné le ton de toute la fantasmatique sur quoi repose ce livre où l'on nous parle de maladie mentale et d'une relation amoureuse vécue comme une relation transférentielle.Pour qui accepte la proposition que toute parole révèle à sa façon le désir inconscient qui la porte, il n'y a là rien de surprenant.

Toutefois, avant de commencer l'examen de ce texte qui nous paraît présenter un intérêt psychanalytique, voire «clinique», il convient d'écarter une difficulté. Dans l'histoire de Dick, de Nicole et de Rosemary, c'est-à-dire à travers personnages et intrigue, je trouve déjà, comme lecteur ou comme critique, une représentation digne d'intérêt: plus d'une

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page du livre offre une bonne description de la maladie mentale et, surtout, la relation conflictuelle qui «unit» Dick et Nicole est particulièrement bien observée. S'en tenir à ce premier matériau, cependant, serait une grave erreur de méthode. C'est que, quel que soit le degré de réalisme de ces pages[1] et, même, leur nature autobiographique, il ne s'agit là que de fiction: rien de ce qui nous est dit n'est «vrai»; ça ne l'est, en tout cas, qu'approximativement, et cela parce que comme «sujets» nous nous trompons toujours. Un matériau existe pourtant auquel nous devrions pouvoir nous fier[2] et il est constitué par l'ensemble du discours de Fitzgerald, parole de sujet qui va bien au-delà de l'histoitre de Rosemary, de Nicole ou de Dick, et dont le titre, on l'a vu, offre un bon exemple. Comparé à ce matériau, le roman, alors, dans ce qu'il a de plus ou moins consciemment organisé — et cela inclut l'intention de réalisme, la réflexion sur la psychiatrie —, n'est rien de plus qu'un «souvenir-écran». On l'a compris, personnages et événements rapportés ne sont que des signifiants au même titre que l'ensemble des mots dont est fait le livre. C'est cet ensemble du discours, le texte dans sa globalité, que nous devons dès lors tenter d'écouter. On y verra apparaître un «sujet» au sens où l'entend la psychanalyse, et il sera aisé de constater le rôle prédominant de cet architecte inconscient, véritable maître d'oeuvre du roman dans ses moindres détails.

I

Qu'est-ce qui se répète, donc, dans *Tender is the Night* et pointe ce sujet? Déjà, l'architecture générale du livre est riche en information (comme le sont les remaniements successifs de cette architecture par le romancier). La structure formelle de *Tender is the Night* est simple[3]: 1) En vacances sur la Riviera, la jeune actrice Rosemary Hoyt fait la connaissance de Nicole et de Dick Diver; personnage et narratrice à la fois, elle les décrit pour le lecteur avec admiration. Rosemary est amoureuse de Dick, Dick dit aussi l'aimer, mais leur passion restera toute platonique. L'épisode couvre approximativement les années 1919-1925, et l'atmosphère dominante de cette partie veut être celle du jeu et de la fête. 2) La deuxième partie, beaucoup plus courte, est constituée par un retour en arrière et couvre les années 1917-1919. De façon générale, Dick en est le narrateur: il rencontra Nicole alors qu'il songeait à s'établir comme psychiatre en Suisse; c'était une patiente schizophrène dans la clinique qu'il visitait; il était encore médecin militaire. A la suite de cette unique rencontre, Nicole envoie à Dick de nombreuses lettres où elle parle d'elle-même (c'est un «transfert» nous dit le romancier). Dick fait ensuite plusieurs visites à la clinique et après quelques temps, la jeune femme paraissant «guérie»,il l'épouse. 3) La troisième partie, 1929-1930,dont Nicole peut être considérée comme la narratrice, nous montre quels conflits déchirent maintenant les époux. Nicole songe à prendre un amant, Dick boit de plus en plus. A Rome, cependant, Rosemary et Dick se retrouvent et deviennent amants; mais leur liaison est décrite comme très éphémère: entre eux non plus il n' a pas d'amour. Après maintes péripéties (consacrées tout comme dans la première partie à la vie désoeuvrée des riches américains en Europe), Dick disparaît du devant de la scène, tandis que Nicole, désormais capable d'harmonie et d'épanouissement, est enfin guérie[4]. Pour faire pendant

[1] Il y en a au reste beaucoup d'autres qui me paraissent dénuées de tout réalisme.

[2] L'analyste restera cependant «sujet», c'est vrai; mais au moins le sachant, on peut espérer qu'il en tirera parti.

[3] Je m'en tiendrai à la division choisie pour la première édition, c'est-à-dire en trois parties; elle est d'ailleurs celle que semble choisir à présent la critique après un engouement passager pour le remaniement opéré par Malcolm Cowley (cinq parties) en 1953.

[4] «Nicole relaxed and felt new and happy; her thoughts were clear as good bells — she had a sense of being cured and in a new way (...) 'Why, I'm almost complete,' she thought. 'I'm practically standing alone, without him.'» (*III*, VII, 289). (Le premier chiffre renvoie à la partie, le second au chapitre et le troisième à la page. J'utilise l'édition Scribner de 1962 — *Contemporary Classics*).

à ce rétablissement, donné par le romancier comme définitif, ce qu'il y a de malheur et d'échec dans le livre, à la hauteur de la troisième partie, est réservé à Dick; au fil des pages, son destin apparaît comme de plus en plus tragique: il est alcoolique et disparaît dans l'anonymat aux Etats-Unis. Le roman, à la dernière page, le rend à la nuit[5]. Construction à trois temps, donc: un temps de bonheur et de fête[6], un temps de tristesse et de séparation tragique[7], et entre les deux le «flashback» qui tente d'expliquer ce passage de *I* à *III*, de la fête (ou de l'illusion) à l'enfer. Le retour en arrière étant à l'évidence posé comme antérieur aux développements tragiques de l'histoire de Nicole et de Dick, nous nous trouvons en présence d'une intrigue, et au moins d'une chronologie, dont la structure est à deux temps. Non seulement le temps du malheur (*III*) répond au temps de la fête (*I*), mais, surtout, le sort des deux époux est assujetti à un jeu de bascule par quoi l'un des deux seulement peut atteindre à l'épanouissement. Le médecin deviendra alcoolique et on peut le construire comme détruit par la maladie, sa patiente au contraire réussira à chasser ses démons. Dick paie de sa perdition le salut de Nicole. Le cas de figure n'est pas inconnu en psychanalyse, et on comprend peut-être mieux alors que la partie centrale du roman (*II*) présente quelques--uns des traits d'une interrogation d'ordre psychanalytique. Je tiens ce jeu de bascule pour la structure profonde, c'est-à-dire significative[8], du roman; que Fitzgerald ait mis consciemment en scène cet échange destructeur, voire mortifère, ne change rien à l'affaire: je puis fort bien avoir l'intuition qu'un lien, transférentiel disons, m'attache à quelqu'un, sans pour autant «comprendre» immédiatement de quel mécanisme je me trouve prisonnier. Voici en tout cas un premier élément de répétition. Ce double mouvement d'ascension et de descente aux enfers, en effet, non seulement constitue la ligne de force de l'architecture mais informe encore plusieurs passages et se retrouve parfois au niveau des images[9]. L'exemple le

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[5] Ce résumé ne vise qu'à remettre en mémoire les grandes lignes de l'intrigue; il va de soi qu'il n'y a aucun degré d'équivalence entre le schéma ci-dessus et le roman dans sa complexité. Exemple parmi d'autres, ainsi, il n'est jamais dit précisément à quel titre Dick faisait ses visites à la clinique. La trame romanesque reste à ce sujet imprécise et mêle plusieurs fils: d'un côté des liens se tissent entre le jeune médecin et celle qui n'est pas encore sa patiente; de l'autre, la riche famille de Nicole cherche un psychiatre qui prendrait Nicole en charge.

Cette imprécision sur le statut de la relation entre Nicole et Dick à ses débuts fut sans doute une façon pour le romancier de dire une vérité, façon de laisser percer que le référent (dans la réalité donc) de Dick n'était pas tout à faite le médecin de Nicole.

La seule allusion à l'installation de Dick à la clinique est cette remarque de Franz:

> «In my opinion Dick can co-operate right here,
> without any one going away» (*II*, VI, 140)

Ensuite entrent en jeu les Warren et leur fortune, masque inconscient, sans aucun doute, écran dont la fonction et de nier la force du contre-transfert (*II*, IX). Cet écran, la fortune des Warren, a aussi fonction de signifiant, naturellement, et peut s'analyser: «excuse» avancée par Fitzgerald, instrument de la contamination dont son héros aurait été la victime, l'argent trouve sa place dans la relation à la mère phallique.

[6] D'un point de vue socio-historique, ceci semble correspondre aux années 20.

[7] J'y vois une représentation de la Grande Crise.

[8] On vient de constater qu'il est aussi possible d'exploiter cette structure au plan socio-historique: la Crise fait suite à la fête ou à l'illusion de la fête.

[9] Voir par exemple: «The ease with which her reply reached him seemed to BELITTLE his megaphone, so she RAISED her voice and called, 'Can you hear me?' 'Yes.' He LOWERED the megaphone and then RAISED it stubbornly.» (*I*, VI, 27)

«His work became confused with Nicole's problem; in addition, her income had INCREASED so fast of late it seemed to BELITTLE his work.» (*II*, XII, 170)

Le schéma est surtout utilisé par le romancier pour rendre compte de la relation entre Dick et Nicole. Ce n'en est pas moins une «microstructure» que l'on retrouve à plusieurs reprises dans le livre: «(...) a ghastly UPRISING of the MUTILATED in a dressing station.» (*II*, XIV, 180)

«He was of TIRED stock yet he RAISED himself to that effort.» (*II*, XVIII, 203)

«'After all, what do you get out of this?' 'Knowing you're STRONGER every day. Knowing that your illness follows the law of DIMINISHING returns.'» (*III*, V, 267)

plus caractéristique est bien entendu cette page, au chapitre VIII de la deuxième partie, où Dick et Nicole se rencontrent lors d'une ascension en funiculaire.

On a peine à croire que ce mouvement des deux cabines où celle qui descend (elle est chargée d'eau) fait monter l'autre n'a pas été consciemment choisi par le romancier; ceci n'enlève rien toutefois à la force de la métaphore qui prend ainsi place dans la structure d'ensemble du roman.

> Mountain-climbing cars are built on a slant similar to the angle of a hat-brim of a man who doesn't want to be recognised. As water gushed from the chamber under the car, Dick was impressed with the ingenuity of the whole idea — a complementary car was now taking on mountain water at the top and would pull the lightened car up by gravity (...) It must have been a great inspiration.

On pourrait s'arrêter là et se contenter de souligner l'étonnante finesse psychologique du romancier. N'est-il pas préférable, toutefois, d'aller au-delà de cette description réaliste d'une relation névrotique, pour aboutir enfin à l'analyse, c'est-à-dire à une explication de ce qui se joue entre deux êtres qui se déchirent? Il faut pour cela, on vient de le dire, passer de la prétendue psychologie des personnages à l'étude de l'écriture. Que l'image du funiculaire ait été consciemment choisie ou non, «reste diurne», «souvenir écran», cela a en définitive peu d'importance. Car si nous voulons comprendre oú se trouvent les racines du mal et pour quelles «raisons» les êtres se détruisent, il faut prêter attention à ce qui se répète, à ce qui échappe à leur attention consciente et reste étranger à leurs intentions déclarées. Voilà qui nous ramène à la structure dégagée, à ce jeu de bascule qui organise toute l'intrigue et dont nous pouvons maintenant tenter de donner une interprétation.

II

A analyser en effet ce qui fut inconsciemment exprimé dans *Tender is the Night*, nous comprendrons mieux par quels obscurs chemins un «sujet» peut organiser sa propre destruction.

Un type donné de relation se répète dans le roman, qui mérite attention. L'indice est d'importance, car chacun des trois personnages centraux se trouve pris dans cette seconde structure. On verra plus loin qu'elle s'articule tout à fait avec la première.

Commençons par Nicole. Elle se caractérise par son attachement irraisonné au jeune docteur Diver. L'ayant rencontré une fois, elle lui envoie une cinquantaine de lettres. Il s'agit là d'un transfert, c'est-à-dire par définition d'un attachement d'une très grande force.

Et cependant, en dépit de cette grande force que Fitzgerald a fidèlement représenté par le biais de son personnage, d'autres forces, contraires, ne manquent pas d'apparaître entre les lignes du portrait. Le conflit sera apparemment de courte durée, mais il faut tout de même noter que dans les premiers moments qui suivent la rencontre de Nicole et de Dick la jeune fille fait état d'une difficulté, voire d'une impossibilité, à aimer... quelqu'un.

> «I couldn't fall in love.»
>
> «I know I wouldn't be fit to marry anyone for a long time.» (Book 2, Chap VII, p.143, Scribner)[10]

Ensuite, certes, les deux personnages s'installent dans une relation où le transfert paraît s'approfondir, et Nicole se laisse aimer.

Cette analyse du personnage de Nicole, toutefois, ne nous est livrée qu'après plus de

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[10] Cf: «When you're older you'll know what people who love suffer. The agony.» (*I*, XI, 41).

cent pages. Dès le début du roman, un conflit similaire peut être observé à l'oeuvre chez Dick et chez Rosemary.

La première partie du roman (Book One) raconte en effet leur «amour» et surtout leur fascination réciproque. Mais Dick est marié et ne se sent pas libre.

> «(...) I just wanted to make you love me — if you love me everything's all right.» «Unfortunately I do. But Nicole mustn't know — she mustn't suspect even faintly. Nicole and I have to go on together (...)»
>
> «Nicole mustn't suffer — she loves me and I love her — you understand that.» (*I*, XVII, 75)

Dans sa relation à Rosemary, c'est cet attachement de Dick pour Nicole qui va informer toutes ses conduites. (Pour être exact, au reste, la fascination que Rosemary exerce sur Dick n'est notée clairement qu'au chapitre XVI et il faut encore 5 pages au romancier pour qu'il écrive: «I'm afraid I'm in love with you, said Dick») Rosemary le séduit, mais c'est de Nicole qu'il parle dans toute cette page. Et chaque fois que Fitzgerald tente de nier cet attachement de Dick pour Nicole ou d'en faire un amour du passé, il s'y prend à mon sens si maladroitement que ses affirmations ressemblent à des dénis:

> (Rosemary) had thought, however, that it was a rather cooled relation, and actually rather like the love of herself and her mother. (75)
>
> Many times he had tried unsuccessfully to let go his hold on her. They had many fine times together, fine talks (...) but always when he turned away from her into himself, he left her holding Nothing in her hands and staring at it, calling it many names, but knowing it was only the hope he would come back soon. (*II*, XIV, 180)[11]
>
> Nicole began to run very suddenly, so suddenly that for a moment Dick did not miss her. Far ahead he saw her yellow dress (...) and he started after her. Secretly she ran and secretly he followed. (*II*, XV, 188)
>
> Despite the overhanging mountains Switzerland was far away, Nicole was far away. (*II*, XVIII, 201)[12]

C'est bien un des traits pathétiques de ce roman que la méconnaissance soit si finement décrite. Nous savons, nous comprenons, mais nos certitudes raisonnées ne servent à rien. Il y faut une autre forme de conviction, une découverte par le coeur, l'âme, qui ne peut apparaître sans l'analyse du transfert et requiert notamment une bonne interprétation. L'ambiguité des sentiments de Dick en tout cas est peinte superbement; on peut y lire en clair, je pense, que «son» destin n'est tragique qu'à cause de son aveuglement. Personnages, Dick et Nicole sont tous deux de bonnes représentations de ce que la passion malheureuse fait des êtres; «il» est attaché à elle comme «elle», le transfert une fois en action, fut attachée à lui au début de l'histoire.

Pour comprendre cette représentation d'un lien si difficile à défaire prenons maintenant en considération le portrait de Rosemary. C'est par le portrait de ce personnage et de ceux qui l'entourent que le sujet va en effet dire sans le savoir l'essentiel sur son propre cas. Retour du refoulé, révélation comme entre parenthèses, en marge, que le lecteur du roman peut ne pas remarquer mais dont nous devons faire l'analyse. Première répétition d'une

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[11] Je reviendrai sur ce passage, mais déjà on peut s'interroger sur ce «hold on her» et sans doute entendre plutôt «hold on him», son emprise, à elle, sur lui.

[12] Tout ce qui suit mérite analyse; par exemple: «(...) he thought about her with detachment, loving her for her best self.»

relation déjà rencontrée (selon la chronologie), Rosemary aime Dick à peu près de la même manière que Nicole, au début, aimait le jeune psychiatre.

C'est ce que l'écriture, sans crier gare, fait apparaître après seulement vingt pages de roman:

> «I love him, Mother. I'm desperately in love with him — I never knew I could feel that way about anybody.» (*I*, IV, 22)

Dix pages plus tôt, l'enthousiasme de Rosemary fut mis sur le compte d'une fascination d'ordre social et simplement mondaine; d'abord, dit Fitzgerald, Rosemary est séduite par l'élégance et la beauté d'un groupe:

> «I fell in love on the beach,» said Rosemary.
> «Who with?»
> «First with a whole lot of people who looked nice; then with one man.» (*I*, III, 12)

La critique a beaucoup parlé de ces «nice people». A ces études sur l'argent, la réussite, et même la beauté des «riches», il faut aujourd'hui ajouter l'analyse de cet émerveillement (qui semble avoit été celui de Fitzgerald). On peut en effet voir comment «l'imaginaire» sert d'écran au «symbolique»[13] et comment la passion profonde, névrose ici et vérité du sujet, se masque derrière des considérations d'ordre socio-économique (qui ont par ailleurs leur réalité propre, naturellement).

L'attachement de Rosemary à Dick s'inscrit ainsi dans le registre de la répétition. Mais nous devons nous assurer que c'est bien là tout ce qui est répété et prendre par conséquent l'ensemble du tableau en considération. Que successivement deux femmes soient décrites comme passionnément attachées au héros peut n'être qu'une partie du fantasme en jeu, partie imaginaire de l'iceberg. N'est-il pas significatif en effet que dans les deux cas la relation amoureuse à plus ou moins long terme se détériore? C'est que dans la représentation aucun personnage n'est libre, et si nous disons, plus correctement, que ce ne sont que des signifiants, l'argument est plus fort encore: le film de leurs amours malheureuses n'illustre rien d'autre que ce que le sujet inconsciemment désire. Nous avons vu Nicole hésiter, déjà, au tout début, puis Dick se sentir prisonnier de son lien à Nicole; qu'en est-il de Rosemary? Rien n'est dit qui tente de la rendre responsable de l'échec de sa relation à Dick. Si nous tendons l'oreille, pourtant, Fitzgerald nous révèle beaucoup. En dépit des déclarations enflammées qu'il prête à son personnage, il lui donne aussi un autre lien. Sans cesse, et sans que cela paraisse gêner les amours de la jeune fille, le romancier la met en scène aux côtés de sa mère. C'est ensemble qu'elles apparaissent dans le livre, à la première page, — «a woman and her daughter» —, et quand Rosemary n'est pas avec sa mère, celle-ci est tout de même présente dans le discours de sa fille, c'est-à-dire en définitive dans le discours de Fitzgerald. Mrs Speers est la confidente de Rosemary, naturellement, mais surtout c'est par sa volonté que semble mue la jeune fille.

> (Rosemary) tried to think with her mother's mind about the question. In this process she was often acute beyond her experience, with remembered things from old conversations that had gone into her half-heard. (*I*, IX, 39)

Cinq années plus tard, alors qu'il est explicitement écrit que Rosemary est «maintenant femme», la mère est toujours là:

> «Mother's coming over next month (...) she always felt you were someone I ought to know. (*II*, XX, 209)
>
> «I miss Mother so, but she's to meet me in Paris, Monday.» (*III*, VII, 282)

[13] Bien qu'articulé à lui et susceptible d'analyse également; on l'a dit, l'argent est un signifiant.

C'est, peut-être, que cette mère est parfaite; mais cela est dit avec une telle insistance — «Mother is perfect» —, bien au-delà de toute ironie[14], qu'on a tout de même envie d'y aller voir de plus près.

> Her mother was her best friend and had put every last possibility into the guiding of her (...) By not sparing Rosemary she had made her hard — by not sparing her own labor and devotion she had cultivated an idealism in Rosemary, which at present was directed toward herself and saw the world through her eyes. So while Rosemary Hoyt was a «simple» child she was protected by a double sheath of her mother's armor and her own (...) (*I*, III, 12)[15]

On reste saisi devant la justesse de ce qui est presque une réflexion psychanalytique: l'aveuglement de la mère dévouée, le piège d'un idéalisme forcené, et la conséquence, dite à demi-mot dans «simple», de ce maternage pourtant destructeur. Mais l'analyse, attendue, ne suit pas; le romancier, qui doit parler de ce qu'il a connu tant le portrait est réaliste[16], lui aussi semble la proie de la méconnaissance. On se croirait devant un portrait de parent de psychotique extrait de l'oeuvre de Harold Searles[17]: triomphe de la volonté, de la bonne intention, bref du «moi» selon la terminologie lacanienne («Mother likes to help everybody.»). Et certes, le parent veut le bien de l'enfant, c'est-à-dire se dit vouloir son bonheur et ne paraît mu que par ce souci. Mais ce faisant il fait de l'enfant son objet et l'empêche de naître sujet. Fitzgerald le dit ici admirablement: protégée par une double «armure», Rosemary ne fait rien que sa mère n'approuve, mais le prix de cette «protection» ressemble à la mort. Elle ne voit le monde qu'à travers les yeux de cet «Autre», c'est à peine si elle existe.

On connaît la formule tragique qui caractérise si bien la double-contrainte: je veux que tu t'émancipes, que tu te libères de mon emprise. La formule se retrouve dans *Tender is the Night*:

> «I want you to go alone.»(*I*, III, 13)[18]
>
> «Her mother was pleased that she had done so accurately what she was told to do, but she still wanted to launch her out and away.»(*I*, V, 25)

C'est bien du noeud de la psychose qu'il s'agit ici, à tout le moins de la prépsychose, noeud si difficile à défaire parce que l'enfant n'a d'autre place où se tenir que celle assignée par le désir inconscient du parent. Et comment n'y tiendrait-il pas à cette place quand c'est tout ce qu'on lui laisse pour exister? Il a beau s'agir d'une place d'objet, il s'y accroche parce qu'il n'a rien d'autre.

> «I don't love anybody but you, Mother darling.» (*I*, III, 13)

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[14] Voir aussi: «Then her mother, forever perfect.» Il est vraisemblable que Fitzgerald a mis quelque ironie, parfois, dans ce portrait, comme par exemple lorsqu'il fait dire à Dick: «You don't know what you want. You go and ask your mother what you want.», mais ceci ne dure jamais et je retiens surtout de la scène l'attachement de l'enfant à la mère: «I think you're the most wonderful person I ever met — except my mother.» (*I*, VIII, 3)

[15] D'autres détails de ce saisissant portrait mériteraient analyse, mais on ne peut tout commenter mot à mot: «(...) twice satisfactorily married and twice widowed, her cheerful stoicism had each time deepened. Her first husband, Rosemary's father, had been an army doctor, and a second a cavalry officer.» Femme forte, sûrement, qui a «vaincu» ses officiers de maris, le tout par la volonté (moi). Belle intuition de Fitzgerald qui fait d'un de ces maris un médecin militaire.

[16] Et parce que nous ne parlons jamais que de ce que nous avons connu.

[17] *Collected Papers on Schizophrenia and Related Subjects*, 1965 (L'effort pour rendre l'autre fou, trad. Brigitte Bost, Paris, Gallimard, 1977).

Countertransference and Related Subjects: Selected Papers, 1979 (Le contre-transfert, trad. Brigitte Bost, Paris, Gallimard,1981)

[18] Peu importe que dans ce cas Rosemary réussisse à retarder l'exécution de l'ordre donné.

Aussi voit-on Dick faire, mais sans ironie cette fois, la louange de cette mère volontaire, optimiste et conquérante:

> «I understand why you speak as you do of your mother (...)
> Her attitude toward you is very fine, I think. She has a sort of wisdom that's rare in America.» (*I*, VIII, 37)

Je laisse à votre interprétation la dernière phrase; elle pointe en tout cas clairement la méconnaissance dans ce qui la précède. De tels passages nous aident à nous libérer de l'illusion (convention nécessaire au plaisir littéraire, je sais, mais ici nous tentons de procéder en analyste) sur quoi repose tout personnage de fiction: de manière plus ou moins claire, tout le roman de Fitzgerald dit la même chose et c'est le sujet inconscient qui produit ces paroles: «Mother is perfect», une mère est toujours parfaite.

Au-delà de Dick et de Rosemary, nous remarquons alors que tout le monde dans le livre, chacun des trois signifiants principaux, Nicole, Dick et Rosemary, est prisonnier d'un lien dommageable, destructeur, voire mortifère. Les situations dans lesquelles apparaissent Dick et Rosemary sont parfaitement symétriques; de la même manière que Dick est encore attaché à Nicole, Rosemary reste prisonnière de l'amour qu'elle porte à sa mère. On comprend mieux, alors, pour quelle raison, face à Rosemary, Dick ne parle que de Nicole: «Elle m'aime et je l'aime» et «il ne faut pas qu'elle souffre» (75). Si Rosemary dit la même chose:

> «But you can love more than just one person, cant you? Like I love mother and I love you — more. I love you more now.» (*I*, XV, 65),

c'est qu'elle représente le même sujet. Elle le représente au reste tellement qu'on retrouve dans le discours qui sous-tend ce personnage le même aveuglement, les mêmes mouvements de déni rencontrés à propos du signifiant Dick. Pas plus que Dick ne l'aime autant ou davantage que Nicole, elle ne l'aime autant ou davantage que sa mère. Que l'on fasse un instant attention à l'incroyable «logique» que lui prête le romancier:

> Rosemary ran to her room and wrote a letter to her mother; she was conscience-stricken because she did not miss her mother at all.» (*I*, XVII, 76)

Si elle se sent coupable n'est-ce pas que, pour Fitzgerald, elle devrait regretter la présence de sa mère? Au reste, pourquoi la fait-il écrire? L'ambiguité qui souvent nous habite est une fois encore superbement rendue.

Entre Dick et Rosemary, en tout cas, aucune relation forte, solide, durable, ne pouvait s'établir. Le signifiant «Mother», tout comme le signifiant «Nicole», qui en partie représente la même réalité (non fictionnelle), est la clé de l'attachement inconsciemment mis en scène dans le livre.

III

Le sens de cette mise en scène répétée d'une relation amoureuse impossible peu à peu apparaît. Il semble que nous puissions à présent mieux saisir ce qu'illustre l'histoire tragique de Dick Diver et quelles sont les conditions psychiques de production du roman de Fitzgerald. Nous venons de le voir, Dick et Rosemary sont les exactes représentations d'êtres qui ne sont pas libres d'aimer; sans doute à travers eux allons-nous découvrir un sujet qui fut de la même manière aliéné.

C'est en effet de psychose que *Tender is the Night* nous parle. L'obstacle à une relation amoureuse disons adulte, harmonieuse, n'est rien d'autre que ce membre de l'autre couple archaïque, le parent dont l'enfant est l'objet.

On comprend l'intuition de Fitzgerald qui fit remonter tout le drame de Dick au viol

de Nicole par son père. C'est à partir de là que tout se met en marche dans ce système de signifiants qu'est le roman. Imaginant ce viol (fantasme) ou rapportant un fait réel, le romancier parle d'un traumatisme qui est grave de deux façons au moins: l'horreur de ce qu'est un viol dans la réalité et sa signification symbolique, ici, dans le cadre d'une fiction écrite. J'interprète ce traumatisme — sur lequel Fitzgerald, avec délicatesse, passe au reste très vite — comme la représentation inconsciente de l'inscription du désir parental, un désir, dans ce roman, particulièrement destructeur. A sa façon, chacun des trois personnages porte la marque de ce désir, en est même le résultat: Nicole fut violée, Dick devient esclave d'un désir (Autre) de la guérir, Rosemary, plus clairement encore, est prisonnière de la volonté maternelle[19]. Dans cette perspective, la relation de Dick et de Nicole symbolise parfaitement le rapport transférentiel qui se tisse parfois entre patient psychotique et thérapeute. Le signifiant Nicole possède plusieurs dimensions: 1) Il s'agit d'abord de l'enfant blessée, violée, qui porte en elle les stigmates d'un désir destructeur, tandis que 2) dans sa relation à Dick, elle est à la fois a) le patient psychotique ou prépsychotique que le thérapeute désire «sauver» et chez qui b) il trouve inconsciemment une image de mère potentiellement génératrice de psychose. Dick est donc la représentation d'un désir de soigner le parent, et ce désir inconscient consiste en fait à se mettre à la place assignée par le parent destructeur, ici la mère, apparemment. Ce n'est pas un hasard si Nicole et Dick, pendant plus de la moitié du roman, apparaissent souvent ensemble, au point, plus d'une fois, de ne former qu'un au plan de l'écriture: «the two Divers», «the Divers»[20]. Nous avions Mrs Speers et sa fille, voici un autre exemple de symbiose:

> (...) but somehow Dick and Nicole had become one and equal, not opposite and complementary; she was Dick too, the drought in the marrow of his bones. He could not watch her desintegrations, without participating in them.» (*II*, XV, 190)

Dans *Tender is the Night*, l'enfant est au centre, et sa fonction symbolique est de «phalliser» la mère. C'est de cette manière que nous pouvons expliquer la structure «en bascule» du roman. Le parent met inconsciemment en demeure l'enfant de le reconstruire, l'illusion névrotique étant que le «salut», la rephallisation, peut se payer par l'utilisation de l'enfant (ainsi maintenu à l'état d'objet et par conséquent pour partie détruit).

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[19] Pour ce qui est du viol, ce désir de l'Autre que je tente de mettre en évidence s'articule très bien avec une fantasmatique oedipienne: «Quelqu'un a blessé ma mère, j'ai le devoir de la sauver, voire d'effacer cette agression.» Dans ce cas de figure, Dick est à la place du fils.

Mais le sujet a bien d'autres représentants dans le livre et Rosemary, à son tour, se trouve dans le triangle à la place de l'enfant. A Paris, au chapitre XII, c'est bien à une scène primitive qu'elle assiste:

> «'— So you love me?'
> 'Oh, do I'
> It was Nicole — Rosemary hesitated in the door of the booth — then she heard Dick say:
> 'I want you terribly — let's go to the hotel now.'
> .....
> 'I want you.'
> 'I'll be at the hotel at four.'
> Rosemary stood breathless as the voices moved away.
> .....
> She did not know whether she was attracted or repelled, but only that she was deeply moved. It made her feel very alone (...) (*I*, XII, 53-54)
>
> Rosemary kept thinking of Dick waiting for Nicole now at the hotel.» (*I*, XII, 55-56)

[20] *I*-VII, VIII, IX, XI, XII; *II*-XIII, XV; *III*-IV, V, VII. Comme on pouvait s'y attendre, les occurrences sont beaucoup plus nombreuses dans la première partie du roman; mais elles ne disparaissent véritablement que trois chapitres avant la fin (*III*, XI), où l'on trouve: «Dick and Nicole» (307).

A partir de cette belle intuition des mouvements en jeu dans une telle situation pathogène, Fitzgerald illustre avec précision ce qui se passe dans le transfert (il utilise le mot trois fois au moins) et souligne avec justesse l'interdépendance des deux membres du couple thérapeutique: tous deux sont également attachés l'un à l'autre, en vérité il n'y a pas de contre-transfert. Aussi trouve-t-on souvent la figure du cercle dans le livre («'We're beginning to turn in a circle' he admitted» (*II*, XIII, 179)); c'est la meilleure illustration qui soit du transfert. On se souvient du manège au chapitre XV, et de la grande roue; plus loin, le romancier revient à sa façon sur cette interdépendance:

> His love for Nicole and Rosemary, his friendship with Abe North, with Tommy Barban in the broken universe of the war's ending — in such contacts the personalities had seemed to press up so close to him that he became the personality itself; there seemed some necessity of taking all or nothing; it was as if for the remainder of his life he was condemned to carry with him the egos of certain people, early met and early loved, and to be only as complete as they were complete themselves. (*III*, II, 245)

Le tableau clinique est remarquablement complet: l'univers fragmentaire, brisé; les contacts qui dissolvent l'être de l'analyste; la nécessité de tout prendre, de tout accepter de peur de n'avoir rien; le poids tragique que peut représenter la prise en charge de certaines personnes; la référence à l'enfance, peut-être («tôt rencontrés et tôt aimés»); l'illusion, enfin, le fantasme de reconstruction, de rephallisation: je ne puis être «complet» si le parent ne l'est lui-même.

La notion de complétude et le mot «complete» reviennent souvent sous la plume de Fitzgerald; Rosemary est presque complète, et Nicole aussi, à la fin, est «presque complète», capable de «se tenir debout seule», sans Dick. Etre complet, tel est notre rêve à tous avant que la vie, ou la psychanalyse, ne nous ait aidé à faire le deuil de cet idéal impossible. Le sujet, nous a appris Lacan, n'advient que dans la coupure; le passage par la castration symbolique — plus ou moins bien «digérée» selon les êtres, certes — est essentiel à notre harmonie de sujets puisqu'un sujet par définition n'aura jamais la complétude, la finitude de l'objet.

Nous touchons ici au point le plus délicat de l'interprétation psychanalytique du roman de Fitzgerald. A travers l'apparence de réalisme de l'histoire qu'il a imaginée et à travers son écriture, un désir de sujet se laisse entendre. La destruction de Dick, en effet, ne représente rien d'autre qu'un désir (névrotique, prépsychotique, peu importent les étiquettes) inconscient de reconstruire le parent, fantasme où la mère «utilise» l'enfant à des fins de rephallisation selon les schémas et les stratégies secrètes d'une relation mortifère. La méconnaissance, on l'a compris, a consisté à nourrir l'illusion que le parent pouvait être sauvé, rephallisé. C'est précisément là que réside la conduite d'échec de la maladie: si, dans le roman, le sacrifice de Dick peut sembler utile à Nicole, on peut néanmoins mettre en doute qu'une analyse qui se solderait ainsi par la destruction (totale) de l'analyste puisse être bénéfique pour le patient. Mais, surtout, il importe de voir que cette conduite d'échec n'est rien d'autre que l'aboutissement d'un désir, conséquence de la soummission inconsciente de l'enfant à l'Autre, et que l'idée, noble, de sacrifice a seulement fonction de masque, de paravent.

Parce que l'enfant dans l'adulte n'a d'autres repères que ceux de ses jeunes années, parce qu'il ne sait comment être «aimé», ou traité, autrement, sans cesse il se replacera dans cette situation originelle. Dans le cas qui nous intéresse, il s'agissait sans doute de répondre à cette demande: «Complète-moi.»

Mais lorsque le parent utilise l'enfant comme objet de sa propre rephallisation (imaginaire, illusoire), il lui interdit cette castration symbolique dont nous venons de parler, et le prive

ainsi du statut d'objet[21]. C'est pourquoi des deux «membres» du transfert tragique mis en scène par le romancier, un(e) seul(e) peut être sauvé(e), et cela par la détérioration de son compagnon. Voici retrouvé notre jeu de bascule, métaphore centrale de l'ouvrage; il traduit tout à fait le déséquilibre propre à la maladie mentale.

Mais pourquoi «rephallisation», et qu'avons-nous besoin de ce détour pour arriver au bout de notre analyse de *Tender is the Night*? Chacun répondra en fonction de son expérience de critique, d'analyste, ou même de philosophe, mais ce qui est certain c'est que le roman de Fitzgerald parle beaucoup de castration.

> One writes of scars healed, a loose parallel to the pathology of the skin, but there is no such thing in the life of an indivudual. There are open wounds, shrunk sometimes to the size of a pin-prick, but wounds still. The marks of suffering are more comparable to the loss of a finger, or of the sight of an eye. We may not miss them, either, for one minute in a year, but if we should there is nothing to be done about it. (*II*, XI, 168-9)

> (Dick) had lost himself (...) Between the time he found Nicole flowering under a stone on the Zurichsee and the moment of his meeting with Rosemary the spear had been blunted. (*II*, XVIII, 201)

Est-il besoin de commentaire? Et pourquoi inclure dans ce roman une visite aux tranchées de la Grande Guerre — que Fitzgerald appelle du reste «the last love battle» — dans une sous-section qu'il nomma à un moment «Casualties»? (*I*, XIII)

Parlant de la mort de tant de jeunes hommes, autant que de la guerre c'est de ses propres obsessions qu'il parle. Il y a d'autres exemples. L'explication entre Tommy et Dick, ainsi, dont Nicole est l'enjeu, débute chez un coiffeur. Peut-on expliquer le choix de ce lieu autrement que par l'importance qu'y jouent les ciseaux? («the snip of shears» (*III*, XI, 307)). Plus explicite encore, enfin, est la séance de ski nautique où Dick, un homme sur les épaules(!) soudain ne peut se redresser («He could not rise.» (*III*, VII, 284)). Le sens symbolique de la scène laisse peu de place au doute.

Le fantasme me paraît évident: pour dé-castrer le parent, la mère, le héros ne peut qu'offrir sa propre castration, et si «castration» gêne, disons «son propre corps», l'essentiel étant qu'il demeure attaché à l'Autre, ainsi devenant son objet.

Du coup, l'importance de l'argent s'explique aisément. En achetant Dick, les Warren se l'attachent; là encore il y a annihilation du sujet. Le romancier l'a-t-il senti, qui montre son héros comme perverti par l'argent? En s'alliant aux Warren, Dick va en tout cas à sa perte. C'est que l'argent souvent signifie le phallus fécal par quoi l'enfant tente de se cacher la différence des sexes[22]. Dans *Tender is the Night*, les images de mères phalliques abondent (et cela commence par l'épigraphe); les Warren, et Baby Warren singulièrement, sont des représentations du parent destructeur, et c'est bien Fitzgerald qui les a voulus riches.

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[21] «I think Nicole is less sick than any one thinks — she only cherishes her illness as an instrument of power.» (*III*, I, 239)

[22] Une curieuse phrase, au reste, semble faire allusion à cette différence: «You've suffered, but many women suffered before they mistook themselves for men.» (*II*, XIV, 184) «Before» ne me satisfait guère, et je trouve cette phrase étrange; Fitzgerald dit-il ici que les femmes en question cessèrent de souffrir une fois qu'elles se furent prises pour des hommes? «Before» apparaît où la logique fait attendre un autre terme: «after» peut-être, ou «because»; la phrase demeure obscure. Il peut s'agir d'un lapsus qui tentait de nier la différence.

Quelques lignes plus loin, une phrase mérite d'être citée: «I am here as a symbol of something.» Se peut-il qu'il y ait ici une intuition du «phallus» dont Lacan a depuis fait la théorie? Au même chapitre, page 180, nous avons déjà relevé: «But always when he turned away from her into himself he left her holding Nothing in her hands and staring at it, calling it many names (...)» C'est bien en tout cas pour masquer la place d'un manque que l'enfant se tient où l'assigne un désir Autre.

Non seulement, ainsi, le romancier met en scène la chute de son héros, mais il souligne en même temps l'assujetissement de celui-ci au phallus de la mère.

Deux noms propres, pour conclure, vont montrer de quelle manière un fantasme central a présidé aux choix d'écriture; l'analyse de ces deux éléments fortement symboliques met en valeur la cohérence de l'ensemble. La mère de Rosemary Hoyt se nomme Speers; cela se prononce comme «spear», qui désigne la lance, le javelot. On a vu de quelle autorité Mrs Speers disposait, mais elle «dissèque» aussi, ce qui se passe de commentaire:

> «'Rosemary's had crushes, but sooner or later she always turned the man over to me — ' Mrs Speers laughed, 'for dissection.'» (*II*, XI, 163)

Reste Dick Diver, qui se retrouve à Hornell à la fin de l'histoire. Il est passé par Batavia, Lockport et Geneva, N.Y., noms qui pointent le bas, (The Netherlands), l'inférieur, l'absence d'issue, et sans doute la répétition, la régression, dans ce qu'elle a de plus illusoire[23]; il aboutit à ce Hornell où certains liront peut-être avec moi «Hell», enfer, ville en tout cas qui n'évoque qu'en négatif le centre prestigieux qu'est Cornell.

Quoi d'étonnant à cela? On sait le sens populaire de «dick» (zizi, pénis), et Diver renvoie assez bien au plongeon, à la chute. Le désir inconscient qui a présidé à la construction de l'ensemble fut bien un désir de destruction de soi, de sacrifice à la «gloire» de la mère phallique. La nuit, dans ce roman, non seulement n'est pas tendre, mais elle «viole» l'enfant.

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[23] Geneva est dans l'Etat de New York; ironiquement, ce n'est même pas la Suisse des chapitres précédents où pourtant Dick s'est déjà perdu.

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Vision/Voyeurism/Violence: Poetics and the Primal Scene

MARY ARENSBERG (*)

«For lyric poetry is not only rooted in mythic motives as its beginning,
but keeps its connection with myth even in its highest and purest products.»
Cassirer, *Myth and Language*

«Never let the cat see the primal scene...»

«The child introjects the primal scene with the pleasure of ideal participation,
and the prohibition of actual participation... both the terror and the
excitement of the primal scene; both the fear and the wish...»
Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body*

«Every woman I go out with turns out to be my mother.»
The Police

The materials of the «primal scene», principally vision, voyeurism, violence, agitation, paternal mastery and female submission, are the constant elements in what may be called *primal scene poems*; that is, poetic texts that both play out and mythicize their own primal scenes or an original scene of poetic vision, at the same time they invent a more general etiology for history, nature, art or myth. What is repressed by the poet in all these poems are other constants: the inability of all art to represent origins (that is to possess the mother), the necessity to invent alternative myths of origins that displace and disguise the poet's exclusion from the original scene; and the inevitability of interruption and the satisfaction that comes with postponement of the father's desire. For primal scene poets, the act of poetry is one of violence and desire: a desire for union of self with otherness or (m)otherness; a desire to interrupt the project of the precursor, to «make a scene» or to change the players; and the memory of violence at the scene of invention; the catachresis when flesh

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is made word. That memory compels the poet to disguise the mother, perhaps as a muse, to make her into someone else.

As in Freud's reading of the «original» primal scene in the case of the Wolf Man, the material of the *primal scene poem* is veiled and problematized in myth, dream and metaphor. We all remenber that the opening and shutting of the butterflies wings become not only the splayed legs of women in the narrative of the Wolf Man but also symbolize the visual sign of opened legs (the V) and too register the hour (5 o'clock) of the parental coitus. In identifying poetic primal scenes, the critic as «Freud» must be attentive to the concealed «primal scene material» and be able to identify with the poet, a voyeur or excluded child, outside of the activity. In Norman O. Brown's reading of the primal scene, the child is, at the same time, horrified, immobilized and fascinated at and by the site (sight) of the scene of origin. «Now there was one person, who, as Freud also has noted, actually was rigid during this scene: the child who witnessed it. So 'to be turned to stone' by the sighjt of something means to be fascinated by it. The child is stiff, with the actual inability to move, the rigidity that comes over someone who suddenly sees something terrifying. But the rigidity is also the erection of the penis.» Within the child, as in the poet, there is the tension of desire: the wish to be the father of origins and the terror of the mother's violation. An example of such a *primal scene text* is W.B. Yeats' «Leda and the Swan», a poem that invents the primal scene of history in the rape of Leda by Zeus, places the reader in the position of voyeur and reads history as a text of violence and beastiality.

My central examples here of primal scene texts are taken from the American poet Wallace Stevens whose poems, to quote from Cassier, have been considered some of the «highest and purest products» in our Western tradition. The first is «Peter Quince at the Clavier», which you have received, a text that has been read, until recently, as the incarnation of poetic invention or even as creativity as annunciation. The innocence of these readings, however, is misreading, since the poem is suggestive not only of the autoerotic nature of the poetic act, but also of art as the production of the poet as voyeur and inventor of violence. In a way, the text unfolds as a dream and may be interpreted in the way of the dreamwork. Indeed the poet-dreamer is disguised as Peter Quince, the rustic mechanical from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, a play of «dream» that links the erotic with hierarchies of imaginative creativity. In its manifest content, the text of the dream reveals the masked poet as Quince engaged in an erotic fantasy. Seated before a keyboard on which he plays out his desire, his fingers express his longing for the image of the «woman in the blue-shadowed silk». Readers familiar with Wallace Stevens know that this woman is his muse or interior paramour, the poet's mataphoric mate and the feminine principle that personifies his own feminity. She is the mataphysical lover who inhabits the chambers of the poet's consciousness, the source of his vision of the feminine and the metaphoric origin of his desire to concretize the world. Her presence in the poem, between Quince and the sounds of the clavier, is as a trance-medium or conduit between the poet's consciousness and the universe of unconscious myth.

The myth that emerges is the apocryphal story of Susanna and the Elders, the wife accused of unchastity by two church elders, probably because she refused their advances. Daniel the prophet exposed their treachery, and as a result, Susanna was vindicated, and they were put to death. The emplotment of the myth occupies the central portion of the poem which is overlaid with a musical text that empties into the poem's famous coda. As in a dream, time and space are eclipsed as the poem moves back and forth in time, while the two events of the poem (Quince at the clavier and the story of Susanna and the Elders) seemingly occur simultaneously. When reading «Quince», we enter into the landscape of the dream where the artificial limits of linearity, history and time are erased. The myth itself, in its deepest structures, is grounded in sexuality, betrayal and death, while its manifest imagery consists of varied symbols: the clavier, the garden, the woman

and the portal. Throughout the dream-text, too, there is a chain of metonymic signifiers that lead from touch to desire to language and form a kind of erotic bracelet between desire and death, arousal, violence and interruption, or the material elements of the primal scene.

The dream-text's latent content begins with the allusion to Peter Quince and the imaginative production of Shakespeare, clearly here the poem's precursor and father-imago. Peter Quince is another version or disguise of the poet who steps out of the literary Oedipal drama to sit down at the keyboard of Stevens, the ephebe, and play out the desire of all poets: to ravish the mother as muse. The muse here remains nameless but is first cloaked in the blue silks of the Renaissance and ultimately disguised in the correlative form of Susanna. In the final strophe or coda of the poem, the woman is Freud's third casket or the mother as death. Disguise, too, is the central figure of this text, for sexual arousal, particularly the strain of the autoerotic, is masked as music. There is the excitation of Quince whose «fingers» provide an entry into the erotic desire for the mother as muse; there is the awakening of desire in the Elders as they «watch» in her garden; and there are the «throbbing» beings of the Elders whose «thin blood» becomes quickened to angelic heights. Midsummer madness orspring fever permeates the language of the second canto:

In the green water, clear and warm
Susanna lay.
She searched The touch of springs
And found
Concealed imaginings.
She sighed
For so much melody.
Upon the bank, she stood
In the cool
Of spent emotions.
She felt, among the leaves,
The dew
Of old devotions.

In these stanzas, Susanna's sexual explorations are thinly disguised as ablutions, but they are also metaphors for poetic imaginings that explore the origins of the primal scene of poetry. As a figure for the muse. Susanna submerged in the green water is herself a *locus amoenus*, self-possessed and participating in the pleasure of her own inventions. Her solipsism, here, has been noted by Harold Bloom (*Climate*: 36), and more recently by Meyer and Baris, who suggest that Susanna provided Stevens «with the garden and its dual theme of *caritas* and *cupititas*, celebration and danger, realization and ravishment. Linking all the variations of the garden motif is the double strain the sensual and spiritual...» (*Wallace Stevens Journal*: 1988, p. 61). Yet Susanna is also a fantasy-repression of the unviolated mother who can be present at the primal scene yet remain untouched; because her autoeroticism screens her from the violent memory of paternal mastery, Susanna as muse is already possessed by the parthinogenesis of her own creativity.

The elders inhabit the space of otherness in the dream: they are both the poet who would gaze on the primal scene of poetic invention and the principle of thanatos or the fall of language from myth into time and history. Here the vision of female sexuality is also a trope for the center of generative myth, which is, metaphorically, the precursor of language and poetic voice. The «presence» of the Elders in this dream-text also registers the voyeurism of the repressed poet, whose super-ego permits him to gaze on the onanastic activity of the muse, but prevents him from entering her garden of from admitting the «presence» of the father or poetic porecursor. Her discovery of the gaze of the Elders is the equivalent to the death of the poetic vision that is killed by the intrusion of the

reality principle. Like the child in the crib, exiled from the scene of his own origins, yet seeing the source of his being enacted, the poet can only gaze at but never participate in the primal scene of creation.

In the «Idea of Order at Key West», it is the sounds of the ocean that produce «a mimic motion», «a constant cry/That was not ours although we understood,/In human, of the veritable ocean.» But why is the silent cry of the ocean both foreign and understood, like a dream? What we have again in these lines from Steven's great shore crisis-poem, is the material of the primal fantasy or the «fallen poetry» of the subconscious stirred to life by the shore scene and the song of memory that hears but cannot speak the riddle of the scene of origin.

The sea scene of origination, however, cries out to the memory, but its sounds of «grinding» and «gasping» are transferred into the familiar fear and phantasmogorical horrors of the child outside the door. Excluded from his origins, the child dreams of the rescue of his mother from the grasp of the sea, but the sea here is so threatening, so menacing and, as Stevens writes, «ever-hooded», that the poet denies its power to insist that «it was she (the paramour-singer) and not the sea we heard.» Stevens invokes the vision of the primal scene and its repressions here at Key West and later in the «The Auroras of Autumn», where he bids good-bye to «the mother's face, the purpose of the poem.»

Farewell to an idea... The mother's face,
The purpose of the poem, fills the room.
They are together here, and it is warm,
With none of the prescience of oncoming dreams.

In this imaging of his own conception, the poet finds an entrance into origins through the face of the mother or the idea of the mother's face. The dream begins *in utero* where the illusion is created of a womb of art, and the suggestion is made that the purpose of the poem is the disclosure of its own origins. Both sites of origination, however, are informed by the principles of belatedness or the forbidden entry into a time and place that exist only as screen memories or ideas that order the poet's world. If he could only hear the sounds of origins they would be «a summer sound, repeated in a summer without end.» But the sounds of pure logos, the parental discourse of ourselves and of our language, pure sound, are merely the fixations of an aural text that repeats but cannot medley the sound of the ocean or the father. The sea, then, is a mask, as is the singer of the poem, the muse who strides on the shore. «The meaningless plungings of water and wind» disguise the inaccessible carnal knowledge of the maternal, as well as the scaffolding of this poetic text, which in its quest for its own origins, can only make empty words of the sea.

What we are left with at the end of Key West is the predicating power of language or the sea of words where «fragrant portals» may be both the entrance to the text and the entry to the primal chamber; where the cry of the ocean's mimic motion pantomimes the sounds of parental union; and where the origins of the poem are buried in the fallen poetry of the speaker's unconscious. Primal scene poems, then, are «ghostly demarcations», that gesture towards our origins and ourselves and haunt us with their presences that never were.

Peter Quince at the Clavier

Just as my fingers on these keys
Make music, so the selsame sounds
On my spirit make a music, too.

Music is feeling, then, not sound;
And thus it is what I feel,
Here in this room, desiring you,

Thinking of your blue-shadowed silk,
Is music. It is like strain
Waked in the Elders by Susanna.

Of a green evening, clear and warm,
She bathed in her still garden, while
The red-eyed elders watching, felt
The basses of their beings throb
In witching chords, and their thin blood
Pulse pizzicati of Hosanna.

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In the green water, clear and warm,
Susanna lay.
She searched
The touch of springs,
And found
Concealed imaginings.
She sighed
For so much melody.

Upon the bank, she stood
In the cool
Of spent emotions.
She felt, among the leaves,
The dew
Of old devotions.

She walked upon the grass,
Still quavering.
The winds were like her maids,
On timid feet,
Fetching her woven scarves,
Yet wavering.

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«Being's Malady»: Psychotic Experience of Time and the Body in Emily Dickinson

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Not until she was thirty-two years old did Emily Dickinson feel the need to consult a recognized authority on literary matters. Then she sent six poems to the editor of a journal. Her first letter to Thomas Higginson was sent the year following the birth of Sue and Austin's child. In the house next door which her father had built for Austin and his wife, Emily now had a little nephew, and even if she never went to see him, his presence nourished her desire to make her poems known. Thus she would ask the person she endowed with the appropriate authority to tell her, not if her poetry was good, original, publishable, but rather, if it «lived».

April 15, 1862, Emily wrote to Thomas Higginson:

> Are you too deeply occupied to say if my Verse is alive?
> The Mind is so near itself — it cannot see, distinctly — and I have none to ask. Should you think it breathed — and had you the leisure to tell me, I should feel quick gratitude. (*L*260)

Emily Dickinson's images suggest that the poem has come to take the place of the missing child. The request addressed to Higginson whom she calls her preceptor, is in fact a request for knowledge, knowledge about poetry, knowledge about life and death. Twenty-six years latter, at the beginning of May 1886, Emily writes again to Higginson and asks him the same question, she will die the following week, the object of her question is other:

> Deity — does He live now?
> My friend — does he breath? (*L*1045)

The letter — or poem, since for Dickinson, the words are synonymous, is a body, it breathes, a being living and separate. God, the Word, has this power also to take on a body, but, as body, he can die. The mortal body remains, as remainder. As the space of divine condescension, it can eat, it can see, it left the garden of Eden in order to understand the distance which separates desire from the satisfaction of desire, in order to «find his sustenance». And this food which he must find will change him, and changing him, it will bring him closer every day to death, for food is not part of unity. («In the sweat of your face/you shall

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eat bread/till you return to the ground,/for out of it you were taken» Genesis 4:19). Except when the nourishment is divine: in the garden of Eden or in the desert. That is to say outside of space and time. The body is in time, the letter leads it astray. And, on the inside, is the soul which is fed by something else, that much is certain, it is nurtured by divine authority, in heaven. The body is its vehicle, the soul an external intimacy, the law preserved in its otherness, but on the inside, like pain.

God is full just as the world is complete, but language is there to bear witness to the lack of equivalence between being in words and that which surrounds it. The body, like the language of the subject of poetry is incomplete, but it is possible to locate the area of absence, to follow the outlines of loss. The missing organ, for Dickinson, is not the foot, of which the verse makes such exuberant use. The foot is not mutilated but only «bare» and thus, a synecdoche of the human condition: «barefoot life». Often, however, the foot is a euphemism:

Is Bliss then, such Abyss,
I must not put my foot amiss
For fear I spoil my shoe?

I'd rather suit my foot
Then save my Boot —
For yet to buy another Pair
Is possible,
At any store —

But Bliss, is sold just once.
The Patent lost
None buy it any more —
Say, Foot, decide the point —
The Lady cross, or not?
Verdict for Boot! (*P*340)

In «I started early — took my dog» (*P*520), the erotic encounter with the sea is experienced at the level of the feet and there the shoe seems to have a feminine identity: (Then my Shoes/Would overflow with Pearl). In *P*340 however, if the Boot is feminine, the foot seems phallic and consecrates the double identity of the subject.

The lack in language, the missing letter in the alphabet of poetry, finds a corresponding image in the vision of the body of the speaker:

Before I got my eye put out
I liked as well to see —
As other Creatures, that have Eyes
And know no other way —

But were it told to me — Today —
That I might have the sky
For mine — I tell you that my Heart
Would split, for size of me —

The Meadows — mine —
The Mountains — mine —
All forests — stintless Stars —
As much of Noon as I could take
Between my finite eyes —

The Motions of the dipping birds —
The Morning's Amber Road —
For mine — to look at when I liked —
The News would strike me dead —

So safer — guess — with just my soul
Upon the Window pane —
Where other Creatures put their eyes —
Incautious — of the sun — (*P*327)

Dickinson's correspondence permits us to find the trace of a stay of several months in Boston, far from her father's house. Emily lived with her cousins and was treated by a medical specialist for she was suffering from her eyes. This incident is just previous to her decision to stay in her own room where her poetry reaches its richest expression. The only element of precision that we have concerning the poet's ailment is the mention of an intolerance to light. The «dangerous» power of the sun was a theme in the poetry however well before this period and it is easy to read this photophobia as a metaphoric symptom. «Eye» and «I» are, of course, homonyms.

The window glass is always present as a barrier and a protection. Yet the soul may be risked there where the eyes would be too endangered. It is the nature of Emily's danger that *P*340 evokes.

In order to express her gratitude to Higginson who had agreed to criticize her verse, Emily writes: «the Vein cannot thank the Artery — but her solemn indebtedness to him, even the stolidest admit...» (*L*352). The Vein is feminine for Emily, while the Artery becomes masculine. The sexualization of words which have no gender in English, makes of the individual's body something like an assembly. Emily's trope poses the question of the relationship of dependency between the poet and her reader whom she calls her «surgeon». But the image speaks even more clearly of the difficulty of recognizing the self in ones own body, especially when one is faced with the dispersal of the different members. In other words, how can one recognize oneself in ones desire? Here is a letter to Sue:

Where my Hands are cut, Her fingers will be found inside — (*L*288)

Several poems speak of suffering in terms which permit us to link phenomenon to a weakness of the image of the body proper. Since, in the throes of pain, there is no distance perceivable between the sensation and the self, the image of the self is reduced to the perception of pain. There is therefore a relationship between suffering and Narcississm. Pain distracts from reality, the libido detaches it self from object cathexis and returns to the ego. Object choice is a compensation for a certain narcissistic loss; but this choice is determined by the possibilities that the object gives us for reconstituting an image of the self. That is why, when the loss of an object comes about, the cathexis can regress to the previous position of narcissism. Freud called this process the working through of mourning. He even wonders why, in the case of a «moral» loss; this operation is necessarily painful. Of course suffering has no real negative connotation for Emily Dickinson, the word «pain» conveys a notion far more complex.

In Emily's case, we do not know what has been lost, and she gives «it» many names. The image of the widow and of mourning is symbolical; it serves the cause of the global reconstitution, through an explicitation of loss; in other words: I can not name the lack as that of a lost object but I can name myself bereft. Pain effectuates a remodeling of the body, but in the form of a statue. «Immortal death has deprived us of mortal life» says Lucretius. It is in fact a matter of the loss of the self.

After great pain a formal feeling comes —
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs —
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?

The Feet, mechanical, go round —
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought —
A Wooden way
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment, like a stone —

This is the Hour of Lead —
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons, recollect the snow —
First — Chill — then Stupor — then the letting go — (*P*341)

In «After great pain» the mechanical, incredulous functioning of all the organs as the self returns to some perception of reality depends upon the memory of suffering. For the self identifies with the sur-prise of pain: pain remains a surplus, an excess which fixes everything in a mechanical gestuality. This is a sort of memory of betweenness, the no man's land that letter 288 defines:

There is no first, or last in Forever — It is Center, there, all the time.

Memory is therefore neither a function of time, nor of self, but rather the memory of a functioning, or of motricity. Outside of time and of the senses, memory is circular, and satisfied, narcissistic, the image comes back to itself: «a Quartz contentment — like a stone.» But the possibility of an image precedes the image: at the instant when consciousness comes back, when it becomes once more possible to compare, «as freezing persons», the memory of pain is blotted out. What remains is before and after, and the two coincide.

«A Quartz contentment like a stone» is a comparison which reverses the normal, expected functioning of analogy which should link together two different elements. We have here the same movement as in poem 1084. The figure of speech, in Dickinson's technique, establishes resemblance in the realm of the same. Here Emily demonstrates, more than she explains, the structure of which the poem is an expression. It is obvious that the capacity to engender metaphor depends upon the possibility of perceiving difference. When pain makes time expand or contract to the point of an eternal present, the imagination faints away.

The first result of this is a dispersal of the unity we call self and it is accompanied by the personification of the body parts: nerves, heart and feet go through their motions independently, for the unification which is the result of an identity is now impossible. The poem questions identity in another way when it attributes the masculine gender to the heart: «He». This is all the more suprising since, while heart would call for a neuter «it», if it were to receive a gender, as the synecdoche of Emily, we would expect a feminine. The loss of identity; «was it He», the absence of temporal guideposts: «And Yesterday, or Centuries before», the fracturing of space: «Of Ground, or Air, or Ought» all of this is not to be understood as synonym of suffering, but rather as the marks of the aftermath of great pain, the sign of a former presence now absent. The poem accumulates references to the absence of the living, to the transformation of the organic; to its petrification, which brings us back to the eye — for petrification is the price of a forbidden spectacle, that of the Gorgon, of Sodom. Even Orpheus turning back to see Eurydice is frozen in elegy. Mourning is an eternal return to loss. The «stiff», the «mechanical», the wood, the stone and the lead, the whole leading up to the image of the snow, these images are often figures

assumed by death in Dickinson's poetry. All of these elements are to be put into relationship with the semantic network introduced by «formal» which suggests that it is only at the moment when the life of pain retreats that the formal ordering of poetry can begin. The notion of absence is encoded on another level as the poem encounters the figure of ellipsis several times: the lack of the direct object after the transitive verb «bear» is one example.

The conclusion «This is the Hour of Lead» takes up once more the trochaic beginning after a series of verses starting with iambs. This sort of rhythmic return seems to suggest an effort to complete a form. Yet the logic of the poem remains suspended. The lack of closure encoded by the sound of the open vowel in the final rhyme (snow — go) suggests the fading away of the voice of a speaker incapable of bringing the poem to a logical conclusion. What is more, the last verse with its seven tonic accents is one of the longest ever written by Dickinson. It proceeds by enumeration, but furnishes only the appearance of a logical progression in the midst of an obsession which defies all notions of temporalilty.

Freud noted that pain comes about due to the fact that motor reaction to danger, which would be flight, has become impossible; and this happens because the stimulation, the sensation which should warn the organism to flee it, comes from the interior. How can one avoid what is inside? To a certain extent, movement is associated to speech and silence to pain. If this status quo were to be disturbed, the whole world would be «haunted».

> There is no silence in the Earth — so silent
> As that endured
> Which uttered, would discourage Nature
> And haunt the World. (*P*1004)

The feeling rendered in Dickinson by the passive position of the speaker and the impersonal «letting go» are found again and underlined in another poem where the terms «Trance» and «Swoon» permit an escape from the unbearable present:

> There is a pain — so utter —
> It swallows substance up —
> So Memory can step
> Around — across — upon it —
> As one within a Swoon —
> Goes safely — where an open eye —
> Would drop Him — Bone by Bone. (*P*599)

A «Trance» is, in etymological terms, «trans» meaning across, it is a figure of betweenness, which is solidified like the «Hour of Lead», the realm of death:

> When I was a little girl I called the Cemetery Tarrytown but now I call it
> Trans — a wherefore but no more and the if of Deity. (*PF*49)

The self cannot bear too much reality, that is why it calls upon amnesiac techniques, certain of which announce the final amnesia, death. Dickinson insists upon the fact that

> No Drug for consciousness — can be —
> Alternative to die
> Is Nature's only Pharmacy
> For Being's Malady (*P*786)

The Malady of Being or Malady is Being? In the final verse it is impossible to distinguish between existence and essence. Once more we come back to the false dialectics of «A Quartz contentment — like a stone».

Since Malady is after all a quality, a possibility of being, and would therefore belong to being, whence the possessive, here it seems at the same time to be being itself: Being

is Malady. That is why death is that which comes, at the end to fill the lack, not really of that which is the cause, but of the contents, the interior reality of being.

In «There is a Pain so Utter» nature furnishes the figures of death in life: these are the failings of consciousness, and the body divided «Bone by Bone», follows if it can. In the same way the arrest of temporality is welcome in *P*859:

> An Unreality is lent,
> A merciful Mirage
> That makes the living possible
> While it suspends the lives.

Dickinson proposes to survive her «Hour of Lead» through an acceptance of it. If the hour of lead is another image of the constitutional lack, it does not come from the exterior, but from within, like pain itself; Emily acknowledges its role, and its place, and as she recognizes it, she herself becomes this place-between. This is a process which she can render perfectly explicit through the necessary «abdication» of consciousness in «Me from myself to banish» (*P*642). Rather emptiness, fainting, loss of consciousness which can have a limit, although one cannot forsee it, than the infinity of death.

«After great Pain» has its point of departure in a formal feeling, then the poem goes on till it reaches the loss of exterior authority represented by time and space and finally it sinks into silence at the conclusion. Because the speaking subject is fragmented from the beginning, her degeneration is not perceivable until the last line of the poem. Thus the poem provides an access to a border-line psychical condition which would be difficult to grasp without it. More importantly perhaps, the poem generalizes this experience by postulating the universality of the death instinct.

GERMAN LITERATURE

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E. T. A. Hoffmann's *Rat Krespel*: The Anatomy of an Eccentric

LEE B. JENNINGS (*)

German romanticism can be regarded as the last gasp of idealistic philosophy and the culture associated with it. There is an almost mystical belief in, or longing for, a more complete mode of existence, but also a drift of this belief toward an imaginary realm and away from the present reality. The idealistic view is defended the more frantically the more ill-founded it begins to appear in an increasingly pragmatic climate.

For nineteenth-century European readers in general, E. T. A. Hoffmann represented a rich infusion of fantasy and symbol, but for most arbiters of German literary taste he seemed to represent romanticism's wretched excess, its reduction to the trivial level of the ghost story. The more serious and favorable evaluations of Hoffmann's work have fixed their attention largely on the «artist problem» and have thought his central problem to lie in a conflict between visions of an ideal existence and the imperfection of the present reality — a conflict alleviated, if not actually resolved, by humor and irony. Indeed, many of Hoffmann's expressed views, as well as those of his more autobiographical characters, bear out this line of interpretation, and it is not our intention to deny it all validity. In the last two decades, however, it has become increasingly clear that Hoffmann's works can be read on another level to yield an opposite message, though it is one that is equally compatible with the tenor of the times in which he wrote.

This more pessimistic message says that visions of an ideal realm are futile, that they are mere idiosyncratic daydreams or insane delusions, that there is no cosmic harmony, but only happenstance and the rule of blind instinct. The interface between these world views lies in the concept of madness, which, in romantic thought, may be a form of metaphysical revelation, and in the doctrines of Mesmer and his adherents, where some cognitive validity was attributed to modes of thought below, or beyond, ego-consciousness. It is the interplay between cosmologies of order and chaos, between conscious and unconscious, that seems to lend substance and depth to Hoffmann's writing. A degree of social protest has also been seen in Hoffmann's satirical gibes at the particular realities of the early bourgeois scene. Yet his stories seem to revolve not so much around the peculiar status of the artist in society, or in the cosmos as a whole, as they do around the role of irrational mental processes in demarcating or determining reality, and, in particular, the role of fantasy as an enhancer of, or detractor from, our perception of existence.

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It has been observed, at least since Freud's interpretation of «Der Sandmann», that some of Hoffmann's stories read like psychiatric case histories, and, indeed, the nihilistic undercurrent in his writings can hardly be uncovered without some acquaintance with depth-psychological concepts. As the utopia diminishes, the dystopian view takes shape in the familiar patterns of neurotic and psychotic symptomatology. Hoffmann, to be sure, never tires of calling upon the dark, demonic forces of Fate as a foil for his grandiose visions of a higher world, but as the dark forces gain in strength the nihilistic view draws upon the phantoms of the unconscious. Thus Hoffmann's characters, the more they fall victim to the forces of Fate, begin to display characteristics better explained by psychological than philosophical doctrines.

Hoffmann's story *Rat Krespel* («Councillor Krespel»), written in 1816, may serve to illustrate the changing approach to Hoffmann's work, showing as well how the substantiality of a work may become more evident through the addition of a psychological dimension. This is ostensibly the account of an eccentric character, arising from a framing discussion about insanity and «spleen». (The frame narrative, which lends the volume its title, is an informal club of aspiring authors who read each other their works — the *Brothers of St. Serapion*, so called because of the unsettling encounter one of the members had with a crazed hermit who fancied himself to be that long-dead saint, resulting in much discussion of the relation between artistic imagination and delusion.) Eccentrics have a long history in German literature. They may appear as positive or negative figures, depending on the author's orientation with regard to the social norms that they tend to violate. Since German romanticism tends to be preoccupied with the type of the artist, who is generally seen as individualistic and nonconformist, most romantic protagonists are eccentric in some way. What we are dealing with here is characters who are eccentric even by romantic standards. Such is the case with Councillor Krespel, who is described in the first line of the story as «*allerwunderlichst*», «most peculiar». Generally speaking, eccentrics in literature fall into two patterns: (1) Gradual humanization, in which the character appears less strange the more we know about him; or (2) dehumanization, in which the character proves to be demonic or supernatural or is so heavily symbolic as to forfeit human status. An intermediate stage, encountered in more recent times, is the characterological study, usually in terms of environmental influences, showing how a strange person became that way, without the person's coming to seem any less strange. The psychological literature, since it deals in general with various forms of eccentricity, contributes little to the problem of the eccentric as such but rather deals with manifestations of inappropriate behavior under such rubrics as obsessive-compulsive neurosis or schizoid personality. Perhaps the closest thing to a specialized study of eccentricity is that of Ludwig Binswanger, the existentialist psychoanalyst, in his discussion of «*Verschrobenheit*» (wrong-headedness, literally: being screwed together wrong — but without the sexual connotation that «screw» has in English.) His primary example is a father who gave his terminally ill daughter a coffin for a Christmas present. (His second example is a mental patient who, at dinner, put a piece of cold tongue on his bald head to cool it off; the third is a rather run-of-the-mill crank.) Binswanger's conclusion is that the eccentric of this type lives in a world where everything goes awry and is askew, intimate personal interaction is virtually unknown, practical perspective is lacking, and behavior is governed by abstract principles rather than decision-making in the here-and-now. Councillor Krespel, as the narration first leads us to think, represents the standard pattern of the merely apparent eccentric who, as we learn more about him, emerges as a sympathetic and tormented human being with understandable motives. On the other hand, there is a residue of intractable queerness in his behavior that is more reminiscent of Binswanger's ill-advised Christmas giver.

The principal narrator of Hoffmann's story is one Theodor, who, at the time of the narrated events (as he himself indicates) was a young, inexperienced, conceited, and meddlesome

law student, bent on unravelling the mystery of Councillor Krespel and his apparent tyrannization of a young woman, Antonie, an exquisite singer, who is first believed to be his ward. It is indicative of Theodor's fatuousness that, like the rest of the town, he is entranced by Antonie's singing, though he himself has not actually heard it. Councillor Krespel, a noted jurist, is widely known as an eccentric who wears strange clothes of his own design and once had a house built according to his spur-of-the-moment instructions to the workers. When Theodor first sees him, he is struck by the way Krespel lurches about but never bumps into anything. Krespel, we learn, forbids Antonie to sing and has thrown her fiancé out of the house. He is also known to take apart and discard valuable old violins in an attempt to discover the secret of their tone. Though he builds violins too, destroying them seems to interest him more. Antonie dies in the course of the narrative, and Krespel then tells his story to Theodor, who had come to denounce him for his inhumane treatment of Antonie. Krespel relates that he was once secretly married to an Italian opera singer, Angela, who, by his account, made his life miserable with her fits of temperament. Once, when she smashed his violin in a fit of pique, he threw her from a window and left her. Fortunately, it was a first-floor window and she landed in a bush, and neither she nor her unborn child suffered harm; but Krespel never returned to her. When, some years later, Angela died (of the aftereffects of a cold), Krespel took custody of the daughter, Antonie, his supposed ward. Her singing talent is said to be the result of an «organic defect» which will cause her death if she goes on singing. When she insists on singing once more with her fiancé, a young composer, as accompanist, she suffers a fainting spell; it proves not to be serious, but in the meantime Krespel flies into a rage and almost forcibly ejects the young composer, amidst fierce infernal imprecations. Antonie becomes compliant, gives up singing and cares for her father. As a substitute for her forbidden singing, Krespel plays a rare Cremona violin, with which Antonie virtually identifies herself. One night Krespel has a dream in which Antonie is singing to the accompaniment of her fiancé, and on waking he finds her dead of unknown causes, a beatific smile on her face. At the moment of her death the sounding post of the Cremona violin had cracked.

A friend of Krespel's, a professor, explains his apparently insane behavior after Antonie's funeral (bitter exultation at his new freedom, erratic hopping and leaping) in the following terms. Krespel is like a «thin-skinned insect» whose momentary contortions make it seem deformed, though it always returns to its original shape. He lacks the covering beneath which the rest of us carry on our craziness undetected. With Krespel, «everything becomes action.» His overwrought gesturing is the «lightning rod» whereby, giving vent to bitter scorn, he returns his earthly frustrations to the earth, leaving the divine part of his nature, his «inner consciousness», intact.

The story overtly follows the humanitarian pattern in which a seeming eccentric turns out to be «normal» after all, and to have such unexpectedly good reasons for his actions that the reader may even feel somewhat misled. One would wish to derogate neither Hoffmann's attempt to create an unusual tragic situation nor his metaphysical slant, his vision of an ideal realm revealed through music and feminine beauty and often inimical to *élan vital.* As we concentrate upon the earthly sphere of social interaction, though, it becomes apparent that Krespel's eccentricity, or neurosis, has not been entirely explained away.

Traditional interpretations have dwelt upon the art-versus-life theme, seeing Krespel as a failed artist or the artist as tragic clown, and have stressed his well-meaning, though brusque, protectiveness toward Antonie. In the 1970's however, certain literary scholars, notably Ellis and McGlathery, began to cast doubt on the purity of Krespel's motives, that is to say, on Hoffmann's overt representation of him as a person of pure motives, pointing out that none of the three narrators: the young student, the professor, and Krespel himself, comes across as being entirely reliable. A doctor's diagnosis of Antonie's moribund condition is really hardly more than a passing supposition, seized upon by the basically

misogynist Krespel to bind his daughter to him in what amounts to a thinly-veiled, non-threatening, incestuously tainted liaison. Even so, Ellis seeks to normalize Krespel somewhat; he points out that the jerry-built house, though outwardly bizarre, is quite comfortable inside, and that the thin-skinned insect to which the Professor compares Krespel is behaving normally, lacking only the «skin» of outward appearance, that is, an acceptable social persona. The house-building episode is indeed puzzling; it seems to attest more to innate architectural genius than to «*Verschrobenheit*» on Krespel's part, and as a major example of eccentricity it is rather tame. What the episode shows is that Krespel possesses a sound intuition — not the passive hearkening intuition favored by romantic poets, but an instinctive sense of the right moment for action. The fact that this point is not further developed may reflect a general distrust of strong-willed action in post-Napoleonic Europe, in which case the dependence of our concept of eccentricity on sociohistorical context becomes important. (Even Binswanger recognizes this problem, when he remarks that the gift of a coffin would not be considered odd in China.)(41) Thus, the man of action may already be considered eccentric.

The Professor's insect simile resists normalization more stubbornly. What he is describing seems to be the larval stage of an insect, which, in its phallic amorphism suggests the bare Freudian id. The Professor's justification of Krespel as one who acts out his aggressions in order to leave his divine soul intact sounds suspiciously like a definition of the psychopathic personality. Krespel's harsh treatment of his wife Angela, to be sure, is ironized — Krespel says that he was asked to keep the incident quiet, lest there be a copycat epidemic of primadonna-defenestrations. Hoffmann, himself a sometime orchestra director, lapses into the satiric mode here, and, in general, the mixture of awe and derision with which he regards his creation contributes to the enigmatic complexity of the work. What is certain is that the more we analyze the work, the less Krespel emerges as a clearly sympathetic figure.

Krespel first appears to conform somewhat to Binswanger's picture of the virtually untreatable, socially underdeveloped schizoid. The impression is rendered mostly through the main narrator Theodor, who, however, implies that it was the result of immature fantasizing and sensation-seeking on the part of his younger self. In a second stage of psychological insight, mostly provided by Krespel's own narration, filtered through the persona of Theodor, a rather sentimental humanizing process takes place, in which Krespel's bizarre antics appear to be the result of stoically concealed inner suffering. This seemingly more enlightened view is undercut, however, by the clear indications of Krespel's near-psychotic ambivalence toward his daughter and by the brief interpolation of the third narrator, the Professor, which is overtly meant to humanize Krespel but achieves rather the opposite in its image of a personality scarcely able to maintain minimal intellectual control — not a merely «eccentric» personality, but a dangerously unbalanced one, innocuously masked.

We have to wonder whether Antonie's «defect» is in fact her feminine sexuality, and music little more than transcendentalized eros. Hoffmann's descriptions of supernal bliss, in general, sound suspiciously erotic. We ask ourselves whether his longed-for other world is above, beyond, and in the future, or below, within, and in the past. Krespel's ego may be intact, but it is easily shunted out. The writhing, polymorphous insect, we fear, may some day not return to its original form.

The violin may provide a further key to Krespel's peculiar oddness. (The story is untitled in the original collection, and although it begins in the vein of a character study, the early editors' designation *Rat Krespel* may not be as appropriate as that of one of the English translators: *The Cremona Violin*.) It is a mechanistic vessel containing the spirit — as is the human body, in Cartesian thought. But the female body is traditionally thought to contain spirit or soul in an intimate way unforeseen by Descartes. We are reminded of Hoffmann's fascination with automatons. Is it really the female body, in its amalgam with psyche, whose mystery Krespel seeks, destructively, to solve? Does he wish to destroy that which he cannot possess, or to act out his possession by destruction of the desired object?

A grudging nurturer, he seems to need nurturing himself and stumbles through life in quest of this elusive goal, or in delusive quest of the «freedom» thought to come from annihilating the bond of early intimacy.

Some of Hoffmann's eccentrics are playfully trivialized demonic figures, of no characterological significance. In this work, however, while seeking to humanize an outwardly eccentric character he simultaneously dehumanizes the character to a like degree, giving motivation with one hand and taking it away with the other. The result is that our attention is diverted to preconscious areas, leading to a gain in psychological depth not obtainable through the usual modes of characterization. Whether Hoffmann intentionally undermines his own apparent intent to create a tormented-artist scenario is a question difficult to answer and one that, in the opinion of some, ought not to be asked. If we extrapolate the ultimate narrator, largely coincident with the author Hoffmann, we get a picture of skepticism and irony masking and rationalizing a fear of uncontrolled behavior, of being a plaything of unknown forces, of being overwhelmed by one's feelings. Equilibrium is gained by stressing the absurdity of one's surroundings, by toying with the idea of demonic influence, by occasional sentimental religiosity, and by the cultivation of a persona of embattled insouciance. This configuration may not account for Hoffmann's creativity, but it may tell us something about his need to write and his choice of subject matter.

Most probably there is an absurdity-quotient built into Hoffmann's literary production, a realization that character must contain contradictions in order to appear real, and that this mode of production leads to results that are unforeseen by the author but are nevertheless in some way meaningful. If we have treated Councillor Krespel as a real person here, it is not only because this is part of the agreement between author and reader, but also because the literary construct before us is sufficiently complex to make the enterprise rewarding.

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Franz Kafka's Before the Law or some Problems in Psychology of Literary Understanding (*)

LÁSZLÓ HALÁSZ (**)

A man comes to the open door of the Law. The door-keeper does not allow him admittance. The man decides to sit down beside the door to wait for admittance. However, after years on end he is near to death. At the end of his life, the door-keeper tells him that the door was intended for him.

The short and enigmatic text is a real challenge for the experts who gave a great number of different interpretations. The main reason why I concentrate on this text is that together with my Swedish colleagues we just finished a study about understanding *Before the Law* with Swedish and Hungarian subjects. So I can compare this source of information with some information from literary experts, including the writer himself.

Many experts agree that *Before the Law* is an allegory. It is a complex text, not as a structure but as a meaning. Allegory invites the reader to interpret or look for a «latent» meaning. *Before the Law* is also known as a parable. The essence of it like that of an allegory is to tell a narrative which is understandable on more levels than one. The purpose of a parable is didactic, i.e., to teach a moral lesson. The situation is curious, we may say contradictory as «Parable, it seems, a way proclaim a truth as a herald does, and at the same time — says Kermode (1979) — conceal truth like an oracle.»

All the experts try to find out this concealed truth which Buber calls «metaphysics of the door». Concerning the «genius loci» as a recent psychological interpretation let me allow mention an Italian one, presented by Fusco (1990). In his interpretation the story is that of an obsessive neurosis. The man as an obsessive person turns to himself in a continuous, useless and painful research of exceeding his own condition, but his efforts have no possibility of success. The door-keeper cannot give in because the direct vision of the Law = Logos, the logic-categorical consciousness is not receptive to the unconscious pulsional forces. The Ego «restricted», coerced inside his obsession.

A Dutch literary scholar, Andringa (1989) collected about thirty main ideas of the theme of «metaphysics of the door».

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The experts «try to link the Law to a larger domain of knowledge and experience: those, connecting the story with the Jewish tradition, refer to it as God's law, or the Thora, psychological views interpret it as man's own fright or self-censure, from the more philosophical point of view — references to Kierkegaard and Nietzsche frequently occur — it is taken for the Truth, which is impossible to find for those looking for it, other take it for the 'Weltordnung', as such not accessible to men, for 'das Gesetz der unerlosten und unerlosbarne Welt', for the law of the dying, etc.»

It is worth completing the list with a special one. When one of the protagonists of *The Trial* finished telling the story of *Before the Law*, to the leading figure, K., they begin to discuss the main points of the meaning. Or rather, they focus on different interpretative alternatives.

A) The door-keeper deluded the man. If the statement of the door-keeper that he cannot admit the man at the moment and the door was intended only for the man were in contradiction with each other, the door-keeper really would have deluded the man. «But there is no contradiction. The first statement on the contrary, even implied the second.»

B) The deluded person is the door-keeper. «He knows nothing about the aspect and significance of the interior, so that he is in a state of illusion. But he is deceived also about his relation to the man from the country, for he is subject to the man and does not know it.» By the way, one of the door-keeper's delusions is that he can shut the door which is simply impossible because «at the beginning of the story we are told that the door leading into the Law stands always open.»

C) The door-keeper «belongs to the Law and as such is set beyond human judgment — ... The man is only seeking the Law, the door-keeper is already attached to it». So «to doubt his integrity is to doubt the Law itself». That does not mean that it is necessary to accept as truth everything the door-keeper says, «one must only accept it is as necessary».

Our question is whether the 17-year old Hungarian and Swedish good secondary school students from Göteborg and Budapest understood the story in similar fashion? 30-30 subjects took part in the study and they could read the story in their own mother tongue without the name of the author. Of course, the translations, were prepared years before our study and their slight stylistic differences were negligible from our point of view. Following the reading without any time pressure the subjects recalled it as detailed as they could and then answered «What do you think the author meant to say?» question. The peculiarity of the study was that following the first reading, recalling and understanding the experimental situation was repeated three times. Another story was also used. Now I will totally disregard this complex issue which will be presented in two detailed papers (Asplund, Halász, Marton, 1990, 1990a) and concentrate only on some relevant problems.

The main point of our procedure is that the comments which seemed in any way relevant were identified and marked. These comments formed a pool and our interest was focused on the pool of meanings. Each commentary had two contexts in relation to which it had to be interpreted. A) It depended on the whole response from which it had been taken, B) On the pool of meanings to which it belonged. The interpretation was thus an iterative procedure (cf. Marton, 1986) which went back and forth between the two contexts for each unit of analysis. It is dialectical in the sense that bringing the comments together develops the meaning of the category, while at the same time the evolving meaning determines which of the categories are included or omitted.

Let us see the categories and some examples which show the fundamental frames of the subjects' understandings.

> *Focus on the man — what he does.*
> «The man asks and begs the door-keeper to let him in. Instead he should have pulled himself together and fought his way past the guard (the obstacles) in society.»

«When a man is determined to live in accordance with the Law, he has to fight against any kind of obstacle.»
«The man was afraid of the possibility. He had to decide and did not take the risk.»
Focus on the man — who he is «The man from the country as a 'country man' symbolizes the man in the street.»
«You have to be educated in order to understand the Law. It is for everyone but only the man who understands it could use it. That man is uneducated which is symbolized by the fact that he is coming from the country.»
Focus on the individual destiny «Everybody has his own 'door'. Goals and ways are individual.»
«The meaning of life is unattainable and the road is individual to every man.»
Focus on the Law — what it does «The author mocks the handicapped situation of an average man against the despotic people who present the Law which is mystic, superhuman, inaccesible. This is the way how they make it bureaucratic.»
Focus on the Law — what it is «The door of the Law is the eternal Truth.»
«The door of the Law symbolizes the fulfillment which is a non plus ultra in everybody's desires.»

The ratio of these categories was rather characteristic in our subjects' understanding. There were no more than one-third of them who focused both on the man and the Law. I cannot resist quoting one of them as a parody of a psychoanalytical interpretation: «The Law is a female womb, the door-keeper his wife's refusal and the man is the frustrated husband.» By all means it is doubtless that the majority of the subjects was inclined to be satisfied with a unidirectional focus. At the same time there were rather remarkable — statistically high — differences between the Hungarians and Swedes. Four-fifths of the Hungarians but only one third of the Swedes focused on the man — what he does. At the same time more than one third of the Swedes and only less than one tenth of the Hungarians focused on the Law — what it does.

For the Hungarians a fundamental national issue is to suffer the failures without any reconciliation. The most famous line of the most famous Hungarian tragedy — which is a subject for all the Hungarian primary and secondary school students — says «Your task is to fight and hope». Taking it into consideration it is plausible why the Hungarians focused so much on the man — what he does, his fight and not his submission. And if we think of the high appreciation of egalitarianism and democratic lawfulness in the Swedish life it is plausible why the Swedes paid their attention to the Law — what it does, in that case to the oppressive strength of it.

My idea is that there is not only a «recurrent personal theme» — as Holland (1985) points out — which expresses the reader's identity-feeling having an influence on processing short stories. But there is a culture-dependent theme as well, which is determined by the national identity connected with the historical-social circumstances. And the reader's processing during which he forms a variation based on his personal theme is also influenced by a culture-dependent theme (in an American — Hungarian context cf. Halász, 1988).

It is obvious that the context of our study and the way it was done was correct only to specify the role of a culture-dependent theme but not that of a personal one. At the same time our study clarified a further problem of the literary understanding beyond that of the Kafka text. The story is not understood when merely the symbols of the man and the Law are perceived. It also contains a paradox, since the man is both invited to enter the Law — the door is intended only for him and is always open — while the door-keeper will not give him permission to enter.

When I presented Kafka's own commentary about the meaning of his text I left out

a rather important, may be the most important remark which he added in the name of K. that «it was not his final judgment». That is, he does not try to pretend as if he knew the meaning of his own story which like the Law is always open. And so its meaning is ironically uncertain as he puts down referring to the commentators of scriptures. «The right perception of any matter and a misunderstanding of the same matter do not wholly exclude each other.»

That is a paradox the structure and trend of which is like the way of understanding the text with a focus on that contradiction, *focus on the man's experience of a paradoxical elusiveness*, of a possibility which is given to him, yet never to be achieved.

«It is a rather contradictory situation... The man can probably never enter the door as the Law itself blocks his path. If he entered despite the Law he would break it, because it cannot allow him enter. He cannot cope with this contradiction as he does not want to break the Law... The contradiction which he cannot solve is a paradox. So he can enter but cannot. That is why the story is such a shocking reading.»

Only one Hungarian and one Swedish subject understood the story in such a way. Though it is quantitatively negligible not qualitative at all. It is, however, probable that this way of understanding like the former ones will completely dissatisfy a psychoanalyst. In fact, deep psychoanalytically oriented phantasy is not required by the *Before the Law* to see the two characters as a Double, and, or, to interpret the man's behaviour based on the self-defense mechanism which divided his personality. We can even think of a one-sided homosexual attachment which aroused his self-aggression till death. And last but not least we can search for the concealed meaning identifying the open door of the Law with the opening of the female sexual organ. Each alternative could be worked out in detail and fit into different allegorical approaches. More or less all these and some other alternatives are acceptable.

Nevertheless, I am afraid, the main point of this text and suchlike Kafkaesk in general slips away from the interpreter as the complex understanding is not rigidly tied to an allegorical explanation. Ony when one reflects on the inner relations of the text in which the figures have their role, can one grasp the experience of paradoxical elusiveness which the text conveys.

At the same time, from a psychological point of view there is no problem to see the rules of the logic of the story in which «right perception and misunderstanding», the possibility and impossibility of reaching a goal, closedness and openness do not exclude each other, and where contradictions may get on well together. All these are organized by the affective logic as Freud (1981) characterized a dream. The text expresses a dream phantasy image, a nightmare if you wish, by all means a vision which mediates Kafka's experience about an irrational and anxiety-arousing world where hope is hopeless, help is helpless, defence is defenceless, where sense is nonsense. And you cannot forget that in that latter respect what is true to the world is true to the text.

The aim of any sort of reader-response study is to know something about the reader, to know the transaction between him and the text, and not knowing the text itself. Though originally we wanted to study the ways of understanding I think that we found out something important about the text. So the empirical study of meaning assignment may contribute to the study of interpretation of a literary text.

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BRITISH LITERATURE

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Dramatic Patterns in Superego Revenge in Hamlet

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«Lest I revenge. What
myself upon myself?»
(Richard III, V, iii, 187)

My paper is full of questions, and tentative. Apart from the traditional revenge genre which has been analyzed by many critics, what is behind the popularity of the theme of revenge in Elizabethan tragedy? Justice? Social tension? Unconscious fears? Stephen Booth warns that the audience of *Hamlet* is not allowed the comfort of isolation in one system of values appropriate to the lawless in the audience? To teach the Christian view of revenge as amoral? (Prosser) To reflect the Elizabethan willingness to confront violence in themselves and their society? Or is it to pander to the sadistic and masochistic desires of the audience. Part of the popularity of *Tamburlaine* staged in the late 1580s came from the savage effectiveness of the stage devices. Kyd's Spanish Tragedy was another popular success at this time, mostly due to its violent stage action. The ten tragedies of Seneca came out in English translation in the 1580s, and Kyd took some of the bloody devices pictured by Seneca in ornate thyme for a Roman audience and put them into action for an English one. The Spanish Tragedy was a success with a whole generation of theatregoers, and the revenge play, with its ghosts and its madmen, started its long career on the London stage. In the 16th century London theatre the taste for sensationalism was dominant, and the enactment of cruel atrocities was greatly appreciated. Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, first staged in 1594, provided London audiences with more of the same atrocious revenges. Shakespeare packed this play with horrible atrocities to fascinate his audience and probably to reflect the taste for horror and horrible revenge he found in the translations of Senecan tragedy. But this is well trodden literary criticism ground.

Let us think of some different revegeful questions. Is the socialized aspect of revenge simply that sons avenge wrong done to their fathers? Is the theme of revenge to focus on avenging sons (four of them in *Hamlet*), and therefore on heritage and the importance socially and psychically of the father-son relationship? Is taking revenge on one level for

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the son an act of reparation, a creative making amends for the successful oedipal attack? On another level revenge seems a never ending process of oedipal crimes, fathers going in fear of their sons (or daughters?) and sons overthrowing their fathers, or a comparable authority figure. (Apart from Hamlet, Prince Hal and Macbeth are the most noticeable sons in this respect). However, in *Hamlet*, as in so much else in the play, we have the converse: a son going in fear of his dead father; a son who cannot overthrow his father's authority. Hamlet stands between a murdered father and a murderous uncle-father. One would like to know what shifts aggressive revenge from society to the individual, and from the individual to society. Is there some basic dynamic pattern of psychic action that Shakespearean tragedy dramatizes as revenge? How can Freud and other theorists help us to understand this dynamic pattern?

The concept of the superego, both individual and cultural, is important to our understanding of the dynamics of aggressive revenge and destruction in Shakespeare's tragedies. In drama, the tragic hero's superego is of course separate from the cultural superego. Superego aggression may be directed against the self or the external world; the operative feeling in this aggression is always revengeful hatred. It is a necessary assumption in my thinking that in tragic action there is a direct link between the protagonist's suffering and death, and the revengeful destructiveness of his superego and that of the community he exists in. It is the fate of the tragic hero to satisfy the conflicting and revengeful demands of the social superego and his own superego; when these demands coalesce, we have a definitive image of tragedy: the destruction and self-sacrifice of the tragic hero. (Montgomery Byles, *Imago*, Vol. 39.2,149-164 and *University of Hartford Studies in Literature*, 11, 58-69). In *Hamlet* Osric is the agent of this coalescence. The wager represents the poisonous revenge of both Laertes and Claudius; it is Hamlet's death warrant, but Hamlet has surrendered himself to its treachery and, more importantly, to his own death. The devoted Horatio guesses Hamlet's terrifying and deep resignation: «If your mind dislike anything, obey it. I will forestall their repair hither and say you are not fit.» But Hamlet is ready to «let be» (V.ii.206-207; 212). The same complex dynamic is true for Macbeth; terrified by the compulsive nature of his guilt and the threat it represents, Macbeth finally stands and faces the sword of the man he knows is fated to be his ultimate violater: «... before my body / I throw my warlike shield; lay on, Macduff.» (V.viii.30-34). I would suggest then that the theatre supplies the external stage into which the internal struggle of the ego and revengeful superego is most commonly projected. The tragic hero acts out the phantasies of the ego's struggle against a cruel superego; the play represents the author's working out of this unconscious conflict which is transformed, with all its identifications into the play.

Freud thought the source of the superego was the internalization of the castrating Oedipal father. He also thought the superego was one aspect of the death instinct (thanatos) in its aggressive need for punishment. Freud theorized that the cruel superego was also the revengeful aggressor that produces not only the need to idealize, but also the need for aggressive self-abuse when the ideal fails: for suicide or murder (Freud, *Collected Works*, Standard Ed., 14, 138-9; 18, 52-5; XXI, 113-117).

Here we might think of Othello whose cruel superego demands murder for imperfection, then suicide for his own guilt. In her chapter on superego formation, Edith Jacobson states that the core of the superego is «certainly the law against patricide and matricide and the incest taboo»; she then goes on to say that superego fear continues and replaces castration fear, but that some people may «unconsciously equate the superego with the threatening paternal — or their own — phallus.» She also points out that «there is a tremendous step between the simple moral logic of castration fear, fear of punishment and hope of reward, to the abstract moral level of a superego which has expanded from the taboo of incest and murder to a set of impersonal, ethical principles and regulations for human behavior.» (Jacobson, 127). Melanie Klein traces the beginning of the superego back to early (infant)

oral phantasies of self-destruction, which is a direct manifestation of the death instinct.

The death instinct is a useful concept in many ways: it represents a decomposition of the ego under attack by the superego; it tends to weaken object relations, and it tends to narcissistic withdrawal. It is demonstrably true that narcissism and idealism are important components in Shakespeare's tragic protagonists, especially Coriolanus, Othello, Hamlet and Lear. Yet it is only fair to say that there has been enormous resistance to Freud's idea of a death instinct since he first formulated it. Perhaps this resistance has something to do with our unwillingness to accept the violence of self-destructive and revengeful tendencies within ourselves. It seems it is easier to bear punishment inflicted from the outside than to face internal self-destructive tendencies. Possibly the origin of the superego also represents a similar attempt at externalization. Ehrenzweig suggests that instead of being rent by internal tensions, the ego projects its self-destructive aggression onto a split off part, the superego, and prefers to submit to its attacks which now come to it from outside, as it were (Ehrenzweig, 192). Superego aggression also projects itself into the outside world and onto the figures of punishing parents, punitive laws, repressive political regimes, conquest and invasions, and so on.

The superego's function is to induce guilt and to repress; openness (not closure), requires a weakening of superego power of repression. Yet a lifting of repression, or recognition of repressed material may produce extreme anxiety, even panic. For example, on one level of interpretation the Ghost represents the unrepressed hostility Hamlet feels for his father. The hostility Hamlet feels for his father is externalized as revengeful hatred not only for Claudius, his «uncle-father» but also for Gertrude, his «aunt-mother» and for Ophelia. These internal processes are externalized and dramatized in the soliloquies where the thought is frequently revengeful, sadistic and self-destructive. Hamlet's soliloquies are also expressions of superego conflict: to die or to live; to honor or to revenge; duty to oneself or to one's father. On one level Hamlet is ashamed of his father's command to revenge, and, at the same time ashamed of his inability to fulfil the command.

Eleanor Prosser suggests the Ghost is an idea Hamlet has long been waiting for (Prosser, 134). I am ucertain just what the idea is but it is possible that the Ghost is not only a projection of Hamlet's hostile feelings towards his father, but also serves as a projection of his murderous feelings about «the seeming-virtuous queen» his mother's husband: «So Uncle, there you are.» (1.v.110). If the command to murder Claudius is another instance of repressed wishes surfacing into conscious intention, then it is obviously less threatening that the revengeful need seems to come from outside, from the superego demands of authority, of the outraged father, husband, king. The oedipal theory clearly works here. Like Macbeth who has been thinking about the three weird sisters before he actually meets them, so Hamlet has been thinking, on some pre-conscious level about his uncle-father; and that is why at first he thrills to the command to murder: «O my prophetic soul!/My uncle?» (1.v.40-41).

The superego then is a revengeful force which seeks to punish. Hamlet tries to become his father's superego, but because he cannot act on it, his own superego takes revenge on him — drives him mad, kills him eventually. He cannot consciously question the morality of avenging his father's murder, because that would be to challenge his father; moreover, part of him is torn by the moral discrepancy involved in committing murder as a solution to the problem of murder. In an effort to gain control over the destructivenss of the superego, the tragic hero tries to project his sense of guilt through his ambition or revenge, onto others. Hamlet channels his revengeful aggression in a variety of ways: through his constant cruelty to others, his verbal hostility, and his «antic disposition».

Barber and Wheeler write of Hamlet's need to use his hostility to «protect his integrity against acquiescence in the corrupt world, on one side, or acquiescence in self-loathing, on the other.» These critics also see Hamlet's «need for revenge as the core of a need for expression and vindication.» (Barber and Wheeler, 262). Certainly Hamlet's aggressiveness

finds relief in his often very violent expressiveness, especially when he turns love into violence as he does in the nunnery and closet scenes. The command to revenge is itself a directive to transform love into violent and revengeful hatred. It is a superego command from the idealized father to his son to hate and destroy the bestial father-figure of Claudius, that heap of «garbage» that «nasty stye». Initially the command to revenge displaced some of Hamlet's superego aggression outward in his attempts to «catch the conscience of the king» and to be his mothers conscience, but the failure to actually achieve revenge, to murder Claudius, and so be at one with his father, fills him with deep dismay and self-contempt as his soliloquies reveal. Once the means of displacing the immense energy attached to the sense of guilt fails, the aggression turns inward, there is nowhere else for it to go. Hamlet becomes a victim of his own revengeful and aggressive need for punishment. He takes revenge upon himself; he accepts the wager from the absurd Osric. His ego yields to his superego and takes on the suffering the self-abusive superego produces. In these circumstances the ego collapses under the weight of so much revengeful self-hatred; the pain and anxiety produced by the murderous superego becomes unendurable.

Freud's view of instinctual fusion between erotic and aggressive instincts makes possible the idea of an admixture of erotic quantities even in destructive processes, and this may explain any masochism there might be in the tragic hero's self-sacrifice, as well as the sadism in superego aggression. In Shakespearean tragic drama the protagonist's sense of guilt (superego aggression) and need for punishment is so pronounced that the ego is not strong enough to be independent of the superego, or to control it. In this kind of tragedy the ego seems unable to defend itself from the severity of the revengeful demands of the superego by such normal activities as repression, denial, or rationalization. Eventually the function of the plot is to make sure the protagonist's displacements fail. The ultimate aim of the tragic hero is to act out the compulsive nature of his guilt, both the guilt he feels for his own personal wrong doing, and the generalized guilt which the social demands represented by the drama have required him to internalize. He is compelled to submit to the deathly demands of his own superego and that of the community.

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Shakespeare's Magic and its Discontents

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In «The Tempest» Shakespeare made a final effort to envision a dramatically probable world in which a perfectly benign authority might render order the intransigent human passions that moved his tragic protagonists to their catastrophes tractable to a cosmic hierarchical. In order to do so he raised his protagonist above all his previous representations of rulers by endowing him with the absolute powers of a magician, and he replaced the relatively naturalistic characterization and ordinary causality of the earlier plays with predominantly symbolic action and flattened character. The ideological implications of these moves together with their psychological correlates emerge when one reads «The Tempest» in context with the plays that precede it.

In order to understand the significance both of Prospero's magic and of those who are subjected to it I will attend to parallels between the themes, conflicts, and configurations of characters in plot sequences that are rendered symbolically in «The Tempest» and naturalistically in earlier plays.

In doing so, I give particular weight to the differences and omissions rendered significant by otherwise parallel plot sequences, and in line with Freud's insight that polarities conceal an underlying identity, I focus on the relationship between paired and polarized figures, such as good and bad women. Attending to the relation of «The Tempest» to the earlier plays not only reveals the emotional implications of «The Tempest's» schematic action; it also illuminates the ideological implications that are obscured in the powerful emotional resonance of the earlier works. For the purposes of this essay, I will concentrate on the forward direction, examining the ways in which elements of the earlier works both prefigure and illuminate the significance of the magic that is the most salient feature of this play. An understanding of the genesis and components of Prospero's magic provides access to the conflicts within Shakespeare's project that reach their culminating expression in the breach between Prospero's absolute power to structure his world and the complete powerlessness of his subjects. His magic constitutes their destiny.

That Prospero's magic is no mere device, but rather the locus of the play's central meanings, can be seen by tracing its the ways in which it develops from the providential happenings of the preceding romances. There is no explicit magic in «Pericles»; rather authorial control is manifested as an ultimately beneficent fate secretly at work in the apparent fortuitousness

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of the events that unite, separate, and reunite Thaisa, Pericles, and Perdita. Unlike events in the early comedies, these coincidental meetings are not perceived merely as a convention of the comic genre; rather, they transform the play into a divine comedy in which the conclusion symbolizes a transcendent telos, or state of being that represents an ideal human state, permeated by divine authority. Though the play glances towards naturalistic causality in the deaths of Cleon and Dionyza at the hands of their enraged subjects, Providence itself destroys the incestuous Antiochus and his daughter and ensures that the heroically good Pericles, as well as Thaisa and Marina, will be rewarded. Cymbeline differs from Pericles in that the greater emphasis on human agency renders the providential hand less obvious, and in that the characters are more naturalistic because they are less clearly defined within the categories of good and evil than those in «Pericles». However, the apparently less numinous accidental meetings that structure the plot appear in retrospect as instruments of a transcendent force that concerns itself with transforming human consciousness. This providential force functions now to administer a spiritual therapy by confronting morally imperfect men with the apparently, but not finally, irrevocable consequences of their actions. Posthumus' dreamed reconciliation with his dead amily signifies his transformation into one who simultaneously becomes morally worthy of happiness and fit to function as the instrument through which Providence aligns psychological, family, civic, and political relations with divine hierarchical order.

However, both of these plays are somewhat messy and sprawling affairs, their action spanning reaches of time and space. Their uneven quality has been widely noted, and one can easily identify the bits of pieces of previous plays out of which they are composed: «Pericles» combines motifs from «Hamlet» and «King Lear», and «Cymbeline» combines motifs from «Othello» and «King Lear», with shades of Lady Macbeth in the wicked Queen. These comparisons highlight the degree to which in these plays the forces that wrest the characters from tragically irrevocable consequences of their actions lack a dramatic impact commensurate with the gravity of the earlier works.

«The Winter's Tale» more clearly anticipates «The Tempest» in attempting to present magically transcendent events as though they were possible in an actual world.

Here Shakespeare increases dramatic intensity by concentrating the action in two locales, while emphasizing the benign power of time by the sixteen years that separate the falling from the rising action. He also intensifies the emotional impact in two ways. First, Leontes' paroxysm of jealousy and widening paranoiac vision give a fully tragic thrust to the action in Sicilia. Second, as Paulina controls events similar to those that in the earlier plays were left to time and circumstance, she becomes a kind of quasi-magus, capable of turning art, the old tales and plays, and the statue, into «life.» Her role is to keep Leontes in an alchemical cauldron of agonized remorse on the implied assumption that sufficiently prolonged pain will transfigure his soul, rendering him worthy of the restoration that waits in redeeming time. This fusion of seemingly naturalistic human agency with a agical aura appears most vividly in the wildly improbable naturalism of Paulina's explanation of how she stage-managed Hermione's apparently miraculous resurrection. In this way Shakespeare asserts that the seemingly irrevocable crimes and errors of the past can be revoked, and that a transcendent fulfillment of the heart's deepest desires can indeed come to pass — that miracles can occur to transform the real world into a fairy tale. But the play remains a play; it cannot cross the boundary that divides the wonder of the on-stage from that of its off-stage audience, so that the more the play insists on the reality of its own transcendent vision, the more the multiplying references to art rebound as self-references, reinforcing rather than penetrating the invisible wall that divides the play from its audience.

These experiments with the quasi-magical, whereby staged events that purport to represent possible worlds also symbolize the operation of transcendent powers, highlight the import of the explicit magic with which «The Tempest» endows Prospero.

The coalescing into Prospero's magic of the previously vague transcendental forces render him their representative. But it is important to make a distinction here between seeing Prospero as an allegorical figure for Providential powers, and seeing him as a magus, that is, as an ordinary human being subject to ordinary human stresses and conflicts who has acquired more than ordinary powers. Whereas in the previous romances Shakespeare attempted to give the illusion of probability to unrealistic events that transformed the lives of ordinary people, in this play he asserts the reality or probability of a redeemed world by trying to endow a perfectly beneficent and absolutely powerful ruler with a naturalistic psychology. Entrusted with the task of turning his island kingdom into a microcosm of a transcendent world, Prospero is to be Shakespeare's answer to his own previous kings and dukes, in whom he had portrayed the psychology of power in such depth as to make it appear inevitable that they should succumb to its temptations. While on the one hand Shakespeare abandons the representation of naturalistic causality in the events Prospero manages, on the other hand, in Prospero he portrays a naturalistic psychology of a person capable of resisting the enormous temptations involved in wielding the awesome power over the lives, hearts, and minds of others that in previous plays was entrusted to providential time and circumstance. Shakespeare's project is to generate a psychologically probable portrait of an uncorrupted ruler and to portray the human cost of the task he has entrusted to him. Signs of personal stress, such as Prospero's frequent irascibility, his alternate affection for and irritation at Ariel, his foregoing of revenge, the mixed reluctance and weariness with which he sheds his power, are designed to show Prospero as suffering the loneliness and burden of authority while resisting the temptations to misuse it in the service of self-interest. On another level, because Shakespeare in a sense represents his own authorial power in the providential force that moves the previous romances to their conclusions, the more than monarchical power with which Prospero is endowed suggests that he represents his author's shaping hand. That is, Shakespeare is the providential force that in other plays constitutes his characters' fate, just as Prospero's power constitutes the fates of those subject to his magic. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the stresses that he depicts in Prospero have some bearing on his own relation to his art — a subject to which I will return later.

While the play's tension arises from Prospero's relation to his own power, Prospero controls the comically reduced figures who are his pawns with an ease that conceals the emotional significance of the schematic action. However, just as the import of Prospero's magic emerges in the context of earlier plays, so the real intransigence of the problems he confronts emerges when one places the figures subject to his magic in context with their dramatic forebears. Moreover, the genealogy of Prospero's antagonists allows one to penetrate some darker sources of his magic and some obscure convolutions in the psychology of power.

It is important to note that Prospero's most powerful antagonist is not any of the male figures he confronts; rather, it is Sycorax who, though banished to the past of the play, constitutes Prospero's only competitor for magical control of the island. Though the cruelty of Sycorax and the compassion of Miranda render them polar opposites, both figures derive from the heroines of the early comedies to whom Shakespeare entrusts a large measure of his authorial control. Portia, by invoking the virtue of compassion that will characterize later portraits of redeeming women, manipulates Shylock into revealing his worst side. Rosalind orchestrates almost all the action of her play, and both taunts Phoebe and toys with Orlando, but faints with compassion at the thought of his wound. In «Twelfth Night» the two qualities unravel so that control falls to Maria who structures the events that trick Malvolio into exposing his hypocrisy with a glee that has a discomfitingly sadistic edge, while Viola attends more to others' distress than her own while waiting for comic time to untie the circumstantial knots. Clearly Shakespeare wanted to envisage women who would be both virtuous and powerful, but signs of his ambivalence appear in the

tinges of cruelty that accompany their manipulative skills, and shade their figures into those of later evil women.[1] Isabel marks a mid-way point in the process. In her the two aspects of the feminine recombine as she pleads that Angelo show Claudio mercy, a quality lacking in her response to Claudio when he shrinks from martyring himself to her chastity.

As though dimly aware that the shades of emasculating cruelty in these figures have the potential to relate them to the still unconceived Goneril, Regan, and Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare emphasizes the ways in which their female power is hedged with male control. Behind the Neo-platonic radiance of Belmont hovers the image of Portia's dead father. From beyond the grave his will governs what appear to be the chance events by which Portia's spouse will be selected. As though her submission to male authority is a condition of the power she later assumes, she both obeys her father's will and formally submits herself, her power, and her possessions to Bassanio. Rosalind's controlling power also is embedded in the aura of male dominion. Though her father has no active role in shaping events, his dwelling is the load-stone that draws all the characters to itself. Rosalind seems to establish a rival venue around which the action revolves, but the nuptial celebration centers around her father's forest glade. The pervasive presence of her father's power coalesces with the images of a magical uncle, dwelling deep in the forest's heart, to whom Rosalind attributes her love lore. Multiplying toward the conclusion, these references to a magical uncle tend to merge with Duke Senior's figure. Therefore, Rosalind not only yields her power to shape events to men at the end of the action; from the beginning it is defined by and conditional upon obscured male power.

As one moves from the early plays, one can see a contest between men and women to represent their author's shaping power. Lacking the charm of her predecessors, Isabel alienates the sympathy of many readers in a way that seems related to the fact that Shakespeare mid-way in the action subordinates her to the Duke's managerial role. In this way the male power that is behind the scenes in these comedies clearly steps to the fore, but in «All's Well that Ends Well» Shakespeare tries once again to infuse ontrolling power with feminine virtue by resorting to the formula he used in «The Merchant of Venice». Inherited from her dead father, the medicinal magic by which Helena cures the king is related to the manipulative skill with which she arranges the events that will both reform Bertram and ensure a happy ending. The fact that Helena, the last nubile woman in whom Shakespeare invests some of his authorial power, does not assume male disguise in a situation parallel to those in earlier plays suggests that in time Shakespeare grew uneasy with the transvestism by which he endowed women with male control.

In the tragedies corresponding figures vie for the villainous power that occasions the protagonist's downfall. In «King Lear» Edmund initially shapes the action but as his power passes to Goneril and Regan they acquire the sadistic and diabolic overtones that earlier characterized Iago. The imagery renders them symbolic of a cosmic principle, whereas Edmund remains merely an opportunist. Women clearly win the contest for diabolic power, not only because Goneril and Regan have fuller control over events than do male figures, but because Shakespeare calls upon his audience's visceral response to the outrage of Gloucester's blinding to ground the symbolic resonance of powerful and cruel women.

«Macbeth» has a similar configuration. On the one hand Lady Macbeth's manipulative and seductive powers are elevated to a cosmic principle of evil and linked to evil magic

[1] It seems likely that Shakespeare early on tended toward the liberal side of the contemporary debate about women, but that over time the psychological pressures from other sources pressed him toward the most conservative views. For two different approaches to these issues see particularly Linda Woodbridge, Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womankind, 1540-1620, (Urbana, Univ. Of Illinois Press, 1984), and Ian Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman: A Study in the Fortunes of Scholasticism and Medical Science in European Intellectual Life, (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1980).

by the imagery that associates her figure with those of the witches. On the other hand, her declaration that she would have dashed out her infant's brains had she «so sworn» as had Macbeth strengthens with visceral horror the moral condemnation of her unlawful aspiration. The forbidding female magic that is channeled through Lady Macbeth represents a fate that is to Macbeth what Maria is to Malvolio, or Goneril to Lear. It elicits Macbeth's darkest desire in order to destroy him, as later Prospero will use Ariel to provide Sebastian opportunity for the attempted regicide for which he then punishes him. Though in a softened mode, the pattern of «Macbeth» is repeated in «Antony and Cleopatra», in which the naturalistic portrait of Cleopatra is associated with the mysteries of Isis and the Nile. On one level the erotic magic of Cleopatra's charm draws Antony away from the Roman world and corrodes the foundations of his Roman identity. On a more general level the magic that emanates from her manifests itself as the force that ensures the supremacy of Octavius' daemon to Antony's, that brings Octavius' ships to Egypt with preternatural speed, and that deprives Antony of Hercules' protection and fells his «soldier's pole.» The magic in this play is more benign than in the previous tragedies, but the imagery links Cleopatra's explicitly sexual magic to the powers that are apparently independent of her, suggesting an obscure relationship between female sexual charm and the hidden powers that control what Antony experiences as fortuitous circumstances.

These women in the tragedies prefigure their counterparts in the romances in two ways. First, the horrendous portrayals of female cruelty in Goneril, Regan, and Lady Macbeth illuminate the depth of horror implied by but concealed in the flattened figures of the romances. Dionyza presides over a wasteland, cannibalistic kingdom in which parents, like Lear's monsters of the deep, devour their young, and Cymbeline's Queen, whose beauty and sexual charms disguise the foul sexuality that generates her son Cloten, initiates the hierarchical confusion of the entire action by seducing Cymbeline from his allegiance to Rome. Second, the extension of female seductiveness into an evil magical force is suggested in Cymbeline's Queen whose skill in concocting poison potions contrasts to the healing powers of Helena, Cordelia, or Marina, and finally produces Sycorax. Sycorax's ugliness represents her cruelty, but her evil magic, carried forward from the witches in Macbeth, derives from and conceals not only the vicious brutality of Goneril, Regan and Lady Macbeth, but also the feminine beauty that empowers them, and that is most fully rendered in Cleopatra's bewitching charms. Since Prospero acquires his power by defeating Sycorax, it should not come as a surprise when we find that Prospero's magic is tainted by the source from which it arises.

The ideological component of Prospero's magic becomes visible in relation to Miranda's progenitors, who become both more submissive and more subject to others' power as good and evil women become increasingly polarized.

Desdemona's compassion for Othello's suffering defines their love, and extends even beyond the brink of death when she exonerates him of blame for murdering her, but it also renders her his victim. Cordelia's medicinal compassion for Lear can alone counteract the cosmic force of her sisters' cruelty, but the silence that defines her authenticity both renders her defenseless against her articulate sisters and deprives her of dramatic force. Shakespeare maintains the aura of loving-kindness around her figure by banishing her from the stage while keeping her image present in the words of other characters for whom she is a haunting memory. In «Macbeth» the figure of compassion forms a counterpart to Lady Macbeth's horrific imagination when Macbeth fears that pity «like a naked newborn babe / Striding the blast,» will «blow the horrid deed in every eye» (I, vii, 21-23). In «Coriolanus» Shakespeare almost makes muteness speak through Virgilia's silent agony at the sight of her husband's wounds, but she is powerless to shape events. From these figures Marina inherits the radiant purity than can cleanse brothels and the compassion that heals Pericles' Lear-like catatonia. Miranda is this figure's final avatar. But being both constituted by

and the exemplar of the compassion that has in more partial ways characterized her dramatic forebears, she ecomes as one-dimensional, as fairly-tale like, as her counterpart Sycorax.

Attending to these genealogies reveals that Prospero's magic derives from and is composed of both the good and evil powers of female figures. On the one hand, along with shades of their cruelty, he inherits from Sycorax and her forebears his powers of enchantment with which he shapes the events that constitute reality for others. On the other hand, he justifies his power by aligning it with a cosmos that manifests its compassion in the winds and seas «whose pity sighing back again» did him and Miranda «but loving wrong.» Shakespeare solves the problem of making female compassion an active principle while subordinating female figures to male authority by associating the active aspects of compassion with Prospero's magical powers and at the same time reducing the figures from whom he derives it to onedimensional fairy-tale figures. Having, as it were, drained the life-blood from his female progenitors, Prospero can control the denizens of his island with deceptive ease. The magic that renders Prospero an image of both his creator's shaping power and of a benign providence covertly derives from the women whose subordination it ensures.

Upon Prospero's subjugation of women rests his success in containing the aspirations of the male figures who would transgress the boundaries of correct hierarchy. Either the union of Ferdinand and Miranda will place Prospero's issue on the throne of a transformed Naples, or a reanimated Sycorax will generate from the bad magic of her deceitful sexuality an opposing kingdom, peopled by the over-reaching progeny, or dramatic ancestors, of Caliban and a befouled Miranda. Either a submissive Miranda will irradiate with her virtue the mind and soul of the man to whom she yields herself, and generate virtuous children, or a Sycorax will, like Cymbeline's queen, contaminate the being and he seed of men whose uneducated sexual passions enslave them to evil women.[2] Without Prospero's commanding magic, unruly sexual passion will transform the connubial love between Ferdinand and Miranda into «barren hate, / Sour-ey'd disdain, and discord [which] shall bestrew / The union of [their] bed with weeds so loathly / That [they] shall hate it both» (IV, i, 19-22). Only Prospero's magic can defend the generative potency of a virtuous couple as the fountainhead of a fertile and righteous kingdom from the unruly and corrupting desires that will otherwise contaminate his world with the «pestilential vapours» that befouled Hamlet's.

It is in order to prevent such contamination, and to create a spiritually radiant polity that Prospero assumes the right to cause suffering that in the earlier romances belong to the unseen Providential hand. In the name of his transcendent ideal Prospero causes Alonso to suffer grief for a son he believes to be dead and confronts him with his past crimes; he torments Caliban with pinches for disobedience, and leads his party into the «filthy mantled pools» that confront them in outward form with images of their inward state; and he tests Ferdinand's submission and love by reducing him to a slave's state. Were Prospero merely an ordinary ruler charged with regulating his subjects' behavior rather than their inward being, such arbitrary cruelty, in political terms, would define him as a tyrant, and the combination of his obsessive concern with sexuality and his cruelty, in psychological terms, would link him to the sadistic sisters of «King Lear»[3]. Only by claiming to be legitimated by a transcendent authority can he define his actions as a spiritual

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[2] This aspect of women's power over men reaches into the problem of inherited virtue as articulated in the Renaissance debate on true gentility. Signs of Shakespeare's uneasiness with it appear in the doubt or grudging concession, expressed in several plays, that good women can have bad sons, as well as in the identity made between virtuous mothers and their daughters in «Pericles» and in «The Winter's Tale».

[3] Curt Breight in «'Treason doth never prosper', The Tempest and the Discourse of Treason», Shakespeare Quarterly (Spring, 1990) 1-28, argues that Shakespeare intends the play as an exposè of the monarch's strategies to justify absolute power by generating treasonous plots and cruelly punishing people. He assumes that to reveal the extraordinary tortures that were used will automatically force the conclusion that Shakespeare saw through the strategies of containment, but there is good ground to believe that he might have thought them necessary.

therapy, like that which Paulina's administers to Leontes, or Edgar to Gloucester. But to claim such authority he himself must be an exemplar of the spiritual and psychic purity he seeks to inculcate in others. Furthermore, if Shakespeare is to achieve this dramatic goal of positing a believable alternative to the catastrophes that befell the kings and dukes of his tragedies, his magus must be at once an exemplar of spiritual enlightenment and psychologically plausible.

This project collapses should shades of Angelo's hypocrisy darken Prospero's image so that he becomes one who punishes in others the desires he disowns in himself, or should he be seen as one whose repressed sexuality fuses with aggression, making him like Lear's «rascal beadle,» who lashes the whore whom he «hotly lusts to use... in the kind / For which [he] whip'st her» (IV, vi, 161-62).

The play provides no direct way in which to discuss Prospero's sexuality, for it seems to eliminate the issue by providing him with a long-dead wife and only a daughter for female companionship. The implied assumption is that his spiritual authority rests on his having transcended sexual desires. But this textual strategy creates more problems than it solves. On the one hand it strains the psychological probability necessary for Shakespeare's project to believe that a person like Prospero who so concentrates attention on managing others' sexuality would totally have obliterated his own. On the other hand, in so far as his obsession with sexuality bespeaks repressed desire, the absence of a suitable partner would not eliminate his conflict; it would intensify it.

If he desired the divine Miranda, as Angelo desired Isabel, he would be steeped in self-loathing for sullying the good, but the only feminine alternative to her is Sycorax, whose image stands for the emasculating violence of her canonical predecessors. To desire her would add terror to the self-loathing entailed in desiring the bad. Within the thought system implied by Prospero's banishment of Venus and her unruly son from the wedding masque, sexual desire itself, even within marriage, is corrupting.[4] Furthermore, unlike Lear, Pericles, and Leontes, Prospero has managed to keep his daughter with him, hereby rendering any erotic desire incestuous.

The incestuous tensions that were suggested in various ways in these earlier plays were obscured by having the daughter entrusted to a benign providence, which in the guise of fortuitous circumstance also separated her from her father until she was safely promised to a younger man. But since Shakespeare's effort to embody transcendental powers in a human figure logically entails that Miranda be entrusted to her father's upbringing, Prospero must be one whose sexual passions are either extinct or entirely amenable to his will. But signs that Prospero's sexual drives are neither extinct nor quiescent appear implicitly in his imprisonment and humiliation of even the virtuous Ferdinand, the pinches with which he torments Caliban, and the «beating brain» that afflicts him after the interrupted wedding masque, behavior that has led various critics to see the entire play as a critique of its central figure. The omission of any explanation for these episodic outbursts suggests that the rigor with which Prospero restrains the unruly desires that are depicted in others derives from an equally harsh and punitive self-restraint. Rather than being one whose inner harmony corresponds to and exemplifies a divine harmony, in psychoanalytic terms he becomes one whose ego-ideal and passions are as radically polarized as are the figures he confronts.

This view of Prospero renders the play's formal attributes an image of its protagonist's character. Shakespeare restrains his material within the classical unities of time and place, and he controls the characters subject to Prospero by severely limiting their affective range, just as Prospero controls their movements and behavior. In this way the play's overt thematic emphasis on the need for stringent control mirrors the contrast between the psychological naturalism of Prospero's character and the onedimensional characters who people his world.

[4] For some contemporary views on sexual pleasure within marriage, see Maclean, p.105n.

Together with the substitution of Prospero's magic for ordinary causality, this mirroring moves us towards a psychomachiac or onieric reading in which the figures whom Prospero confronts are seen as aspects of his psyche that he has repudiated in order to maintain his selfimage or ego-ideal.[5] Particularly significant in this regard are the non-naturalistic characters of Caliban, Ariel, and Sycorax. In Caliban Prospero expresses his attitude toward his body. The imagery associates him with standing water and earthiness, in contrast to Ariel who is associated with moving waters and with the «purer» elements of air and fire. Caliban's attempted rape of Miranda gives a sexual dimension to his insubordination to right authority, which in turn links him to the court party. Caliban's plan to steal Prospero's books and knock a nail into his head makes the body's rebellion from the mind's authority a figure for all hierarchical violation.

Therefore, on Prospero's ability to control Caliban rests his power to organize his island world as a model of the Naples to which he will return. As the polar opposite of Caliban and the agent of Prospero's punitive therapy, Ariel might be thought of as representing Prospero's intellect, the higher element that keeps the lower in their place. However, such a view does not correspond to Ariel's desire to be free, nor to Prospero's alternately affectionate and irritable responses to him. A clue to Ariel's place in Prospero's psychic dynamic is to be found in his dramatic genesis from the same source as his opposite number.

Caliban is born from Sycorax's womb, and Ariel is released by Prospero from her cloven pine, a distinctly genital image. That they are both in a sense born of Sycorax suggests a hidden affiliation between the bodily impulses Prospero controls and the cruel means by which he controls them.

The common birth of Ariel and Caliban suggests a quasifraternal relationship. As with the occulted ties between Sycorax and Miranda, one can discern underlying links between the polarized figures by attending to their dramatic ancestors, who are the good and bad brothers of previous plays. Ariel's supremacy over Caliban represents the rectification of the disordered passions between brothers depicted in Oliver and Orlando, Duke Frederick and Duke Senior, Claudius and King Hamlet, Edgar and Edmund, and, of course, the two other fraternal pairs in this play. In earlier plays, good and bad brothers are opposed on the basis of their desires for material goods and status versus spiritual goods and love. However, in «Cymbeline» the fraternal pair acquires another range of associations, one that generates a new axis of signification. Like Caliban and Ariel, Cloten and Posthumus, being respectively foster and step-son to the king, are also quasi-fraternal. To the previous value oppositions depicted in other fraternal pairs, they add one between body and spirit, a polarity that was anticipated in the less obvious and morally neutral polarity between Puck and Bottom. Compared by Imogen to Posthumus' undergarments, Cloten becomes an allegorical representation of Posthumus' low desires, from which he in time frees his more spiritual understanding. This new polarity is more fully realized in «The Tempest», but the denied fraternal relationship suggested by their dramatic predecessors indicates that it is not only Caliban in his «filthy mantled pools» who represents his mother's rank sexuality, but that the apparently antithetical figure of Ariel represents a sublimated expression of the very desires his task is to punish and restrain.

The obscured relation between the figures is indicated in a second way. Though Prospero describes Caliban's past attempt to rape Miranda, in the present Caliban seems without sexual desire. Rather than seeking to repeat his attempt on Miranda, he offers her to Stephano, and for all he is maligned, he is associated with the island's munificence. It is as though

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[5] For a fully oneiric reading of the play see Kay Stockholder, Dream Works: Lovers and Families in Shakespeare's Plays (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1987). Marjorie Garber in Dream in Shakespeare: From Metaphor to Metamorphisis (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1974) argues this is the most dream-like of Shakespeare's plays.

in the time suggested by the gap between his attempted rape in the image of the play's past and the play's present he has been castrated and reduced to a kind of infantile or pre-genital psychological state.[6] Just as female sexual desire from earlier plays was channeled into Prospero's magic, so within the play the phallic potency that is denied to Caliban in the play's present is bestowed instead upon his brother in whom it is metamorphosed into magical force.

Prospero establishes his supremacy to Sycorax by releasing Ariel from her power, but he gains his victory and the services of his «tricksy spirit» on condition of and at the price of his denial of Caliban's, or his body's, sexual desires.[7] As we have seen before, Sycorax evolves from the sexual and cruel women of the previous plays. Her reduction to an ugly witch of the past expresses Prospero's hatred and fear of sexually enticing women who can arouse his repudiated desires. Because he associates these desires with insubordination and evil they threaten his self-image or ego-ideal as a providentially authorized Magus. Therefore he is caught in an escalating emotional dilemma in which his assessment of his sexuality as evil is reflected in his vision of cruel and sexually foul women, the desire for whom renders him vile in his own eyes. The image of Ariel entrapped in Sycorax's pine suggests a past form in which Prospero yielded to the charms of a less diminished version of Sycorax, but in self-disgust refused to discharge the seed that would propagate more Calibans.[8] He feels imprisoned by «her most unmitigable rage,» because he will not yield

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[6] For a related approach to Caliban see Meredith Anne Skura, «Discourse and the Individual: The Case of Colonialism in The Tempest,» Shakespeare Quarterly (Spring, 1989) 42-69.

[7] This interpretation of Ariel coheres with a mythic approach to the magical power he represents in the play. Norman O. Brown, in his study of Hermes in Hermes the Thief, New York, 1947) links the various attributes of Hermes, thief, trickster, messenger of the gods, protector of trade, and representative of skills, to herms.

These ithyphallic carvings topped with a representation of the god's head, were placed on road sides, public places, entrances to public and private dwellings. He argues that these carvings or stone piles did not represent fertility, but rather represented and invoked Hermes' magical protective powers in whatever places strangers might be found. The self-rising nature of the phallus, both its power, and its unreliability, he argues, were expressed in Hermes the trickster, the magician and the craftsman. According to this thinking, the various ways in which the phallus can be regarded accounts for the disparate qualities attributed to Hermes. In this context Ariel, who is a messenger like Hermes, would represent Prospero's magical powers and their phallic source.

A similar conclusion flows from another mythic source. Paul Radin in The Trickster, New York, 1969), recounts and discusses the Winnebago Trickster Cycle in connection with other North American Indian trickster tales. Whether hare, or spider, the trickster figure in these tales often carries his penis with him, sometimes in a box, and sometimes wrapped around himself. He often sends it on errands; it is sometimes obedient, and sometimes gets into trouble of various kinds. Karl Kerenyi, commenting on Radin's material, («The Trickster in Relation of Greek Mythology», tr. R. F.C. Hull, in The Trickster, hypothesizes that the trickster can be represented by his phallus. Though Kerenyi does not regard Hermes or other trickster gods as magical as does Brown, the trickster's phallus shares with its owner the attributes of skill, sprightliness and deceptiveness. This relation of the trickster to his phallus still parallels Prospero's relation to Ariel, or Oberon's to Puck, though it would not account for Ariel being the agent specifically of Prospero's magic. To see Prospero in this context is to think of him as a kind of Trickster god overlaid by a strenuous morality who hides or who has lost awareness of the phallic nature of his little messenger. Oberon and Puck show more of the characteristics of the trickster, neither one being particularly moral, and Puck having detached pleasure in the fools that mortals be, and unconcern about his mistakes. Ariel, the more moral agent of a moral master, shows traces of that in his statement that even he, who does not have human feelings, might feel pity for the court party, whose sufferings he engineered.

These mythic parallels suggest that the concept of magic, or of the trickster creator and deceiver, is rooted in the psychic concomitants of sexual biology, and that magic for Shakespeare became an image of his art in which he desperately tried to envision a solution to insoluble conflicts.

[8] The corresponce between the image of Ariel entrapped in Sycorax's pine and the Prospero's earlier image of his brother as «The ivy which had hid my princely trunk, / And suck'd my verdure out on't» (I, i, 86-87) suggests a person who to escape the conflicts involved for him in heterosexual love attempted a homosexual detour, but associated that with depletion and betrayal.

to orgasm and cannot lose his desire. He can escape what he experiences as entrapment only by draining from his phallus its vital energy and transforming it into Ariel, or the «potent art» that still sometimes does not «cleave» to his thoughts, and strains toward release. Once free, Ariel will display in benign, because non-human, form his genital source. «Where the bee sucks / There suck I,» he says, while an enervated and dreary Prospero will return to Milan «with every third thought on the grave.»

In the service of his espoused hierarchical ideals Prospero has transformed his sexual desire into the magical spells with which he shapes his subjects' experience and governs their actions.

His ideal is symbolized by, and its realization made conditional upon, the perfect subordination of a pure woman to a man in whom lust has been sublimated into affectionate appreciation of feminine spiritual radiance. However, Prospero's victory over active and sexual women not only expresses his sexual fears; it also increases them by attributing to sexuality such vastly destructive powers. The pain of this emotional double-bind is expressed in the image of Ariel's groans, vented for twelve years «as fast as mill wheels strike». The only anodyne for his pain is to win Ariel's release by denying his desire, and, in the name of a transcendent ideal, channeling his frustrated phallic yearning into a will to power that affords him the devious gratifications of Lear's «rascal beadle». Thus is Prospero's magic comprised of the fused aggressive and erotic drives that bemonstered the features of women in «King Lear». As the expression and product of these confused desires, Ariel becomes his instrument for punishing in others the passions he has so tortuously repressed in himself. In order for a fruitful kingdom to spring from Miranda's union with Ferdinand, Prospero and Shakespeare required a resplendent vision of a gentle sexuality lovingly conformable to spiritual authority. But Venus and her unruly son cannot be banished, and they never cease both to rebel against and to pervert the curbs and bridles that were to assure their innocence. The vision of happy harmony Prospero's magic is to translate into a redeemed polity in Naples rests on a morass of psychological torment. In so far as Shakespeare renders in Prospero's magic an image of his own art, his bestowal of it upon this otherwise psychologically probable figure represents his effort to generate a vision of perfect authority so tangible that it might, like Hermione's statue or Prospero's epilogue, leap the ontological divide between life and art, between stage and audience. In this context the old idea that in Prospero's enervation Shakespeare expresses his own is both sanctioned and deepened. It becomes plausible to see Shakespeare as one drawing on his vital energies in a urgent bid to substantiate, to materialize, a vision of hierarchical harmony and its attendant value system with an implicit psychological argument for its possibility and necessity, even as he felt the winds of history dispersing the «insubstantial pageant». As we have seen, his argument turns against itself, but in the process of mounting it Shakespeare created a moving image of the painful emotional dynamic necessary to transform libido into super-ego, or passion into the will to power.

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Hamlet and the Technology of the Mind's Eye

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I begin with an image (Fig. 1): Laurence Olivier's Hamlet, seated in the dark and turning toward a door off-screen, where Polonius is about to announce the arrival of the players. Olivier's film, with its deliberately oedipal reading of the play, has a teen-ager's importance for me, since that is when I first saw it, and though I have seen other Hamlets — like Nicole Williamson's, or Derek Jacobi's, or Innocenti Smoktunovsky's — none of them has displaced Olivier's Hamlet in my mind and, significantly, none of them has been a stage performance: all have been films or videos. This translation across media is not a casual or indifferent matter but marks how I am positioned as reader and observer by a technology of representation. This image of Olivier, by the way, is a photograph of a video of Olivier's film, which he made after playing Hamlet for many years on the stage.

As a teenager I identified passionately with Olivier's heroic and melancholy young prince. These days I identify more with the middle-aged man slumped in a chair in a dimly lit room, looking as if he might be watching TV. And at lectures where I have shown this photo of Olivier, the audience, sitting also in a dimly lit room, seem in their postures and attitudes a lot like the image on the screen. This is not just an accidental similarity but a sign of how we are all, observers and observed, defined by a shared technology of representation. It is also a sign of the broad differences between our representation of an actor on a stage and Shakespeare's.

Hamlet is an actor, or would-be actor. The play Hamlet, like virtually all of Shakespeare's plays, is saturated with the question of the actor's identity, epitomized by Iago's dark claim, «I am not what I am» (1. 1. 65), words that imply a link between acting and imposture but, more radically, tell of a vertigo at the core of identity itself, an impossible but unavoidable equation of identity and its negation. The intensity of Shakespeare's questioning of the actor has attracted not only actors to his plays but also readers who imagine Shakespeare himself as the embodiment of the question. So, Borges begins his parable about Shakespeare: «There was no one in him; behind his face... there was only a bit of coldness, a dream dreamt by no one.»

In London he found the profession to which he was predestined, that of

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the actor, who on a stage plays at being another before a gathering of people who play at taking him for that other person[1].

In the reciprocity of play between actor and audience Borges playfully locates the vertigo of the self. It is in this site, this space between actor and audience, that Shakespeare locates the self as a specular rhetoric of the mirror, as when Cassius says, «Tell me, good Brutus, can you see your face?» and Brutus replies, «No, Cassius; for the eye sees not itself / But by reflection, by some other things» (1. 2. 51-53). I want to explore this site in some detail. In particular, I want to question what happens when we introduce the technology of the camera into it. For I suspect that the site of the actor and his audience, which we recognize as so essential to Hamlet, exists for us in a different form — not only when we see it in film or video, but also when we imagine it even in its purest form, just the actor face to face with the audience. My guess is that we do not, cannot, imagine it except as it is mediated by our experience of, our inscription in, the technology of the camera.

This question came to me forcefully last year during the presidential debates on television. They were not debates, of course, but highly controlled opportunities for candidates to appeal to voters and make their claims for the role of President. As I looked at them looking back at me, I suddenly asked what could they be looking at, to whom or what were they presenting themselves? There was a studio audience, but each candidate turned his attention almost invariably to the camera, clearly posing for it, each in his own style. If Borges were to write a parable of them, how would it go? «Each had found the profession to which he was predestined, that of the candidate, who on a stage plays at being President before a camera, while, in another place, people gather before TV sets to play at taking one of them for President.» Again, the vertigo of identity. But here it is mediated by a technology of perception and knowledge, a technology that has its beginnings in Shakespeare's lifetime, with the development of the first practical telescope. This introduction of a technology between the perceiver and the perceived transforms Western knowledge. It coincides roughly with the advent of the modern state and its powerful monarch, whose magnificent image — like England's Elizabeth — functions as the specular form of the nation's ideal ego for a citizenry scattered across a large and various social landscape. It coincides, too, with the transformation of the market from a place, where buyer and seller meet face to face for the ritually controlled occasion of exchange, to a permanent and unbounded process, in which exchange is split into distinct acts of sale and purchase separated in time and space[2]. What all these instances have in common are new technologies of representation, which are also technologies of absence that represent the object of knowledge in another place. On the stage, though, the actor's presence appears to overcome absence, and our experience of film or video feels like a witnessing of presence. But theater, film, and video all differ in the way they position the spectator in relation to their distinctive forms of narrative. In the theater scenes change and, within scenes, the director has a wide latitude in shaping what the spectator sees while, with rare exceptions, the spectator stays where he or she is in a privileged point of view[3]. Film changes these relationships radically by introducing the mechanism of the camera. The critical difference is not film and video's great power to create illusions of reality; the stage is powerful at this, too, and each medium

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[1] Jorge Luis Borges, «Everything and Nothing», in Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings (New York: New Directions, 1964): 248. The story, listed as a Parable, mentions its subject's name, «Shakespeare», only in the last sentence.

[2] See Jean-Christophe Agnew. Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theater in Anglo-American Thought, 1550-1750 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1986).

[3] One intriguing exception is the long-running play, Tamara, a murder mystery that takes place on a stage distributed among the rooms of a large town house, where the audience is free to follow the actors from room to room as they play out their story.

performs according to its own version of a suspension of disbelief. What is different is that the camera positions the spectator in relation to its object as something pleasurably immediate and present but also absent at the same time. This is the condition of film and video's pleasures of the voyeuristic gaze at an unwitting object and the fetishistic gaze at an openly displayed object.

In making his film version of Hamlet, Laurence Olivier shortened it considerably, from approximately four hours in an uncut performance to two and half hours on the screen[4]. He cut Fortinbras, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, completely. He cut many lines that could be considered redundant or unnecessary, he transposed some scenes, and he even cut two of Hamlet's soliloquies. The cuts and changes are often explained as seeking to create a strong narrative line and to exploit film's ability to communicate immediately in sensuous, exact images what language conveys less directly. There is also Olivier's much discussed intention to shape the story in accord with Freud and Jones's oedipal reading of it. Although this interests me, and I do mean to comment on it, what interests me more is the way in which the film medium itself seems to influence Olivier's imagination. For it is my guess that Olivier presents an oedipal Hamlet in order to fulfill the logic of film narrative more than he uses film to present an oedipal Hamlet.

To see this, I want to comment on a brief excerpt from Olivier's film, and my choice of scenes is controlled by at least two motives: to extend my discussion of the actor, and to take advantage of Robert Nelson's very different film, Hamlet Act (1982)[5], which presents only one scene, from the arrival of the players, through the Hecuba speech, to Hamlet's soliloquy, «O what a rogue and peasant slave am I». I want to compare the two films even though the comparison will not be very close, since Olivier cuts most of what Nelson presents — the Player's Hecuba speech and, with it, Hamlet's soliloquy. In choosing to make Hamlet as a film, Olivier and his photographer, Desmond Dickenson, made careful decisions about how it would look on the screen. The choice of black and white was dictated in part by Olivier's disappointment with the color quality and resolution of early Technicolor. He also envisioned the film in terms of an extended depth of field, capturing foreground and distance in equally sharp focus, as only black and white could do then. And he seems to have chosen black and white for its power to render dramatic contrasts of light and dark, with many of his closeups having the appearance of classical portraits, the faces strongly modeled, and his group scenes looking like black and white versions of Rubens or Rembrandt. Along with William Walton's music, and Olivier's bleach-blond hair, these choices seem calculated to portray Hamlet as the hero of mainstream film narrative. Olivier cut and transposed the First Folio text extensively. If you look at the summaries in Appendix A, which compare a portion of the First Folio text side by side with Olivier's film, you can see some important differences. There are of course the cuts of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, Reynaldo, and the Danish ambassadors to Norway. But more significant is the way the Nunnery scene (3.1) is moved back and its parts transposed, so that «To be, or not to be» comes immediately after Hamlet's violent encounter with Ophelia and just before the arrival of the players (2.2). These changes, which supported Olivier's oedipal reading, shaped the play for the post World War II generation. Although, predictably, the custodians of high culture scoffed at the film, it was immensely popular,

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[4] Hamlet (1948). Produced and directed by Laurence Olivier. Screenplay by Laurence Olivier and Alan Dent. Music by William Walton. Photography by Desmond Dickenson. Hamlet: Laurence Olivier. Ophelia: Jean Simmons. Claudius: Basil Sidney. Gertrude: Eileen Herlie. Stills used by permission of Janus Films.

[5] Hamlet Act (1982). Directed by Robert Nelson. Screenplay by Joe Chang. Hamlet: Dick Blau. Player: Dave Fisher. Polonius: Bob Whitney. Canyon Cinema, 2325 Third St. (Suite 338), San Francisco, CA 94107. Stills used by permission of Robert Nelson.

winning Olivier two Academy Awards, one for best actor, the other for best picture[6]. It would be hard to exaggerate the cultural importance of Olivier's Hamlet: for many years it has simply been the play for the American public, and today it is more widely disseminated than ever before in the form of a video rental. The way viewers, especially the young and adolescent, have internalized the film's figure of the hero, is captured nicely by Bernice Kliman's personal memory (which is not unlike my own):

> The first Hamlet I saw was Olivier's on film when I was fifteen years old. I went to see it four or five times. It descended to subliminal levels, and when I studied Hamlet later, I «knew» certain truths about it deep in my being. I knew that «To be» had to precede the players' arrival; it made sense only that way, because how could Hamlet move from the exuberant joy of «The play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king» to the despair of «To be, or not to be»?[7]

Olivier's revisions have the effect of establishing a strong narrative line of rising confidence in Hamlet, starting with the Nunnery scene and what seems to be its immediate result, the lowpoint of «To be, or not to be». Then come the actors and, in the deep focus of black-and-white, the moment when the camera follows Olivier/Hamlet's exhilarated run from close-up to a lighted stage in the distance, where, with his arms raised, he spins like a dancer and cries triumphantly, «The play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king» (Figs. 2a—2h). This is followed at once by the «mirror up to nature» scene, where the first shot of Hamlet provides a visual pun, as Olivier the director sits on the arm of what looks like a director's chair to tell the Player how to «speak the speech» (Fig. 3). By the end of the sequence, it is clear that Olivier is determined that his Hamlet will never again «lose the name of action» (3. 1. 88).

The revisions also have the effect of concentrating Hamlet's distress as a function of his relationship with Ophelia — and, by association, with all women — while he then gains confidence among the players, in whose thoroughly masculine company women exist only as masquerade[8]. Among these men, in the «mirror up to nature»/scene, Olivier

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[6] See, for instance, John Ashworth, «Olivier, Freud, and Hamlet», Atlantic 183, nº 5 (1949): 30-33. Ashworth had studied Shakespeare as an under-graduate under George Lyman Kittredge and, in 1948, was teaching at Columbia. In a scathing review, he complained that «the drama of Hamlet's life is replaced by the drama of what Hamlet might reveal from a couch.» Ashworth was still convinced that Kittredge had said the last word about the meaning of Hamlet and indicted Olivier's film for pandering to contemporary fashion, which was clearly the reason why it was sure to gross millions in its American distribution. And yet, ironically, his idea of Hamlet is a lot like Olivier's. For Ashworth, Hamlet is no «weak-willed procrastinator», but the greatest of Shakespeare's heroes. The attitude is understandable if we remember that both Ashworth and Olivier had just lived through a world war.

[7] Bernice W. Kliman, Hamlet: Film, Television and Audio Performance (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1988): 13. Kliman discusses the transposition of the Nunnery scene, 33-34. (Of course, today's youth are more likely to find their specular ideal ego in a rock video than in anything so dated as Olivier's Hamlet.)

[8] Olivier makes a similar revision earlier in the film, when he moves the scene of Laertes' departure and Polonius' warning to Ophelia to avoid Hamlet (1.3), placing it earlier, just after Hamlet's first soliloquy in 1.2 («O that this too sallied flesh»). As a consequence, Hamlet does not encounter the ghost-in fact he does not even hear of the ghost's appearance-until after we see that there is something between him and Ophelia which troubles her father and her brother. This tends to interpose another concern between Hamlet and his father, implying instead that what really troubles him is a woman, Ophelia or his mother or both. In another change, Hamlet's praise of Horatio («thou art e'en as just a man / As e'er my conversation coped withal» [3. 2. 54]) is moved to 5.2, just before Osric's entrance, and Olivier cuts lines that might have seemed effeminate or homo-erotic when spoken by one man to another: «Since my dear soul was mistress of her voice / And could of men distinguish her election, / S'hath sealed thee for herself» (3. 2. 65-67).

FIGURE 2a

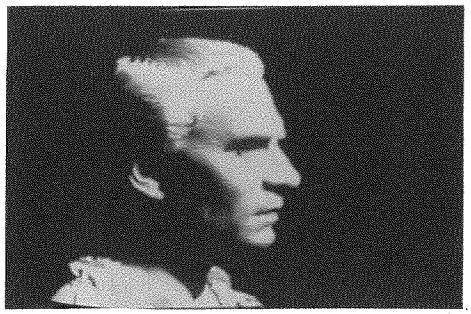

FIGURE 2b

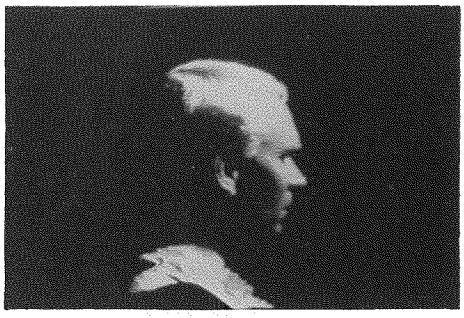

FIGURE 2c

FIGURE 2d

FIGURE 2e

FIGURE 2f

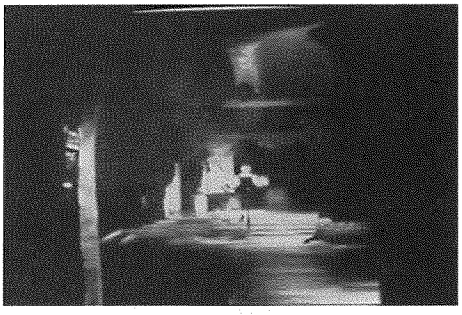

FIGURE 2g

FIGURE 2h

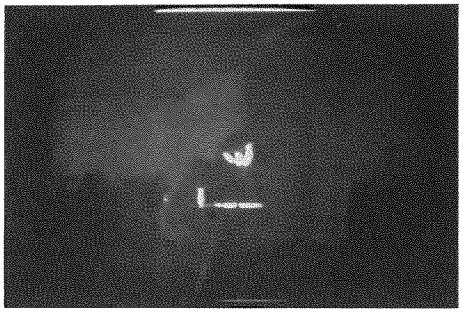

FIGURE 1

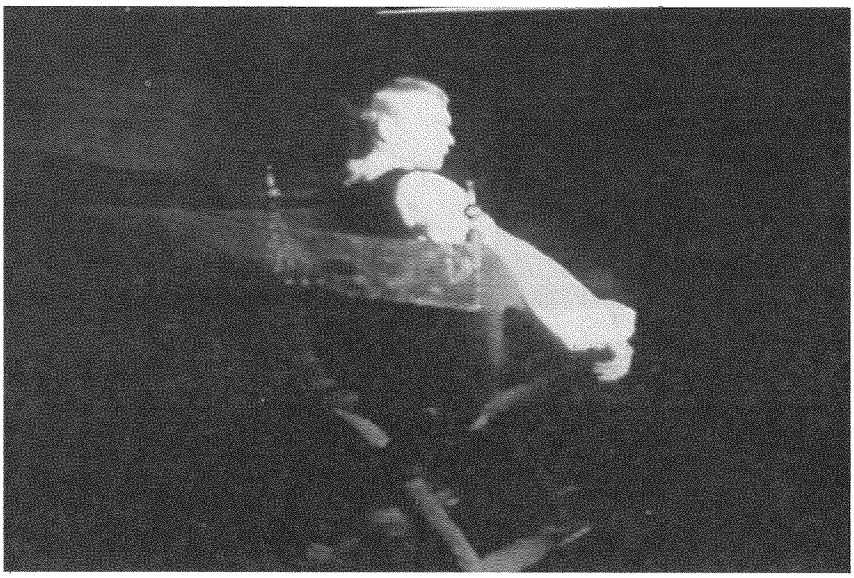

FIGURE 3

performs a key piece of business. Just after Hamlet warns the clowns to behave themselves, Olivier picks up a woman's blond wig and fits it on the boy actor's head (Fig. 4). Suddenly «he» becomes «she», and the resemblance to Jean Simmons's Ophelia is uncanny (Fig. 5). It looks as if Olivier could begin the Nunnery scene all over again and, as he hesitates before the boy masquerading as a girl, we almost expect him to ask, «Are you honest?»

FIGURE 4

FIGURE 5

(3. 1. 102)[9]. The moment is emphasized by its duration, as the forward movement of the narrative remains suspended until Olivier/Hamlet resolves the gender of

[9] See Laura Levine, «Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-Theatricality and Effiminization from 1579 to 1642», Criticism 28 (1986): 121-43. Levine cites as three prime examples, Stephen Gosson's remark that theater «effeminates» the mind, Phillip Stubbes's warning that a man wearing women's

the boy/girl figure by giving him a very manly slap on the shoulder and tells the players to go get ready[10].

By now, I suspect, you have recognized the debt I owe to contemporary feminist film theory for my reading of Olivier's Hamlet, in particular the well-known essay by Laura Mulvey on visual pleasure in narrative cinema, and more recent elaborations by Teresa de Lauretis, John Ellis, and others[11]. It is a theory that draws on the Russian formalist reading of narrative, specifically Vladimir Propp's analyses of folk tales, in which the masculine subject of narrative is confronted, seduced, threatened, fascinated by the feminine object, which he must escape or overcome in order to fulfill his narrative role. (The archetype of this story is the encounter between Oedipus and the Sphinx.) In film narrative, with its visual power and voyeuristic pleasure, the woman is the object of the spectator's look, the man the bearer of the look. Thus, in Mulvey's words:

> A male movie star's glamorous characteristics are... not those of the erotic object of [the spectator's] gaze, but those of the more perfect, more complete, more powerful ideal ego conceived in the original moment of recognition in front of the mirror (12).

Mulvey's allusion to the mirror indicates another important source with which feminist film theory informs its thinking, the work of Jacques Lacan — in particular the concept of the mirror stage, that moment of a «jubilant assumption» by the infant of a specular self-image, an ideal ego, that is always displaced, other, inscribed in a technology of absence[12]. Lacan also contributes his crucial theory of the resolution of the Oedipus complex, according to which the child renounces the demand to be the phallus, or to be everything for mother, the totality of her desire, and submits instead to a symbolic castration which is the route — and the price — of entry into the symbolic order. I do not mean to rehearse Lacan's work in any detail here, nor to review his seminar on Hamlet, with its interpretation of desire in relation to the mourned phallus[13]. What matters to me is the way in which Lacan's thinking makes possible an analysis of the visual as a field of desire.

Necessarily, such analysis proceeds from Lacan's later concept of the «gaze», which defines the subject not as seeing so much as being seen, and being seen by another that the subject cannot see in return[14], so that the exchange between Shakespeare's Brutus

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clothing risked «adulterating» his gender, and William Prynne's story of a man who actually «degenerated» into a woman as a result of cross-dressing (121).

[10] Even Olivier's use of the Freud/Jones reading of the play seems done in the spirit of male bonding as defense against maternal dependence or feminine identification. In his memoir, On Acting (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1986), Olivier recounts his meeting with Jones in 1936 or 1937, when he was about to play Hamlet on the stage, and he remembers an exchange in which they agreed that Hamlet's oedipus complex is unconscious, something that an actor would not try to make overt. According to Olivier, Jones said, «You're not supposed to tell the audience with every wink and nod that one of the reasons for your present predicament is that you wish you were still hanging on your mother's tits» (79). So, the great actor of Hamlet enlists the great psychoanalytic interpreter of Hamlet in an agreement between men, that Hamlet is no sissy, at least not consciously.

[11] Laura Mulvey, «Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema», Screen, 16, no. 3 (1975): 6-18. Teresa de Lauretis, Alice Doesn't: Feminism, Semiotics, Cinema (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1984); esp. Ch. 3, «Desire in Narrative». John Ellis, Visible Fictions (London: Routledge, 1982).

[12] Jacques Lacan, «The mirror stage as formative of the function of the I», in Écrits: A Selection, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977): 1-7, 2.

[13] Jacques Lacan, «Desire and the Interpretation of Desire in Hamlet», in Literature and Psychoanalysis: The Question of Reading: Otherwise, Yale French Studies 55/56 (1977): 11-52. [The date of the seminar is 1959.]

[14] Jacques Lacan, «Of the Gaze as Objet petit a», in The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-Analysis, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1981): 67-119. «The pre-existence of the gaze — I see only from one point, but in my existence I am looked at from all sides... The gaze is presented

and Cassius, cited earlier, is to be reunderstood with emphasis on the otherness and thingness of the «other things» that make up the reflecting surface in which Brutus says the eye can see itself.

That is, Brutus answers Cassius' question, whether he can see his own face, first with a negative, «the eye [also «I»] sees not itself», then adds what seems to be an affirmative qualification: «but by reflection», which is then further qualified by the parallel phrase, «by some other things», and the subject is thus defined by a lack, an inability to see itself but by displacement in a mirror that «reflects» the self in the opacity of its otherness and thingness. At base, the reflecting medium is language but, more broadly, it is the whole array of technologies of representation — for us, primarily the camera, which magnifies the illusion of reality while positioning the observer as a function of its technology. This is not a complaint against such a technology, nor an invitation for us once again to stake out the idealist site of subject or object somewhere «beyond» or «before» the otherness and thingness of language, for it is only in the other thing that is language, or its technological extension, that the desiring subject comes to exist and know it exists: «the eye sees not itself but by... some other things.»[15]

Consequently, the masculine subject and feminine object of film theory, and the desire that links them, are to be read as plotted across the opaque surface of a visual language stained by the blind spot of Lacan's «gaze», where the feminine object is seen to «stand in» for what is missing. There are problems, though, in the alliance of feminism with Lacanian theory, and many have resisted what they take to be Lacan's phallocentric bias. These problems show up in criticisms of Laura Mulvey, that for her the spectator's look is always masculine and heterosexual. Important revisions of her analysis argue that narcissistic identification and voyeuristic or fetishistic looking are variable and fluid in relation to the object; so that the position of the spectator, whether male or female, can be masculine or feminine, heterosexual or homosexual[16].

What this means for a reading of Olivier's Hamlet is that all the choices of textual revision and film technique converge to create the image of a narrative hero, presented on the screen as if to fulfill the spectator's desire, which is variously narcissistic and voyeuristic and fetishistic. Olivier presents a virile Hamlet aggressively pursuing a solution to the mystery of his father's death. His glamorous good looks, his dancer's poise, his classically trained voice, all contribute to the creation of an image — a high-culture icon — that matches Ophelia's description: «The expectancy and rose of the fair state, / The glass of fashion, and the mold of form, / Th' observed of all observers» (3. 1. 152-54). Jean Simmons, though, never gets to speak these lines: it is not for this Ophelia to pronounce the spectator's desire; that is the privilege and pleasure of the camera's eager look, tirelessly moving this way and that to catch the actor's face and figure at the right distance and angle, framed

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to us only in the form of a strange contingency, symbolic of what we find on the horizon, as the thrust of our experience, namely, the lack that constitutes castration anxiety... In our relation to things, in so far as this relation is constituted by way of vision, and ordered in the figures of representation, something slips, passes, is transmitted, from stage to stage, and is always to some degree eluded in it — that is what we call the gaze» (72-73). Stated thus in Seminar 11, which dates from the first half of 1964, the concept of the gaze extends Lacan's earlier thinking about the visual — particularly the notion of méconaissance — in the mirror-stage paper delivered at a conference in 1949, though in it he alludes to an earlier paper in which, he says, he first introduced the idea of the mirror stage in 1936.

[15] See Joan Copjec, «The Orthopsychic Subject: Film Theory and the Reception of Lacan», October 49 (1989): 53-71. «Language's opacity is taken as the very cause of the subject's being, its desire» (69); also Lacan: «we are beings who are looked at, in the spectacle of the world. That which makes us conscious institutes us by the same token as speculum mundi» (Four Concepts, 75).

[16] John Ellis (op. Cit.) and Steve Neale, «Masculinity as Spectacle: Reflections on Men and Mainstream Cinema», Screen, 24, n.º 6 (1983): 2-17.

just so, the lighting sensuous and precise. This camera is unobtrusive, stealthy, invisible, the absent figure of an art that conceals art. This, too, serves the hero's narrative, and does so in absolute contrast to the style of Robert Nelson's film, Hamlet Act. In Nelson's film, the camera and all the gear of film-making are clearly visible. It belongs to the genre of movies about making movies. The setting looks like an industrial film studio, maybe in a basement, where the lighting seems casual, ad-hoc. Equipment is visible here and there, and the director and production crew appear occasionally on the screen. The actors seem to be not quite in costume (the Player wears an academic robe), and they move in and out of their roles doing several takes of the same shot. Clearly the film seeks to represent, in film and video terms, Hamlet's preoccupation with the actor as the agent of representation, and it offers a film-within-a-film, as Dick Blau, the actor playing Hamlet, uses a video camera to record the Player's speech and play it back during his soliloquy (Figs. 6—8). What interests me about this movie is the way it deflects the spectator's gaze from its object. Blau, as Hamlet and Blau, takes up several positions in relation to representation: filming the Player with the video camera, watching a tape of the Player, then filming himself as he works himself up into a passion: «Bloody, bawdy villain!» (Fig. 9). Sometimes he ignores the film's camera, sometimes he looks right into it (Fig. 10). At the end, he seems to disrupt the boundary between these modes, delivering the last lines of the soliloquy while looking directly at the camera, holding his gaze for a moment and breaking it as the director says «cut». After a dissolve, Blau/Hamlet is still in front of the camera, with voices and noises heard in the background, while he looks again at the camera and then away. Where do we locate Blau/Hamlet in Borges' parable? And where do I locate myself? Do «I» play at taking «him» for another «person»?[17] As I watch Blau/Hamlet watching the Player's speech on the video monitor, I see the figure of myself watching him on my own video monitor as I write/wrote this sentence. It is a different kind of vertigo. It works against the formation of a heroic narrative by eluding the spectator's narcissistic desire for an ideal ego. Where Olivier produces an exhibitionistic hero to be consumed by a voyeuristic gaze, Nelson presents a hero who, instead of captivating the spectator as unwitting voyeur, mirrors the gaze as an image on the screen, making it visible and readable, an effect which diffuses the hero's forward drive toward narrative fulfillment[18].

Olivier's Hamlet works to sustain a heroic narrative, and the qualities of the ideal ego discovered in the mirror stage are inscribed upon the film's surface: perfection, completeness, potency — all of them apprehended as aesthetic properties of the screen image. They are properties, too, of the actor's craft as imagined by Hamlet, and in this regard Olivier's film repeats what it represents. Hamlet's desire for mimetic completeness and perfection — a true mirror of «the very age and body of the time» (3. 2. 23-24) — puts an impossible demand upon representation itself. When he stages The Murder of Gonzago, aggressively interpreting it to his audience, the result is confusion and a double mis-recognition. Just as Claudius seems to read his guilt in the play, so Hamlet is sure that Claudius reveals it his in response. But the play depicts not a fratricide but the murder of an uncle by

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[17] See Jane Gallop, «Beyond the Mirror», Wide Angle 7 (1985): 59-61. «No dialogue was scripted for this film [Hamlet Act] besides the Shakespearean dialogue. Blau, Fisher, and Whitney in the non-Shakespearean lines are extemporaneously 'being themselves' or perhaps 'playing themselves'» (61). Gallop refers to a «complex and ambiguous register where theatrical documentary and realistic fiction melt together, where not only is the self a theatrical role but the part the actor plays is real» (61).

[18] Commenting on an earlier version of this paper, at the annual Buffalo Symposium in Literature and Psychology (May, 1989), David Willbern noted that the two movies presented complementary visual motives, exhibitionistic and voyeuristic, which displace the verbal dimension of Shakespeare's text. I would add that Nelson's film, by making the spectator self-conscious, opens the way for one to be a reader of the screen image, to rediscover writing in the visual technology that displaces it but, like any displacement, still bears the trace of what it has displaced.

FIGURE 6

FIGURE 7

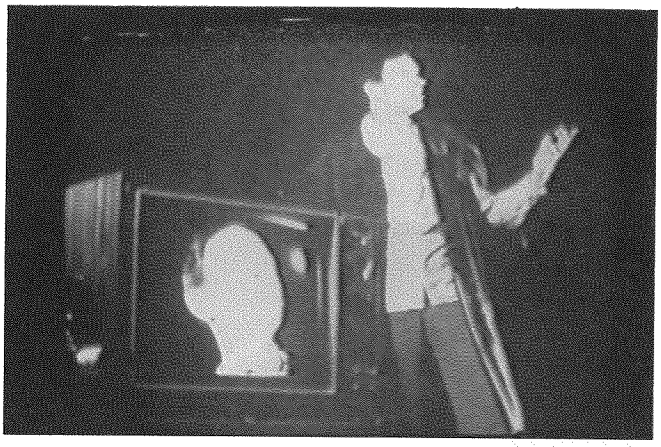

FIGURE 8

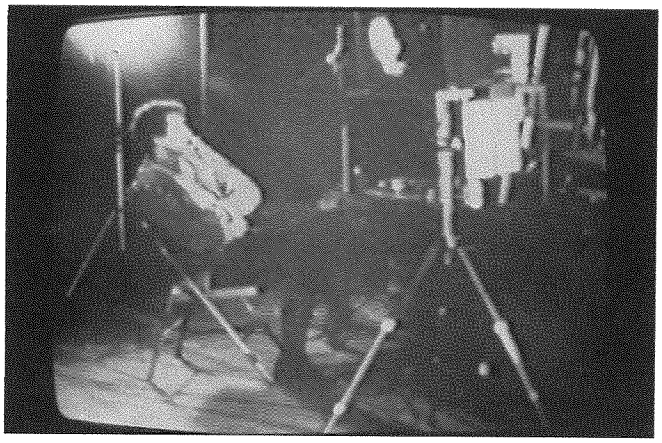

FIGURE 9

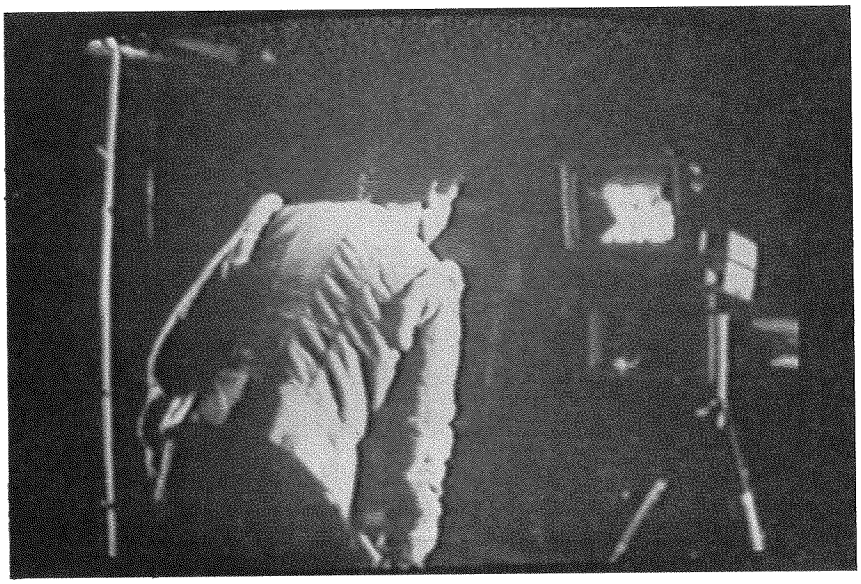

FIGURE 10

his nephew, as Hamlet himself announces, though Olivier cuts the line and all of the Mousetrap play except for the dumb show that precedes it. «The actors cannot keep counsel, they'll tell all», says Hamlet (3. 2. 141-42). What they tell, though, is a story in which Hamlet is in Claudius's place, a nephew/brother mirroring the oedipal desire of the uncle/father.

Hamlet fulfills the mimetic purpose of playing by an act of mis-representation[19].

This displacement, the figure of an unclosable gap in mimesis, already figures earlier in the play, when the ghost appears. Horatio reports seeing the ghost to Hamlet, vouching for his recognition of it: «I knew your father, / These hands are not more like» (1. 2. 211-12). But a pair of hands are alike only as mirror images, each the exact mis-representation of the other. Or, in the first scene, when Marcellus asks, «Is it not like the king?» (1. 1. 58), Horatio answers, «As thou art to thy self», and his answer configures self-similarity as the function of another term, the ghost that comes in «the same figure like the King that's dead», a sameness conceived as a likeness, similarity as identity, suturing a gap, and it is this figure of death that underwrites identity, this ghostly figure of the father/king, «buried Denmark». So, the first lines of the play counter the demand for self-disclosure («Who's there?») with a reciprocal demand («Nay, answer me. Stand and unfold yourself»). Only then comes an answer: «Long live the king». Originally, the ritual formula, «The king is dead, long live the king», referred to two successive monarchs. It was a ceremonial pronouncement made in the gap between one king's death and the next king's coronation. By the time of Hamlet, though, the formula had been transformed by Tudor jurists seeking to redefine the nature of the sovereign. Now it referred to the two «bodies» of the king, one mortal, the other immortal — a figure of the crown, the realm, the body politic[20]. So, the ghost of the king and father is a ghost in language, a third term underwriting self-similarity as identity. On Hamlet's stage, in the Mousetrap, it is the ghost within mimesis, the mirror that misrepresents[21].

Olivier's omission of Hamlet's crucial line, «This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king» (3. 2. 244), erases the moment of mis-recognition and reinforces the film hero's aggressive narrative trajectory. Another omission with a similar effect is the role of Fortinbras. By cutting Fortinbras, Olivier denies Hamlet an important source of resistance against the seduction of a heroic identity; for it is in the figure of Fortinbras that Hamlet can see, as in his double, the allure and the absurdity of his own demand upon himself to act the hero's role. At the end, the film is deprived of the terrible irony of the eulogy spoken by Fortinbras over Hamlet's body, as he commands a hero's funeral for him[22].

In Joseph Wishy's recent documentary film, To Be Hamlet[23], at the end of Part I, the Russian actor Innocenti Smoktunovsky is shown in an extreme close-up — his face filling the screen — as he speaks «To be, or not to be» in Pasternak's Russian. He addresses the camera like an intimate friend in a low, intense whisper and, at the end, pausing to regain his composure (apparently with tears in his eyes?), he breaks into awkward English:

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[19] For a related interpretation, see Jean-François Lyotard, «Jewish Oedipus», Genre 10 (1977): 395-411.

[20] See Ernst H. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1957).

[21] At the May, 1989, Buffalo Symposium in Literature and Psychology, Linda Charnes, in her paper on Troilus and Cressida, connected the rhetoric of self-similarity in the male characters to the social production of gender and its erasure of feminine subjectivity. As in Hamlet, what produces representation is the «ghost» of authority that authorizes identity. For Shakespeare, it is the ghost of absolute monarchy. For us (simply put), it is the ghost of capital-as in the commodity, or in the corporation, heir to the king's immortal body.

[22] Commenting on an earlier version of this paper, at the annual Buffalo Symposium in Literature and Psychology (May, 1989), Elizabeth Jane Bellamy remarked that the absence of the Player's Hecuba speech-and Hamlet's response-erases the all-important allusion to Aeneas and his epic selfreflection in the murals on the walls of Dido's palace. Also erased is Hamlet's self-reproach for being a wordy «drab», a whore-another instance of Olivier cutting anything that portrays Hamlet as anxious or ambiguous about gender, or that deflects his virile self-presence and forward narrative movement.

[23] To Be Hamlet (1985). Produced by Joseph Wishy. Directed by Derek Bailey. Narrated by Trevor Nunn. With John Gielgud, Laurence Olivier, Richard Burton, Nicol Williamson, Ben Kingsley, Jean Louis Barrault, Vittorio Gassman, Maximillian Schell, Innocenti Smoktunovsky, and Mandy Patinkin. Capital Cities / ABC Video Enterprises, 825 7th Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

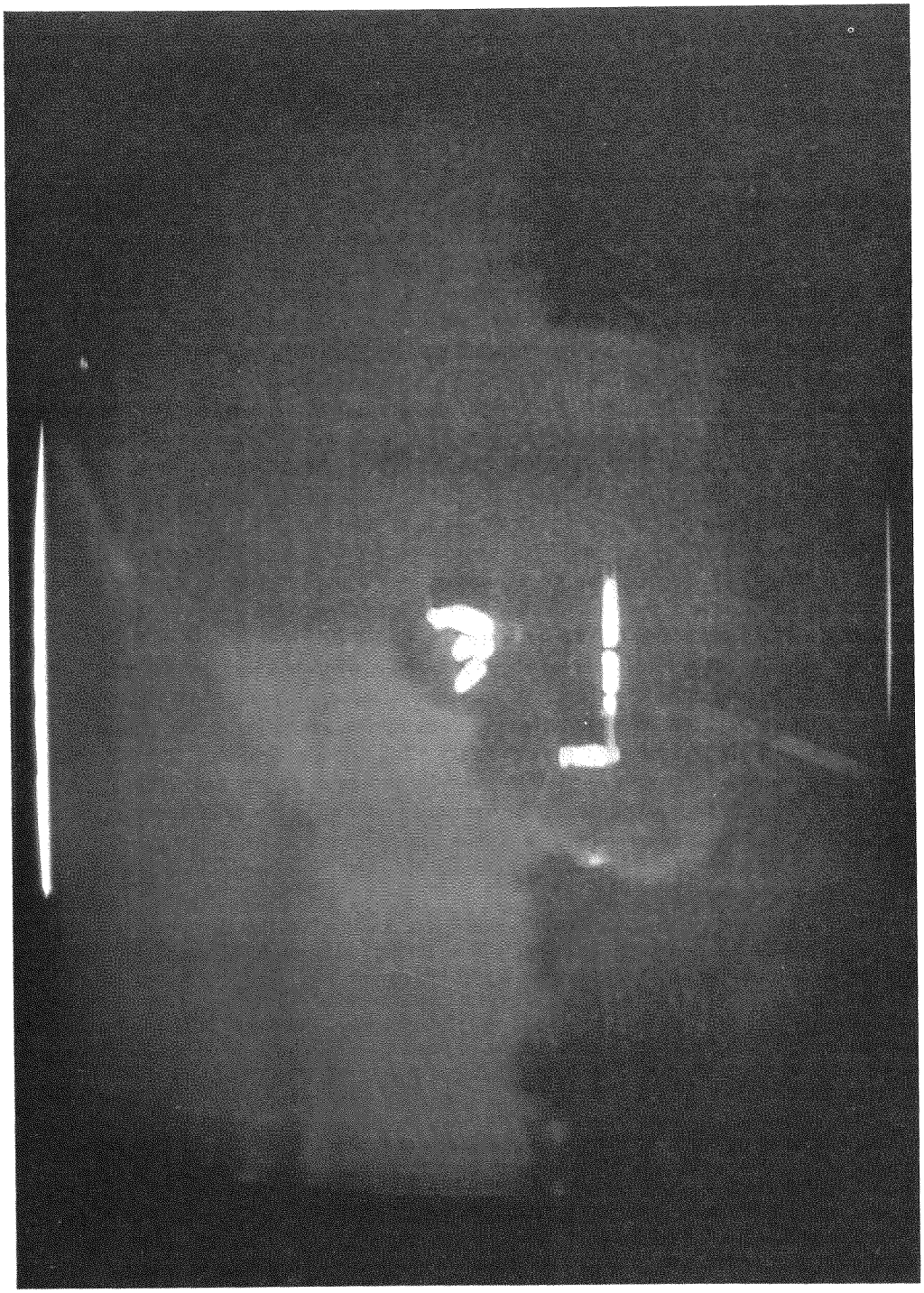

FIGURE 11

«I am very often remember about my friends in your country. My best regards, everybody, for you. Thank you. Thank you, very much.» It is as if the speech, or more exactly speaking the speech to the camera, has carried him — like the Player who weeps over Hecuba — into a region of loss, mourning, and remembrance. The moment is complicated by the pathos of an actor in late middle age speaking once again the lines he had spoken as a young man[24]; and it is complicated, too, by the trace of a desire for brotherhood between the enemy twins of east and west. But I think that its feeling also arises from the actor's relation to the camera, which presents itself as an absence — a technology of absence — enabling the actor to address himself in the other, as in another place, another time, but also as a function of his absence.

Earlier, I said I thought that Laurence Olivier had not so much used film to represent an oedipal Hamlet as he had used an oedipal Hamlet to fulfill the specular desire of mainstream film narrative. In saying this, I was seeking to foreground the technology of representation that Olivier's film art conceals, but I want to suggest further that, as a technology of absence, it already has written into it the dimension of the oedipal and its resolution in castration; that is, already written into it is death, absence, mourning, and remembrance. Or to put it another way: if Freud comes to Oedipus by way of Hamlet, then Lacan comes to Hamlet by way of the mirror, as a figure of absence. Or to put it yet another way, with a glance once again at the final image in the sequence showing Olivier's run, leap and spin as he cries, «The play's the thing» (Fig. 11). If you look closely, you will see a reflection - a ghost - of me peering through the lens of a camera at the TV screen on which Olivier appears as a small abstract figure of light and dark, coinciding exactly with the lens and with my eye, my mind's eye. There is a story to go with this, too long to be told here, about the overthrow of classical theories of vision during the 19th century and the repositioning of the spectator as a function of the technical machinery, the apparatus of vision that we deploy to perfect our possession of the visual world[25]. This, finally, is where we might locate the Lacanian gaze, otherwise occulted, a blind spot, but here just faintly visible in the look of the self that returns in the figure of a machine, the ghost in the language of the visible, underwriting the visual «reality» that it produces.

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[24] Olivier was over 40 when he made his film, quite late in his career, and his performance therefore evokes the pleasures of overcoming time, age and death. As I write/wrote this footnote, Olivier is/was 82 years old and ill (May, 1989).

[25] See Jonathan Crary, «Techniques of the Observer», October 45 (1988): 335. «Even though [the phenakistoscope and stereoscope of the 1830s and 1840s] provide access to 'the real', they make no claim that the real is anything other than a mechanical production. The optical experiences they manufacture are clearly disjunct from the images used in the device. They refer as much to the functional interaction of body and machine as they do to external objects, no matter how 'vivid' the quality of the illusion» (33).

APPENDIX A

First Folio text	Olivier Film
2.1 Polonius directs Reynaldo to spy on Laertes in Paris. Ophelia reports Hamlet's distraction to her father.	2.1 [cut Polonius and Reynaldo] Ophelia's report as flashback.
2.2 King & Queen welcome Rosencrantz & Guildenstern, receive ambassadors. Polonius reports on Hamlet. King & Queen exit. Polonius questions Hamlet, exits.	2.2 [cut Rosencrantz, Guildenstern, and ambassadors] Polonius reports on Hamlet. King & Queen exit. Polonius questions Hamlet, exits.
Rosencrantz & Guildenstern question Hamlet, tell of players' arrival. Polonius announces players, Hamlet welcomes them. Hecuba speech, Hamlet's «O what a rogue...»	[cut Rosencrantz & Guildenstern]
3.1 King questions Rosencrantz & Guildenstern about Hamlet.	3.1. King & Polonius set Ophelia up as lure for Hamlet. [skip «To be or not to be»] «Nunnery» scene. King decides to send Hamlet to England.
King & Polonius set Ophelia up as lure for Hamlet.	[Camera follows Hamlet up tower stairs to top]
Hamlet: «To be or not to be» «Nunnery» scene.	Hamlet: «To be or not to be»
King decides to send Hamlet to England.	[fade out as Hamlet descends, fade in to Hamlet sitting in the dark]
	[2.2] Polonius announces players, Hamlet welcomes them. [cut Hecuba speech, cut Hamlet's soliloquy, all but «The play's the thing...»]
3.2 Hamlet instructs the players. «Mousetrap» scene.	3.2 Hamlet instructs the players. «Mousetrap» scene.

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Unconscious Fantasies of Sexuality in *Emma*

BURTON A. MELNICK (*)

This paper focuses on the unconscious fantasy that seems to me to underlie the ending of Jane Austen's *Emma*. To a very great extent I will be engaging in a kind of blunt decoding of unconscious symbols — the sort of procedure you find in parts of *The Interpretation of Dreams* and in the earliest psychoanalytic criticism. This is an old-fashioned and rather primitive technique, but its usefulness in psychoanalysis remains, and there's no reason why it shouldn't continue to be used in psychoanalytic criticism. But reading only *begins* with decoding. Without some awareness of a larger context, what I'll be saying today could appear extremely naive and narrow in scope. In fact this paper is excerpted from a book-length work subtitled *Fantasies of Sexual Identity and the Meaning of Jane Austen's Novels*. The book studies the conscious themes of *activity* and *passivity* in Jane Austen's novels. It tries to uncover the fantasies which, as I see it, underlie those themes on the level of unconscious psychodynamics. It argues that we can find in the succession of Jane Austen's novels a thrust towards a fantasy that will successfully accommodate Jane Austen's own conflicting impulses towards activity and passivity, and it tries to show how that thrust affects the development of Jane Austen's plots and the conscious meaning of her novels. Time does not allow me to go into any of this today. But it is important to realize that what I will be doing today belongs to that larger context.

Now, readers of *Emma* hardly need to be reminded that throughout the novel Emma Woodhouse displays a strong resistance to marrying. I would like to begin by examining that resistance, especially as it appears in the later part of the book.

When, even after realizing that «Mr. Knightley must marry no one but herself» (408)[1], Emma nevertheless concludes that she «would not marry, even if she were asked by Mr. Knightley», her reason has to do with her solicitude for her father. Marriage «would be incompatible with what she owed to her father, and with what she felt for him. Nothing should separate her from her father» (416). Arguably, Emma's solicitude is not especially overdone. Mr. Knightley himself admits that merely bringing Mr. Woodhouse to live at Donwell would be a risk of the old man's «comfort, perhaps even of his life» (448-49). Still, it must be meaningful that Jane Austen should give her heroine a father who can justify Emma's saying — even after Mr. Knightley's proposal — that so long as «her father lived, any change of condition must be impossible for her» (448). The striking thing about

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[1] References are to Jane Austen, *Emma*, Vol. 4 of *The Novels of Jane Austen*, ed. R. W. Chapman, 3d ed., 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1933).

that formulation is, of course, its association between Emma's marriage and her father's death.

And we do in fact have evidence that in Emma's solicitude for her father there is something too extreme to be taken as perfectly normal. Once he has devised the project of coming to live at Hartfield instead of taking Emma to Donwell, Mr. Knightley sees no further obstacle to his marriage. In the last chapter Mr. Woodhouse has been brought to accept the marriage in principle (though for some time in the future). Emma and Mr. Knightley for their part have set a date and drawn up a «plan», and «John and Isabella, and every other friend, were agreed in approving it.» *By now no one has any realistic fears for Mr. Woodhouse's well-being if the marriage takes place.* Though Mr. Woodhouse has not yet been «induced to consent» to the marriage, his «mind» is well «on its way to resignation.» But Mr. Woodhouse is «not happy» — and that is enough for Emma. «... *though her understanding almost acquiesced in the assurance of both the Mr. Knightleys, that when once the event were over, his distress would be soon over too*, she hesitated — she could not proceed» (483, emphasis added). On the next to last page of the novel Emma is still refusing to marry, for reasons that both of the sensible Mr. Knightleys — *and to a great extent Emma's own rational part — reject. She «could not» go on. Whatever her «understanding» may say about it, Emma somehow cannot* marry without her father's «voluntary, cheerful consent» (484). But for Mr. Woodhouse to give such consent would require some «wonderful» and impossible «change of his nervous system» (483).

Given the situation in the last chapter of the novel, the only *plausible* occurrence that would make Emma's marriage possible is Mr. Woodhouse's death. Obviously, however, such an ending would be insufficiently comic. Hence the intervention (by definition implausible) of a *deus ex machina* who takes the form of an unidentified poultry thief. All Mrs. Weston's turkeys are stolen — «evidently by the ingenvity of man» (483). Now, there are several ways of interpreting that last phrase. Whatever interpretation we make, however, the «perfect» and highly implausible ending of *Emma* works, I think, as a reminder (as the use of a *deus ex machina* often does, intentionally or not) that no happy and realistic ending is to be found — that there exists no realistic solution to the conflicts at the heart of the plot or, in this case, in the heart of the heroine.

Emma's conflicts find particularly vivid expression in the fact that she will *not move into her husband's house until after her father dies.* In my book I try to show that in Jane Austen's novels the bridegroom's house functions symbolically on a number of levels. On one level it serves as the concrete embodiment of the bride's new estate — of the life she will lead after marriage. But I also argue that, among other things, the new house can represent the bridegroom's social and sexual potency — and even, perhaps, on a very unconscious level, the physical organ of his potency. This last interpretation implies a kind of symbolic equation, one familiar enough in psychoanalysis and in literature, between house and body. What I want to suggest now is that in Jane Austen this symbolic equation pertains to the male and the female body alike. On the level of unconscious symbolism, I take the new house — the married estate — to represent not only the bridegroom's potency (of which the bride becomes mistress) but also *the new body that the bride herself receives.*

What I have in mind is that at marriage a woman, so to speak, changes bodies. Previously she had lived in a virgin body, just as she had lived in a house her father had provided. Upon marrying she exchanges this body for the body, which in the fantasy I am discussing her husband *gives* her, of a mature, sexually active woman. And thus I see special significance in Mr. Knightley's remark, «A man would always wish to give a woman a better home than the one he takes her from; and he who can do it where there is no doubt of *her* regard, must, I think, be the happiest of mortals» (428). I also see special significance in Emma's contention that «few married women are half as much mistress of their husband's

house» as she is of Hartfield (84). For one thing, as I establish at some length in my written chapter on *Emma*, Emma associates marriage with *loss*. For her (until Mr. Knightley announces his plan), marriage means *losing Hartfield*. If for Hartfield we read her virgin body — her maidenhead) then her hesitations about marriage become more understandable. I am not suggesting that the novel's ending, which has Emma remaining at Hartfield, implies that in any literal sense Emma will remain a virgin for the rest of her father's life. But in the light of everything we have seen about Emma there *is* reason to suspect that so long as her father remains alive, there will be some kind of shadow over her sexuality. In some emotional sense Emma *will* remain a virgin. So long as she lives in her childhood home, she will not entirely *be Mr. Knightley's*.

But Mr. Knightley, in moving to Hartfield, will be Emma's.

Mr. Knightley is presented as a very virile man, «plain», «unaffected» (448), and *vigorous* with «a great deal of health, activity, and independence» (213). Even more than by vigor, however, he is characterized by moral and physical *firmness* — by unbending uprightness. At the ball Emma remarks his «tall, firm, upright figure» (326) — which nevertheless has nothing awkward about it, for he moves «with natural grace» (326).

Mr. Knightley brings his firmness, natural grace, and vigor to Emma's house. In fact, however, Mr. Knightley and these virile — or phallic — qualities of his have always *been* in Emma's house. The only difference is that after marriage Emma will in every sense *possess* them. I have suggested that Emma's moving to Donwell would have paralleled — and indeed *will* after Mr. Woodhouse's death — her coming into possession of a new body, that of a mature fully-sexed woman. To me it makes a great deal of sense to see Mr. Knightley's moving in to Hartfield as parallel to an underlying female fantasy about recovering full, overt, publicly acknowledged possession of the «firm» and «upright» masculinity that, in the fantasy, had never really been absent (but which was in some danger of being «lost» on account of Emma's misbehavior). On every level a large part of Jane Austen's joke in *Emma* is that in the end Emma's impossible desire for marriage without change is satisfied. The joke is not an entirely joyful one, and we become more sensitive to its full force when we are aware of Jane Austen's hints — unintentional though they are — that Emma's impossible desire concerning married life in general subsumes a primitive and thoroughly unrealizable fantasy about her own body.

In this connection it is significant that Mr. Woodhouse's ultimate consent to the marriage specifies that Mr. Knightley is to come to Hartfield not so much to be Emma's husband as to provide «protection» to Mr. Woodhouse. The situation at the end of *Emma* is unblocked by Mr. Woodhouse's fears of «*house-breaking*» (483). In order to protect his house from penetration by outsiders, Mr. Woodhouse must allow Emma's marriage — must, that is, allow Mr. Knightley to enter his house permanently. And the thought of *that* causes Mr. Woodhouse acute «distress». Even before the poultry-thief appears, however, «both the Mr. Knightleys» — with whom to a great extent Emma's own «understanding» concurred — had given «assurance... that when once the event were over, his distress would be soon over too» (483). This distress, remember, is occasioned by the penetration of a virile man into Mr. Woodhouse's *house*, on the occasion of a marriage. To me, Mr. Woodhouse's anxiety suggests the anxiety of a bride about defloration.

One consequence of this interpretation is that Mr. Knightley, who has always been more of a father to Emma than Mr. Woodhouse has been, will, upon marrying Emma, be Mr. Woodhouse's husband at least as much as he will be Emma's. Mr. Woodhouse will suffer some «distress» upon the «event» of Mr. Knightley's entering Hartfield as a husband, but he will add to his household a «firm, upright» member — one on whose nightly presence he can rely for the rest of his life. Mr. Knightley will restore to Emma

what has, in the fantasy that I see in this novel, always been present-but-lacking, and will supply her father with what has always been lacking. On all its levels the fantasy that *Emma* presents of the ideal «union» is implausible; on some levels it approaches the grotesque.

It becomes somewhat less grotesque, however, if, as I do with some of Jane Austen's earlier novels and as analysts usually do with dreams, we take all of the characters in *Emma* as symbolizing parts or facets of a single character, whose basic self is represented by the heroine. My written chapter on *Emma* makes a beginning in this direction, with Harriet Smith and with Mr. Knightley. I am inclined to see the character of Mr. Woodhouse as embodying Emma's own deep-seated fears of sexuality, just as Harriet embodies her feminine erotic desires and Mr. Knightley the strictures of her conscience.

Thus, for me, in *Emma*'s unconscious psychodynamics it is literally true that «any change of condition must be impossible for» Emma so long as «her dear father lived», for on this level «her own dear father» *means* her own insurmountable fear of any change in her sexual condition. On the same level, Emma's solicitousness for her father — in particular her refusal to move to Donwell for fear of killing him — seems to me to show her unwillingness in the present or the immediate future to free herself of her fears in any radical way. The novel's denouement, in other words, represents a childish and rather pathetic wish on Emma's part to be able to overcome her fears at least to some extent by turning them against themselves. The fears are, ultimately, fears of sexual penetration; and the wish expressed at the end of *Emma* is that fears of violent penetration by strangers might provide the motivation for allowing something like penetration by the well-known and solicitous Mr. Knightley. I say «something like penetration» because Mr. Knightley's moving to Hartfield rather than Emma's moving to Donwell seems, symbolically, still to deny Emma the acquisition of a completely mature woman's body. Emma seems to me to want to eat her cake and have it too — to be penetrated and yet to remain intact.

The contradiction may, however, originate slightly farther afield. Though Donwell was originally an *abbey* — an institution devoted to celibacy and hence sterility — in the present, Mr. Knightley's estate is a farm, and, by all indications, a notably productive one. Emma's feeling that it is impossible for her to move to Donwell so long as her father lives may, I think, represent a feeling that she cannot allow herself to become pregnant until her fears of sexuality have, given time and Mr. Knightley's patient understanding, been thoroughly overcome. In my book I try to show that Jane Austen's other «lively» heroines all have difficulty in giving that final confirmation of their femininity that bearing a child is sometimes thought to constitute; and if *Emma* parodies *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* we can expect its heroine, in this respect as in others, to follow the example set by Marianne Dashwood Brandon and Elizabeth Bennet Darcy.

In the last analysis it makes relatively little difference whether we see Emma's fears as fears of defloration or as fears of pregnancy and childbirth. If we are dealing with fears of childbirth, the arrangement at the end of the novel is less directly self-contradictory. Symbolically it means that sexual activity is permitted (despite the initial «distress») so long as it does not lead to pregnancy. But how much sexual activity does that in fact allow? We can see that the arrangement at the end, even in this interpretation, still places significant restrictions on the expression allowed to Emma's sexuality — to say nothing about Mr. Knightley's. Whether the heroine's fears are ultimately of pregnancy or of defloration, the novel's ending calls for her simultaneously to accept and deny her own sexuality. If I am right that *Emma* is to be taken as a kind of self-conscious parody, then its ending is, artistically speaking, an appropriate one. But, on the level of unconscious fantasy, it has very uncomfortable overtones. My guess is that Jane Austen herself, on an unconscious level, felt uncomfortable with the ending of *Emma* and reacted to that discomfort in the writing of *Persuasion* — a novel which many readers feel to be somehow more mature than its predecessors.

I should perhaps add, since I have touched on at least two controversial questions about female identity, that I do not believe that femininity necessarily implies any need to bear children. But I do think that — to some extent, and unconsciously — Jane Austen believed that, and I think that her highly ambivalent feelings about reproduction and mothering play a role in all of her novels. And as far as what is called «penis envy» is concerned, I do not know how important or how necessary a part of female psychology it is. I do think that — understandably enough, given the power structure of her world — it played a part in Jane Austen's psychology. Indeed, for me, part of the accomplishment of *Persuasion* is that there Jane Austen is able to work her way through and ultimately to transcend infantile concerns with the anatomical differences between the sexes. In *Persuasion*, she achieves a broader and more balanced vision than in the earlier novels of what it means to be male and female, and along with that, I think, a considerably less frightening vision than the one I have been outlining of what is meant by the expression «sexual activity».

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The Secret Language of *Salomé*

SYLVETTE GENDRE-DUSUZEAU (*)

The following interpretation of Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* comes at the end of a long research on Oscar Wilde[1] that was necessary to understand the meaning of the play in a way different from the usual analysis referring to castration, incest or virginity.

Before I begin with the play itself, I have to give a few clues. My work took place in the same line of research as Robert Silhol's[2]. It lies on the idea that the process of writing in its specificity is motivated by unconscious problematics to which the pecularities and recurrencies of writing opens a royal access.

The biographical elements I happen to use become helpful only when they can bring confirmation to what has already become apparent in the author's writing. No interpretations can be given unless one can link them to the consequences of a particular unconscious problematic as it can be seen or heard in the writing. Considered from this point of view, a careful study of the writing leads to the unconscious knots within the psyche and even shows the psyche at work, at the same time repeating a possible traumatic effect and trying to overcome it.

Of course this sort of research gives only access to a fictional history case since it operates without a patient's suffering and out of a real transference relation, but still it remains valid psychically.

Wilde's writing is organised around a sort of pattern composed of three elements that happen to be «the name, the double and the secret», to be of course taken into account as signifiers of some unknown problematic.

These can be met under various forms in each text, either the three together or more often one only but in a predominant position. For example the question of «the double» related to a «mirror-portrait» and consequently to the specular image appears in *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* and in *The Fisherman and his Soul*. The «secret» is the main theme of The Sphynx without a secret, and the question of «the name» can be reached more precisely in *The Importance of Being Earnest* and *The Portrait of Mr. WH.*

Just a few words on this litterary essay in which Wilde consciously proposes an original solution to the secret concerning the famous Mr. WH to whom Shakespeare dedicated

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[1] Sylvette Gendre-Dusuzeau, *Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wild, Homopatronymie et portrait*, Thése de Doctorat, sous la direction de R. Silhol, Institut d'Anglais Charles V, Univ. Paris VII, Juin 1990, 2 vol.

[2] Robert Silhol, *Le Texte du désir*, Ed. Ecrits/Cistra, 1984.

his *Sonnets*. The *Sonnets* of Shakespeare belong to this special genre of poetry built on a nominal enigma to be found in the verses' rhymes. According to the English professor Leslie Hotson[3], the initials «W.H.» stand for «William Hatcliffe», the mock king of the mock winter court that used to be elected among the students of the Inns of Court in London each December at that time. In fact the various ways of writing that name can be easily seen in the verses under various forms: HAT/AT/LIV/LIVE/LIFF/.

Wilde himself had his own idea on the matter in his time. After studying a few homophonies, he identified Mr. WH as a young beautiful actor named Willie Hughes, supposed to have been Shakespeare's lover to whom the poet had dedicated his whole work. As usual here the question of homosexuality conceals everything else and prevents further investigation.

Why is it necessary to mention all this? Because Wilde through the *Sonnets* is fascinated by a text hiding a nominal palimpsest. The whole essay shows Wilde's attempt to join together the initials «W.H.» to their corresponding name and to their corresponding body.

Let's kep in mind the idea of the palimpsest and his unconscious echoes and let's have a look at other unconscious glimpses referring to «the name». It is noticeable that all throughout Wilde's work, lots of names begin with a double initial such as «Stars and Stripes» (the twins in *The Canterville ghost*), «Baron Barnheim» (in *An Ideal Husband*), «Cecily Cardew», «Red Rubin», «Gaunt Gibeon» and many others among which the famous «Bunbury» to be read in two parts, «Bun Bury» (in *The Importance of being Earnest*). The attention is also drawn by the way Wilde plays with the English Grammar, reversing the right place of the common noun and its adjective as it is the case in the story *The Millionaire Model* which ends with «the model millionaire», this changing corresponding to subtle changes within the psychic layers of the writing.

All this information is enough in order to have a quick idea of what is at stake in Wilde's writing and which makes sense in relation to a biographical event I'm going to reveal now.

Oscar Wilde's father, William Wilde who was a famous oculist and aurist ennobled by Queen Victoria had led a double life so to speak before his marriage. He had begotten three illegitimate children and in particular an elder son that he had named «Henry Wilson». This name corresponds to the initials «W.H.» that fascinated Wilde so much. However what is more important as far as unconscious problematics are concerned is that this son's identity and that of the two daughters who followed him was kept secret. Henry Wilson who became a doctor at his father's hospital in Dublin was known to the legitimate children of Sir William as their cousin, their father's nephew, Sir William being consequently their uncle. The biographers underline the fact that William Wilde possibly named his illegitimate son Wilson meaning thus to establish in his own way that he was the father but without notifying it legally, the name WILSON standing for WIL's SON or WILLIAM's SON through, the homonymy.

What is relevant here is that William Wilde gave his illegitimate elder a mock surname, that is a name with a fraud written in it, a fraud which hides and tells at the same time the father's fault.

With those biographical elements it is made possible to figure out what is at work in Wilde's psyche in correspondance to the singularities of his writing.

We have to do here with a transgenerational secret or rather a silence and its unconscious transmission showing its consequences within the psyche as can be seen throughout Wilde's writing.

The French authors N. Abraham and M. Torok have theorized the influence of an

[3] Leslie Hotson, *Mr. W.H.*, London, Rupert Hart-Davis, 1964.

unwitting knowledge at unconscious level passing unawares from one generation to another[4]. In fact Wilde's writing shows that he had an unconscious knowledge of his father's illegitimate son whose fraudulous name was meant to hide the filial bond. When we learn that Wilde added the christian name WILLS to his own after cousins of his, thus calling himself Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, we can't help supposing it was meant to re-establish unconsciously his own nominal filiation to his father apart from the fact of echoeing his father's secret paternity. In fact, WILL'S WILDE suggests to the ear with the use of the genitive, THE WILDE OF WILLIAM. We can consequently be aware of the effects of this unwitting knowledge regarding Wilde's identity and unconscious identifications.

A detailed study of Wilde's writing using homophonies and synonymies makes it feasible to approach the mortiferous consequences of this secret on Wilde's life, leading him eventually to his own destruction. I just want to mention here that Wilde died of a symptom issued directly from this unconscious problematic.

Another psychoanalyst, René Major has theorized the consequences emerging from the disfunction of the proper name — the proper name is of course different from Lacan's «Nom du père» related to the Symbolic order. René Major points out how various unconscious complications can lead to the loss of the main function of the proper name, that of «discerning». This flaw in the unconscious function of the proper name shows its effects by producing doubles in one way or other[5].

The impossible access to his father's secret appears metaphorically through the numerous signifiers Wilde uses in association with hearing and eyesight, the two usual ways leading to the matter of secrets. These concern the portraits, the photographies, beauty and esthetism, as well as music — piano music, opera music, musics either soft or shrill.

Keeping all this psychic background in mind it is now possible to come back to *Salomé*.

Let me remind here that *Salomé* is entirely written in French[6]. This is not the first occurrence of a foreign language in Wilde's work since he frequently inserts clauses in French, Spanish, Latin or Greek. These little bits of languages become really interesting if we consider them as a sort of palimpsest writing, a secret tongue talking silently within the words of the mother tongue. In *Salomé* the little bits of languages come together in a formidable attempt to make themselves heard, excluding at the same time the mother tongue. However the secret message remains to be found.

Another important element is that Wilde borrowed so to speak the subject matter of his play. This brings back here something Wilde has very often been reproached with, plagiarism. His «borrowing» the biblical drama reveals two differences:

> Salomé wants Iokanaan's head (John the Baptist's) for herself, not influenced by her mother's revenge.
> She is crushed to death under Herod's soldiers'shields.

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[4] N. Abraham and M. Torok's works are given here both in their French and American editions.
- *L'écorce et le noyau*, Paris, ed Aubier Flammarion, 1978. The Shell and the Kernel, Univ. of Chicago Press (in preparation).
- *Le verbier de l'homme aux loups*, Paris, ed Aubier Flammarion, 1976.
In A review of Contemporary Press, John Hopkins Univ. Press, Cornell Univ.: N. Abraham, The Shell and the Kernel, Vol 9, n.º 1, Spring 79; N. Abraham, Psychoanalytic Esthetics, Vol 16, n.º 3, 1986; N. Abraham, The Phantom of Hamlet, Vol 18, n.º 4, Winter 1988; N. Abraham, Critical Enquiry, Notes on the Phantom, Vol 18, n.º 2, Winter 1988; N. Abraham, M. Torok, «The Lost Object-Me, notes on Identification within the crypt, Psychoanalytical Enquiry», Vol 4, n.º 2, 1984.

[5] R. Major: *Le Discernement*, ed. Aubier, 1984.; *De l'election*, ed Aubier, 1986; «Le nom propre et le double», in *City of Glass* (Paul Auster) et *The Secret Sharer* (J. Conrad), Cahiers Charles V, Univ Paris VII.

[6] O. Wilde's *Salomé* was translated into English by Lord Alfred Douglas. O. Wilde finally agreed with the existing English Translation.

The second point about Salomé's death can only be understood within the specificity of Wilde's writing, within the unconscious inner grammar of Wilde's writing. I should remind here that Dorian Gray died from the anomalies of his specular image since the knife that ripped the canvas of the portrait killed him in return, by transitivity. The modalities of Dorian's death in the novel have of course to be referred to the disfunction of the specular image from which emerges a double image following the pattern of Narcissus be captured by his own image.

In Wilde's play, it must be noticed that Iokanaan and Salomé are not introduced like characters but like images caught in the specular capture. Salomé is «a narcissus» and Iokanaan a «silver image». Therefore the unconscious grammar of Wilde's writing can't help producing Salomé's death in a specular way. This is what happens when Herod orders his soldiers to crush her under their shields that are nothing but mirrors of well-polished steel.

I shall briefly allude to the question of the «name» combined to the question of «the secret» in Wilde's *Salomé*. Although it is said to call «him» by his name in the play, the Messiah is never called Jesus. He is know, as THE SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD, HIM, A HOLY MAN, that is he is named by adjectives instead of by his proper name.

In the same line of research on «the name» it seems that Wilde whose unconscious choice was not to name Jesus can't call Jesus' twin brother or double if I may say so by his proper name either. Therefore John the Baptist will be Iokanaan in the play.

Concerning «the secret», Iokanaan himself is really a signifier of Wilde's father's unreachable secret. Iokanaan is described like an «ivory statue», with the pun on «ivory» in French: «ivory = ivoire = y voir = to see there». More than that, Iokanaan «says terrible things but it is impossible to understand what he says». We are brought back here to the problematic of «the secret» as it appears through the process of the writing.

However this secret is not only to be heard or to be seen, it is also to be spoken through a mouth and this is precisely what can never happen in Wilde's case. The mouth that opens and closes itself over the dumb language is largely to be talked about in Wilde's *Salomé*. Here is the quotation in English:

> «It is thy mouth that I desire, Iokanaan. Thy mouth is like a band of scarlet on a tower of ivory. It is like a pomegranate cut with a knife of ivory. The pomegranate-flowers that blossom in the garden of Tyre, and are redder than roses, are not so red. The red blasts of trumpets, that herald the approach of kings, and make afraid the enemy are not so red... Thy mouth is like a branch of coral that fishers have found in the twilight of the sea... It is like the vermilion that the Moabites find in the mines of Moab, the vermilion that the kings take from them».

As could be expected, Wilde's writing silences Iokanaan's mouth (with a band of scarlet). His mouth is red all over, coloured by the rich hues of a painter's palette: «Pomegranate, coral, vermilion». In the French language all these words: «Grenade, coral, vermillion» can be used both as adjectives and nouns, offering thus the same possibilities of shifting as those noticed in *The Millionaire Model*.

Among this vast range of reds a proper name hides itself and shows up at the same time, it is TYRE, in «The gardens of Tyre».

TYRE and SIDON were those two rich pagan cities of Mesopotamia and of Judae, one being «the double» of the other. TYRE gave its name to the famous Tyrian purple, the famous «dye» calling forth the associations on this other meaning «death». TYRE springs up from the list of reds as a master signifier since it can gather all of them under the expression «Rouge tyrien» in French and «Tyrian purple» in English. However it must be remarked that although «rouge» appears in the French text, «purple» is absent from the English translation in the sense of «Tyrian purple». This avoidance is significant in

our context. Besides the adjective «rouge» that Wilde uses lavishly in his French *Salomé* does exist in English as a common noun meaning «women's make up» — particularly bad women's.

Are we allowed then to go as far as supposing that *Salomé* was written in French because of the specific bilingual possibilities ot the signifier ROUGE whose double quality of adjective in French and noun in English enables a junction of the two languages, letting free the tongue at last, letting the secret language speak?

The text can't bring any more answers unless one calls forth another biographical element.

18 years before Oscar Wilde's birth, his future father William Wilde accompanied a patient as a doctor on a holy pilgrimage to Jerusalem. William Wilde was very keen on archeology and intended among other various plans he had to discover the secret of the fabrication of the red dye in Tyre. He made excavations on the spot and was lucky enough to find out the mortars still containing bits of the shell-fish that was used. He could event identify it.

This information becomes relevant when one knows that Henry Wilson appeared magically at the very time when William Wilde returned from his foreign journey. This birth seems to have happened without any mention of a mother whatsoever.

These facts aren't of much help if they are not related to the whole problematic such as it is displayed in Wilde's writing.

Salomé is the only text together with the story of the *The Nightingale and the Rose* that comes very near to the mystery of Henry Wilson's mother. It is thanks to Wilde's writing that we could suggest that Wilson's mother probably died in labour, possibly soaked in blood.

Wilde's writing shows quite clearly how all those unwitting elements are reorganised at unconscious level to build a personal sexual theory on conception and birth. The mortar excavated, exhumed from the biblical past is held in the father's hands just as the king seized the vermilion from the mines of Moab, watching at the same time his son mythically born from a marine-shell.

It is more feasible now to make hypothesis about the French language of *Salomé*.

Isn't it in this melting mortar of the new religion announced by the double figures of the Messiah and Iokanaan that the babe Henry Wilson was born too, the son of an invisible mother just as Jesus was born from his godly invisible father as it is mentioned in Wilde's play? Henry Wilson also belongs to a family in which father will stand for uncle as it is the case for Herod and Salomé as a consequence of Herod's incestuous marriage with Herodias.

The story of *Salomé* ré-interpretated in the French language would be a means of repeating the traumatic consequences of his father's secret on Wilde's proper name. It would also be an unconscious attempt to fabricate again the broken filial bond that make Wilde — at unconscious level — his father's son.

PSYCHOLOGISTS AND PSYCHOANALYSTS LOOK AT LITERATURE

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The Scenic Function (Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*)

YVES THORET (*)

Talking after Antal Bokay, it was the least I could do to mention the play where Shakespeare talks about the kingdom of Bohemia, *The Winter's Tale*.

I would like to thank Robert Silhol, Nancy Blake and Erik Nakjavani who helped me very much with the english translation of this article.

What occurs when the spectator of a theatrical performance is overwhelmed by an «happening effect» or, what we call in french «un coup de théâtre ?»

I have not much experience in the field of literature but I shall try to study this problem, starting from the last scene of *The Winter's Tale*, taken as an instance of a strong theatrical happening effect.

You know the story. Queen Hermione has been cruelly traumatized by different ways: accusations concerning her adultery expressed by her husband Leontes, king of Sicilia, she has also been traumatized by the separation from her new-born daughter, born in jail, by the public trial in which she was the accused and finally by the sudden death of her son.

Paulina, the queen's confident, has informed us in the third act that Hermione was dead.

We are now, sixteen years later, in the last scene of the play. The daughter that everybody thought lost, Perdita, just appeared and comes back to Sicilia with her lover, the king of Bohemia's son.

The kings of Sicilia and Bohemia and all the court gather in the house of Paulina for a surprise which has been kept hidden to them till now, queen Hermione's statue, made by an italian sculptor, Julio Romano.[1]

You know the scene. Paulina welcomes the king cheerfully. She draws a curtain and uncovers the statue of Hermione.

The king adresses himself to her or to it, I do not know exactly what to say, but the statue keeps still :

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[1] W. Shakespeare, *The Winter's Tale*, The Arden Shakespeare, ed. by J.H.P. Pafford, London and New York, Routledge, 1989 (act V, scene 3).

«Chide me, dear stone, that I may say indeed
Thou art Hermione; or rather thou art she
In thy not chiding; for she was as tender
As infancy and grace.»

The king asks Paulina why the queen has such a wrinkled face, why she has so much more wrinkles than before.

He is torn between contradictory feelings, dismay and hope, the warmth of life and the coldness of stone.

Perdita begs her mother's blessing to join again the curse of generations but Paulina warns her that the paint of the statue is still wet. Paulina insists on the fact that it is nothing more than a thing, an image which belongs to her, but the king and the princess have no stronger desire than to stand admiring it or her, (what should I say?).

So, Paulina now provokes the magic issue to occur, to happen. She orders:

«Music, awake her; strike!
' Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;
Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come!»

And she adds in a confidence to Hermione:

«I'll fill your grave up.»

And the statue changes itself into a living woman who moves, walks downstairs, kisses her husband, blesses her daughter and plays again her part in life.

PETER BROOK

I shall now quote what Peter Brook, who performed and directed this play in 1951 in the Phenix Theatre, wrote about this scene:

> «In a *Winter's Tale* a very subtle construction hinges on the key moment when a statue comes to life. (...) In fact, the statue that comes to life is the truth of the play.»[2]

Brook observes that the play is divided into three parts.

At first, the king, under the effect of a passionate jealous complaint, in the context of a possessive love, accuses Hermione of being adulterous with their guest, Polixenes the king of Bohemia, grown-up in his childhood together with Leontes. He condemns the queen to death and the baby is taken away and left on an island.

In the second part of the play, this girl is brought up by a shepherd. At the end of her adolescence, she falls in love with the prince of Bohemia. His father Polixenes refuses their wedding project and orders his son to leave this girl, behaving with the same cruelty as Leontes in the first part.

In the third part, the young lovers fly away from him and come to Sicilia, to implore help from Leontes, in the same place where the dramatic conflict began sixteen years before. «When the young lovers enter Leontes's palace the first and the second sections overlap: both put into question the action that Leontes now can take. If the dramatist's sense of truth forces him to make Leontes vindictive with the children, then the play cannot move out of its particular world, and its end would have to be bitter and tragic: if he can truthfully

[2] Peter Brook, *The Empty Stage*, London, Mac Gibbon and Kee, 1968, p. 89.

allow a new equality to enter Leontes's actions, then the whole time-pattern of the play is transformed: the past and the future are no longer the same. The level changes, and even if we call it a miracle, the statue has none the less come to life.»[3]

This is a typical theatrical effect. As Peter Brook says, «when working on the *Winter's Tale* I discovered that the way to understand this scene is not to discuss it but to play it. In performance this action is strangely satisfying-and so it makes us wonder deeply.»[4]

FREUD

To elaborate an answer to Peter Brook's questions, we must recall briefly the comments of Freud about two other Shakespeare's plays, *The Merchant of Venice* and *King Lear*.[5]

In the first one, the pretenders to the hand of Portia have to choose between three caskets of gold, silver and lead. Bassanio chooses the simplest, the palest chest, the lead one, and inside it, he finds the painting of his beloved Portia.

Old King Lear divides his kingdom between his three daughters but the youngest one remains silent and he refuses to give her anything. She will reveal herself later as the best of his daughters.

As you know, Freud interpretes the chests as women and the paleness of the lead chest or the muteness of Cordelia as metaphors of death. But he wonders why we always choose what symbolizes death. The genius of the dramatist is to give us the illusion that the hero remains quite free to make any choice he likes to. He keeps the possibility to choose what he desires most of all.

«The Goddess of Love herself, who now took the place of the Goddess of Death, had once been identical with her. (...) Thus the replacement by a wishful opposite in our theme harks back to a primaeval identity. (...) Choice stands in the place of necessity, of destiny.»[6]

This is the main point of my talk. We cannot avoid death but we think we can choose love. We choose the prettiest, but in fact it is the unavoidable death which she announces.

I insist on the kinship between these two goddesses, of Love and of Death, that Freud puts in evidence. There is a primaeval identity between them which allows this pattern to be set in action.

ROMAN JAKOBSON

You know the two axes of the language that he has described; the vertical axis, the paradigmatic, along which one operates choice, selection or substitution of paradigms. It works according to the principle of equivalence. Equally, the horizontal axis, where combination and the ordered sequence of syntagms are submitted to the action of the principle of contiguity.

In 1960, Jakobson described the poetic function as the projection of the principle of equivalence from the vertical to the horizontal axis[7]. For example, in Shakespeare's

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[3] Ibidem, p. 89-90.

[4] Ibidem, p. 90.

[5] S. Freud, «Das Motiv der Kastchenwahl» (1913), *G.W.*, Vol. X, pp. 24-37; «The theme of the three caskets», *Standard Edition*, Vol. XII, pp. 290-301.

[6] Ibidem, *S.E.*, p. 299.

[7] R. Jakobson, «Closing statements; Linguistics and Poetics» in *Style in Language* (T.A. Sebeok, Ed.), New York, 1960.

Julius Caesar, when Marc-Anthony adresses the people of Rome after Caesar's death:

«Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.»[8]

«Friends, Romans, countrymen» are paradigms which are linked by the principle of similarity and sequenced in this verse in order to signify the increasing of the effect of his coming speech.

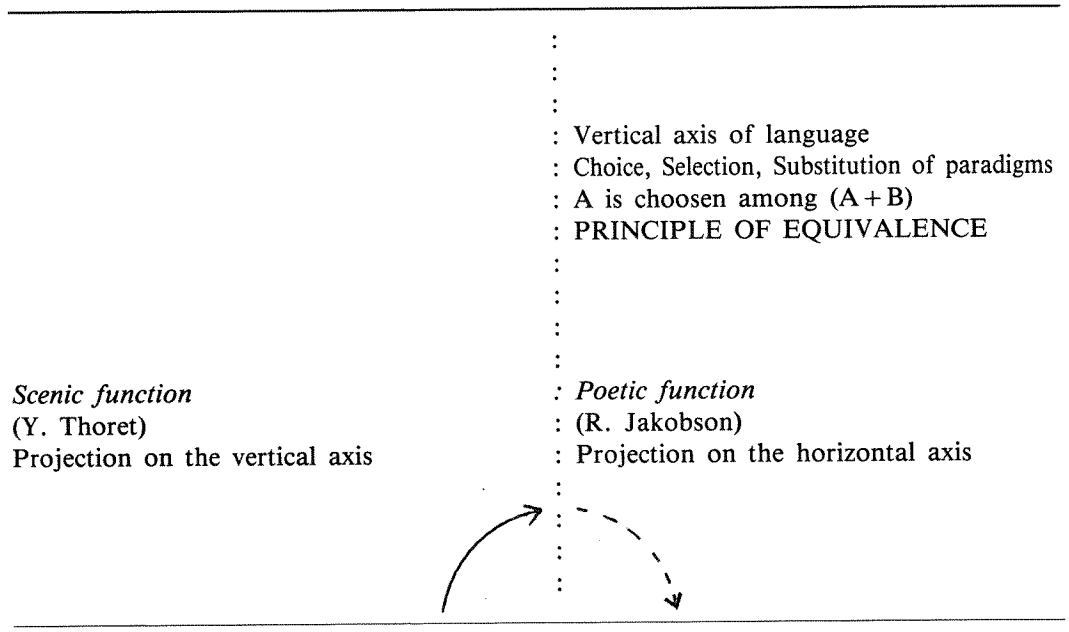
THE SCENIC FUNCTION

I proposed in 1983[9] the idea of another function which would operate within this pattern in a symetrical way to the poetic function. I called it the scenic function.

It consists of the projection of the contiguity principle from the horizontal axis to the vertical one. (Schema 1)

SCHEMA I

Axes of Language (R. Jakobson)



[8] W. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act III, Scene 2.

[9] Y. Thoret, «Etude sémiologique de la fonction scénique dans la relation thérapeutique», *L'Evolution Psychiatrique*, Tome 48, Fasc. 2, 1983, pp. 471-481.

Given the choice among several options, among several paradigms, the elements which form a sequence come together. It is a metonymy which when projected looks like a metaphor.[10]

WHAT DOES OCCUR IN *THE WINTER'S TALE*?

If we seek, like Norman Holland invites us to do, «the anxious and hidden persona» in ourselves, we may deepen the sense of our identity.[11]

Now we may discern that the character of Leontes is described differently in the third part of Shakespeare's play and in the text of Robert Greene, *Pandosto or the Triumph of Time*. In the first two parts, there is not much difference between these two texts; the sequence is nearly the same: a state of happiness is affected by an occurence which leads a character (Leontes in the first, Polixenes in the second part) to find himself excluded from the primal scene. He suspects they want to do away with him, and this passionate suspicion enrages him. This passion leads a victim to death or exile.

What does happen in the third part?

The same sequence could be repeated, with a tragic stratagem like in *Pandosto*: the king sends the young prince to jail and he tries to obtain the young girl's favours by threatening her. Shamed when he discovers that she is his daugther, he kills himself.

Shakespeare preferred to give a happy ending to this play in a very surprising way; he organizes in a new pattern the elements which make part of the repeated sequence. So, the elements are the same, but the construction made with them is organized differently in the last part of the play.

King Leontes is charmed by the beauty of Perdita and he tries to obtain her love, in spite of Paulina being shocked by his attitude. He discovers in time that this pretty girl is his daughter and he accepts with fair-play the law of incest prohibition.

The new theme of the triumph of Love has replaced the relations based on competition or separation. I do not believe that he morally evolves or redeems himself. It becomes possible, for these characters who live in the «Castel» where everything may happen because it is a theatre, to choose love in place of anger. The components of the repeated sequence are still the same: they all pull together in order to retreave Hermione from the realm of death. This is the new deal Shakespeare strikes up, in order, as Bernard Paris has said, to bargain «with fate».[12]

I think that it is the reactivation of the king's sexual desire for his daughter that leads him to give up the absolute power of an archaic and exclusive love relationship and helps him to accept that, even a king, may not make love with his daughter.

Conforted by this recent sexual desire, the king feels himself more human when he stands in front of the queen's statue. He admires her so much that he reminds their first meeting. When the statue comes back to life, an object, an image metamorphoses itself into a character, played by a person, a living person co-present with the spectators.

Paulina warns the king: if your don't love her well, «you'll kill her double», for the second time. Be careful, «do not shun her».[13]

What I find important here is that this scenic function allows us to understand the

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[10] Y. Thoret, «Place du théâtre dans l'oeuvre de Freud», *Degrés*, Bruxelles, 16 éme année, nº 56, hiver 1988, pp. c1-c20.

[11] N. Holland, *Holland's Guide to Psychoanalytic Psychology and Literature-and-Psychology*, New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1990.

[12] B.J. Paris, «Bargains with Fate: the Case of Macbeth», *The American Journal of Psychoanalysis*, 1982, Vol. 42, nº 1, pp. 7-20.

[13] *The Winter's Tale*, Act V, Scene 3.

structure of the sequence whose elements are gathered as the different options offered to Leontes's choice.

At the begining of the Statue scene, Leontes has to choose among the following options:

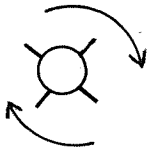
1. The request made by Polixenes in *Pandosto* is to save Florizel and condemn Perdita to death.
2. Meanwhile, Camillo threatens the shepherd of punishment. The poor man confesses then that Perdita is not his daughter but he has found her on the sea-shore with jewels which prove that she was Leontes and Hermione's daughter.
3. Leontes expresses a sexual desire for Perdita and he would be ready to punish or banish his young rival, Florizel. But he discovers in time that Perdita is his daughter and he accepts with a smile the law of incest prohibition.
4. What could be the fourth choice ? Polixenes threatens Perdita and Camillo impresses the shepherd, a false father, while Leontes would be ready to kill or exile Florizel.

SCHEMA 2

Options Offered to Choice on The Vertical Axis

1. Polixenes:
   - •Florizel to be set free
   - •Perdita's death

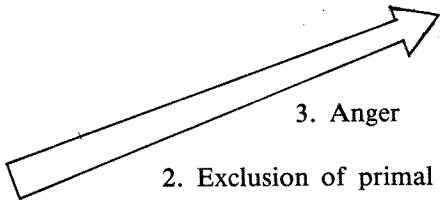
2. Camillo:
   - •Threatens the shepherd who confesses the secret of Perdita's story



4. Paulina:
   Obtains the metamorphosis of a statue in living again queen Hermione

3. Leontes:
   - •Sexual desire for Perdita
   - •ready to banish Florizel
   - •accepts law of incest prohibition

ORDERED SEQUENCE ON THE HORIZONTAL AXIS



4. - Death or exile of a victim
   - Revival

3. Anger

2. Exclusion of primal scene

1. Situation of happiness

The first three options are related to the relationship with the son (Florizel), the father (the shepherd) and the daughter (Perdita). The only remaining issue is related to Hermione as a mother-figure. But she had died long before. All these possibilities of choice drive Leontes to accept and to enforce Paulina's stratagem to give life to Hermione's statue.

This miracle allows a new formation of couples in the play: Leontes with Hermione represent the royal couple, Perdita and Florizel will soon get married, Paulina is given a new husband by Leontes, Camillo, the confidents get together and the poor Polixenes remains again alone, so that all could begin again, but this might be another story.

In this play, Shakespeare shows us a Lion which becomes human when he complies with the conditions that his wife exist as a subject, so that she may come back to life, love and give love.

This scenic function means that there are situations in literature, theater and therapeutic relationship in which a good choice may be made and there is one only which is the good one.

This is the way to obtain miracles.

DISCUSSION

Norman Holland remarked that Shakespeare presents the mother figure in *The Winter's Tale* by using three characters, the mother giving birth (Hermione), the daughter (Perdita) and Paulina who represents death. He observed that, in this play, when men are in charge of the plot, it leads to trouble whereas, when women take an active part in the situation, it leads to a solution. He wandered why Leontes and the other characters behave so. He reminded us that the Oracle enunciated by Apollo tries to warn Leontes against his errors.

I replied that court of Sicilia could represent male homosexuality, as one notices in Antigonus remark about his daughters:

> «... And I had rather glib myself, than they
> Should not produce fair issue.»[14]

It looks to me difficult to discern which is the unconscious desire of Leontes. In *Pandosto* as in Shakespeare's play, the king decides to bury his wife and his son in the same grave, placing them together for ever.

After the presentation of this paper, it occured to me that perhaps the strongest unconscious desire of Leontes is to rejoin his wife-mother in death, for ever; I thought this desire might explain the strong effect of its counter-representation, revival of Hermione's statue.

Jim Swan expressed an interest in this analysis in connexion with specific theatrical effects.

I made an observation that Claude Levi-Strauss in *Le cru et le cuit* offers the same pattern in order to analyse the structure of myths.[15]

Joan Montgomery Byles, author of an article about *The Winter's Tale*[16], insisted upon the significance of Mamillius death, the royal couple's son in this play. For her, Leontes does not have an important influence in the events of the play. She considers the main agent of the plot in the play to be Paulina; for her, the final «miracle» in the play represents the power of women. She insisted that this play is neither a tragedy nor a comedy but a fascinating succession of surprises.

This discussion demonstrated the condensation of the plot in this final «statue scene».

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[14] Ibidem, Act II, Scene 1.

[15] C. Levi-Strauss, *Le cru et le cuit*, Mythologiques, I, Paris, Plon, 1964, p. 313.

[16] Joan M. Byles, «The Winter's Tale, Othello and Troilus and Cressida: Narcissism and Sexual Betrayal», *American Imago*, Vol. 36, n.º 1, Spring, 1979, pp. 80-93.

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La Pensée-Schizo: Antonin Artaud

FREDERICO PEREIRA (*)

Il y a chez Artaud une recherche folle sur la Pensée, les Mots, l'Esprit et l'Ame, les Choses, le Temps et l'Espace qui nous retient le souffle et nous met face à un étrange abîme, autour duquel et au bord duquel notre pensée, si elle est authentique et non pas hautaine, vraie et non pas «entomologique», a des difficultés à s'organizer. Une pointe d'angoisse nous prend, si nous voulons aller à la rencontre du dire de Artaud, une masse d'angoisse et peut-être un magma d'impressions vagues et condensées, de croyances pré-organisées à ce que *tout déployement analytique est déjà fuite, éloignement, détachement.*

Car Artaud nous met avec une extrême violence-au-delà-de-la-violence en face de ce que *dans la construction de la subjectivité est necéssairement perte, soumission, aliénation.*

Perte du contact *immédiat* avec le Monde, abandon d'une position unaire, reflet d'un trop-plein narcissique.

Soumission à la langue par laquelle le sentir s'exprime, va vers l'autre; soumission à la langue-monde-de-mots qui fait de chaque chose l'en-moins qui est sa représentation; soumission au Code.

Aliénation à l'autre, «positionnement» dans lequel pour que le sujet advienne il faut qu'il parle, qu'il ne soit plus du «pur Esprit» mais une âme qui *se dit.*

Toute Pensée est alors *Trahison*, et toute parole, toute écriture devient «*cochonerie*». L'acte poétique est admis dans la stricte mesure où il *est l'Ame qui y réside.* L'écrire est admissible comme lieu d'habitation de l'Etre, et l'écriture vue comme perte révoltante de la substance de l'Etre dans la mesure où elle ne soit que *pure manifestation.*

D'un côté, Artaud pense:

> «*attirer l'attention sur la valeur réelle, la valeur initiale de (sa) pensée.*»[1]

c'est à dire sur sa *valeur de réalité.*

Le dire c'est la réalité de ce qui s'y dit — sinon pure trahison.

Mais de l'autre côté, Artaud affirme sans illusions:

> «*Toute écriture est de la cochonerie. Les gens qui sortent du vague pour essayer de préciser quoi que ce soit de ce qui se passe dans leur pensée ce sont des cochons... Tous ceux qui ont des points de repère dans l'esprit, je veux dire*

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[1] A. Artaud: *Lettres à Jacques Rivière.*

d'un certain côté de leur tête, sur des emplacements bien localisés de leur cerveau, tous ceux qui sont maîtres de leur langue, tous ceux pour qui les mots ont un sens, tous ceux pour qui il existe des altitudes dans l'âme, et des courants dans la pensée, ceux qui sont l'esprit de l'époque et lui ont nommé ces courants de pensée, je pense à leurs besognes précises et à ces grincements d'automate qui rend à tous vents leur esprit — ce sont des cochons... Ceux pour qui certains mots ont un sens et certaines manières d'être... Ceux qui croient à des «Termes»... — ce sont des cochons.
... Et je vous l'ai dit: pas d'oeuvre, pas de langue, pas de parole, pas d'esprit, rien.»[2]

Ceci, rendu avec une aveuglante clarté dans «Pèse-Nerfs», est une conséquence du désir que l'Esprit et la Vie communiquent directement, et du besoin, autrement plus radical, que le Poétique soit le Réel et le Réel le Poétique à l'intérieur de l'Esprit qui est tout l'Esprit et, dans l'Esprit, l'Ame.

Ce à quoi on aspire c'est à un Livre

«qui soit une porte... abouchée avec la réalité.»[3]

C'est à dire, un Livre, une Ame-Esprit où le Réel se confond avec la Pensée dans le temps du non-pensé.

Temps du non-pensé qui n'est pas le temps de la proto-représentation, le temps qui est condamné à se dépasser en se conservant — car dans la proto-représentation il y a déjà un trop de pensée, un excés de représentation, donc le temps de la proto-représentation est déjà le temps maudit de l'élaboration de la trahison au Réel et donc à l'Esprit.

Le temps du non pensé comme du non pensé et non comme du destiné à advenir comme Pensée; temps du non-pensé en soi, temps mythique où la rhétorique de l'Ame est vécue *comme si elle était déjà de la Pensée et non le geste de la Pensée.*

Pas de place pour le mensonge. La maniére de dire est le dire en entier qui est le tout de ce qui s'y dit.

Le refus du Signe: signe qui ne se dédouble pas, signe qui ne peut pas avoir deux surfaces, signe qui est le volume même de la chose, l'emplacement de la chose.

Refus aussi du advenir à être signe, refus de l'avenir, refus du Temps.

Une pensée à venir...
— est-ce que ça existe?
N'est-ce pas que chaque pensée est toutes les pensées, que chaque pensée est la pensée-être de l'Ame qui est à l'intérieur de l'Esprit et qui est tout l'Esprit?

Il n'y a pas du Temps; il y a au contraire refus de toute Temporalisation. Il n'y a pas du Temps sinon le *Temps Ponctuel* où la chose est le dire de la chose et chaque pensée n'importe quelle pensée, c'est à dire toutes choses et toutes pensées et rien de chose et rien de pensée.

Le temps ponctuel est le lieu d'habitation de l'espace de Néant qui n'est pas espace de Mort:

«Si l'on pouvait seulement goûter son Néant... et que ce Néant ne soit pas un certaine sorte d'être mais ne soit pas la mort tout à fait...»[4]

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[2] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs.*
[3] A. Artaud: *Lettres à Jacques Rivière.*
[4] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs.*

Refus du signe et refus de la distance qui sépare le geste qui désigne de la chose désignée, refus de toute la distance qui brouille l'Etre... Rien de caché, rien derrière, rien au delà: *Tout est*, et dans le Temps Ponctuel *tout est en même temps*. L'espace du Néant ce n'est donc pas l'espace de la Mort, mais au contraire se cherche comme espace du *tout plein*, de toute pensée, de toute fibre, de tout corps, de tout geste de tout temps et de tout lieu — magma de toutes choses. Du trop plein qui est le *Tout* où il n'y a rien à dire puisque *tout y est* dans son intégralité.

De là la raillerie par rapport à ceux qui «ont des termes», qui parlent des «courants de pensée», des «besognes précises», desquels on peut dire qu'ils ont «un certain côté de leur tête sur des emplacements bien localisés de leur cerveau.»

Le refus de la distance est aussi le refus de toute géographie de la pensée, de toute orbitalisation d'objets de pensée.

En fait, *des objets de pensée on ne peut dire qu'ils vont et qu'ils reviennent, puisqu'ils sont Tout à chaque fois*. C'est pourquoi saisir une forme de pensée est impératif, absolument impératif car ne pas la saisir ce n'est pas perdre une forme de la pensée mais c'est perdre la Pensée, l'Ame et l'Esprit.

> «*Si je peux saisir une forme, si imparfaite soit-elle, je la fixe dans la crainte de perdre toute la pensée.*»[5]

«Si imparfaite soit-elle...». Et pourtant la question essentielle qu'Artaud se pose devant les formes ne concerne pas leur qualité — elle concerne *leur existence*:

> «*Il m'importe beaucoup que les quelques manifestations d'existence spirituelle que j'ai pu me donner à moi-même ne soient pas considérées comme inexistantes.*»[6]

— Ou aussi:

> «*dans une heure et demain peut-être j'aurai changé de pensée, mais cette pensée présente existe; je ne laisserai pas se perdre ma pensée.*»[7]

C'est pourquoi le travail critique devient pure déraison, et sonnent tellement à côté les remarques de J. Riviére concernant les «maladresses» d'Artaud, desquelles Riviére dit qu'elles lui «paraissant correspondre à une certaine recherche de votre part plutôt qu'à un manque de commandement de vos pensées».

C'est exactement l'opposé, car ce qu'Artaud cherche à fonder c'est somme toute une Ontologie Surréelle où le «manque de commandement» provient de la *négation du Moi* qui commanderait et chercherait — quoi, d'ailleurs? — et de l'*affirmation impossible d'un «je»* à l'intérieur duquel coule la totalité des choses depuis le commencement du monde.

C'est pourquoi aussi tout le travail psychopathologique ou toute intervention psychologique classique sonnerait faux, radicalement à côté, fou.

> «*Il me manque une concordance des mots avec la minute de mes états*»
> — dit Artaud.

Et voilà qu'il écarte les voix du bon sens commun:

> «*Mais non, mais non, mais c'est normal, mais à tout le monde il manque des mots, mais vous êtes trop difficile avec vous même, mais à vous entendre il n'y parait pas, mais vous vous exprimez parfaitement en français, mais vous attachez trop d'importance à des mots!*»[8]

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[5] A. Artaud: *Lettres à Jacques Rivière*.
[6] *idem*.
[7] *ibidem*.
[8] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs*.

La réponse d'Artaud ne se fait pas attendre, elle vient d'immédiat:

> «*vous êtes des cons. Vous êtes des cons, depuis l'intelligent jusqu'au mince, depuis le percant jusqu'à l'induré, vous êtes des cons, je vous dis que vousêtes des chiens, je vous dis que vous aboyez au dehors, que vous vous acharnez à ne pas comprendre*»[9]...

... À ne pas comprendre que la tragédie d'Artaud ce n'est pas de ne pas atteindre le Beau et le Vrai, mais de *résider en deçà du Beau et dans un lieu où le Mensonge est impossible.*

Le Poétique d'Artaud est seulement le *poétique de l'évenement* («saisir toute pensée») et la question qui abime l'âme c'est *le doute non pas quant à si c'est vrai, mais quant à si ça existe.*

Et, pourtant, il le sait bien:

> «*j'ai un esprit qui littérairement existe.*»

— mais il ajoute:

> «*comme un T existe, ou un E, ou un S, ou un M.*»[10]

Cela veut dire: un esprit qui littérairement existe dans le refus de la distance qui traduit tout acte de signifier.

La recherche d'Absolu a un prix: **existir comme une lettre**. Car «pour se détendre, l'esprit a besoin d'une borne et que vienne sur son chemin la bienheureuse opacité de l'expérience. **Le seul remède à la folie c'est l'innocence des faits** — dit à juste titre J. Riviére[11]. Sinon,

> l'«*Universel possible se change en impossibilités concrétes.*»

Espace de tous les Espaces, Espace de toutes les Choses, Temps de tous les Temps dans la ponctualité du Temps, l'Etre de Artaud est un **Etre d'impossibilités concrètes**, où l'Ame à l'interieur de l'Esprit refuse de *se lier* à n'importe quelle chose, puisqu'**une chose au fond, ça n'existe pas, mais seulement la chose comme Universel possible.**

Ce vide par trop-plein, parfois, Artaud veut le dépasser:

> «*Il me suffit que l'on croie que j'ai en moi la possibilité de cristallisation des chose* en des formes et avec des mots qu'il faudrait.»

Il y a en fait en lui cet **appel** répété, abandonné, repris à nouveau: *croyez-moi, regardez-moi, ne me dites pas que c'est beau ou bien fait, laid au insuffisant! Dites-moi seulement: ça existe et c'est découpé! Confirmez par votre regard mon regard, et par votre oreille mon oreille. Ecoutez avec moi les murmures des choses, les cintillements de l'Etre, sentez avec moi du Monde la melodie du Monde!...*

Il savait bien, comme personne n'a su avant lui que l'abandon de l'Absolu, l'acceptation de la perte de l'Universel possible ne peut se faire qu'à *l'ombre de l'objet*, à l'ombre de l'Autre. C'est cette ombre de l'Autre — *et non pas l'Autre dans sa plenitude d'être* — qui permet que l'impulsion vers les choses donne de l'existence aux choses et aux pensées des choses.

Car, évidemment, la constitution des choses n'est pas une fonction de la sensibilité. La lumière même qui frappe l'oeil ne se met à exister que si elle est vue par l'**oeil mental**

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[9] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs.*
[10] A. Artaud: *Lettres à Jacques Rivière.*
[11] J. Rivère: *Lettres à A. Artaud.*

dont Artaud a tant parlé. Ce n'est pas la rétine qui donne à la lumière le statut d'existant; *c'est l'oeil mental — ombre de l'autre — qui voit la réponse de la rétine.*

La réalisation du réel est la conséquence du témoignage par l'Autre de l'action du Réel sur le corps du sujet.

Et que se passe-t-il si ce témoignage n'existe pas, que se passe-t-il si l'oeil de l'ombre se clôt?

C'est le monde des choses qui se précipite à l'intérieur de l'Âme du sujet, mine l'Esprit, *fait un avec lui*, et ainsi s'abolit le Temps et l'Espace dans un trop-plein d'où il n'est plus possible de parler, d'exister, de faire exister.

Artaud savait ce que personne n'a su avant lui: que *l'Autre a pour function de maintenir la distance entre le sujet qui se constitue et les objets de pensée qui, au contact de la réalité, par lui sont créés.*

Il le savait, lui, qui disait si clairement:

> «*Cette inapplication à l'objet... est chez moi une inapplication à la vie... Je ne suis pas au Monde et ce n'est pas une simple attitude d'esprit*»[12]...

... «*Je ne suis pas au Monde*»...

Bien sûr que non. *C'est le Monde qui est en lui.*

Ce qui a une double conséquence:

1º Constitution d'un espace/temps mental surchagé, avec un *trop de tout*. Constitution sans arrêt de choses mentales caractérisées essentiellement non pas par leurs qualités mais par leur *extrême densité*. Rien ne peut passer près de ces objets qui ne soit pas par eux immédiatement attiré pour avec eux *fusionner* — produisant donc en permanence un magma d'objets mentaux où le possible concret devient impossible. *Une Pensée sans objets de pensée*. Des *trous noirs*. Il faudra les couper, les casser, ces objets...

2º Constitution d'un Espace/Temps où *tout est dans tout*, où *toute perspective peut coexistir avec son inverse*. **Le haut est en haut et en bas, le dedans est le dedans et le dehors du dedans, l'avant est l'avant et après de l'avant, la partie est partie et le tout de cette partie:** «*J'imagine l'âme alors bien centrée et toutefois à l'infini divisible.*»[13]

> ... «*Paolo Uccello est en train de se débattre au milieu d'un vaste tissu mental où il a perdu toutes les routes de son âme et jusqu'à la forme et à la suspension de sa réalité.*
>
> *Quitte ta langue Paolo Uccello, quitte ta langue, ma langue, merde, qui est-ce qui parle? Où es-tu? Outre, outre, Esprit, feu, langue de feu, feu, feu, mange ta langue, vieux chien... Il y aussi un Antonin Artaud en gésine de l'autre côte de tous les verres mentaux et qui fait tous ses efforts pour se penser autre part que là... Et d'ailleurs, c'est en lui (Antonin Artaud) que Uccello se pense, mais quand il se pense il n'est veritablement plus en lui.*»[14]

Soit: Artaud pense à Uccello donc c'est Uccello qui se pense: si Uccello est dans la pensée d'Artaud c'est que Artaud-qui-pense-à-Uccello est dans la pensée d'Uccello-qui-pense-à-Artaud-qui-pense-à-Uccello. Voici donc ce que signifie: «Uccello n'est plus en lui.»

Ce qui est pensé passe à l'interieur de la pensée, ce qui est regardé passe à l'interieur du regard:

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[12] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes.*
[13] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes.*
[14] A. Artaud: *Paul les Oiseaux ou la Place de l'Amour.*

«le soleil a comme un regard. Mais un regard qui regarderait le soleil. Le regard est comme un cône qui se renverse sur le soleil. Et tout l'air est comme une musique figée, mais une vaste, profonde musique, bien macérée et secrète, et pleine de ramifications congelées.»[15]

Le soleil — image de l'espace unaire — a un regard qui se regarde à l'intérieur d'un temps immobile, ponctuel:

... une musique figée...

Ce *trop de tout* est un excés que l'Ame ne peut supporter. Les objets regardés qui passent à l'intérieur du regard, les choses pensées qui passent à l'interieur de la pensée, les mots qui trahissent la pensée et les mots-choses qui sont aussi de la pensée — forment une masse qui produit l'*indigestion de l'Ame, la congestion de l'Esprit*. «On a tout mangé» c'est: «on a trop mangé». Il faut s'en débarrasser.

Faire de la place, car *tout penser est incompatible avec penser*. Il faut faire du vide.

«Je ne veux que vider un problème palpitant.»

Mais pour faire du vide, il faut détruire, fragmenter ces objets-pensée, séparer. Ce qui paraitrait être seulement l'expression d'une fonction «attaque contre les liens»[16] est en fait en premier lieu une *fonction digestive*.

«... Un effondrement central de l'âme, une espéce d'erosion, essentielle à la fois et fugace, de la pensée, (une) non possession passagère des bénéfices matériels de mon développement, (une) séparation anormale des éléments de la pensée... Il y a donc quelque chose qui détruit ma pensée, un quelque chose qui ne m'empèche pas d'être ce que je pourrais être, mais qui me laisse... en suspens. Un quelque chose de furtif qui m'enléve les mots que j'ai trouvés, qui diminue ma tension mentale, qui détruit au fur et à mesure dans sa substance la masse de ma pensée...»[17]

Ou:

«... une volonté supérieure et méchante attaque l'âme comme un vitriol, attaque la masse mot-et-image, attaque la masse du sentiment et me laisse là, pantelant, comme à la porte même de la vie.»[18]

Il y a là *un mouvement de rupture* et un mouvement de *double incorporation*.

C'est le mot et la chose qui se séparent, c'est le lien mot à mot qui est abolit et les mots deviennent des êtres, des *contenants purs* et mutuellement équivalents — tout mot s'equivaut, et même des sons, des sonorités, des éclats.

Le mot est séparé de la chose qu'il représente parce qu'il s'y trouve en fait trop de choses et surtout parce qu'il s'y trouve l'*innacceptable représentation-«mensonge»*.

«Rupture appliquée à se multiplier elle-même entre les choses et le sentiment qu'elles produisent dans notre esprit»,
«décorporisation de la réalité.»[19]

Contre le mot en tant que tel, aussi, il y a des attentats, car «l'esprit est reptilien... il se dérobe jusqu'à l'attentat à nos langues».

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[15] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes*.
[16] Bion: *Second thoughts*, 1967.
[17] A. Artaud: *Lettres à Jacques Rivière*.
[18] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes*.
[19] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes*.

Et en même temps — paradoxe apparent — il y a recherche non pas *des mots, mais du Mot, du* **seul mot où tout l'Etre repose**:

> «*Il ne me faudrait qu'un seul mot... un simple petit mot sans importance, pour être grand, pour parler sur le ton des prophètes, un mot témoin, un mot précis, un mot subtil, un mot bien macéré dans mes moelles, sorti de moi qui se tiendrait à l'extrême bout de mon ETRE.*»[20]

Mais voici que ce mot «à l'extrême bout de mon ETRE» est aussi un trop de mot, un trop de chose, un trop d'être, et la seule intuition qu'il est possible d'en avoir est *celle de la lettre et non du mot*, de la partie non signifiante et non du tout:

> «*... un esprit... qui existe... comme un T, ou un E, un S, un M...*»

D'un autre côte, *s'il est partie il est tout*, et le «petit mot» est aussi la totalité des mots dits à tout jamais depuis les origines, le «petit mot» accapare l'Etre et est accaparé par le Monde. Le Mot est en même temps le pont entre l'Esprit et la Chose, et il est l'Esprit *et* la Chose.

Ce que ce «petit mot» designe alors c'est l'*impossible expérience de l'Etre*. Impossible car l'Etre s'encapsule dans le mot qui s'encapsule dans le chose, et la chose s'encapsule dans le mot qui s'encapsule dans l'Etre; *double incorporation* qui signale un impossibilité de l'Etre, du Connaitre et de l'Eprouver, pour utiliser ces belles expressions de Masud Khan[21], et par conséquent une aporie fondamentale de l'Expérience et de la Pensée.

Le «Petit Mot» c'est de l'Etre en fusion. Du trop d'Etre qu'il faut rejeter pour faire du Vide pour la Pensée. C'est bien de quoi il s'agit quand il s'agit de

> «*rompre autour de moi l'atmosphére... pour donner la place d'un espace impossible à ce qu'en moi n'était encore qu'en puissance, à toute une germination virtuelle et qui devait naître, aspiré par la place qui s'offrait.*»[22]

Mais voici à nouveau que l'aspiration de l'Esprit par la place où il pourrait advenir en pensée se confond avec la perte, l'aliénation, l'insuffisance d'Etre.

Le Vide est occupé par une «possibilité concrète», négation de l'Universel possible. Et là surgit l'Angoisse:

> «*une angoisse acide et trouble... une angoisse en éclairs, une ponctuation de gouffres serrés et préssés comme des punaises... une angoisse où l'esprit s'étrangle et se coupe lui-même — se tue.*»[23]

Aucune solution, aucune issue, seul ce balancement entre l'Esprit et le Monde, où l'Esprit est abandonné puisque non pensable sinon par l'intermédiaire des concrets de pensée, et les concrets de pensée tenus en horreur puisqu'aliénation de l'Esprit.

Aucune issue, sauf la fermeture au Monde et à l'Esprit, ou l'affirmation d'un Esprit qui absorbe le Monde et se fond en lui:

> «*Je souffre de l'Esprit intimidation des choses pour les faire rentrer dans l'Esprit.*»[24]

Mais le centre fondamental de la position mentale d'Artaud reste l'APPEL. Appel à l'Autre, mouvement vers un autre qui, dans le silence, *accueille*, ait, lui, un vide paisible, un Néant où l'Etre puisse germiner. Appel à un autre qui n'a jamais existé pour lui. Souffrance

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[20] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs*.
[21] Masud Khan: *The Privacy of the Self*, 1974.
[22] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs*.
[23] A. Artaud: *L'Ombilic des Limbes*.
[24] A. Artaud: *idem*.

de l'autre. Manque de l'autre, dans l'absence duquel tout est fusion, magma, mal d'être.

Un Autre qui n'explique pas, qui ne dise rien, qui n'espère rien...

...«**Alors... on comprendra...**»
«*Tout ceci sera trouvé bien et je n'aurai plus besoin de parler.*»[25]

[25] A. Artaud: *Le Pèse Nerfs.*

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Children and Humor

ZSUZSA VARGA (*)

I had a talk with four years old Eszter about her imminent birthday. «Actually I do not know who will have birthday tomorrow» — I said. «I have no idea». «Me» — she answered, with a burst of laugh. Next time we were walking home from the playground. Still in the street we saw her mother waving to us in the window. «Somebody is waving, who could she be» — I said. «I do not know that woman, do you?» Eszter, angrily: «Don't speak so!» — and started nudging me, in a fury. What gave rise to her serenity in the first case and to her anger in the second? N., equally four years old, is getting ready for a fancy-dress ball. He chose to dress up as a lion. For a long time he was happy with the idea and made preparations about it. The morning before the ball, as a dress rehearsal, he put on the lion dress. Unexpectedly, he burst into tears, desperately: Mummy, I don't want to be a lion!». Such things are frequent in everyday life. Not infrequently, remarks of adult persons intended to be humorous, elicit from children fright instead of cheer. The same remark may terrify a child on one occasion and make him laugh on another. Based on such experiences, in the first part of my talk I will analyse the characteristics of children's sense of homour, the traits which distinguish it from that of the adults. In the light of these findings, in the second part of my talk I am going to deal with the psychoanalytical analysis of a prominent personality of humorous child literature, Lewis Carroll.

I

Many authors dwelled upon the development of laughter and the sense of humour. May I mention only Charles Darwin, Martha Wolfenstein, Lisbeth Sachs, Ernst Kris, Edith Jacobson, Martin Grotjan. A common trait in their conception is that they relate laughter to overcoming anxiety. The comicality and humour as children sense it — they say — have a connection with the past conflicts of the ego, with the succesful repeticion of formerly endured traumas, with the triumph of the ego. Martha Wolfenstein describes in a paper of hers to have collected jokes among six to twelve years old children which she then told to other children. She found that children of this age group did not understand either the puns, or the conceptual elements of the jokes, and still they laughed. Why? One of the favourite jokes of children is the following: «Why did the moron jump off the Empire State Building? — Because he wanted to show he had guts.» Many children distorted the

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joke, for instance a boy told it in this way: «Why did the moron commit suicide? — Because he didn't want to live.» Evidently this boy did not understand the pun. But he realized that the joke is about falling down, a situation of danger. Telling the joke helped him to face his own anxiety about falling. Wolfenstein, quoting Kris, interprets a well known phenomenon in this way: the child who is able to overcome his anxiety when falling will find it extremely amusing being thrown in the air. The psychic mechanism behind this phenomenon is called counter-phobia.

Another example of Wolfenstein is about a five years old girl telling this story: «Once upon a time there was a little girl named Nothing. And she went to a sharpening knife store and she cut herself. And her mother came running and took her home and put her into bed, and she began to cry again. And then she hit herself and she run out of bed and she lay down on the floor and she rolled in the gutter and then she got run over and more. She didn't get dead.» Wolfenstein's interpretation: the girl got the mastery of her anxiety about being hurt through denial «(she didn't get dead»); characteristic is also the step of reversing from passive to active in the way that by telling the funny story the girl herself becomes the originator of the anxiety. Her conclusion: children's joking serves their reducing anxiety in the first place, and the psychic mechanisms acting in jokes are: *denial, reversal from passive to active, and counter-phobia.* Wolfenstein heard from children many jokes with concealed content involving children's birth. There is a well known joke about an Indian girl, who went to Vassar and came home pregnant. As she got off the train she greeted her father: «How». «I do not mind how» — he said angrily, but tell me, who. A seven years old girl told this joke as follows: «The Indian girl's father greets her: «How». The girl answers: «I know how, buuuuu!». The girl telling the joke evidently understood that the joke is about something forbidden (a sexual secret). In this case, too, there is some sort of a reversal: that of the roles of child and parent. The child in a way takes the role of the grown-up, knowing what she shouldn't know.

Clearly, another source of joy in children's laughters has its origin partly in *deriding* or *dominating* others.

There are facts about the history of culture which sustain this conception.

The following quotation is from Quintiliar, a famous orator of the Romans: «Derision is not far away from laughter».

The comicality goes back to the antic satirical plays. But in the satirical plays there is always an inauspicious motif, too. The developmental sequence of the Greek dramas is an indication to this fact: tragedies were born first, followed by comedies, later on.

Kris mentions that the gargoyle-type water-shoots of the Gothic cathedrals, the Chimeras-playing the role of exorcizers — were unequivocally frightening figures during the 13th Century. From the 14th Century onwards they became increasingly amusing figures. The semantic change of some words during language development shows a similar tendency. For example, the words «komisch» in German and «drôle» in French had an earliner shade of meaning «Unheimlich» (uncanny) before they came to mean «comical».

The content of children's jokes plays age-specific traits. It has a double function: a progressive and a regressive. Its progressive character can be expressed like this: If the ego of the child is strong enough to dominate the conflicts, the situation of danger, then the ego transforms the situacion through denial, reversal into the opposite. Through such defences he or she will be the strong, the active one.

Let me evoke here an example of my own clinical praxis, years ago.

Attila is seven years old. He came to me into therapy because of his stuttering. This started after an avalanche — like succession of tragedies in his family. One of his grandparents died, the father deserted the family, the mother fell seriously ill amidst these evils, and recovered only months later. Of the anamnesis I learned that Attila started to speak early. Even as a suckling he found it particularly pleasurable to imitate the voices of the adults.

When he was three the mother observed some mild stuttering whenever Attila was about to express strong emotions. This disappeared soon. As a nursery school child he had a passion in telling tales. He excelled by his sense of rythm, his mother said. During the therapy his inclination to joking became manifest soon. He was particularly fond of puns. During the sessions he was usually eating biscuits after which he asked for water. He called the biscuits «water biscuits» indicating that he needed water after eating them. Once we were playing a parlour game, horse-race. In this game the player who enters a square with the colour indicating a hindrance has to step back a few squares. When Attila got to the hindrance, the die rolled away. «The die too stepped back» — he said with a laugh. It was clear to me that the oral fixation, manifest also in his fondness of juggling with words in various ways, became the main source of symptom formation, too. By splitting the words he symbolized the splitting of the family in a way. (His family name too had to do something with splitting). The intensification of the orality became also visible when he unexpectedly returned to suckling his finger about at the same time when his stuttering began. Both symptoms expressed his regression to an earliner infantile stage, since stuttering means speaking unintelligibly, as little children do. In this way by his stuttering he communicated a wish-phatasy: let everything be as was in his infancy when the family lived peacefully together.

At the end of a session we came to discuss how long he could stay with me. «Sure, the next child is waiting already» — Attila said. «Nobody is waiting» — I answered. «Then the Nobody is the one who is waiting» — he said — «and you are so heartless to make Nobady wait. Just think of it: I have to visit a psychologist who is so heartless!». (The grandfather died of a heart-attack). Once he said of a broken toy: «I fix it with my words». According to his mother his favourite pastime was to go to logopaedic sessions. He pronounced the words to be practised with a maximal self-confidence and delight, directing himself like a conductor. At a session I came to understand that for him joking was a more successful and safer defense than phantasy plays. When — after a long time — he first gave a hint in his world game to death (by getting out cemetary, graves) I asked him, who died «Me» — he said and burst out in a laugh. Then he corrected himself: «No, not me, grandfather». When later we started to speak of what he might have felt when his father deserted and his mother fell ill, he again took a flight into joking. «Just imagine! I should have remained alone and starved to death» — he said with a sardonic grim. A few hours later he asked me to give him something to eat, with these words: «May I have my monthly provision?». His expression, intended to be a joke, was a clear hint to the alimentation paid by his father. But he sharply refused the phantasy play related to death. When I suggested him puppet show or role play of this kind he visibly started to worry, becoming closed into himself. I understood: this boy endows the words with some sort of magic power. He finds it easier to pronounce what he is terrified of than to transform it into a tale, a phantasy, or acting it out in his play. Yet pronouncing and naming things should be palliated. The best way of doing so is the denial of what is true, thereby making it untrue, holding things off through joking.

Theoretical considerations

Freud underlined as one of the fundamental aspects of the joke its double character, its Janus face. The technique conceals the hidden content (the agressive, sexual or other aspirations), i.e. the tendency of the joke, but also brings it to the surface: hence the bursting impulse, the laughter. In this way the joke veils and unveils in the same time, giving thereby green light to the expression of ambivalent feelings. It says truth and falsehood simultaneously. A Hungarian poet, Dezsõ Kosztolányi, stresses in an essay the relativity of humour: «Great and small are felt by it together. It does not bite as irony does, just compares, collates,

and that is how it displays the eternal relativity of things. Great is sometimes seen small and small is seen great by it.»

Puns aim precisely the *relativity of words*. However, for somebody to face the relativity, the lability, the ever changing colours of things, and to overcome, — whether intellectually or emotionally — he or she has to be sufficiently *stable and flexible*. Yet characteristic to children's thinking and their range of experiences is just the opposite, the lack of stability, of flexibility, and of constancy — a prevailing relativity. Children's thinking is visual and concrete. It cannot detach itself from the pictorial representation of words. This makes their thinking inflexible, and therefore unable to quickly changing the angles, without which puns cannot be understood.

There are explanations, by Freud and by Sándor Ferenczi, too, which go to greater depth. Piaget has taught us that for children the pronounced words are identical to things, and a sudden change of words means for them the change of things. Yet the fear of the transformation, of metamorphosis is one of the most ancient and most profound anxieties of children. Jokes and humour are nothing else as playing with changes, coquetting with possibilities, provoking the distress about metamorphosis.

The same idea appeares in Norman N. Holland's book: «Laughing». In this book he speaks about the individual's «primary identity». In connection with this he refers to the «identity theme» of Lichtenstein. Norman Holland found that joking was nothing that a challange of the inherent identity. If the inherent identity is strong enough it can stand this challange.

N., while getting ready to go to the fancy-dress ball, easily played around with the thought of being transformed into a lion, up to the last minute. Then he suddenly recoiled, frightened by the idea of really becoming a lion.

Eszter who another time does not mind joking even if mummy is involved, was at the time of the story just about to start nursery school. My words, meant to be joking, touched her too deeply, mobilizing separational anxieties in her which made her unfit for such jokes.

This problem is being dealt with in Iván Fónagy's paper: «Uncle is joking». After frightening the child with the «sacking man» it is of not much use to calm him saying that «it was only a joke». The child — Fónagy writes — has not yet learned how it is possible «to lie sincerely, how it is possible to say white and make it mean black.» Because of the lability of his ego-identity, because of the lack of constancy in his thinking and emotions jokes are too often taken seriously by a child.

In what I said so far about children's jokes, may I underline two ideas. First: that a specific feature behind children's jokes and humour is a *fear of change*. Since jokes usually involve change, they can easily awaken this latent anxiety.

Second is a theoretical problem: I tried to grasp the essence the double nature of jokes and humour. Freud does not amply expound this question in his book on jokes. I think that behind the Janus like character of jokes psychic processes and defense mechanisms can be discovered which may be characterised by duality[1].

Denial, counter-phobia, changing from passive to active and reversal are all of a dual character, to use Imre Hermann's terminology. They are dual not only in the sense that in each of them a painful experience of the past is turned into its contrary, but also in another sense: the elaboration through reversal can only lead to *half-success*. This is why a joke cannot give more than a momentaneous, transitional satisfaction. It may not be a chance that Freud speaks of the Janus-face of the joke. Janus is told to be the Roman

[1] Our great psychoanalyst, Imre Hermann described many years ago the so called «dual thinking», which is a manifestation in thinking of the mother-child dual unity. This is in accordance with Henry Wallon's concept, the so called «molecular thinking».

god of every beginning, the protector of doors, gates, passages. May I suggest that the jokes, the humour are born by the reversal of the tragicalness, and that it is always closely related to ambivalence. In final analysis, I consider it to be a tentative solution to the problem of ambivalence. This does not mean that everybody who is able to joke is fighting against ambivalence. But this may be the case with all those who are continuously joking, whose natural element is humour. Humorists are such persons. A case in point is a great Hungarian humorous writer and sentimental in his poetry, Frigyes Karinthy (the hungarian translator of Winnie the Pooh). His mother died when he was six. In a study of mine I pointed to the connection between this tragedy in his life and his perpetual cracking of jokes as also his artistic talent. May I now underpin the above mentioned assumption with a another literary example which is a well known product of humorous juvenile literature: the two Alice books by Lewis Carroll. The analysis of these books is closely connected both with the problem of the infantile dread of metamorphosis and with its relation to the double life of the writer, with his ambivalence conflicts.

II

The works I consulted include the relevant chapter in Grotjan's book, a 1938 psychoanalytic study on Alice by Paul Schilder, and a biography of Lewis Carroll.

Lewis Carroll, alias Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, was a nineteenth century English mathematician and writer. He was the eldest son of a religious family with eleven children, eight of whom were girls. According to Schilder, little is known about his attitudes toward the other children in the family. His father had an affection to mathematics. His mother had the soul of an artist. His parents were relatives, although it is not known whether near or distant. Lewis Carroll and some other members of the family stuttered. From his youth he had a number of whims and compulsions. He would always wear a hat and gloves all the year round. In his biography we can find a note from his age of sixteen: he exults at receiving a new hat and a pair of gloves from his father; he was worried about not to receive gloves to wear in the summer. (The continuously running rabbit in «Alice in Wonderland» is always looking for its gloves). Wearing a hat and gloves is covering the body. It is interesting to note that Lewis Carroll was the inventor of the dust cover for books. Another one of his compulsions was writing letters and diaries. «I *must* write two thousand letters a year» — he wrote. Not less than ninety-eight thousand seven hundred and twenty-one letters of him are known.

He lived in Oxford from age 18 until the last day of his life. Apart from some outings and a trip to Russia he never left the town. «Tied to the spot, in seclusion» — this is what is written about him. He never had a wife or children. He had felt an affection for little girls till he became an old man. It is said that he hardly ever made friends with adults; he was only attracted by children, especially girls. What exactly this means, or how much of these loves he preserved in his imagination, and how much came true, is not known. Still, his letters to little girls show deep sadness. Some of his poems can be found in the Alice books. In fact, they were written to a real person, ten years old Alice. The full history of the Alice tales can be found in Carroll's notes in his diary. When he was thirty, he often went for outings to the rivers nearby whith a friend and the three daughters of a dean. Out of the three girls he liked Alice the best. The Alice stories came about based on the tales told during these boat trips. «Alice in Wonderland» was published some years later, in 1863; Through the Looking Glass in 1871. Carroll was described as a strict, reserved and compulsively accurate man. Being a man of letters was secondary for him. He drew cartoons, e.g. he illustrated the original copies of the two Alice books himself. Another of his pastimes was photography (Doubling!). He actually lived in a double world: one

world was that of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, the reserved, accurate Oxford mathematician, logician and clergyman. The other was of Lewis Carroll, the writer with his wayward imagination. He allegedly published his mathematikal papers under his original name; his pseudonym only served the purpose of his work in literature. As a matter of fact, he did use his pseudonym on his books popularizing mathematics and logic. His works include, apart from the Alice books and those on mathematics and logic, «The Jabberwocky Ballada», «The Hounting of the Snark», (an animal, invented by Carroll), some more literary works, and a collection of riddles and puns as well as caricatures. One of his hobbies was making riddles. One is a tangled labirynth which he drew for a little girl. The letter of his name can be reached through the letters of her sister's names. One of his proposals was to publish two pages of «The Jabberwocky Ballada» — and later the whole of it — in mirror writing. He himself was a master of mirror writing. (One of his mirror poems can be found in Through the Looking Glass). Schilder mentions a religious work by him, «On Eternal Punishment».

The heroine of the two Alice books is a little girl who in Wonderland falls into a deep well (dream) and who in Looking-Glass-Land Finds herself on the other side of a mirror, in a looking glass house. In this house everything is reversed, There is a mess there, lifeless figures come to life etc.

«This curious child» — as can be read in Chapter One of «Alice in Wonderland» — «was very fond of pretending to be two people». «She remembered trying to box her own ears for having cheated herself in a game of croquet she was playing against herself.» In the reversed world Alice goes through a number of fantastic adventures. Meanwhile she is anxious about her *identity* all the time. She has good reasons to be anxious because she changes from time to time. In each chapter of Wonderland something is happening to her body or someone else's body. Whatever she eats or drinks her body becomes either too long or too short. No wonder, when the caterpillar asks her who she is, she is so embarrased she cannot answer. («Who are you?» — said the caterpillar. Alice replied rather shyly. «I — I hardly know, Sir, just at present — at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have changed several times since then.»)

In the Looking Glass book the Looking Glass Insects urge her *to lose her name*. Later she finds herself in a forest in which things have no names. She is worried that she might lose her name and that someone else will have it. The identity and safety of others is also in constant threat. The Rabbit in Wonderland is always on the run, because the Queen always wants to behead him for a little lateness or some other minor negligence. The Court convenes to sentence those guilty of stealing the tarts. In the Looking Glass an egg — Humpty-Dumpty — grows and comes to life. As Humpty-Dumpty is sitting on top of a wall his legs crossed like a Turk, Alice wonders how he can keep his balance. She recites a poem, the well known nursery rhyme: «Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall... etc...»

In virtually every chapter something is happening to the *identity* of somebody, and to space and time as well. Wonderland is haunted by time, old age, the thought of death. This is what the beautiful sad poems are about in both volumes. E. g. «Through the Looking Glass» begins like this:

«Child of the pure unclouded brow
And dreaming eyes of wonder!
Though time be fleet, and I and thou
Are half a life asunder,
The loving smile will surely hail
The love-gift of a fairy-tale.»

In Wonderland, Alice recites the poem: «You are old, Father William», on the Caterpillar's request. The animals talk about who is what age. Alice gets into the house of the Duchess, who is nursing a baby and who always talks about time. Time doesn't pass at the tea-

party, the clock is late, it only shows troubles, not hours and minutes. The Dutchess is being sentenced to death for being a little late, and the Nock Turtle mourns for the past.

In a chapter of Looking-Glass time passes backward. The Queen wails over a bleeding finger she is going to sting soon. The Garden of Live Flowers, The Queen and Alice run very fast — and yet remain at the same place.

Besides these problems (identity, time-space, doubling, reversing) the Alice books abound in *agressive phantasies*. Everybody is in danger: either someone breaks himself, or someone has his head chopped off, or they enter into fight over something. In the Looking-Glass, for instance, Tweedledum and Tweedlede have a battle over a broken rattle. The persons in Wonderland came from playing cards, those in the Looking Glass from chess. The books are full of oral agressiveness. Alice's body changes when she eats. In virtually every chapter somebody faces starvation, or someone has to be afraid of the consequence of eating, or of being devoured. E.g. Alice dares not drink out of a bottle, fearing that it contains poison. She tactlessly talks of her eating to mice and birds. The lobster tells a poem of being baked, and finds itself very tasty. They talk about tortoise soup with the Mock Turtle etc.

Offence and punishment also appear in the Alice books. E. g. the jury convenes to pass its verdict over the culpits (in Wonderland). In chapter one of the Looking Glass Alice tells the cat its faults face to face: «Number one: you squeaked twice while Dinah was washing your face this morning. Now, you can't deny it, kitty I heard you?... Number two: you pulled Snowdrop away by the tail just as I had put down the saucer of milk before her!» «... Kitty, you have not been punished for any of them yet. You know I'm saving up all your punishments for Wednesday week — Suppose they had saved up all *my* punishments!... I should be sent to prison, I suppose when day came...»

The books abound in oppository. We meet two opposite worlds, the real one and the dreamy one. In the latter everything is turned topsy-turvy, inverted. Such opposites are: order and disorder, knowledge and ignorance. Alice forgets whatever she learned in school: grammar, history, etc... Instead of a birthday present, Humpty Dumpty was given an un-birthday present. The contrast appears as a reversal in the mirror poem or in the motif of the backwards passing time.

The *relativity attitude* also appears in the Alice stories. A hill is not always a hill, it can be a valley as compare to another hill. The words are relative, lacking a constant meaning. In the Looking Glass Humpty Dumpty and Alice argue about the meaning of the word «glory». («When I use a word» — Humpty Dumpty says, «it means what I choose it to mean — neither more, nor less». «The question is» — says Alice, — «whether you can make words mean so many different things». «The question is» — Humpty Dumpty answers, «which is to be master, that's all»).

Doublings, opposites, reversals, eternal danger of identity, agression, relativity, distortion of time and space etc... — no doubt, these motifs are all related in some way or another to the biographical facts of Carroll's life. The opposites and reversals have to do with his *double life*; the offence and punishment motif with his *fear of being punished*; his fondness of playing with words and inventing puns both with his stuttering and with agression (breaking the words).

My opinion is that all of the above is related to some sort of ego-splitting. Thus the doubleness of the *super-ego*: on the one hand it is overstrict, punishing, on the other it is over indulgent,-infringing, both at the same time. This assumption is in accordance with Carroll's compulsive character.

The many bodily changes and losses of name in the Alice books hint to an *identity disorder*. This is the problem of the ego. In accordance with Schilder I believe that a lack of stability in the identity of the ego (entailing, among other things, relativism) may have to do with the great number of children in the family. Carroll had — according to this

assumption —, a less than firm and secure relationship with his mother. The lability of his identity may have been caused by a fear of loosing the mother.

As far as the double super-ego is concerned, a possible assumption about its source may be a disorder in the sexual identity. Schilder suggests that he may either have created an incest relationship with one of his sisters, or at least may have nursed such phantasies towards them. His fondness of little girls when he was a grown up — must be an acting out of these childhood phantasies.

Towards the end of his book Schilder raises a plausible question: «are children not frightened away by the great amount of aggression in these books?». «Is the net effect on them not dissatisfaction rather than serene enjoyment?».

As far as my circle of acquaintance is concerned, many people dislike these books, which make them worried, fill them with distress. This was the case with me, too. I did not understand much of it, I had an uneasy feeling. Only much later, after I got insight into the sad life of the writer-mathematician, this made me understand and fond of Carroll. Now I cannot only weep on the Alice stories but — which is the contrary of it — I can laugh too.

When I speak so, I do not want to play down the greatness of the writer and the literary value of his work. All I want to stress is this: joking with children should be done with precaution. Jokes have always a double message. «Don't speak so either» — our great poet, Dezsõ Kosztolányi writes in his work, «Esti Kornél's Songs» — «dont't tell the truth, nor what is false».

For children it is more difficult to support changeability than for adults. They are looking for the truth, or for what is false, but in any case for what is stable — for security.

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Colour Expression and Inhibition in Psychoanalysis and Literature

A comparison between clinical findings and Elias Canetti's writings

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INTRODUCTION

«My earliest memory is dipped in red.» «Meine früheste Erinnerung ist in Rot getaucht» . (Canetti, 1977).

This first line in *The Tongue Set Free, Die gerettete Zunge*, the first part of Elias Canetti's autobiography, will be the continuous thread that runs through this lecture on colour expression and colour inhibition as clinical and literary phenomena.

The main thing I want to bring to your attention, is a similarity between a psychoanalytic interpretation of colour use in reactions of subjects on projective psychological tests (cf. Schafer, 1954; Exner, 1986) and a psychoanalytic interpretation of colour use by Elias Canetti in his books.

But before continuing, I would like to draw attention to some critical notes on psychoanalytic interpretations of literature.

In his essay on Churchill, the British psychiatrist Anthony Storr (1969, 1989) warns against speculative interpretations in so-called psychoanalytic biographical studies, with the result of both bad biographies and bad psychoanalysis. Freud's followers (Storr, 1972, 1986) have often been less modest than he used to be in their approach to artists and their works. Indeed, many psychoanalytic writings on art and literature are similar to the treatment the Greek Procrustus arranged for his victims, by cutting or pulling the most individual characteristics of their subjects into such a shape, that they fit the bed of psychoanalytic theory.

In my opinion, the couch of psychoanalysis must be large and safe enough to receive all sorts of patients, with very different individual characteristics. In fact, psychoanalysts are supposed to be trained very thoroughly, in order to prevent them trying to impress their mental prints on the soul of the patient, in a sadistic and narcissistic way. A similar thorough training should be necessary for the application of psychoanalysis into literature.

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I hope that I can avoid such a Procrustian attitude. What I want to present to you, may be no more than some hypotheses about several of Elias Canetti's texts, formulated by a reader skilled in psychoanalysis.

The relaxed atmosphere of the beautiful city of Urbino certainly will stimulate our free associations, phantasies and speculations, in particular since the name of Canetti could have been Italian.

In fact, as you may know, Canetti is a descendent of Spanish Jews, who dispersed over the Middle East and later settled in Bulgaria, where Canetti was born in 1905. Against the will of his paternal grandfather, an autocratic merchant, Canetti and his parents emigrated to Manchester in England, when he was six years old. This emigration was the reason, his father was solemnly cursed by his grandfather. In front of all their relatives who where present and who listened in horror. «Nothing, they said, was more dreadful than a father cursing his son.» It is a biblical scene, and those oriental Jews must certainly have been reminiscent of Saul and Jonathan, another father in conflict with his beloved son.

A year after their arrival in Manchester, his father died. For a few months Canetti slept in his father's bed, and watched over his mother. During nearly ten years the oedipal relation between mother and oldest son will continue. The tension, feelings of guilt and rage it caused are sensibly described in Canetti's autobiography — paradoxically, by adopting the German language, the secret love-language of his parents, the language his mother forced him to learn, to satisfy her own narcissistic wishes, the very language that twice became the language of his enemies, but also the language of his desired cultural treasures. Only by adhering to his language could he survive.

Owing to persistence and sticking to the German language, even when he had to leave Austria and he had settled in London, he could free (cf. the title *The tongue set free*) himself from his mother and father, free himself from the nazi-persecutors too by not surrendering to another language. Through this, as we may call it, sublimated form of warfare, he developed his identity as a writer. A fighter he was already from the very beginning, I think, and proof for this can be found in this first chapters of his autobiography.

His earliest memories are dipped in red, not only due to the threatening friend of his nanny's — as we know from the first story —, or to his father hidden behind the mask of a wolf, or as a result of the stories his mother and the Bulgarian house-maids told him about wolves with red tongues. No, they are as much and maybe even first and foremost coloured by his own temperamentful and aggressive desires, which are represented in the vivid and almost lustful horror stories of his youth.

I shall try to keep in balance both the gratification of some of my own reader desires, and the reality principle of the text. But, as I am not a professional expert on literature, I beg the audience to redress any deviations beyond the possible worlds created by literature.

Nevertheless, the exhibition of colours in some of Canetti's writings probably has a particular psychological meaning. A meaning that, as I said before, can be elucidated by clinical findings about the use of colour by subjects responding to psychological tests, in particular the Rorschach. A short introduction to clinical psychodiagnostics seems appropriate at this point.

THE RORSCHACH TEST AND PERSONAL STYLE

Rorschach, a Swiss psychiatrist, invented a so-called inkblot test. Many of you probably know the test, or some of its pictures. He used this test in order to classify responses of patients with specific symptoms and diagnoses. He found for example, that patients who had been identified as schizophrenics responded quite differently to the same inkblots than other patients. He developed codes and formula's for the registration and interpretation of responses, following the perception theories of Gestalt psychology.

The idea of the Gestalt psychologists was that perception is a process, in which the subject actively searches the environment and perceives whole structures: Gestalts, meaningful configurations; not a bundle of individual stimuli, as their opponents, the behaviourists maintained.

This theory of Gestalt psychology has influenced both psychoanalytic and cognitive psychology. Many psychoanalysts share the opinion that the perceptual style of an individual is shaped by his or her particular psycho-social development in combination with temperament and other innate characteristics. But it is personal perception and defense that create, in a certain sense, reality (cf. Freud, 1895, 1900; Holland, 1978; Horrowitz, 1988). Cognitive psychologists like Neisser (1967, 1976) have presented a similar opinion, but within a different theoretical framework.

The Rorschach Test is a sequence of ten plates with inkblots. Ten inkblots that vary in form, colour and depth structure. Some blots are black and grey, others black and red, and some constitute a multi-coloured picture. They are all accidental shapes, as Rorschach called them himself: «Zufallsformen». That is, ambiguous stimuli, that are supposed to arouse memory-traces and memory-pictures or schemes in the brain, «Errinnerungsbilder» or «Engramme» to use Rorschach's words. In the seventh chapter of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) one can find a similar theory on memory-traces and memory-pictures. A brain specialist like the neuropsychologist Pribram (1976) returns even to the *Project* of Freud (1895) in order to prove that Freud invented a very up-to-date cognitive theory about memory-pictures.

A first set of those codes developed by Rorschach, refers to the area of the inkblot that is perceived by the patient; such as: the whole inkblot, or a minor detail, an opening in the blot, and so on. A second category of scores pertains to the features of the inkblot that are primarily responsible for the image perceived by the patient; such as: the form, the color, the impression of depth or movement, etc.. Finally, a third group of codes concerns the content of the response, such as: animal figure, human figure, mythological figure, and so on.

Similar coding-methods have been developed for other perceptual tests, like the Thematic Apperception Test (Murray, 1943; Bellak, 1986), that are meant to elicit stories from the subject. The theories that have been developed with respect to the interpretation of those tests, may have relevance for the psychological study of literature, in particular in relation to «identity themes» (Holland, 1978) and narrative theories. In fact, my interpretation of the writings of Canetti, is probably as much related to the psychoanalytic interpretation of themes in the Thematic Apperception Test, as it is to the interpretation of Rorschach pictures. It is more for theoretical reasons that I try to focus on the Rorschach test.

Rorschach died when he was 37, in 1922, a year after the publication of his book about the inkblot-method. Not until after his death did the test arouse interest outside Switzerland. In particular during the forties and fifties, when both psychoanalysis and psychological testing increased their influence in the United States, the Rorschach Test became extremely popular. At the end of the fifties it was the most frequently used test by psychologists in clinical settings in the United States (Sundberg, 1961). Twenty years later the Rorschach ranked fourth among the most frequently used clinical tests in the United States (Lubin, e. a., 1981).

One of the negative results of the popularity of the Rorschach Test is, in my opinion, that magic expectations became attributed to it. The ambiguity of the pictures makes them valuable for the assessment of unconscious processes, but it is exactely this ambiguity that may elicit even more ambiguous interpretations by psychologists. In a reaction to this ambiguity, one may be tempted to fall back on a more rigorous, obsessive-compulsive coding, registration and computerization of Rorschach-responses (Exner, 1986). Personally, I think that the combination of coding and psychodynamic interpretation, as proposed by Bohm (1951) and later by Schafer (1954) is still the most productive method of Rorschach interpretation.

As in literature, the reader of Rorschach-responses is confronted with his or her personal unconscious or preconscious reactions, with defense mechanisms that may prevent a good enough interpretation of the unconscious processes in the responding subject. Nevertheless, counting and computerizing may be useful. I started counting, partly for fun, the use of red in the three parts of Canetti's autobiography and in some other books. It is, statistically speaking, the most frequently used colour by this witer. But not as frequent as I thought, because in many cases it is more the impression than the literal use of the word, that paints the images red.

In Rorschach interpretation we sometimes see responses of patients, that indicate the use of colour in the perceptual process, but in which there is not any explicit naming of colour. For example, a subject says that he or she sees some fighting, but cannot say that it is the colour of the blots that gives the impression of fighting. When this happens in reaction to a picture with some red spots, that often by other subjects are seen as blood and as the result of fighting, we may interpret the omission of the naming of red as inhibition, or suppression or even denial of aggression.

Vice versa, one may see responses to black-white pictures, in which there is explicit colour naming, although there is not any chromatic colour on the plate. For example, a patient gives the response «blood in a black bird.» Later the patient explains that the bird is attacked by a man with a knife, although the features of the picture do not show any shape that may possibly represent a man with a knife. In such a case, we think that the patient goes too far in putting his or her phantasies on the reality of the picture itself, and that the theme of a man with a knife must be of special importance in the personal phantasies and life history. Although the ambiguous Rorschach plates allow for many phantasies, there is a limit: when trained and experienced observers can not see a clear connection between the Rorschach picture and the response presented by tha patient. The interpretation, of course, depends in practice on many more factors than I have just mentioned.

CANETTI'S PERCEPTUAL STYLE

Canetti does not seem to avoid colour naming. However, it is proof of his literary craftsmansip, that he is able to arouse a multi-coloured picture without direct colour naming. For example, writing about the different populations that lived in their neighbourhood during his first years, he represents them as follows: «Some people have stuck in my memory only because they belonged to a particular ethnic group and wore a different costume from the others.» Such a formulation immediately gives the reader an impression of colour, I think, without any colour naming. And when, after only a few sentences, he continues with stories about wolves in fairy tales told by Bulgarian peasant girls, this impression of colours is further enhanced.

Canetti himself confirms my hypothesis, when he writes immediately after this passage: «It would be hard to give a full picture of the colourful time of those early years in Ruschuk, the passions and the terrors. Anything I subsequently experienced had already happened in Ruschuk.» A shorter psychoanalytically formulated summary of his autobiography would be impossible.

What we see, in terms of psychoanalytic Rorschach interpretation, is an individual who faces his own temperamental aggressive tendencies, his frightening childhood phantasies and his activated oedipal and preoedipal fears. Not by defence, denial or suppression, but by writing does be cope with those fears. That is: by secondary process and cultural adaptation he tries to give those fears a place in his life, without emotional shyness. Reading his autobiography, one is impressed by Canetti's capacity to integrate; a capacity that exceed the talent of a very good writer.

Why do I focus in this lecture on colour naming, and in particular on the use of the colour red? One of the reasons certainly is the sensation caused in me by *The Voices of Marrakesh, Die Stimmen von Marrakesch*, one of the most impressive travel books I have ever read. It was the second book of Canetti I read, after *Die Blendung, The Blinding*, in English translated under the title of Auto-da-Fe and so missing the perceptual connotations that are, in my opinion, of central importance in that story. Central, because the obsession with letters, writings, books, as Canetti himself describes in his autobiography, almost blinded him from other realities.

Back to *The Voices of Marrakesh*. Marrakesh, the Red City as it is called. In the first story, Encounters with Camels, Canetti paints a threatening picture of camels that are doomed for the slaughterhouse. But first there is only one solitary camel, wearing a red muzzle, balanced on three legs, its fourth having been bound up, surrounded by a knot of people. The air around the camel is charged with fear. The animal has rabies, it is dangerous, they say. While Canetti expected to see a market full of hundreds of gentle beasts, he is confronted with only one animal, living its last hour. An individual animal with whom Canetti seems to identify. The individual versus the mass — a theme that returns in all his works, but to which he dedicated in particular his most sociological book: *Masse und Macht, Crowds and Power.*

Some days later in Marrakesh, while the red glow of the evening sun was begining to fade, he saw a caravan of camels. And again the traveller is disappointed, because those exhausted animals, too, are destined to death. And the Jew Canetti writes: «We thought of the long journey the animals had behind them; of their beauty in the dusk; of their ignorance of what lay in store for them; of their peaceful meal; and perhaps, too, of the people they had reminded us of.» And he describes the voice of the old man who tells them: «'Yes, for slaughter'... His voice had a jugged quality, like the edge of a blunted knife.» Again the threatening man with his knife, like in the first fragment of his autobiography.

And then, again some time later, another solitary camel «that appeared to be putting up some kind of resistance; it was grunting and growling and flinging its head about in all directions.» One can imagine a five-year-old child, angry and hot-tempered, raising an axe and «with a murdurous chant on his lips», as Canetti describes himself when be tried to take revenge on his cousin Laurica. The boy, trying to escape from his grandfather, who kept to calm him down. The anxious relatives and servants surrounding the two opponents. The camel, «nose and rope red with blood», in front of «a powerful, stocky man with a dark cruel face... the butcher.» A man tells them how the camel can smell the butcher, because «the butcher has come from the slaughterhouse and smells of camel blood.» He boasts about the special taste of camel meat and explains how camels are bled to death. Immediately followed by the showing of his own wounds, which were a result of his having fought in the battle of Monte Cassino during World War II. Monte Cassino, where the main-abbey of the order of the peaceful Benedictine monks was laid in ruins during this battle.

In *The Tongue Set Free* Canetti reports about an excursion with his school to a slaughterhouse. He greatly feared the day visit, which came closer and closer. And when they were in the slaughterhouse, their teacher stopped them, when they came to an ewe, who had just been slaughtered and lay open before them. In its womb a lamb was floating. And the boy Canetti stared at his teacher and said: «murder». Only much later, Canetti Writes, he understood that his teacher wanted to help him.

When I started to read the first part of Canetti's autobiography, *Die Gerettete Zunge, The Tongue set Free*, and I saw this first line «My earliest memory is dipped in red», immediately the picture of the story of the camels in *The Voices of Marrakesh* was there. Again the red colour, again the man with a knife, again the threatening atmosphere of an unknown danger. The biblical picture of the Jewish merchants, mixed with Greeks, Albanians, Armenians, Gypsies, and other ethnic groups in Bulgaria, is repeated in *The*

Voices of Marrakesh. The colours, but also the smell of spices and the mysterious sounds of unknown languages in Marrakesh, refer to the first years of his youth.

THE TRANSLATION OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

When patients present, what we call direct colour responses, they are supposed to have problems with the integration of and control over their aggressive or sexual impulses. Often those responses refer to a regressive process, in which the regression goes back to the earliest levels of psychological development, when the child cannot speak. The patient, in this case, is not able to present his or her early traumatic experience in a coherent language. In psychoanalytic treatment, sometimes we can see the same phenomenon, when an analysand cannot speak any longer or is getting very aggressive without finding the right words.

I think that Canetti's writing is partly an attempt to fight down his earliest fears and aggression. An effort to translate traumatic experiences into his German language. German, the language of his parents, which he was not allowed to understand when his father was still alive. To them, the children, his parents and other relatives spoke Ladino, the ancient Spanish of the sephardim. All events during his first years were discussed in Ladino or Bulgarian. But most of those events he can only remember in German, not in the words of his youth. With one specific exception: «only especially dramatic events, murder and manslaughter so to speak, and the worst terrors have been retained by me in their Ladino wording, and very precisely and indestructibly at that.»

The translation of the events he remembers now in German are, writes Canetti, «not like the literary translation of a book from one language to another, it is a translation that happened of its own accord in my unconscious.» And I think Canetti is right. However, even the Ladino words cannot represent those aggressive and destructive experiences of a child, that are beyond words. Neither are the German words, in all their pre-war strenght of the classical education Canetti received, able to represent the sado-masochistic destruction that forced him and many others to leave Vienna. Canetti does not demonstrate, he does not point his finger. He relates the experiences of a boy to the events in the world, without shutting his eyes.

I have already referred to Canetti's first book, *Die Blendung*, and I critized the English translation *Auto-da-Fe*. In the second part of his autobiography, *The Torch In My Ear, Die Fackel im Ohr*, one chapter is called Simsons Blendung, Samson's Blinding. In this chapter, I think, many threads that run through Canetti's writings, come toghether.

Canetti explains how his mother reproached him that he was blinded, because he looked only for things he knew from books. Even more so, because he confined himself to books of a high morality. His basic problem was, according to his mother, that he avoided reality. Afterwards Canetti agrees, at least partly, with her — as he showed by writing about the isolated professor Kien in *Die Blendung*. But reality did come closer to him in other ways.

«For one road to reality is by way of pictures», he writes in *Samsons's Blinding*. «I don't believe there's any better road» he continues. «A man feels strong if he finds pictures that his experience needs. There are several such pictures — there can't be all too many, for their significance is that they hold reality gathered; if scattered, reality would have to spray and ooze away... There are several pictures that a man needs for his own life, and if he finds them early, then not too much of him is lost.»

One of those pictures Canetti needs, is Rembrandt's painting *The Blinding of Samson*. I am not sure, if it is still recognized as a Rembrandt, because the Dutch Inquisition has rejected many former Rembrandts as being paintings by his pupils or other painters. However, that is of no importance to the point I wish to make. This painting shows the moment when Samson looses his eyesight. Seeing such a painting about the destruction of seeing

itself; not about blindness, but about the blinding itself, was a terrifying, tormenting experience for Canetti. In particular at the time, when his mother made those above-mentioned reproaches about his blindness. Canetti tells us that he had always been timid about blind people and never looked at them too long, even though they fascinated him. Since they were unable to see, he felt guilty towards them. At this moment one may remember the self-blinding by Oedipus, at the moment he saw the meaning of his relationship with Jocaste, his wife and mother. Canetti describes how he sees Delilah, who hurries off in triumph, holding the scissors in one hand and Samsom's hair in the other.

«I often stood in front of this painting», he writes, «and from it I learned what hatred is. I had felt what hatred is. I had felt hatred when very young, much too young, at five, when I tried to kill Laurica with an axe. But you don't know what you have felt: you have to see it in front of you, in others, in order to recognize it and know it. Something you recognize and know becomes real only if you have experienced it previously. It lies dormant in you, and you cannot name it; then all at once, it is there, as a painting; and something happening to others creates itself in you as a memory; now it is real.»

In those lines Canetti demonstrates the phenomena of projection and of projective identification, that are so important in Rorschach testing. His sensitivity towards pictures, paintings and colours must be very great, otherwise he could not have written such a beautiful chapter about such horrible things.

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Mental and Vocal Performance in Poetry Reading

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One fundamental assumption of Cognitive Poetics is, that one may account for the perceived quality of a text in terms of the text's structure and the reader's mental processes. A second assumption is, that such an explanatory model should account — and in a systematic way — not only for some perceived effect, but also for alternative or even conflicting effects, when such are reported by various readers. It should be noted that the effects of poetic texts are not perceived in a way in which the effects of, say, electric wires are perceived. The latter are perceived on mere exposure to them, whereas the former presuppose a certain kind of cooperation on the perceiver's part. Different perceived effects of the same piece of literature presuppose different kinds of cooperation. Perceptual qualities of texts arise only when they are performed in certain ways, that is, when the reader discriminates certain elements and realizes certain relationships between them. When readers discriminate other elements, or realize different relationships even between the same elements, one may reasonably expect that different perceived qualities will arise.

The word performance is used in three different but related senses in the domain we are discussing. The first sense is as it appears in the Chomskian dichotomy *Competence—Performance*, the second one is what I shall call here *mental performance*, the third — *vocal performance*, as the phrase relates to the «performing arts». As Wellek and Warren (1956: 138-139) suggest in phenomenological terms, «the real poem must be conceived as a structure of norms, realized only partially in the actual experience of its many readers. Every single experience (reading, reciting, and so forth) is only an attempt — more or less successful and complete — to grasp this set of norms or standards». «The structure of a work of art has the character of a 'duty which I have to realize'. I shall always realize it imperfectly, but in spite of some incompleteness, a certain 'structure of determination' remains, just as in any other object of knowledge» (ibid., 141). Thus, the «structure of norms» is richer than its «realization», in the sense that only some of the alternative potential relationships are actualized, while the others are eliminated. On the other hand, in another sense, the actualization is richer, in the sense that a work of art is «incomplete from the ontological point of view», and must be «filled in» with specific details.

When I speak of «Mental Performance», I refer to those alternative mental operations

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responsible for the alternative actual orgaizations of a text, in which the alternative meanings and perceived effects arise. How does this «Mental Performance» relate to the Chomskian dichotomy Competence—Performance? I suggest, that the term *Performance* is used in both cases in essentially the same sense: «Mental Performance» suggests «the peculiar deployment of the reader's underlying structural knowledge in particular instances of reading». «The reader's underlying structural knowledge» consists in the Rules of his Linguistic and Poetic Competence; whereas their unique application in each instance belongs to the domain of performance, and need not be consistent from one person to another, or even from one reading to another of the same person of the same text. While the 'duty which I have to realize' may remain the same, I may choose to realize it in different ways: from time to time I may prefer different incompletenesses. Such preferences may be affected by the reader's dissatisfaction with the kind of incompleteness of a preceding actualization, or by his personality style, momentary or more or less permanent moods and attitudes, perhaps even beliefs, both accidental and systematic. Perhaps some of these factors of «situational interference» may be defined in terms of their own competences; but are extraneous and incidental from the point of view of Linguistic and Poetic Competence.

As I use the term, «vocal performance» is the vocal realization of a poem's mental performance. In this sense, mental and vocal performance are related to one another like the poem as a «system of norms» is to its mental performance. Here, again, vocal performance is a more concrete actualization and, by the same token, less perfect approximation of the mental performance. Some potential relationships are again eliminated, and, again, some elements of the vocal medium, irrelevant to the mental performance to be actualized become part of the final output. We are speaking of a chain of successive, increasingly concrete actualizations, each later actualization operating within the constraints of the preceding one. The present paper is devoted to an exploration of some of the mental operations involved, by presenting four miniature case studies. It may be found that it is somewhat difficult to follow these case studies, because every one of them demands, on a lower level, to present in a nutshell a different theoretical framework.

It is hoped that the overall term «Mental Performance» can eventually be broken down to well defined specific operations and their integration into one unified perception or experience. These operations may include the discrimination of parts, their weighting relative to each other, the realization of the relationship between them, so as to create an organized whole. To achieve this, differences between elements and structures may be «leveled» or «sharpened»; a series of items that constitute cognitive overload may be dealt with by the abstraction of common qualities generating some *category* or, alternatively, by «dumping» into some undifferentiated background texture; and so forth. I assume that the reader has considerable freedom in the allocation of this representational and other mental resources, even within the rigourous constraints of the structure of a poem. Notice, however, my phrase «rigourous constraints»: I am far from suggesting that «anything goes».

My first case study concerns interpretation, and does not require to have recourse to specific cognitive mechanisms discussed in relation to my subsequent examples. It can usefully be treated in terms of analytic aesthetics and more or less traditional literary criticism. I shall adapt to my discussion relatively short excerpts from my book on «Kubla Khan» (Tsur, 1987).

When one is engaged in an overview of a considerable number of more or less legitimate interpretations offered to one literary work of art, the question inevitably arises, how can a single poem mean all those things, or even a part of them. Thus for instance, Schneider devotes the first chapter of her book to a consideration of the welter of interpretations to which Coleridge's major poems have been submitted. I shall have to confine myself to a relatively short quotation from it:

> Mr. Warren, Mr. Burke, Mr. Knight, Miss Bodkin, and the others cannot all be right (which does not, certainly, prove any one of them wrong). Their various symbolic interpretations of Coleridge's poems not only are not easily reconciled with one another on the basis of «different levels», but also impute quite different moods or emotional tones to the same poem. If *Christabel* is felt as the *Inferno*, it can scarcely also be felt as the moment of balance between good and evil. If *Kubla Khan* is the *Paradiso* of Dante, it is not easy to feel it also as exhibiting the conflict of heaven and hell or Coleridge's somewhat less than heavenly domestic life. To the confusion of these is added the voice of those other critics who maintain that [...] *Kubla Khan* is wholly without meaning of any kind. Though variety among critics is no doubt all to the good, one cannot help wondering a trifle about the present state of criticism when we find as little common ground as this among writers all very eminent, all brilliant and persuasive in argument, and all engaged in describing the central effect of the same poems (Schneider, 1975: 16).

While I agree with Schneider many times throughout my book, this is one point on which I disagree with her. I do agree copletely with Schneider's objection to the extravagancies of symbolic interpreation; but I also believe that such a variety of interpretations as enumerated by Schneider, and much more, *can* all be right, though some of them clearly *are* wrong. The root of our disagreement is certainly in Schneider's phrase «all engaged in describing the central effect of the same poems», which is clearly an oversimplified position. All these critics are, indeed, «engaged in describing the central effect of the same poems»; *but after an interpretation*. As a matter of fact, these critics are only marginally engaged in describing the central effect of these poems; what they are doing, in the first place, is trying to elaborate interpretations. These interpretations are partial realizations of the poem as a system of norms, each of them utilizing a different subset of them, and imputing different weights to them relative to each other. As Morris Weitz (1972) has convincingly argued with respect to the welter of *Hamlet*-interpretations, this is the most we can expect.

Let us consider, for instance, Schneider's misgivings: «If *Kubla Khan* is the *Paradiso* of Dante, it is not easy to feel it also as exhibiting the conflict of heaven and hell». How can two such incompatible intepretations refer to the same data in the poem? The point is that, as Weitz (1972: 256) would put it, the various critics *are not* dealing with the *same* data in «Kubla Khan», just as in *Hamlet* they are not, «where the data themselves are attributed ones, hypothesized by the critic.»

The data accounted for in the various readings are determined by the relative weight the critic bestows upon them within the work of literature. Consider this issue in «Kubla Khan». That the caverns are there and that they are opposed to the «*sunny* pleasure-dome» is given in the poem; but that they are also opposed to the mountain, or that this opposition reflects the conflict of heaven and hell, is hypothesized by the critic. What is *the* theme of «Kubla Khan» is not a datum but a hypothesis, which the critic defends by further hypotheses: from a specific hypothesis about «Kubla Khan» to a general one about some more general patterns, such as the archetype of Paradise and Hades, or «Coleridge's Divine Comedy», or romantic nature poetry, or the nature and structure of ecstatic poetry. Now, to what degree are the caverns considered «central, primary, most important», depends *inter alia* upon whether «*Kubla Khan* is the *Paradiso* of Dante», or exhibits «the conflict of heaven and hell». Consider Bodkin's characterization of caverns: «an essence of cold, darkness, and stagnant air, from which imagination may fashion a place of punishment, the home of the Evil One» (Bodkin, 1963: 101). Under the «conflict of heaven and hell» reading, the aspects of caverns mentioned by Bodkin receive a considerable weight. Both readings agree upon the centrality of Paradise in the overall pattern of the poem, but in

the former reading the poem is part of a wider pattern, with two more poems, in the pattern of «Coleridge's Divine Comedy». Under this pattern, some of the aspects of caverns suggested by Bodkin are necessarily toned down, and the opposition «a sunny pleasure-dome and caves of ice» suggests an overwhelming sense of wonder in the face of «a miracle of rare device», enhancing the directly felt pleasure in the description of the Paradise. This capability of «switching» from one set of aspects to another of the opposition corresponds to the ability suggested by Wittgenstein (1976: 214[e]) to «understand the request to pronounce the word 'till' and to mean it as a verb» or an adverb. It is this mental ability that underlies our capability of offering a variety of more or less legitimate interpretations of the same text. And this is a central aspect of what I have called «Mental Performance».

My next case study concerns Gestalt-qualities related to rhyme-patterns, and is drawn from a study by Tsur, Glicksohn and Goodblatt. This study is an attempt to obtain empirical evidence for a theoretical analysis of Gestalt-qualities associated with varying rhyme-patterns offered by Tsur (1988). Consider the following three quatrains:

1. Think, in this battered Caravanserai
   Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
      How Sultán after Sultán with his Pomp
   Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

2. Think, in this battered Caravanserai
   Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
      How Sultán after Sultán did sojourn,
   And went his way then — never to return.

3. Think, in this battered Caravanserai
   Whose Portals are alternate Night and Day,
      How Sultán after Sultán came to stay,
   Abode his destined Hour, and went his way.

Nº 1 is one of Omar Khayyám's Rubáiyáths, in Edward Fitzgerald's English version, 2 and 3 are versions of it, with its rhyme-pattern manipulated.

The respective perceptual organizations of the three versions can be accounted for in terms of two Gestalt principles, the «Law of Good Continuation», and the «Law of Return». According to the former, «a shape or pattern will, other things being equal, tend to be continued in its initial mode of operation» (Meyer, 1956: 92). The «Law of Return», on the other hand, is «the law that, other things being equal, it is better to return to any starting point whatsoever than not to return» (Meyer, 1956: 151). These two laws impose different characteristics upon different strophic organizations.

The first couplet of 1 actualizes the «Law of Good Continuation»: the end of line 2 continues the sound pattern initiated at the end of line 1. The rest of the quatrain actualizes the «Law of Return»: its third line deviates from the rhyme established in the first two lines; the fourth line returns to it. 2 actualizes the «Law of Good Continuation». The first two lines of this quatrain constitute a «strong» shape: they are connected by a single rhyme, and constitute a symmetrical couplet that may be described by a single structural principle (the second line rhymes with the first). The couplet-pattern «perpetuates» itself, it recurs in the next two lines as well; and had the poem contained ten, or twenty, or one hundred lines, the same «Good Continuation» could have gone on, indefinitely.

It is also instructive to inspect the two versions from the point of view of unity. The Principle of Return in 1 generates a tightly-closed and coherent unit. There is a feeling that the quatrain constitutes a single unit that is closed with a sharp «click», that is, has a strong poetic closure. In 2, the quatrain tends to fall into its parts: two symmetrical

sub-units, two couplets; and if it can be said to close with a «click», it is each one of the two couplets that closes with such a «click». This effect depends on the degree of simplicity of the whole as compared with the degree of simplicity of the parts. Greater simplicity of the whole makes for greater unity. The simpler the parts, the more clearly they tend to stand out as independent entities.

The simplicity of the couplets is considerable in 2; what is more, they constitute a larger unit, divided into two parts with identical structures; as a result, they clearly stand out in perception, as two semi-independent units. This is not so in 1. Here, the smallest unit that may recur with regularity is the whole stanza. The third line, that is not part of any rhyme, is perceived in the quatrain as one that weakens the simplicity of the parts, and so increases their dependence on the whole.

When we compare 3 to 2, we find that the aabb version is symmetrical, and well articulated into two equal parts, it displays good continuation both on the specific and on a more abstract level. The aaaa version has a less good Gestalt: it displays good continuation on the specific (but not the abstract) level, and *can* be divided into two identical halves, though this division is projective, not controlled by poetic structure as in the aabb version.

The source of unity in 1 and 3 is of different kinds. The key-terms for the distinction between them are *grouping* and *differentiation*. The unchanging sequence of one rhyme in four or more lines is perceived as a homogeneous sequence, that lacks sufficient differentiation. This kind of unity is relatively unstructured, its effect is mainly through accumulation. The original Rubáiyáth, with the initial symmetrical couplet-pattern, followed by the third, «deviant» line, and the fourth line «returning» to the rhyme established at the beginning, constitues a coherent structure, imposing unity upon the sequence.

From the foregoing analysis we expected that flesh-and-blood respondents in an empirical study would find version 1 to be the most strongly structured, best integrated and most effectively closed, giving rise to a series of aesthetic qualities, such as interesting, pleasant, and the like, and version 3 to be the least strongly structured, worst integrated and least effectively closed. However, in a series of experiments, we found that our respondents judged these versions at considerable variance with our expectations.

From the analysis of our experimental results we came to the conclusion, that relative to versions 2 and 3, our respondents judged the aaba version to be an aabb manqué on the one hand, and an aaaa manqué on the other hand. Thus, if the reader attempts to realize in 1 the Law of Good Continuation, an exceptionally weak and complex shape results in which two potential strong Gestalts compete for dominance, but cannot be realized. Now simplification and strong shape may be achieved, according to Arnheim (1957: 57), «by changing a figure in which two structural patterns compete for dominance into another that shows clear dominance of one of them». This tendency is called «sharpening». The opposite tendency is called «leveling». «Leveling» attempts to minimize or even eliminate (under conditions that keep the stimulus control weak enough to leave the observer with a margin of freedom) the unfitting detail. If, for instance, the reader finds a deviating line in the aaba version, he may try to minimize its significance, as compared to the aaaa version. «Sharpening», by contrast, exaggerates the unfitting detail. That is exactly what happens in the «archetypal» performance of the Rubáiyáth. When the application of Good Continuation fails, there may arise a tendency to exaggerate the effect of the deviating line; in this case, the return to the initial aa rhyme-pattern will arouse satisfaction in the reader. The greater the disturbance experienced at the deviating line, the greater the gratification achieved at the return to the initial rhyme-scheme. The reader may discover then, that sharpening in this instance pays, and he may attempt to go in this respect as far as possible. Thus, the reader is left with a considerable margin of freedom in organizing the stimulus-marterial.

Thus, the aaba structure is *double-edged*. Double-edgedness is the phenomenon, that a certain literary device or structure may have different, or even opposite, effects in varying

contexts or performances. There is a wide range of double-edged phenomena in literatue (cf. e. g., Tsur, 1985; 1987b; 6 and passim). The aaba version, for instance, may be perceived as having a weak shape in which two structural principles compete for dominance, in which case it will be rated extremely low on the *pleasant-unpleasant* scale; or there may be a (frustrated) attempt to «level out» the deviating line, in which case the rating will be again very low on the same scale; or there may be a (successful) attempt to sharpen the disturbance of the deviating line, followed by a highly gratifying return to the initial rhyme-pattern, in which case the rating of pleasantness will be very high. The ratings of closure, too, will tend to be very low in the first two cases, and very high in the last case.

When we began the evaluation of our findings, we first tended to regard the aforementioned experimental results as the failure of some of our our respondents to recognize the «true» structure of the poem. In the light of the present analysis, however, we had to restructure the problem, and to regard the weak shape of the aaba version in which two structural principles compete for dominance, as the one that underlies all the responses recorded hitherto, one that (vainly) attempts to level discrepancies, and one that (sucessfully) sharpens them into a good perceptual organization. Paraphrasing Arnheim, the foregoing analysis gives sufficient evidence that the realization of a poem involves the solution of a problem — namely, the creation of an organized whole (Cf. Arnheim, 1957: 55). «Organized whole», then, is not a *given* fact, but rather an achievement by deploying certain cognitive strategies such as leveling and sharpening. Thus, the cognitive mechanism leveling-and-sharpening appears to be one of our major resources of literary performance, allowing us to account, in a systematic and principled way, for significant differences in literary response.

My third case study is drawn from my paper «Whitman's Catalogue Technique and Cognitive Processes». The starting point of this discussion is a distinction made by Goodblatt (forthcoming) between what she terms the «illustrative» and «meditative» functions of the Whitmanian catalogue. As an example of the former, Goodblatt brings lines from section 5 of «A Song for Occupations», in which the reader's response to a list of occupations is «to conceptualize the items as a particular statement or category. (...) As such, this catalog can be considered to fulfil an illustrative function» (Goodblatt, forthcoming):

> 4. The plum-orchard and apple-orchard... gardening... seedlings, cuttings, flowers and vines,
> Grains and manures... marl, clay, loam... the subsoil plough... the shovel and pick and rake and hoe... irrigation and draining;
> The currycomb... the horse-cloth... the halter and bridle and bits... the very wisps of straw, (...)
> The anvil and tongs and hammer... the axe and the wedge... the square and mitre and jointer and smoothing plain;
> («Song for Occupations»)

In contrast to the illustrative function, Goodblatt distinguishes a meditative catalogue, whose function is to emphasize sensory experience (ibid.). Goodblatt and Glicksohn (1986) give a good example of this from «Song of Myself»:

> 5. The smoke of my own breath,
> Echoes, ripples, and buzzed whispers... loveroot, silkthread, crotch and vine,
> My respiration and inspiration... the beating of my own heart... the passing of blood and air through my own lungs,
> The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-colored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn,
> («Song of Myself» II)

These authors suggest (1986: 85), that «this catalog is a poetic realization of the meditative technique of 'mindfulness'». For caution's sake, I shall use the vaguer description «this catalog indicates some altered state of consciousness». Intuitively, then, 5 leans more toward the pole of a meditative, or some other altered state of consciousness; 2 appears to have a more conceptual character.

Underlying these altered states of consciousness, there is a process involving «a succession of states each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. In reality no one begins or ends, but all extend into each other», to use Bergson's formulation (quoted by Ehrenzweig, 1965: 35).

One possible way, I suggest, to arouse in poetry the illusion of a succession of states which all extend into each other is when the information conveyed by the succession of phrases of the catalogue constitutes a cognitive overload on the reader's processing space; in such a case, one might assume, the reader is compelled to handle this information by collapsing it into an undifferentiated mass (very much in the manner in which perceptual overload is handled by «dumping» the excess of perceptual information into an undifferentiated background mass). One possible way to handle a catalogue like that in 5 is to assume that the apparently indicative sentence

6. This catalogue is part of a meditative poem

is to be understood as one that performs a different kind of speech-act, descriable as a *crucial recommendation*. In other words, the above (indicative) statement is to be construed as the crucial recommendation:

7. Perform the poem in such a way that it should be perceived as one «indicating» some altered state of consciousness.

More specifically, 6 (and 7) might be construed as

8. Perform the catalogue in such a way that its items constitute cognitive overload on your processing space, compelling you to handle this information by collapsing it into an undifferentiated mass.

If it is merely the construal of 6 as 8 that induces the reader to realize (or experience) 5 as indicating some altered state of consciousness, the intuitive distinction between some meditative and conceptual quality in Whitman's catalogues becomes meaningless. The point, however, is that some catalogues yield to a performance recommended in 8 more readily than some others. It will be observed, for instance, that in a sense the items of 4 too may constitute a cognitive overload on the reader's processing space; on the other hand, they will hardly induce him to handle this information by collapsing it into an undifferentiated mass. It is the arrangement of items in fairly homogeneous groups that induces consciousness to what may be termed «conceptual categorization». So it is precisely this kind of structure that may account, to a considerable extent, for the conspicuous conceptual nature of this kind of catalogue.

Consider the contexts in which the word vine occurs in each of the two catalogues, 5 and 4. While all the items preceding vine in 4 conspicuously belong to the same semantic field (of plants or agriculture), the items in 5 belong to a diversity of fields, so that one may, perhaps, justly apply Bergson's formulation to the passage: «By choosing images as dissimilar as possible, we shall prevent any one of them from usurping the place of the intuition it is intended to call up».

There is another conspicuous difference between 5 and 4. Most items in 5 designate what in Ehrenzweig's terminology might be called *thing-free* and *gestalt-free* qualities, such as «The smoke of my own breath, echoes, ripples, and buzzed whispers, my respiration and inspiration...», whereas most of the items in 4 designate objects that have stable, and

sometimes even characteristic visual shapes that seem to resist fusion. Consider, for instance, the verse

> 9. The anvil and tongs and hammer... the axe and the wedge... the square and mitre and jointer and smoothing plain;

in which both criteria are patent: tools that are taken from one semantic field, and have well-defined boundaries that resist fusion.

Thus, the items in 4 indicate, in Bergson's words, perceptions that «are clear, distinct, juxtaposed or juxtaposable one with another», and «tend to group themselves into ojects»; whereas most items in 5 *can*, at least be treated as «a succession of states each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. In reality no one begins or ends, but all extend into each other» — again, in Bergson's words. The impression of such a sucession of states is reinforced by a phrase like

> 10. The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-colored sea-rocks, and of hay in the barn,

of the shape [the SENSE-IMPRESSION of A and B and C and D and E], where A and B and C and D and E designate a diversity of objects, fused in a single, momentary, lowly-differentiated sense-impression.

The abundance of thing-free and gestalt-free qualities in 5 is foregrounded by phrases of the shape [the GERUND of the CONCRETE], as in «the beating of my own heart... the passing of blood and air through my own lungs» or «a few embraces... a reaching around of arms». Such phrases are obtained from such clauses as «My own heart is beating» and «Blood and air is passing through my own lungs», or «Someone embraces» and «Arms reach around» by two transformations.

This case study has contributed two important aspects to our discussion: a pair of mental devices for handling cognitive overload in poetry reading, *conceptual categorization*, and *dumping in an undifferentiated background*; and a conception, according to which significant stylistic distinctions between similar poetic structures can be made, according to the kind of mental performances they require or afford.

My last case study is drawn from my book *A Perception-Oriented Theory of Metre*, and concerns vocal performance. The theory assumes that in order to account for poetic rhythm, one must distinguish metric pattern, stress pattern and pattern of performance. The first two of these patterns must be defined and assigned independently from each other. The third one is the solution of a perceptual problem presented by the first two. But in principle, we have access to poetic rhythm only through some performance. The regular sequence of metric pattern exists in a reading as an expectation, as the reader's *metrical set*. When a stressed syllable occurs in a strong position, it *confirms* metre; when in a weak position, it *infirms* it.

> 11. That fósters the dróop-héaded flówers áll.
> w s w s w s w s w s
> (Keats, «Ode on Melancholy», 13).

Dróop- in a weak position infirms metre; it frustrates expectations for metrical regularity, staggering the reader's certainty of the established pattern. This uncertainty lasts until metre is reasserted in the next strong position. The experienced reader will perform the line so as to preserve at least the memory of regular recurrence until metre is reasserted. The successive stressed syllables are perceived as emphatically grouped together. Now consider a more complex case:

12. Strúng my ówn éars — I stróve hárd to escápe
w s w s w s w s w s
(Keats, «The Fall of Hyperion», 1, 127).

In this line, metre is confirmed in the fourth, sixth and tenth positions, and infirmed in the first, third and seventh positions. Metric pattern is asserted for the first time as late as the fourth position, where it has a coinciding downbeat with the stress pattern. Having infirmed or suspended metre over a stretch of three syllables, a feeling of relief and certainty follows in the fourth, after a feeling of suspense. The regular metre in such cases can be preserved in the reader's perception only if such a stretch of syllables is performed as a unit, as a stressgroup.

Syntactically, *hard* in the seventh position is to be grouped with *strove* in the sixth. This seems to be required metrically too, since *hard* infirms metre (and is «neutralized» by the preceding stress). It is, however, more difficult to reassert metre in advance, before the actual violation takes place. It demands some performance that enhances the memory of regular recurrence during the period of uncertainty. Some readers find it easier to group the last four syllables together emphatically and experience the relief and certainty in the tenth position, where the two groups, stress group and metric group, have a coinciding downbeat again (this is, for instance, how this line is performed by Richard Johnson on Argo PLP 1043).

13. Strúng my ówn éars — I stróve hárd to escápe
w s w s w s w s w s

Such optional groupings constitute an important part of *performance pattern*. I have called such a group *stress valley*. It has an exceptionally strong shape: it is symmetrical and closed. It consists of two stresses embracing two slacks; or, it may be described as a shape the second half of which is the exact mirror image of its first half. In terms of the limited-channel-capacity hypothesis, stress valley constitutes the *recoding* of some otherwise irregularly distributed stresses, so as to save the extra mental space needed for the realization of the divergent stress pattern and metre.

The stress valley, with the concomitant mental processes indicated above, proves to be a very powerful tool for rhythmically performing a verse line in which such extreme violations of metre occur, as what Halle and Keyser called a «stress maximum in a weak position». It had to be discovered, then, whether an experienced reader would perform a stress maximum in e.g. the seventh position as part of a stress valley, or in some other pattern of performance. For this end, I have asked five members of faculty at the English department of the Sussex University, to read aloud the following lines:

14. Buffet and scoffe, scorge, and crúcifie mee!
7

15. Burnt after them to the bóttomless pit
7

16. How many bards gild the lápses of time
7

17. And with these words his temptátion persued
7

The readings were performed separately by the five readers, who had no advance knowledge of the hypotheses. They were asked to read the four lines *rhythmically*, so as to preserve the stress pattern of the words, and as much of the metre as possible. After having read

the lines, we discussed the readings, to make sure that *my description* fitted what the readers felt they had done.

I formulated two specific expectations: first, that the performance pattern would indicate a stress valley and second, that if 14-16 are performed with a closing stress valley, the readers would experience some extra difficulty with 17. The results left little room for doubt. The performances of four out of the five readers were strikingly similar (my discussion will refer only to these four readings): The fifth was somewhat ambiguous: it *could* be interpreted as a stress valley, but need not be. In the aftermath, the four were *sure* they had stressed the seventh syllable more strongly than they would have normally done (even though it was odd-numbered). The four readers were also in agreement with one another that the last four syllables were performed *as a group*, closer in time to one another, pronouncing the unstressed syllables in mid-group somewhat more rapidly than usual.

My second expectation was amply fulfilled. Three out of the four readers were puzzled by *temptation*. They had several tries before they found a satisfacory performance, amid such remarks as «It's funny»... «It's interesting»... «That's different»... «Are you sure Milton didn't stress *temp-* rather than *-ta-*?» The fourth reader performed the line in his «first go», but his solution was unmistakably the same as the one to which the others eventually arrived. All four solved the problem by marked prolongation of *temp-* with a slight break after it. In the aftermath of the reading they agreed that the difficulty lay in the need to *isolate* the last four syllables *as a group* (since the group begins in the middle of the word *temptation*).

In a context of poetic rhythm, *performance* refers to the set of conditions in which the elements of both stress pattern and metric pattern group into, and establish themselves as, perceptual units. The task of mental performance is to effect such groupings, whereas the task of vocal performance is somehow to convey them in the vocal medium, even when conflicting. Within the present theoretical framework, the conflicting patterns of metre and stress constitute the *structures of norms* to be realized by the reader. The mental grouping that enables this is *mental performance*. For lines like those in 14-17 I have found to the present day only one satisfactory reading, effecting a stress valley in the last four positions. For line 12 we have found two possible groupings that might render its performance rhythmical: either by grouping *hárd* backward, together with *stróve*, emphasizing the string of two consecutive stressed syllables, or by grouping it forward, as in 13, generating the stress valley *hárd to escápe* and achieving more than usually strong perceptual closure at the line ending. Thus, the conflicting sets of norms may be realized, imperfectly though, by some alternative patterns of grouping. This is their mental performance. These patterns of performance, in turn, can orally be actualized by some sub-group of a wide range of vocal devices: the manipulation of stress pattern, intonation contour, speed of utterance and pauses (filled or unfilled). Thus, the various vocal resources appear to be accidental concrete texture with respect to mental performance. And the alternative mental groupings appear to be imperfect concrete realizations of the conflicting sets of norms of stress and metre which, according to Wellek and Warren, constitute «the real poem».

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RECORDED READINGS

Keats. Read by Tony Church et al. Argo PLP 1043.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FILM

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«These Shadows Possess a Power»: The Struggle for Self-Analysis in Ingmar Bergman's *Persona*

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Ingmar Bergman went into analysis at the age of forty. Six months later he withdrew. I am told by a friend of Bergman that his analyst said to him that he already knew too much. I suspect that what Bergman knew at the age of forty was how little he knew and how little he was likely to discover through analysis. He had already begun his own type of self-analysis — through his movies.

From the start, motion pictures were Bergman's means of coping with reality, with his parents' unhappy marriage, with their Lutheran sense of propriety that imposed upon the children a rigid severity and system of punishment, with their silence, with his father's coldness, with his mother's periodic reserve, with his longings and imagination, with the unresolved conflicts of his early years.

When he was a small boy he had been taken to see a film version of *Black Beauty*, a silent film version, and his life had been changed. At Christmas time he had exchanged 100 tin soldiers for a gift given to his brother, a cinematograph. The cinematograph was his salvation: time and again, daytime and nighttime, he would escape into the wardrobe of the nursery, light the paraffin lamp in the projector, and project the images on the unsteady lighted rectangle on the wall. He would turn the handle and the figures would move. This was Bergman's therapy and for the next sixty years he never took his hand from that handle. The adult making the film was still the child projecting the images on the wall.

Bergman frequently talked of his films as dreams. Of making *Persona* and *The Passion of Anna* he said «You have a scene, and you have a dream of this scene, and while writing, this emotion that you are evoking just happens to come out.» Stanley Cavel has made the point that watching a film is like watching a dream whose images are someone else's responsibility. Sigfried Kracauer has said that the sudden displacements in time and space give us a dream-like impression when watching film. Robert Eberwein has argued that the filmic experience revives in us infantile experiences of seeing dreams on the dream screen, that is, the mother's breast. Sitting passively in the darkened movie theater we dream the dreams we see on the screen and ultimately their meanings derive from our own associations.

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Persona constantly seems to dislocate its images, place them in an ambiguous context and in an ambiguous relationship to one another. What is reality and what is dream? Who dreams the dreams and whose dream is the entire film? Does the scene in the bedroom between Elizabet and Alma actually happen? It is presented in such a dream-like way — the lighting so clearly suggests to us that what is happening is not really happening, the music conveys the unreality of the images. But then who dreams the dream? Elizabet? Alma? The young boy? Bergman, the director? Or is the scene given to us for us to dream?

I want to avoid reducing the film to any one theme or configuration. What I suggest to you is that you think of the film as if it were about only itself as a film. Bergman's original title of the film was *Cinematograph*, the name for the projector he enjoyed as a child. With this title in mind we can begin to understand those images of projectors and cameras in the film and why we have that remarkable montage at the start. If the film is about anything, it is about its own process as a work of art. The film is not about Bergman's emotional life, but its own capacity or incapacity to present that emotional life.

As dreams are the history of our past and the prophecy of our future so is Bergman's dream, his *Persona* the summation and incompletion of his entire being. The year is 1986, four years after he has made what he has called his final film, *Fanny and Alexander* and Bergman makes another film, a brief one of some twenty minutes with a Super 8mm camera — he calls it *Karin's Face*. Bergman looks at Karin's face, his mother's face in a series of photographs taken throughout her life and he tries to understand how the smiling, youthful face could turn into one so aged, so tired, so unhappy, so unfulfilled. In *Persona* the young boy who in one context is clearly meant to represent the young Bergman reaches towards the faces of the two women who in the same context are clearly meant to be seen as manifestations, as separate aspects of his mother. In a striking image half of each woman's face join together, but they will not cohere — the boy and director still remain estranged from the mother. Twenty years after making *Persona*, he is still pondering that face — not one face, but many faces — he is still trying to understand what existed beneath that face, beneath the persona, beneath the many personae, and still he has no answers. Bergman's whole life is about the making of *Persona*.

Three years before he made *Persona*, Bergman wrote and directed *The Silence*. In this earlier film a young boy visits a foreign country with his mother and aunt, a land in which the people speak a foreign and unrecognizable language. His mother is a physical, sensuous woman, locked in a battle with her sickly, hypersensitive sister. The boy has a strongly physical relationship with his mother — he is bathed by her, caressed by her, and sleeps naked with her. Later in the film he watches her enter a hotel room with a waiter from a near-by restaurant to have sex. His relation to his aunt is more spiritual, more personal. At the end of the film, on a train with his mother, his sick aunt left behind, the boy recites from a slip of paper some words from the foreign language that his aunt has taught him. In some crucial ways *Persona* continues a number of the themes introduced in *The Silence* — the second film is an extension of preoccupations evident in the first. Perhaps this will be even more evident to you if you keep in mind that the young boy who appears in the first film, his name is Johan and he is played by Jörgen Lindström, is the very same boy who appears at the start and end of *Persona* — indeed, in both works the boy is reading the very same book, Lermontov's *A Hero of Our Time*, chosen not for its subject matter but for its title as an ironic allusion to the director of the films who is represented in a younger incarnation by the young boy.

I can only briefly suggest the connections between the two works, the relationship of the boy to the two women, for example, who are Doppelgängers, separate manifestations of a single being, discordant elements of the same mother that the boy longs to bring together into a single personality with whom he himself might bond. It is from this source, this original splitting of the mother that the entire problem of the persona arises. The

word itself suggests the masks that characters wore in classical tragedy; the personality that society, that culture creates for us and that we hide behind, cowering in fear lest we discover who we are; the Jungian mask that mediates between our ego and the world outside of us. In *Persona* the masks gives way, the personalities of the woman crumble, and fusion takes place — but how frightening is this loss of self. If all that defines us is stripped away, then we are undefinable. If all that separates us is discarded, than we no longer exist as separate beings. We long for the very fusion that we fear and detest.

Time does not permit me to trace more complex connections between the two films, the boy's act of looking, of watching, for example, in both films, implications of the primal scenes that are also evident in both films' pervasive concern with silence, the silence of the night when the child listens for the sounds of his parents or the silence against which he hears their strange noises — there are periods of silence in *Persona* broken by harsh grating noises. And Elizabet's silence, her refusal to speak, the silence of her rage conveys the mother's muteness when being sexually violated by the father. In both films the residue of the fierce relationship between Bergman's parents is also evident in the conflict between the women, a conflict that in *Persona* results in the erotic and violent motif of vampirism, when Alma forces Elizabet to suck the blood from her arm. How fitting, then, that Elizabet should twice appear in the film playing Electra and that her muteness should immediately follow her playing the role of the daughter who brings about the death of her mother. How significant also that in a published interview Bergman mistakenly refers to Elizabet's role, on several occasions, as Phaedra and not Electra — Phaedra who was impelled by the gods to fall helplessly in love with her step-son, Hippolytus.

One more connection between the two films that I will only suggest relates to the boy's development from the imaginary to the symbolic, evident in his acquisition of language in *The Silence* and the struggle between the verbal Alma and the silent Elizabet in *Persona*. I will only say that in the second film the desire for the imaginary, the whole, the undifferentiated — to be one with the breast, to return to the preverbal world of silence, to go back to the dream screen — remains, even though the imaginary is also a state of non-being, of personal annihilation, of nothing — a place we both desire and fear, yearn for and yet loath.

But Alma's attempt to create a world through language is analogous to Bergman's attempt to create a world through art — the film itself is an attempt to pass through the undifferentiated, to articulate characters and their world within the white light on the screen. The film is about Bergman's attempt to give symbolic shape to his own psyche. Bergman himself tells us of his difficulty in articulating his screenplay: «The scenes were born with infinite labour. I found it almost impossible to shape words and sentences.» We also have the film itself as record of Bergman's difficulty, his struggle to give image and sound to his screenplay.

I am now discussing *Persona* as self-reflexive, a work of art as much about itself as a work of art as it is about anything else. Bergman's film from this perspective is about Bergman making his film; it is about his attempt through the art of cinema to confront, to explore, to get straight his emotional life — it is about the capacity and incapacity of film to make sense of his emotional life. To convey this point strongly and unequivocally, Bergman gives us a series of personal references in the film's opening montage, himself recites the voice-over when the two women first appear on the island, and himself appears on the screen near the end of the film, seated by his cinematographer Sven Nykvist who is shooting the film from a crane.

I think we are finally ready to examine the strange and wonderful montage that appears at the start of the film. Bergman, in an interview, tells us that this montage is his attempt «to make a poem, not in words, but in images, about the situation in which *Persona* had originated.» Imagine the man, lying in a hospital bed, exhausted and ill, suffering from vertigo whenever he moves his head, and imagine him rising from his bed a few hours

each morning and trying to write down his thoughts for his screenplay, trying to put into words his feelings and his dreams. «I reflected on what was important and began with the projector and my desire to set it in motion», he says. Indeed, the film actually begins inside the projector with the two rods in the lamp lighting up — you see, that is, on the most fundamental level, what film is all about, light from a projector, breaking the darkness, but light in itself insubstantial, immaterial, the rays of energy with which we transcribe the illusion of a material world. Throughout the film images of this world keep fading away, disintegrating into frames of white light, the way the two women's personae finally break down and disintegrate, the way Bergman throughout his adult life felt the threat of his own life breaking down. The difficulty in establishing an identity is paralleled to the difficulty in establishing a reality, a world on film.

At this point we begin to watch the film from the inside of the projector, observing the word «start», the focussing lines, and the numbers on the leader before the film — all upside down since we are viewing these markings before they have been projected by the lens. We are still watching the film in the projector when we see an image of a cartoon figure, upside down in the upper right hand corner of the frame (we also see the sprocket holes on the film). Then we see the hands of a child rubbing one another, right-side up against a black background. Since the cartoon figure is animated, a creature of drawings, and the hands appear to be real, we have taken a step closer to reality, as close to reality as film can come since we are still watching a series of photographs of the hands.

Another empty white frame imposes itself upon our eyes and then we see a smaller frame at the lower right hand corner of the screen in which we watch part of an old, silent Pathé film. Bergman originally used this old film clip in an early 1949 film *The Devil's Wanton*, interestingly also a film about the making of a film — within the inner film two characters seek to bring back the days of their childhood by viewing this same silent farce that they find in a projector. The allusion, then, is to Bergman's career as a filmmaker as well as to his own childhood and his cinematograph.

Bergman tells us that when «the projector was running, nothing came out of it but old ideas, the spider, and God's lamb, all the dull old stuff.» «All the dull old stuff», refers to Bergman's earlier films about his agonizing search for God, films such as *The Seventh Seal*, which deals with Christ's agony, and *Through A Glass Darkly*, which features the schizophrenic Karen's spider-god.

He states that the landscapes which follow represent the external world that he viewed from his hospital window; he also tells us that he had a view of the bodies being carried in and out of the morgue. The outline of an empty landscape gives way to the lifeless profile of an old woman's face. We are tempted to think of Bergman's mother, who was old and ill at the time he made this film (she died shortly after). If we think of the young boy who soon follows as the young Ingmar and the women within the film as separate manifestations of his mother in his youth, then the old woman who exists in the film's frame is a transition to the inner drama that the film projects.

During the series of shots of the old woman, we have seen the young boy lying on a bier as if he too were dead. Bergman tells us, «I made believe I was a little boy who'd died, yet who wasn't allowed to be really dead, because he kept on being woken up by the telephone calls from the Royal Dramatic Theater.» I think we are to see the boy as if waiting to be born, rising from the world of the dead and reaching towards a scrim that one critic has suggested is a membrane in the womb, behind which awaits the person or personae of his mother.

Bergman has said that the titles of the film, interspersed with some shots from the earlier montage, but also with shots from later in the film, suggests «the film's impatience to get started.» One image appeared in the original film during the title sequence that the censors removed from the American version, a shot of a penis that was obviously meant

to relate to a very brief shot that remains of a woman's mouth placed vertically on the screen so that it resembles a vagina. Certainly the penis in conjunction with the vertical mouth has reference to the boy's birth, but the conjunction also suggests the fertilization that leads to the birth of art through language and articulation.

The kind of self-reflexivity I am describing permeates the entire film. Elizabet with a camera faces the audience and takes our picture both to remind us that we are watching a piece of cinematography but also to break down the invisible wall between us and the world on the screen. Immediately after Elizabet cuts her foot on a piece of glass, left treacherously on the ground by Alma, we watch in disbelief as we see on the screen the film itself begin to tear apart and then burn up, as if the intensity of emotions on the screen is too much for the film to bear, as if the women's rage inflames the film stock. Bergman, I might add, insisted, though unsuccessfully, that all the publicity stills for the film show sprocket holes on one side.

Throughout the film, then, we observe the struggle to imprint a reality on the screen, to imprint it by means of light passing through film that contains images. Bergman struggles with his medium, with film to portray his reality, but his desire is to use film ultimately to get beyond film, to get at the reality it portrays, to get beyond the apparatus and the light and the reflected images. In his filmscript he writes: «Perhaps they [the shadows] no longer need the assistance of the apparatus, the projector, or the sound track. They reach out towards our senses, deep inside the retina, or into the finest recess of the ear. Is this the case? Or do I simply imagine that these shadows possess a power, that their rage survives without the help of picture frames, this abominably accurate march of twenty-four pictures a second, twenty-seven meters a minute.» Here Bergman aspires for the screen to be active and phallic instead of passive and nurturing. The traditional view of the spectator as entering the space of the screen is reversed in the notion of the images entering the spectator.

But this longing to get beyond the apparatus cannot succeed. The struggle with the film medium continues throughout. Events become more unclear and confused as the work proceeds; the ending is uncertain, enigmatic, confused. Alma cradles Elizabet in the hospital room, forcing her to articulate the word «nothing», and then the two women are back on the island preparing to leave. Alma looks in a mirror and the earlier shot of Elizabet pushing back her hair is superimposed over her own image. In a longshot we see someone in a nurse's uniform, perhaps Alma, leaving on a bus. The head of the statue in the garden is replaced in a match cut by the head of Elizabet as she plays the role of Electra; but the image of Elizabet that we see in the lens of the camera on the crane with Bergman and Nykvist is an image of her lying on a bier, looking out at us like the shot of the old woman at the start of the film — and, indeed, we are back where we began, with the young boy reaching out to the images of the two women, followed by the shots of the film running out and the light in the lamp expiring inside the projector. What finally happens is that nothing seems to have happened, that the images will no longer hold, that the story has expired completely — it has deconstructed.

But Bergman does not let his world disintegrate only to take cheap shots at it and us. His works lack the cynicism of most postmoderns because he cares so much, because he is so deeply, so emotionally involved in what he is creating. London bridges may be falling down both outside and inside his psyche, but he manages to hold on, if only by his finger tips. His films are a remarkable record of a director, of an *auteur* in the full sense of the word struggling against the forces of darkness that exist in the real world and in the inner recesses of his own mind; a remarkable record of a director struggling with the very medium of film, with the very limitations of the art to project light on that darkness.

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King Lear «translated»: A Cross-Cultural Psychoanalytic Reading of Kurosawa's *Ran*

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At first glance, Kurosawa's reasons for transforming *King Lear* to *Ran* appear obvious: since women in Japanese samurai society were negligible, changing Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia to sons would seem historically accurate. The elimination of the complex web of father-daughter personal and proprietal relations seems to short-circuit many of the bases for feminist, new historical, and psychoanalytic approaches: literary sons are always rebelling against their father's authority by attempts — open or covert — to overthrow or deflate his phallic prominence. And, as Anthony Davies suggests, «the particular significance of Cordelia's rejection [of her father] loses its force» (152). But if we consider the cross-cultural dynamics of Western audiences viewing Japanese films, then the feminist and psychoanalytic consequences of Kurosawa's «translation» become more apparent.

Some possible Freudian analyses of Kurosawa's shift are obvious. The Lear figure, old warrior Hidetora, racked with guilt for his bloodthirsty ways, wants to place the cares of running his clan on his eldest son, Taro, who would be supported by the second and third sons. Saburo, the youngest son, objects to his father's reasoning that united the brothers will stand, realizing that their phallocentric world is evil, that treason and ambition will disrupt the brothers since they all are children of Hidetora's «degraded age of strife» (Screenplay). Predictably, the father banishes Saburo for speaking the truth, and predictably the middle son — like Edmund — plots to destroy both Taro and, eventually, his own father. Chaos (the English translation of the word «ran») results as Oedipal rivalry escalates.

My students at the University of Hawaii tended to prefer *Ran* to *King Lear*. Obviously, the English subtitles' spare language, eliminating Shakespeare's poetic richness, was easier for them to understand. Though many of my students were of Japanese descent, even those whose roots were not Japanese found Kurosawa's film relevant to their island lives: the samurai culture, traditions, and values, the warrior ethic, the importance of avoiding shame and defending one's family were their real concerns. Moreover, they found in *Ran* a clearer reason for Hidetora's suffering than in *Lear*.

Kurosawa himself believes *Ran* is less pessimistic and tragic than *King Lear* because,

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«at least at the start, Lear has no regrets and never thinks of his past, so there seems to be no reason for his falling into this horrible situation» (Tessier 69, my translation). Admittedly, on first viewing *Ran* I was struck by the film's desolation and tragic waste and found it more pessimistic than *Lear*. The closing shots of the blind Tsurumuru, dropping the scroll of Buddha and poised on the precipice of his family's ruined castle, burn into the mind, leaving a feeling of despair at human folly. But upon reviewing and studying the film, I have come to agree with Kurosawa that his version is less pessimistic and tragic.

As several scholars have suggested, «*Ran* replaces tragedy with history» (Thompson 9). In Brian Parker's words, «Disaster and cruelty no longer have the mysterious, cosmic arbitrariness postulated by *King Lear* but are shown always as the direct result of human error or evil» (416). Even though the actions of Hidetora's sons, his rival warlords, and Lady Kaede are shockingly, graphically violent, their motives, though arguably self-serving and cruel, are clear and, to some measure, justified. The spectator thus experiences, perhaps unawares at first, a distancing effect similar to that produced by Noh drama, one of Kurosawa's favorite dramatic forms (passim Desser, Jorgens, Kurosawa, Richie). This distancing may bother a Western viewer, particularly one familiar with *King Lear*. Western critics tend to be «disconcerted by [*Ran*'s] relatively 'cool' approach when compared with what is assumed to be the stunningly cathartic effect of Shakespeare's tragedy» (Thompson 4). *Ran*'s lesson that human society, especially as represented by the warrior culture Hidetora typifies, eternally repeats the same pattern of war, uneasy truce, self-promotion, treachery, and more war, dulls the spectator's visceral response to Lear's individualized agony and incommensurate suffering; no longer is the tragedy one of the individual but of humanity as a whole.

This transformation corresponds to the de-valuation of the individual that is endemic to Japanese culture. Like «the sacrosanct values placed on originality», so too are «Western 'individualism' and the primacy of the person or subject utterly foreign» to Japanese society (Burch 53). Indeed, Alan Roland has recently suggested that «the whole elaboration of the psychoanalytic theory of personality in its many variations is Western-centric, related to the clinical data of Western personality in societies emphasizing individualism» (xvi). Obviously, to avoid misinterpretation, the Western spectator/critic viewing a Japanese film must take into account different cultural assumptions and «premises» (Richie, «Viewing Japanese Film» 23). At the same time, as Dudley Andrew cautions, «Not all perception is culturally specific and alterable»; «No matter what appears on the screen, audiences will instinctively shape it into a representation of something familiar to them» (29, 47). The literary film critic thus juggles emotional reactions, scholarly detachment, and critical theories that are inevitably culture and gender bound.

In *In Search of Self in India and Japan. Toward a Cross-Cultural Psychology*, psychoanalyst Alan Roland summarizes several theories formulated by Japanese psychoanalysts to assert the uniqueness of the Japanese psyche that depart significantly from theories of Western psychoanalysis. Two are particularly relevant to the adaptation of *King Lear* to *Ran*. Dr. Kosawa, a prominent Japanese psychoanalyst, has dismissed the Oedipus complex as «not central to the Japanese psyche, and substituted the Ajase complex, taken from a Buddhist myth. Here the focus is not so much on the son-mother-father triangle, as in the Oedipus myth, but rather on the son-mother dyad, wherein the son rages over feelings of loss of his symbiotic tie with the mother, but later repents after realizing her great sacrifices for him» (Roland 78).

The other theory that Roland suggests focuses on the uniqueness of the Japanese psyche is Takeo Doi's work on *amae*, or Japanese dependency relationships, which have an intensity unknown in the West. This *amae* can be illustrated by the nature of the psychoanalytic relationship in Japan.

> ... Japanese patient and therapist form a hierarchical «we» relationship with vaguely defined outer ego boundaries, especially on the patient's part. This contrasts with the individualistic «I» and «you» relationship of the Western egalitarian psychoanalytic relationship, where patient and therapist have rather well-defined, relatively self-contained outer ego boundaries. Japanese analysts report an unspoken expectation on the patient's part for a life-long, warmly nurturing relationship, in which the therapist will completely take over and take care of the patient and solve all of his or her problems and symptoms...
> ... Japanese patients expect the hierarchical superior, the therapist, to sense and know their needs and feelings — in fact their whole inner being — with only a minimum of overt verbal communication or even nonverbal cues, for Japanese are extremely restrained in facial and hand gestures. In the long-term relationships of Japanese family and group life, it is assumed that the superior, in the paradigm of the mother, will always be sensitive and nurturing to the subordinate. It is equally assumed that the subordinate will sense the superior's wishes and expectations, so that the therapist expects the patient to pick up various attitudes and even understandings with only a minimum of verbal communication. Anything really important is rarely to be communicated verbally in Japanese relationships... This strong empathic sensing obviously begins in childhood. Japanese children are raised by their mothers to be extremely sensitive and concerned with others' feelings and needs rather than with their own, which should never be expressed directly, but also to expect others, especially a hierarchical superior, to be highly sensitive to themselves. Often a person may only become aware of what he or she wants when the superior has incorrectly sensed and responded to it. Needless to say, considerable anger may be generated when the hierarchical superior — mother or father or group leader or mentor — lacks sufficient empathic sensitivity, responsiveness, or responsibility. (Roland 81, 82-83)

Such anger is clear in *Ran* when Saburo becomes furious with his father when Hidetora wishes to abdicate his authority.

In a fascinating way that parallels some recent work done by feminist and feminist/psychoanalytic critics, both the Ajase complex and the Amae theory center on the parent-child, specifically the mother-son/daughter relationship. Yet, as Coppelia Kahn and others have observed, the mother is absent in *King Lear*. «Lear's family drama takes on new meaning as a tragedy of masculinity... a woman's subjection to her husband's will was the measure of his patriarchal authority and thus of his manliness» (36, 39). This is a point that both Shakespeare and Kurosawa stress. Lear wants his daughters, particularly Cordelia, to be both daughters — obedient — and mothers — caretakers.

Albeit not in the flesh, there is a mother expressly mentioned and symbolically alluded to in *Ran*: the mother of Lady Kaede, wife of Hidetora's oldest son, Taro. In her cold, vindictive fury, Kaede may well be the easiest person with whom to identify simply because her motives are so universal: she desires revenge — not petty, but the total annihilation of the dynasty of the Great Lord, her father-in-law, who butchered her family and drove her mother to suicide. By the accepted codes of social behavior and the outward forms of female submission — perfectly mirrored in her mannered steps, rustling silk kimonos, aristocratic bearing — she sets the stage for her horrifying drama of retribution.

One can find in Kaede an amalgamation of Shakespeare's villains — especially of Goneril, Regan, Edmund, and Lady Macbeth. Parker has rightly likened her to Queen Margaret of the *Henry VI* plays, functioning as Hidetora's past, «With destructive sexuality and an unwavering purpose of revenge» (416). Professing no interest in the traditionally

self-effacing, obedient woman of Japanese society, Kurosawa himself prefers depicting «disobedient women, especially those that are not ordinary.» He also notes that Kaede is a victim who must be understood as part of her environment: married to the son of the tormentor who massacred her family, she reacts as a function of her past (Raison 13, my translation).

Intermingled with Kurosawa's depiction of Lady Kaede as a figure of revenge is the Japanese preoccupation with woman as demon. In Ian Baruma's analysis, «When the maternal mask is ripped off, a frightening spirit is revealed... The examples of females using their demonic powers over men in Japanese literature are, by and large, just that: demonic — jealous spirits, vengeful ghosts, fox-women and serpents» (47, 52). Kurosawa concentrates Shakespeare's varied employment of animal imagery — tigers, foxes, boars, serpents, kites — into the imposing figure of Kaede.

In coaching Mieko Hirada, the actress playing Kaede, for the «family gathering» scene with Hidetora and Taro, where the Great Lord must sign in blood his verbal promise to cede power to Taro, Kurosawa counseled her to subjugate both men as would a snake quietly, softly strangling its prey in down feathers (Raison 96, my translation). The image captures Kaede's polite, formal behavior and underlying menace in this scene. Working in tandem with her immobility full of violence, a device of Noh drama, Kurosawa's interpretation visually represents the contempt of Oswald, Goneril, and Regan in Acts I and II, particularly the controlled mockery of Oswald's «My lady's father» (I.iv.81) and Regan's «I pray you, father, being weak, seem so» (II.iv.200) and «And in good time you gave it» (249). Unlike Shakespeare, however, Kurosawa provides a reason for what seems to be Kaede's gratuitous cruelty to a father who «gave you all» when, after Hidetora's departure, she reveals to the surprised, horrified Taro,

> How I have longed for this day!... I was born and bred in this castle, which used to belong to my father. Then I left it to marry you. My father and brothers, all unaware because of our marriage, were murdered by your father, Hidetora. Then I was brought back to this castle, which was seized from my family... I have waited for this day ever since... This is the room where my mother committed suicide.
>
> (Screenplay Sequence 26)

She looks at the exact spot on which, when her treachery is revealed, she herself is decapitated at the film's end. The initial bewilderment and growing horror that we have been conditioned to feel at Goneril and Regan's — Taro and Jiro's — ungrateful, contemptuous treatment of their enfeebled father conflict with our sympathy for Kaede's obsessed yet understandable desire to revenge her family. Lear *is* a man «More sinned against than sinning» (III.ii.60); for Hidetora, this imbalance is virtually eliminated. The film creates a cultural disruption for Westerners: there are two ways to view Kaede, and the film does not attempt to resolve the ambiguity.

Unlike *Beowulf*'s peaceweavers, doomed to political marriages with the enemies of their families, Kaede resists becoming a pawn in a «hierarchical social order» which, as Eagleton observes about the male-dominated political system of *Macbeth*, is «the pious self-deception of a society based on routine oppression and incessant warfare» (2). Instead, Kaede destroys her enemies at their own game, using their rules to puncture male insecurities encased in warriors' armour. Lady Macbeth-like, her taunting first of Taro and then Jiro dislodges their shaky assumptions of their father's mantle. By combining deceptive female submission with predatory cunning, she effectively emasculates and manipulates the samurai warriors around her, the lone exception being Jiro's advisor Kurogane; and even he must bury his suspicions in the traditional deference he owes Jiro.

In a film packed with startling scenes, perhaps none is more shocking and satisfying than the newly-widowed Kaede's sudden attack on and violent seduction of her brother-

in-law, who has just assumed, through Taro's convenient death (probably Kurogane's handiwork), the lordship. Kurosawa rehearsed his actors for two and a half months to perfect the scene in which the supposedly chastened, repentant Kaede proffers Taro's helmet to Jiro, then leaps upon him, disarms him, and threatens to slay him, even cutting the skin of his throat with his own dagger when he denies responsibility for Taro's death. Kaede further emasculates him by laughing sardonically at his discomfiture and then refusing to leave the castle and threatening to expose his cowardice, graphically illustrating her intentions by shredding the sleeve of her kimono with his dagger. At this point, Kaede transforms into a horrifying variation of a pattern familiar in Japanese cinema: the victim (often the defiled innocent, but in Kaede's case the victim of Hidetora's crimes) becomes «a compulsive man-eating ogress consumed by her sexual savagery» (Baruma 58-59). «Aghast, trembling» (Screenplay Sequence 127), Jiro becomes her sexual quarry as she leaps upon him, kisses him ferociously, then licks the blood from the wound she cut on his neck. Many of the bestial, predatory images and metaphors of *Lear* are represented as, following Kurosawa's directions, Kaede approaches Jiro «like a cat, then, in a sequence of tentatives, like a panther, a lion, a tigress.» During filming, Kurosawa confided in a low voice that he had the impression he was making a documentary on savage animals (Raison 144, my translation). «Robes and furred gowns» — or kimonos — «hide all» (IV.vi.167).

In Kurosawa's post-coital scene — which took only a day to block (unlike the eleven days for Sequence 127) — the spectator recognizes dramatic irony at work. With her back to Jiro and her face to the audience, Kaede reveals her intentions: every word and tone, perfectly calculated, are ruses designed to produce Jiro's reactions. At the scene's start, the camera, focused on Taro's helmet — the emblem of power kicked aside in the last frames of the seduction scene — follows the trail of Kaede's sash as she and Jiro, facing in opposite directions, rewrap their disarrayed kimonos. Waiting until Jiro has stepped behind a screen, Kaede, speaking softly but wearing a calculating expression, lays her trap: «How cold you are! Calling me sister-in-law after what we have just done... [By rights] I should be your wife» (Sequence 132). When Jiro protests that he is already married, Kaede's faked weeping exposes her duplicity to the audience: prostrate and crying on the floor, she notices a butterfly, symbol of resurrection and hope, fluttering near her sleeve, and, while continuing to «cry», crushes it. The audience with whom I first saw the film laughed here in appreciation and snickered at Jiro, who, unaware he is being deceived, touches her shoulder and reassures her that she will never be «just a concubine.» Even though conscious of her duplicity and cunning, the spectator still feels a frisson of horror at Kaede's next movement and words: wheeling and grabbing Jiro in her arms, she tells him, «I cannot bear for any woman who has known your touch to live» while gently stroking his dismayed face.

My reactions to this pair of scenes mix admiration and horror — something akin to the feelings evoked by the Lady Macbeth of Act I. This woman far outshines her men, and from this point on Jiro seems to grow weaker, less authoritative: even his loyal followers, especially Kurogane, ridicule his dependence on Kaede. And the more vengeful and bloodthirsty Kaede becomes — as in her demand for the head of Lady Sue — the weaker Jiro seems. In the marvelously comic yet chilling scene where Kurogane presents Sue's head, which has «magically» been transformed into a stone fox head taken from a temple — a neat literalization of Lear's «she foxes» (III.vi.23) — Jiro averts his eyes and grips his armrest at sight of the bundle; though obviously disconcerted by the package, only Kaede has the composure to unwrap it. An unsettling division arises in the spectator: one should morally and naturally be repulsed by the head, obtained through Kaede's desire to eradicate Jiro's wife and further hypnotize him, yet one also feels curiously contemptuous of Jiro's hesitation to condemn and execute his wife. It is as if the samurai tradition of eliminating any petty hindrances to achieving supremacy — as Hidetora has done so sweepingly in his reign

as warlord — has infected even the spectators. A double-bind occurs for the Western female viewer, for she both admires a strong woman who defeats warriors on their own terms yet despises their ideology, which relegates females to submissive status as wives, concubines, and, or, slaves. Perhaps the hollowness, the ultimate sterility, of Kaede's victory contributes to the increasingly ironic distancing that occurs in the final third of the film.

What is not distanced or diluted is the filmic representation of Hidetora's psychological castration. Lone survivor of his train of warriors, concubines, and servants, he slowly descends from the burning castle keep, arrayed in nightclothes, barefoot, and trailing the empty scabbard of his sword. Unable to commit seppuku (hara-kiri) for lack of a sword or dagger — his sword broke when he slew his first attacker — Hidetora can bear his shame only through madness. His utter defeat is conveyed through the deaths of his concubines: when a volley of gunfire is unleashed directly at Hidetora, the concubines standing before him absorb the bullets; two beautifully dressed and groomed concubines ritually stab each other and die gracefully while Hidetora looks on in horror. Of the more than one hundred sketches and paintings Kurosawa made when envisaging his film, none haunts me more than his startling depiction of women in waiting who throw themselves off the castle keep «with daggers in their mouths — the sleeves of their voluptuous robes trail as they plunge headfirst» (Sequence 99). The women are literally stabbed and choked to death as they swallow the symbol of their dominating culture. Though such a scene would be very difficult to represent convincingly on film, Kurosawa hints at it when the middle-aged concubine, who was lying at Hidetora's side when he first heard the attack, dressed in white, the Japanese color of mourning, braces a dagger on the floor before her. Though the climax of her suicide is not represented visually, her intention is readily apparent, as is the spectator's realization a few moments later that she embraces the phallus-knife, while he cannot.

Rene Girard reminds us that «the world of reciprocal violence is one of constant mirror effects in which the antagonists become each other's doubles and lose their individual identities» (186). In assuming power to act against a phallocentric society that glories in violence and destruction, Kaede transcends her assigned place only by adopting and eventually validating that society's precepts. The consummation of her revenge engenders the rebirth of the masculine violent cycle. In effect, Kurosawa uses Shakespeare's *King Lear* to valorize the modern Japanese mother-centered family he grew up in by undermining the self-destructive father-centered family of samurai days. (Ironically, Kurosawa's family prided itself on its samurai ancestry [*Something Like an Autobiography*]). This is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the figure of the more conventionally passive, saintly Lady Sue, who, recalling the holy Cordelia, finds no cause to blame Hidetora for her family's destruction and quietly accepts her fate by turning to Buddha, contrasting sharply with the Thanatos that motivates Lady Kaede. Though his film cannot quite be categorized as subversive, Kurosawa's changes subtly undercut the male-dominated samurai ideology and, by extension, the phallocentric nature of Western psychoanalysis.

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PSYCHOANALYSIS AND FEMINISM

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Sublimation: Disgust, Desire and the Female Body

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«Women are more body than men because they don't sublimate» (*The Laugh of the Medusa*, p. 257), writes Helene Cixous. I want to begin with that statement, to explore its assumption of a relation between sexual difference and sublimation, and to question the effects of that relation on language. Etymologically, sublimation is linked to the sublime, to an idea of higher states of being valorized by their distance from the body and from quotidien matter. According to Webster's International Dictionary, a common arbiter of our paternal tongue, sublimation means «to purify, to exalt out of the body, to transmute from dross into value, into some other state of value.» For Freud also, sublimation was an alchemical conversation of the dross of the body into a representation of value conferred by civilization. Is it too obvious to say that this transmutation from dross into value which constitutes culture and civilization is gender inflected? And more particularly, that its attribution of value derives from a specifically masculine desire and response to sexual difference?

Freud speaks of sublimation at various points in his papers, and always in terms of value. Describing sublimation as the transformation of a sexual aim into a non-sexual one, «sublimation», he writes in *Civilization and its Discontents* «is what makes it possible for higher psychical activities, scientific, artistic, or ideological, to play such an important part in civilized life» (*SE* XXI: 97). But for Freud this «higher» activity is not mere metaphor; «higher» is literally that which takes place above the lower sexual and excretory organs, although derived from a relation to them. «The unserviceable aim of the various impulses is replaced by one that is higher», he explains, an exchange facilitated by «the components of the sexual instinct», which are specially capable of «exchanging their sexual aim for... one... comparatively remote and socially valuable» (*SE* XI: 54). The component instincts — defined by Freud as those attached to pregenital erotogenic zones, particularly the oral and anal — come together developmentally during the oedipal stage to constitute human sexuality.[1] But the component instinct that most insists itself into Freud's texts, above which one has to rise, is anal eroticism. Writing about the changes in instinctual disposition that civilization elicits, he remarks:

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[1] «The sexual instinct... is made up of component instincts into which it may once more break up and which are only gradually united into well-defined organizations...» Freud, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, 1905, SE VII.

> «The most remarkable example of such a process is found in the anal eroticism of young human beings. Their original interest in the excretory function, its organs and products, is changed in the course of their growth into a group of traits which are familiar to us as parsimony, a sense of order and cleanliness...» (*SE* XXI: 96).

Repeatedly in his writings Freud singles out anal eroticism, and no where more strikingly than in *Civilization and its Discontents* where he even leaves his central text to pursue his imp of the perverse: the significance of anal eroticism and its concomitant sensory mode, smell, in the development of human sexuality. In long digressive footnotes, he narrates a primal myth which begins with the male response to the menstrual smell of women, lingers on a generalized confusion of sexual and excretory functions and concludes by way of disgust with sublimation. Here is his story:

> In the beginning before humans had an erect gait, men were attracted to women intermittently through the smell of their menstrual periods. But with «the diminution of the olfactory stimuli by means of which the menstrual process produced an effect on the male psyche,... their role was taken over by visual excitations which... were able to maintain a permanent effect...» What is more, as he writes, «The diminution of the olfactory stimuli seems itself to be a consequence of man's raising himself from the ground,... The fateful process of civilization would thus have set in with man's adopation of an erect posture... proceeded through the devaluation of olfactory stimuli and the isolation of the menstrual period to the time when visual stimuli were paramount and the genitals became visible, and thence to the continuity of sexual excitement.» (*SE* XXI: 100)

Although Freud here moves sexual arousal from the olfactory to the visual field, from the intermittant to the continuous, it remains for him inextricably intermixed with a sexual repugnance that threatens eros itself:

> «With the assumption of an erect posture by man and with the depreciation of his sense of smell, it was not only his anal eroticism which threatened to fall victim to organic repression, but the whole of his sexuality, so that this, the sexual function, has been accompanied by a repugnance which cannot further be accounted for, and which prevents its complete satisfaction and forces it away from the sexual aim into sublimation and libidinal displacements.»

Speculating that this repugnance may be primary, Freud quotes an old adage: «Inter urinas et faeces nascimur», to explain it. In using this adage on which he had leaned some thirty years earlier to explain hysterical disgust in the Dora case, Freud makes clear that the intolerable confusion of sexual and excretory organs, causing that disgust which he takes as the key to sublimation and the founding of civilization, disgust with the smell of sex, takes the female body particularly as its object.[2]

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[2] Remarkably, Freud presents on odd piece of contradiction in the Dora case: when he quotes the adage which obviously refers to the sexual organs of the woman, within the context of his argument that «the genitals can act as a reminder of the excretory functions; and this applies especially to the male member, for that organ performs the function of micturition as well as the sexual function.» Also, as he writes about Dora's disgust at being kissed by Herr K.:

> «I can arrive at the following derivation for the feelings of disgust. Such feelings seem originally to be a reaction to the smell (and afterwards also to the sight) of excrement. But the genitals can act as a reminder of the excretory functions; and this applies especially to the male member, for that organ performs the function of

But Freud's emphasis on the conflation of sexual and excretory orificies suggests more at work driving sublimation than disgust with woman's body *per se*. In describing the historical repugnance at the proximity of the orificies, and the consequent confusion of anus and vagina which it evokes, Freud virtually elides the female genitals. Not only does such maneouvering to keep the site of difference ambiguous suggest castration anxiety, but it also implies an active *desire* for a non-differentiating anal eroticism characteristic of a male homosexual economy. What Freud thus represents is a social transmutation of the forbidden object of desire into the forbidden object of disgust — a reverse alchemy which implements heterosexual civilization. It is especially *he* who reaches higher because he is repelled by his attraction to the smell down below.

This intimate relation between desire, disgust and anal eroticism comes up more fully in Freud's letters to Fliess, in which he uses his own self-analysis to generalize about the role of the body in normal sexual repression, the «neurotic» alternative to sublimation:

> «Insofar as memory has lighted upon an experience connected with the genitals, what it produces... is libido. Insofar as it has lighted upon an experience connected with the anus, mouth, and so on... it produces... internal disgust, and the final outcome is consequently that a quota of libido is not able... to force its way through to action... libido and disgust would seem to be associatively linked.» (p.281)

Suggesting here that disgust is a kind of negative libido, Freud makes repression rather than sublimation its consequence, and derives repression from the abandonment of former sexual zones, in particular the anus, mouth and throat, the memory of which is still retained as the source of a disturbing and repudiated pleasure.[3] «To put it crudely», writes Freud to Fliess, «the memory actually stinks just as in the present the object stinks; and in the same manner as we turn away our sense organ (the head and nose) in disgust, the preconscious and the sense of consciousness turn away from the memory. This is repression» (p. 280).

But why does he here theorize repression rather than sublimation? As I read Freud's expulsive language, I hear his own desublimation, and a repudiated pleasure liberated through the memory of the very anal eroticism about which he is theorizing. «The stink of the memory» threatens to overwhelm the theory. In other words, for Freud a cigar was never just a cigar, and Freud's own repeated cathexis to the nose and to Fliess's fantastic theories about it are part of the fetishistic network of anal eroticism to which he was drawn.

In the Dora case, Freud insisted that disgust was a strong component of hysteria[4], and elaborated the connection between disgust and denial.

> It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the pathogenic significance of the comprehensive tie uniting the sexual and the excremental, a tie which is at the basis of a very large number of hysterical phobias. (*SE* VII: 32)

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micturition as well as the sexual function. Indeed, the function of micturition is the earlier known of the two, and the only one known during the presexual period. Thus it happens that disgust becomes one of the means of affective expression in the sphere of the sexual life. The early Christian Father's 'inter urinas et faeces nascimur' clings to sexual life and cannot be detached from it in spite of every effort at idealization.» (*SE* VII: 31)

[3] «A memory of excitation of the abandoned sexual zones releases unpleasure», he writes, «an internal sensation analogous to disgust in the case of the object...», *Letters*, p. 280.

[4] See Freud's reading of Dora's oral-urethral eroticism and the discussion of the relation between disgust and hysteria in *Hysteria from Freud to Lacan*: «The word catarrh refers... to the anal and urethral component of Dora's disgust... Freud is careful to point out at once that Dora did not distinguish clearly between genital sexuality and anality. Dredging up the old adage of the church fathers for the occasion, *inter urinas et faeces nascimur* [Freud remarks that] Dora conflates

Thus of Dora's responses to the kiss of her unwanted suitor, Herr K., he writes,

> «I can arrive at the following derivation for the feelings of disgust. Such feelings seem originally to be a reaction to the smell (and afterwards also to the sight) of excrement. But the genitals can act as a reminder of the excretory functions; and this applies especially to the male member, for that organ performs the function of micturition as well as the sexual function. Indeed, the function of micturition is the earlier known of the two, and the only one known during the presexual period. Thus it happens that disgust becomes one of the means of affective expression in the sphere of the sexual life. The early Christian Father's 'inter urinas et faeces nascimur' clings to sexual life and cannot be detached from it in spite of every effort at idealization.» (*SE* VII: 32)

Thus Freud insisted that Dora conflated sexual difference with uncleanliness. As Monique David Menard concludes, «Disgust in hysteria exhibits, at the heart of the conversion symptom, a passionate denial of sexual difference that seeks to attribute to the other a kind of responsibility for having spoiled sexuality» (p. 103). Thus not only do Freud's comments on disgust in the Dora case illuminate hysteria as a pathology of ambivalence about gender difference, but his own recurrent references to disgust throughout his papers cast some shadow on the attribution of that disgust to Dora, and rather point to his own hysterical ambivalence about gender.

In fact, Freud's discussion of sexual repression in his letters is self-confessedly hysterical; saturated with his own ambivalence about sexuality, it ends with a fantasy of expulsion (pp. 278-79) in which Freud imagines himself as a woman in labor, giving birth to a «piece of knowledge» — a phrase itself overdetermined as not only a baby but in the equivalence-formula of psychoanalysis also a turd and a phallus. The passage itself demonstrates a kind of desublimation in its opening playful deflation of the heroic subject:

> It was on November 12, 1897; the sun was precisely in the eastern quarter; Mercury and Venus were in conjunction — «No, birth announcements no longer start like that. It was on November 12, a day dominated by a left-sided migraine, on the afternoon of which Martin sat down to write a new poem, on the evening of which Oli lost his second tooth, that, after the frightful labor pains of the last few weeks, I gave birth to a new piece of knowledge. Not entirely new, to tell the truth; it had repeatedly shown itself and withdrawn again, but this time it stayed and looked upon the light of day.»

The vicissitudes of sublimation are also remarked upon in the course of Freud's description of narcissism in *The Ego and the Id*. In narcissism, the ego withdraws its erotic libido from objects on to itself; that is to say, the erotic drive is desexualized, sublimated. But the consequence is «a defusion of the instincts and a liberation of the aggressive instincts in the superego», Freud writes. «After sublimation, the erotic component no longer has the power to bind the whole of the destructiveness that was combined with it, and this is released in the form of an inclination to aggression and destruction.» Thus sublimation — primary impetus to civilization — not only generates the seeds of its own destruction but internally promotes a cruel and punishing superego («The Ego and the Id», *SE* XIX: 56), which Freud represents as destroying the ego in a sadomasochistic psychodrama. In

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sexual difference with uncleanliness» (p. 93); «Disgust in hysteria exhibits, at the heart of the conversion symptom, a passionate denial of sexual difference that seeks to attribute to the other a kind of responsibility for having spoiled sexuality... the hysteric has no body... owing to a lack... of symbolization of the body» (p. 103).

suffering under the attack of the superego or perhaps even succumbing to it, the ego is meeting with a fate like that of the protista which are destroyed by the products of decomposition that they themselves have created... morality functions in the superego [as]... a similar product of decomposition. Freud's theoretical text indulges a fantasy in which a feminized ego passively «succumbs» to an assaultive superego, representative of the father's law and phallus, and is destroyed by its products, imagined as products of decomposition, again hinting at an anal transformation of generating seed into waste.

In thus proposing that anal-erotic desublimation marks Freud's text I am of course not pointing to anything extraordinary. Literature seduces us precisely through desublimation, by implanting a fantasy through what has been called «a sublimatory reverse» which «solicits and sustains a set of readerly identifications...» (*Formations of Fantasy*, p. 118). But rather than agreeing with Cixous that women don't sublimate I want to suggest that the body functions differently in these readerly identifications for men and women. Does the anal erotic body of Freud's text, with its attendant interest in smell, in non-differentiated pieces, in waste, in objects of disgust that seem to be a reactive response to the female body, characterize the erotic body in male texts generally? Or at least in what we might call male hysterical texts? I think, for example, of T.S. Eliot's description of his poems as blood, as shreds of mucous, as a purulent offensive discharge, his hystericized language incoding the matter of the body through images not unlike Freud's vivid references to pus and mucous in his letters to Fliess.[5] Insofar as erotic representations are gender inflected, so is the psychoerotic economy which fuels them, and if Freud was following the logic of male desire in his narrative of the origin of patriarchal sublimation as a reactive response to the female body, we need perhaps another narrative to account for female sublimation, a narrative whose logic would not lean upon anal eroticism, but on other of the component instincts. Since women are presumably not as threatened by the female body, we might expect that their sublimations are not as strongly propelled by a reactive disgust.

Indeed, if we look at the sublimatory reverse among modernist women writers anality seems to be absent in their representation of the sexualized body; other zones predominate. Luce Irigaray self-consciously privileges touch as a mode of women's writing, which she claims «takes each figure back to its source, which is among other things *tactile*.»[6] In her own writing, Irigaray attempts to represent the form of the mouth and female genitals, those parts of female body from which Freud tells us man runs in disgust but which women conflate. While one might argue that Irigarary self-consciously selects her female body parts to serve an ideological purpose, psychoanalysis has traditionally located female sexuality in oral eroticism — although typically as an upward displacement of genital sexuality. But if anal eroticism is privileged by men because it negates the female sexual organs, oral eroticism and the vagina are both erogenous zones which multiply rather than reduce the zones of sexual exchange. If psychoanalysis privileges sexuality as reception rather than penetration in its «feminine modality», modernist women writers are more bivalent. Gilbert and Gubar note that Djuna Barnes, in her *Ladies Almanack*, incodes a female erotic tongue in the mouth to signify sexuality, thus incorporating penetration into oral eroticism. Virginia Woolf's erotic images also represent the female sexual body as genital and oral and indeed, in her representation, the entire female body becomes implicated in eros, as for example when Clarissa in *Mrs. Dalloway* remembers «a tinge like a blush which one tried to check and then, as it spread, one yielded to its expansion, and rushed to the farthest verge, and there quivered and felt the world come closer, swollen with some astonishing significance,

[5] See also Gilbert and Gubar, *No Man's Land*, Vol. 2. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

[6] In «The Power of Discourse», redefining language to gain a place for the feminine, Irigaray writes:

> «This style or writing of women... does not privilege sight; instead, it takes each figure back to its source, which is among other things *tactile*.» (p. 79).

some pressure of rapture, which split its thin skin and gushed and poured with an extraordinary alleviation over the cracks and sores!» While there are certainly cracks and sores — signifiers of the body as repugnant here, there is more awe — and literally in its phonemic repetition as «poured», «extraordinary», «sores» — than disgust in this overdetermined representation of a momemtary experience of the fullness of being as sexual orgasm, of a pleasure which includes «cracks and sores» as well as «gush» and «pour». Gertrude Stein's very titles — «Tender Buttons», «Lifting Belly» — punningly play with the erogenous body and its various parts but seem to exclude anal images. Is it significant that these writers were lesbian, that is to say that their object of desire was female? Even among the textual productions of women writers who are avowedly heterosexual, however, disgust seems to be an affect that is not well represented. Is its absence a sign of repression or of a different economy of desire?

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Theory and Performance: The Creation of *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows*

DIANNE HUNTER (*)

In his obituary of Charcot, Freud describes him as a *visuel*, someone for whom sight is the dominant way of knowing; and Freud reports Charcot's supreme satisfaction in naming and classifying clinical facts[1]. Though Charcot had made significant contributions to medicine before becoming director of the Paris public asylum for women in 1870, he is remembered by feminists primarily for his work on hysteria at the Salpêtrière, where he advanced his career by staging spectacular demonstrations of his ability to hypnotise and control patients. Charcot's widely publicized contributions to the hysteria diagnosis, which increased dramatically during his tenure as hospital director, were for him and his followers a way of attacking the idea of demonic possession and religious ecstasy, and of getting institutional control of hospitals and schools taken away from the Catholic Church. This anti-clerical campaign was crucial to the legitimizing of secular power as philosophical and medical positivists gained control of the administrative centers of France[2]. As part of his positivistic method, Charcot commissioned draftsmen to make sketches of hysterics in action on the Salpêtrière wards; and he founded a photographic studio at the hospital. Charcot's disciples Paul Régnard and Desiré Bourneville produced two journals, the *Iconographie Photographique*

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[1] Sigmund Freud (1893), «Charcot», *The Standard Edition of The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. and ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1962), III: 11-23.

[2] Jan Goldstein, «The Hysteria Diagnosis and the Politics of Anticlericalism in Late Nineteenth-Century France», *Journal Of Modern History* 54 (June 1982): 209-239.

de la Salpêtrière (1875-1877), and the *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière* (1888-1918), disseminating a visual record of hysteria[3].

This historical drama in which priests and positivists contested administrative power at the site of the female body, and in which the winner was a man with a powerful gaze, a magnetic personality, the authority and space to exhibit and interpret unruly women, and the technology to mechanically reproduce their images was the starting point for what evolved into four separately produced versions of a dance theater performance titled *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows.* I shall describe aspects of the genesis of the piece, some of the thinking behind my participation in it, and the staging strategies of our first production, a work-in-progress performed at Trinity College, in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1988; and of our third production, performed at the Ohio Theatre in New York City in 1989.

Creation of these performances started when I showed reproductions of some of the Salpêtrière photographs to my Trinity colleague Judy Dworin, a dancer and choreographer, and asked her how she would describe them. She said she did not know, and suggested that we get a group of dancers together, enact the poses, and then try to analyze them on the basis of our subjective feelings. I had long felt that the fascination exercised over late twentieth-century feminists by the great hysterics of the nineteenth century, especially those whose images had been made available through the Salpêtrière journals, takes root in their suggestiveness as metaphors or threshold figures for the women's liberation movement[4]. Within its context of the intellectual vogue hysteria has had within late twentieth-century psychoanalytic feminism, I think our work, work largely on and of iconographic politics, indicates that Charcot and his hysterics are for us a rich and powerful metaphor of the mad contradictoriness of what it means to be a woman in a man's world. Though I saw the Salpêtrière hysterics as other than myself, I also felt that I could recognize in their situation precursors of elements foregrounded in twentieth-century feminist theory, especially film theory and psychoanalytic feminism. Therefore, intrigued by the thought of doing research via my own body, I agreed to act on the basis of Judy's theoretically very unfashionable notion of a transhistorical female body whose positioning and expressivity could be decoded through subjective identifications. I regard the idea of using physical replication to get in touch with the meanings, energies and latent intentions of the Salpêtrière hysterics as our enabling fiction; perhaps it can be described in retrospect as an example of the role of illusion in symbol-formation. As a feminist, I liked the idea of reclaiming the hysterical body from its enclosure in fixed images, and of seeing where the energy and power I felt in the Salpêtrière poses would go if it were free to move, just as I wondered about the significance of the word «movement» in the phrase «women's movement» and how that significance might be related to hysterical movement.

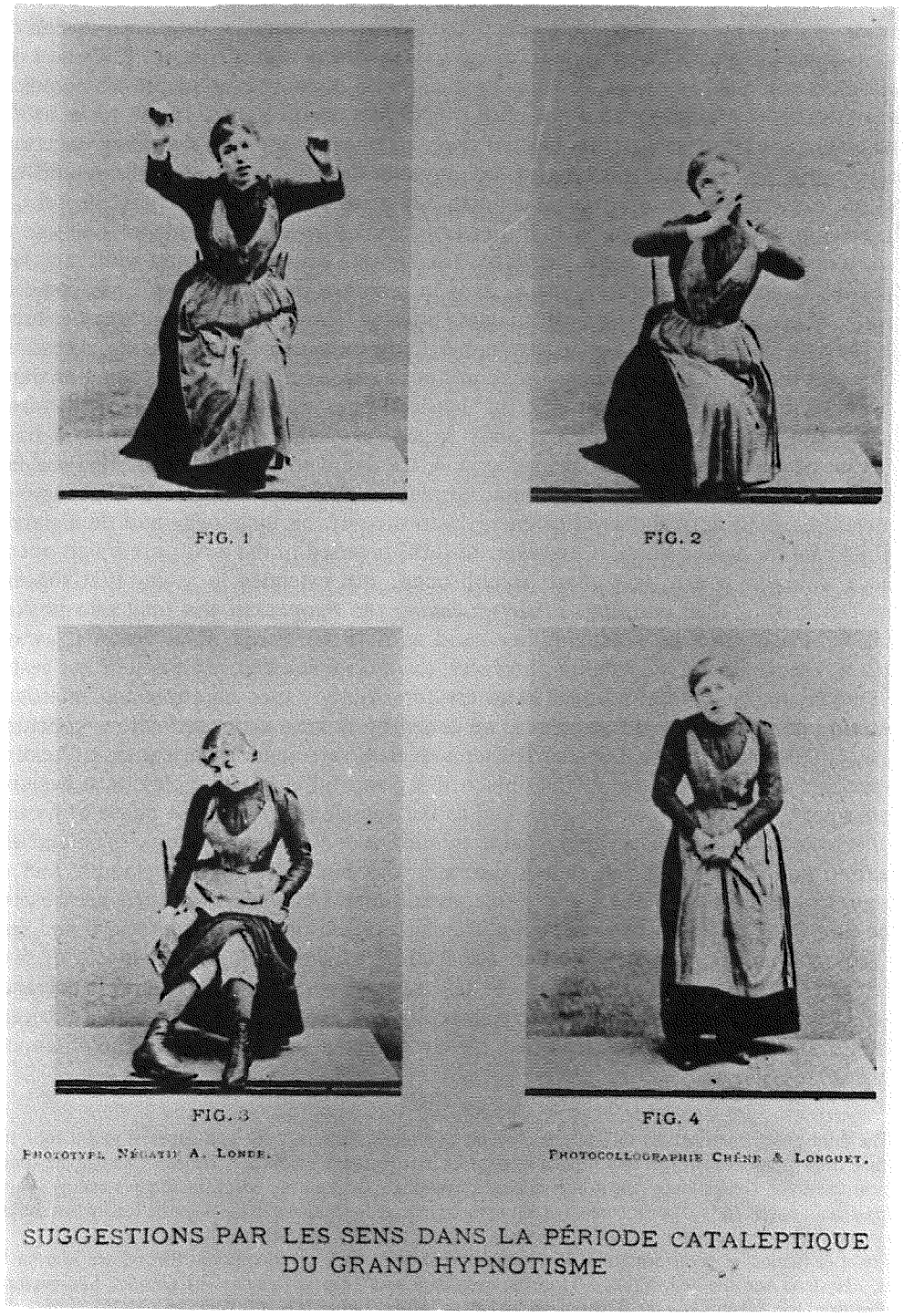
In the spring of 1986, Judy Dworin and I met with dancer Katharine Power, performance artist Lenora Champagne, and movement-analyst Brad Roth to investigate the iconography of the Salpêtrière. Since most of the people in this group were interested in movement, we started with pictures that formed parts of sequences, for example the set, photographed by Albert Londe, called «Sense Suggestions in the Cataleptic Period of Grand Hypnosis» (Figure 1). Ignoring the title, we simply analyzed the first four positions as if they were part of a dance: The woman lifts up her arms, but she is either getting up from her chair or about to sit down, and she is half holding her arms down. Next she is seated and prays,

[3] These journals are stored in the Charcot Library at the Salpêtrière Hospital and at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, as well as in various large medical school libraries around the world. Good reproductions of some of the plates can be found in Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention de l'Hystérie: Charcot et l'Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière* (Paris: Macula, 1982).

[4] This idea inheres in Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément's *The Newly Born Woman*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); originally published as *La Jeune Née* (Paris: Union Générale, 1975).

FIGURE 1

Photo: Albert Londe: SUGGESTIONS PAR LES SENS DANS LA PÉRIODE CATALEPTIQUE DU GRAND HYPNOTISME (1891), from an article by Guinon et Woltke, *Nouvelle Iconographie de la Salpêtrière*, **T. IV. PL. VI.; reproduced from Georges Didi-Huberman,** *Invention de l'Hystérie: Charcot et l'Iconographie Photographique de la Salpêtrière* **(Paris: Macula, 1982)**



but her body is twisted off-center. Still seated, she lifts her skirt to reveal a contortion of her legs in a effect of genital closure, which creates, however, an opening at her ankles. Then she is standing with her hands protecting her genital region while drawing attention to it.

We next turned to Paul Richer's chart of the sequence of postures he saw comprising what Charcot believed were the four phases of a regular attack of grand hysteria (Figures 2 and 3). We focused on Row J for enactment. What we found in the first position here elaborated on the tension we had seen in the contra-lateral pose of Figure 2 in the Londe sequence, a tension, as we saw it, between spirituality and sexuality expressed in a contradiction between the upper and lower body. In pose 1 below the line in Richer's Row J, the attitude is one of prayer, but the petitioner has her body arranged as if she is searching uncertainly with her upper body for the addressee of her prayer, while her lower body pulls in a different direction; her knees point one way, her torso and arms another. In the next posture, the body reclines with head facing in one direction, while the knee is bent on that side and turned away as if to protect the genitals. The figure looks toward and pulls her lower body away from a fixed point in space, as if in response to someone who has come into the room where the figure reclines. In the next position, she holds her arms over her breasts while twisting her lower body as if her upper body were detached from the accessibility of the lower body. Upon enactment, this third posture seemed to us to be acting as though one were giving in to penetration while at the same time not giving in, through detaching and protecting the upper part of the body from what is happening to the lower part.

In the next position of this sequence, pose 4, the figure points in a fashion that suggested to us accusation, and with her other hand displays a fist. This is followed by enactments of postures suggesting withdrawal of energy into the self, backing away and then standing up while backing away, which is however, in turn, reversed in the next pose by an opening out in a wide movement, legs apart, mouth open, arm extended in a way that suggested to me Delacroix's 1830 painting, *Liberty Leading the People*. In the final two positions in this sequence, the figure extends her hand as if to be kissed, then draws it away in a sudden refusal, her gaze extending, however, toward the implied addressee of her gesture.

Though we had initially intended to try for strictly dance notation and anatomical description of this movement sequence, we ended by talking about seduction, concluding that the final part of Row J in the Richer sequence represents a caricature of feminine role-playing. The figure poses as the object of a powerful gaze while playing subversively with her pose. What Charcot had classified as the «passionate attitudes» phase of hysteria, we interpreted as poses in an angry game miming a contradictory drama of submission, seduction, and retreat. We felt that a spectator was built into the movements, and that the represented figure signaled a desire to communicate, but wished to baffle her observer. In the first three positions of Row J in particular, we felt that something weird and secret was being staged that put the observer into the role of a voyeur, subject to covert sexual excitement[5]. As the sequence continued, we felt that the figure accused, withdrew, advanced, and then became frustratingly seductive, mocking the role of being the sexual object of another's gaze, acting instead as a seductively repulsive subject/object who disconcerts her viewer by suddenly saying no[6].

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[5] The third pose is particularly difficult to replicate accurately, especially for non-dancers; and it took much coaching from Brad Roth to get the torsion exactly as it is pictured by Richer. Lenora Champagne declined to repeat this pose, complaining that it hurt her back, and that, as in all the poses, the body's energy is always moving against itself. Judy Dworin compared her subjective state in this pose to the way she feels when subjected to a gynecological examination: «You're supposed to think it's OK, even though you don't.»

[6] For a discussion of transformation of a similar scenario in male psychoanalytic theory, see Martha Noel Evans, «Hysteria and the Seduction of Theory», *Seduction and Theory: Readings of Gender, Representation, and Rhetoric*, ed. Dianne Hunter (Urbana and Chicago: Univ. Illinois Press, 1989), pp. 73-85.

FIGURE 2

Paul Richer, *Etudes cliniques sur la grande hystérie*, **2nd ed. (Paris: Delahaye & Lecrosnier, 1985); Phot. Bibl. Nat., Paris; reproduced from Jan Goldstein,** *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* **(Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 238-239.**

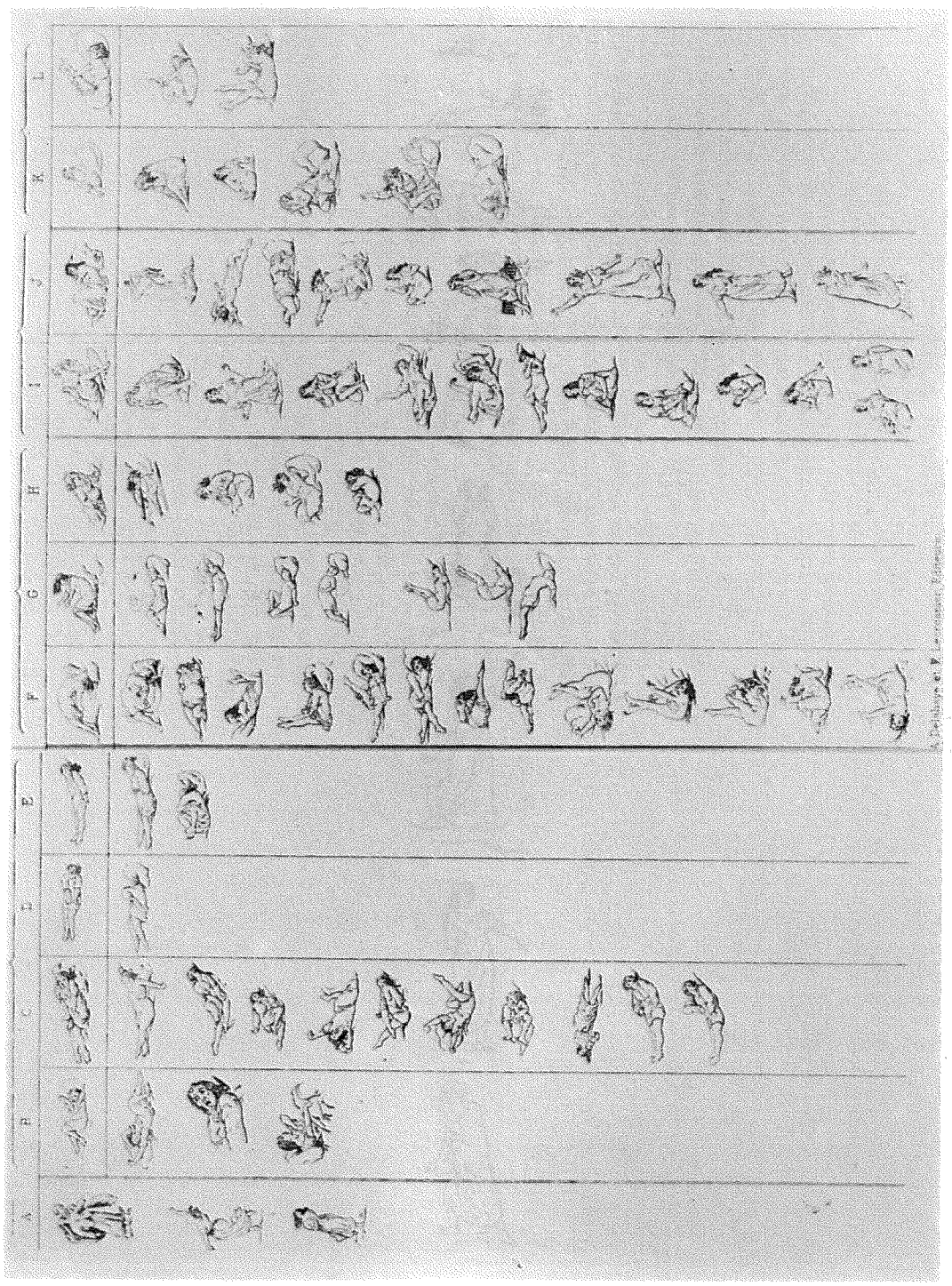

FIGURE 3

Richer sequence, Row J enlarged, from Didi-Huberman, *op. cit.*, p. 115

Judy Dworin expressed her sense of the Richer sequence in these lines:

> There is a game being played
> for an outside eye
> it is seductive
> sexual
> angry
> and totally contradicted
> there is a sense of play
> but also of fear
> there is a sense of performance
> and of deep pain.

In a description of her choreography for the show, Dworin wrote:

> this story became key to our approach to the piece
> the all-powerful gaze
> a seductive game
> struggle for power/control
> the entrapment of sexuality
> and the struggle for freedom — for free expression
> unencumbered by male dominance
> finding the female voice.[7]

In developing a scenario around the Richer sequence we felt we had the starting point for a dramatic metaphor for how we felt about patriarchal sexual politics; and we decided to develop through improvisations a dramatization of what we imagined the women who were the models for Richer's figures might have been trying to say. The images were voiceless, and we wanted to give them words, wishing to fill the gaps we felt in their communications by providing a context that would make their postures intelligible. It seemed to us that taking the poses to their conclusion involved performing them in a theater, not only because of the way the poses have an implied spectator built into them, but because of the way Charcot, at the end of his career, succeeded in theatricalizing madness for medical theory.

As Mary Russo has written of the Salpêtrière photographs, they are hyperbolic, and can be read as double representations. They are «mimicries of the somatizations of the women patients whose historical performances were lost to themselves and recuperated into the medical science and medical discourse which maintain their oppressive hold on women.»[8] This medical mimicry in a way doubles the idea of hysteria as simulated illness; and so, recognizing the Salpêtrière photographs as male-authored artistic representations, we decided to treat them as though they were real and at the same time to contextualize them as cultural constructions.

We hoped that in playing with hysterical mimesis we would not reduce ourselves to it, but could explore and clarify the space in which women were exploited by Charcot's discourse. By deliberately assuming the role of the feminine-as-the-surveyed, we were submitting ourselves to ideas that have been elaborated by patriarchal logic; but our intention, similar to what Irigaray has said of femininity as masquerade, was to make visible by an effect of playful repetition and contextualization what remains practically invisible in Charcot's theory: a possible operation of female social rebellion[9].

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[7] Judy Dworin, Choreographer's Notes for *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows*, unpublished.

[8] Mary Russo, «Female Grotesques: Carnival and Theory», *Feminist Studies/Critical Studies*, ed. Teresa de Lauretis (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 223.

[9] Luce Irigary, *This Sex Which is Not One*, trans. by Catherine Porter with Carolyn Burke (Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 1985), p. 76; originally published as *Ce Sexe Qui N'en Est Pas Un* (Paris: Minuit,1977).

We decided to animate the figures in the photographs and drawings in a fashion that could comment ironically on Charcot's verbal explanations of hysteria and on his role as a dominating, charismatic figure whose psychiatric authority was fraudulent, yet an advance on the clerical theory of demonic possession. We decided that making a credible drama out of the epidemic of hysteria associated with the Salpêtrière required a central male figure playing the role of a charming prick, a role similar to the one played by Jacques Lacan in Jane Gallop's *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction*[10].

As a basis for our work, we assumed that Salpêtrière hysteria was a kind of angry, coquettish, self-repressed dance; that this dance was dominated by an attractive male figure; that this figure objectified what he saw and reserved to himself the privilege of naming it; and that he took great satisfaction in displaying his hypnotic magnetism, power to dominate, emotional distance and verbal fluency. Our project was to subvert Charcot's objectifying pose as a lecturer and to dramatize how his involvement with hysteria undermined his position as a medical authority.

Since we saw in Charcot an avatar of male dominance and repressiveness, we decided that he should have various male reflectors as part of his drama, and that he should be opposed by a group of hysterics with personal histories connected to the history of women's struggles to overcome their position of being dominated and silenced. We wanted the drama to end in collective rebellion spurred by the articulation of rebellious speech spilling into rebellious movement as the result of collective female mutual gaze, culminating in tearing up Salpêtrière photographs and then their ritual burning.

We structured our performance to move from scenes staged, manipulated, and made theatrical by Charcot and his assistants to a drama dominated by female hysterics linked to women of the nineteenth century and today who finally dismay and render their doctors passive and speechless. Through this staging strategy, we wanted to give voice to the repressive silence forced upon hysterics by their cultural milieu, by history, and by psychiatric interpretations.

Since we wished to demonstrate how hysteria is the result of a shared, unconscious structure charged with anxiety, pleasure, and dismay for both the histrionic patient and the observers, we decided that the best vehicle for our show would involve environmental staging. We hoped to undermine Charcot's confident commentaries on his patients by devices such as exaggeration, slides, music, and dance, with which we hoped to appeal to the imaginations and emotions of our audience. In order to work out a playable scenario for this, Champagne, Dworin, Roth, and I worked with environmental set designer Jerry Rojo and a performance ensemble of students in an advanced undergraduate Theatre and Dance seminar titled «Representing Hysteria», team-taught by Judy, Lenora, and myself during the spring semester of 1988. This seminar culminated in a work-in-progress performance of *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows* that April.

The first part of this production began in the lobby of Trinity's Arts Center, where after purchasing tickets, the audience could absorb a display of photographs and simulated artifacts conveying historical information about the context of hysteria as used in the performance. The environment of the lobby showcased paraphernalia from modern media. A TV camera, lighting instruments, electrical cable and monitors set the stage for a Victorian Ladies interview, which served as our prologue and was the first acted scene of the piece. This environment mixed historical and modern images leading the audience back and forth in time, to unite the contexts of past and present. The show business, media-hyped atmosphere was designed to excite the audience to become searching and aggressive in its desire to take in the surroundings. The interview scene was played among the spectators, blurring the line between audience and performers, and set the tone for the production style, which encouraged the spectators to experience and perceive themselves as «performers» sharing the hysterics' role as centers

[10] Jane Gallop, *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction* (London: Macmillan, 1982), p. 36

of attention. While three Victorian women characters answered questions on their roles as, respectively, Lady of the House, Governess, and Maid, a Wild Woman interjected unruly shouts from a stairwell above them, counterpointing their sedateness with exhibitionistic movements and loud laughter; and she twice descended the stairs to break into the scene by attacking the assistant interviewer.

The second part of this production invited the audience to the Art Center's main proscenium theater, where a Lecture-Demonstration was presented. Actors appearing as newsmen in the Prologue had been transformed into Dr. Charcot and his assistant, Dr. Babinski. Now the audience took part in a formal and conventional theater environment with a single frontal relationship between audience and performers. The presence of a live, compact, attentive, orderly, arranged audience was supposed to emphasize Charcot's charisma. Like the historical model, our Dr. Charcot was in an ideal position to demonstrate his ideas and to exercise tactics of mind-control and persuasion on a passive audience.

The third and final section of this production used yet another part of the Art Center's theater complex. The audience was invited to a small «black box» theater adjacent to the main stage used for the Lecture Demonstration. The black box theater had been radically transformed into a very complex environment especially constructed for the section of our performance titled «The Wards». The room was completely filled with a variety of playing levels up to six feet high, stairways, aisles, underpasses, runways, and three banks of diagonally-facing tiered audience-seating areas containing about ninety fixed seats. Once members of the audience were seated they could not move about the space; and the frontal gaze arranged for the Lecture-Demonstration was now fragmented as performances took place throughout the space in a carnivalesque style in specially designated areas and among the audience. The effect was that while this arrangement allowed for good center-focus sightlines, many of the scenes and performances were played in areas where the spectators had a variety of vantage points from which to watch scenes. At times, simultaneous action was played around the room, forcing the spectator to choose what to observe and fragmenting the audience's gaze. The spatial metaphors established by this set worked to suggest the activity and content of the scenes. For example, a runway leading to a stage was reminiscent of a cabaret situation; and the semi-circular tiered seating suggested the dynamics of a medical theater. Spectators looked down on much of the action, rendering most poignant the plight of the hysterics in their private worlds on the wards. The function of this part of the piece was to engage the audience in the richness and complexity of the patients' fantasy life and to open to view a shared, unconscious set of images[11].

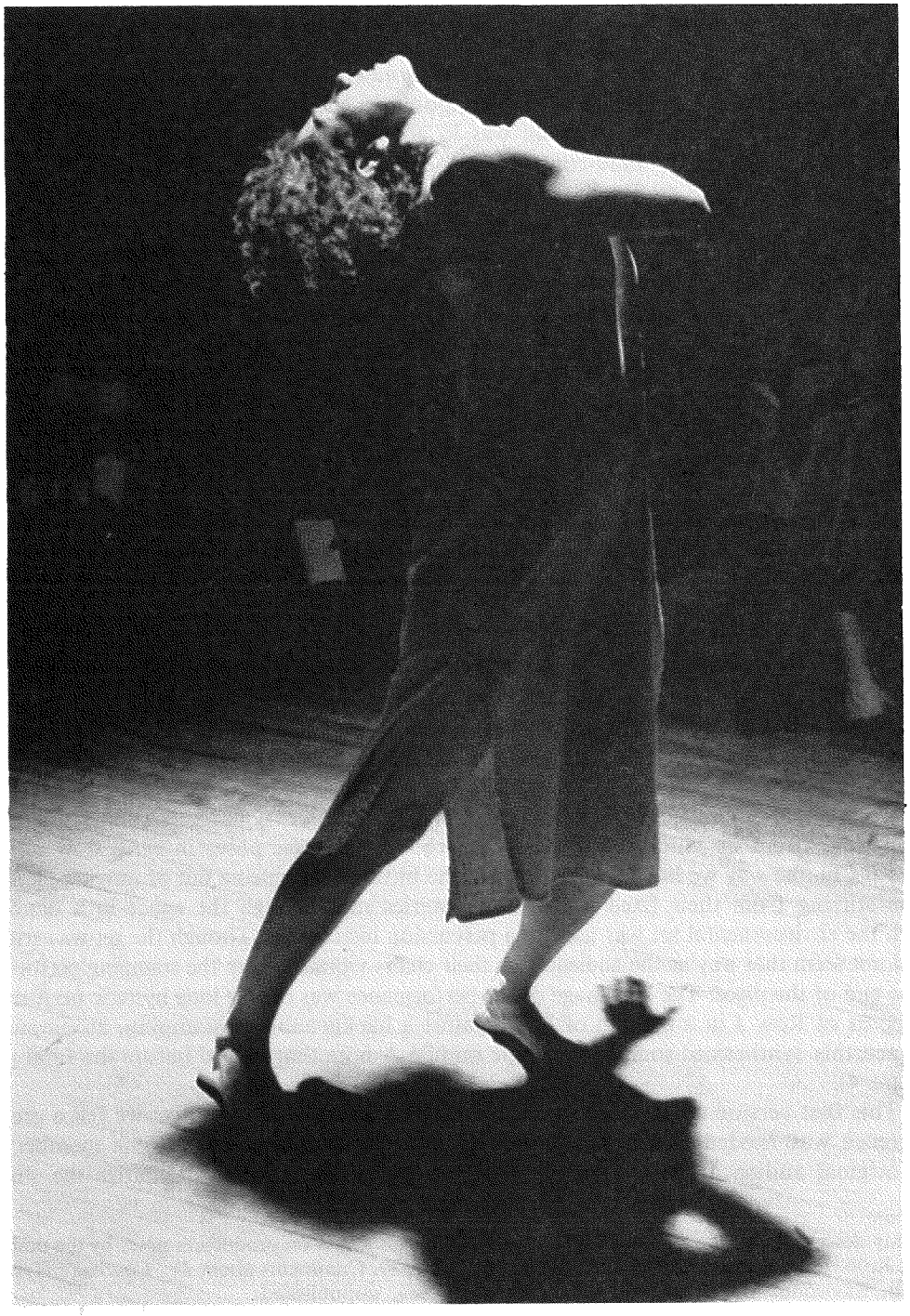
«The Wards» climaxed in an hysterics' ball in honor of Charcot's saint's nameday, and a final ritual in which the hysterics emerged from their poses in eerie slow motion in a Tai Chi-like way we hoped would suggest the birth of the cinema out of moving pictures. Upon stirring from their fixed poses, the hysterics ran through the space in a dance in which the environmental set was used as a percussion instrument. Though the set was sturdy, it did not seem that way as the audience felt their chairs vibrating with the stamping performers at the end of the piece. The last image of the performance was of one lone hysteric performing the poses of Row J in a column of light against a background of stamping, accompanied by unearthly synthesized sound — a single middle-A note that ceased before the final pose (Figure 4).

This first version of our piece proved to be emotionally powerful, yet we felt a greater coherence was needed overall and especially in «The Wards», where some members of our original audience felt lost and bewildered by our attempts to dramatize the shared

[11] My description of the set for the 1988 work-in-progress draws on production notes by the designer Jerry Rojo, «*The Hysteria Project*, PostMortem, Fall 1989, Comments about *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows*, Environmental Settings and the *Mise-en-Scene*», unpublished.

FIGURE 4

Judy Dworin as Isèlle, last scene of *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows*, Ohio Theatre, New York City, 1989. Photo: Vivian Selbo.



unconscious. While we were determined to have the finale take a carnivalesque, nonlinear form, we felt that the emotional intensity we had achieved in 1988 depended in large part on the environmental set built for part III, a set that would have been impractical to recreate for the short run we planned for the New York performances the following year. Therefore, we decided to try to develop a more coherent «through line» that would narrate in a more intelligible way what we took to be the significance for us of Charcot's staging of hysteria and the imagery we associated with it.

We had come to the conclusion that «grand hysteria» mimes profoundly disorganizing emotions in order to communicate these emotions to a spectator perceived as powerful, that such hysteria displays an anarchy of parts, a contradictory, ambivalent relation to gender, to the body, and to authority; and that in miming gender anarchy and anatomical anarchy, hysteria goes beyond words in a grotesque display that manages to be simultaneously alluring, comedic and disturbing. We wanted to stay with this interpretation of hysteria and keep the disorganizing effect of our first production; but we also wanted to tell a comprehensible story that would put hysterical display into an historical context within which we could ritualize expulsion of paralysis and move toward transcendence of, or flight from, the twisted forms of creative expression we saw in the poses.

To this end, our 1989 production enlarged what had been a small display of artifacts to include photographs of all the female hysterics in costume and in pose, with what purported to be case histories. To our more extensive display of still images we added a video tape which included players representing Freud, Cassandra, Charcot's Augustine-Freud's Dora, Herr K., and actresses announcing themselves as the Moser sisters, the daughters of Freud's patient Emmy von N.. Simultaneous with the video ran 80 slides projected by a revolving carousel on a 5-second timer. This slide show included Salpêtrière photographs and drawings, slides of paintings by the Belgian surrealist Paul Delvaux, which we chose for their somnambulism, frozen eroticism, and mordant views of sexual politics; and various images we had drawn on in developing the imaginary world of the piece, including Fuseli's *The Nightmare*, Robert--Fleury's *Pinel Delivering the Madwomen of the Salpêtrière*, the cover photograph of Hélène Cixous's novel *Souffles*, and various representations of Ophelia, Freud, Lacan, and Charcot.

In 1989, in place of the Victorian Ladies prologue, we substituted a dance of three witches interrupted by a witch brought in by a procession of priests and burned at the stake, in a position suggesting the end of Richer's Row J, followed by a dialogue between Florence Nightingale and her mother, who stood as if joined at the back and argued in overlapped speeches about Florence's role as a woman and her vocation as a nurse. Then followed in quick succession three emblematic scenes leading up to the Lecture-Demonstration, kept largely as it had been in 1988. To the Wards section we added a dancing master who doubled as a male hysteric in the Lecture-Demonstration and as Dr. Breuer in dream sequences and emblematic dance sequences on the Wards. This section staged a conspiracy by the hysterics, their rebellion, and the escape of the hysteric Augustine during festivities which ostensibly celebrated Charcot's nameday but which turned out to be his expulsion, led by the hysteric Isèlle, who hissed him off stage and then overturned his chair.

The story of the hysterics' rebellion and escape interpolated emblematic movement sequences linking Salpêtrière iconography with passages from Breuer and Freud's *Studies on Hysteria, The Interpretation of Dreams, Fragment of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria*, Anne Sexton's *Transformations*, Cynthia Macdonald's *Alternate Means of Transport*, Hélène Cixous's part of *The Newly Born Woman*, and written contributions by members of the performing ensemble; and the verbal climax of the performance was a Christine Spellman monologue spoken in the character of a modern Cassandra, a woman dressed in twentieth--century costume who addressed her rage to an image of Jacques Lacan projected over Charcot's vacant, upset chair. Cassandra's remarks about the power of the female gaze

seemed to release in slow motion the hysterics from their poses, and the piece ended as it had in the first version.

In sum, *Dr. Charcot's Hysteria Shows* portrayed the ways in which late nineteenth--century European androcentric society, compounded by Charcot's iconographic means of diagnosing and shaping his patients, led to the construction of a certain kind of hysteria at the Salpêtrière.

The iconography of this hysteria provides a rich metaphor for twentieth-century feminism's dynamic relationship to the forebears of modern Eurocentric women's subjectivity.

JUNGIAN APPROACHES TO LITERATURE

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Henry James Looks at the Unconscious in «The Last of the Valerii»

SUZI NAIBURG (*)

Like the ghosts that stalk Henry James's most famous tales, the disinterred statue of Juno in «The Last of the Valerii» (1874) attests to the power of the unconscious to demand attention. Once unearthed, Juno compels Conte Valerio's allegiance, and he becomes possessed by the ancient goddess. Thus James's tale is a testimony to the dangers of «exhum[ing] dormant primeval things» as Leon Edel has observed (James, *Supernatural* 70)[1] and a study of what happens when a weak ego excavates in the depths of the psyche.

In James's story a wealthy young American «who had the air and almost the habits of a princess» marries an «extremely handsome» Italian count, a man who touches «not only her heart, but her imagination» (71). The story is narrated by the Countess's godfather, who is a «painter of ruins and relics» (75). Even before the wedding, the Countess-to-be begins to refurbish the Count's ancestral property in Rome. Over his protests she orders excavations to begin. They are supervised by an «ugly, dwarfish man, who seemed altogether a subterranean genius, an earthy gnome of the underworld» (80). A magnificent statue of Juno is unearthed that bestirs the Count's unrestrained pagan devotion. The more obsessively he worships the marble goddess, the more he withdraws from his wife. The Countess discovers evidence of a blood sacrifice on Juno's altar and orders the burial of her rival to restore her marriage. Afterward the Count falls on his knees and buries his head in his wife's lap.

Several years after the main action of the story takes place, an inquisitive visitor asks the Count about a marble hand he sees suspended in a cabinet. The Count responds with this cryptic remark, which ends the tale.

> «It is the hand of a beautiful creature... whom I once greatly admired.»
> «Ah, — a Roman?» asked the gentleman, with a smirk.
> «A Greek», said the Count, with a frown. (102)

Even these sketchy clues suggest several questions to which a new interpretation could be addressed. What is the meaning of the Count's insistence that the statue is Greek rather than Roman? What is the significance of describing the excavator as a dwarfish man and underworld figure? What does the Count lose as well as gain when he returns to his wife?

James's story sets up an «either/or» situation: either the Count worships Juno and

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[1] Subsequent parenthetical references to this text will include page numbers only.

sacrifices his marriage, perhaps even his sanity, or Juno is sacrificed and the Count's marriage and wits are restored. My reading, however, suggests that it is a far richer and more complex tale then this simple dichotomy implies. While the narrator remains confused about the Count's personality, James's story has more to say than the narrator understands.

Unlike previous interpretations, mine is not aligned with the narrator, who disliked disturbing the surface of the earth and «especially objected to the personage who conducted the operations» (80). As a genre painter, the narrator literally translates three-dimensional reality into two-dimensional art. He creates surface out of depth. Yet depth, not simply the illusion, is what mattered most to James and dangerously compelled the Count.

The narrator and the Count define different positions with respect to the buried past. The narrator remains at a safe distance — close enough to eye the romantic images but not close enough to be deeply effected by them. The Count, however, becomes overwhelmed, haunted, and possessed. Between these two extremes lies the position of the Countess. Looking from another angle, the Count is caught between two women — between his wife, the guardian of their marriage, and his goddess, the divine embodiment of marriage. The tragedy of the tale lies in the Count's inability to hold an intermediate position between the two or mediate the demands of his goddess while still maintaining a fruitful relationship with his wife.

When Juno is discovered, both husband and wife are asleep. But while the Count is awakened by a dream «that they'd found a wonderful Juno, and that she rose and came and laid her marble hand on mine» (82), the Countess sleeps «dreamlessly it appeared» (83). The Count's dream occurs just as the statue is discovered. This is a significant coincidence. Applying Jung's theory of the psychoid layer of (or in) the unconscious, this synchronicity suggests that the Count's ego is vulnerable to invasion from contents deeply buried in the psyche and from unconscious materials profoundly constellated and potentially overpowering.

As the Count's experience demonstrates, such unconscious materials demand immediate attention and need to be mediated. When one is open to the psychoid layer of the unconscious, the boundary between the ego and the collective unconscious is very thin. In psychosis, for example, «the unconscious invades, assuming control of the conscious ego» creating «psychic confusion and chaos» (Samuels 123). In contrast, the Countess's dreamless state suggests that her ego boundaries are not fragile, that she is less likely to be overwhelmed by the disruptions of the unconscious, and that she may have the potential to mediate the energies of what appears at the door of consciousness.

As the Count is drawn toward Juno, he turns away from his wife. Soon he begins to treat Juno «... as if she were a sacro-sanct image of the Madonna» and keeps her hand like a «relic» in a «silver box» (86). The Count's pagan worship becomes an obsession. Whatever «mystery» Juno holds, holds sway over the Count (87). His ego is not strong enough to mediate or contain her overwhelming influence. The Count becomes possessed by a marble goddess. «'His Juno is the reality'», his wife declares; «'I am the fiction!'» (97).

From the beginning the Count acknowledges his affinity to paganism and his respect for the potency of what lies deeply buried in the dark recesses of psyche and soul. The Count is dissatisfied with contemporary religion because it lacks passion and authenticity. He longs for «a faith that was on terms of reciprocity with nature» (91) and betrays his belief about the old gods' continual presence.

> «It was in the caves and woods and streams, in earth and air and water, they dwelt. And there — and here, too, in spite of all your Christian lustrations — a son of old Italy may find them still!»
>
> He had said more than he meant, and his mask had fallen (92).

Clearly the picturesque, of which the narrator is so fond, does not satisfy the soul-

hungry Count, who is associated with Dionysus, Lord of Souls; Hermes, Guide of Souls; and Pan, whose «instinct», James Hillman tells us «is always in search of soul» (*Pan* lxi). The Count invokes Dionysus by his Latin name when he swears to being superstitious (80). He lets his imagination play over Hermes's statue as he envisions «the old feasts and the old worship» (89). The narrator thinks the Count had «betaken himself to communion with the great god Pan» after Juno's burial (102). Each of these gods reflects the paradoxical nature of reality — its darkness as well as its light.

Dionysus brings on madness, but he is also the loosener. Wine provides release as well as intoxication and ecstasy. Dionysus is the twice-born god. «The fullness of life and the violence of death both are equally terrible in Dionysus» (Hillman, *Pan* xix). Pan induces nightmares and panic, but he also brings healing dreams and creates a heightened sensitivity to nature and instinct, which can lead to insight. Fear can be a call to consciousness (Hillman, *Pan* xix). Hermes is a trickster and a thief but he is also «the god of connections, bridging realms and dissolving frontiers: between earth and the Underworld, men and gods, life and death» (Stassinopoulos 25). He is a maker of mischief and magic and a guardian of liminal space.

James's association of the Count with these gods connects him to their attributes: depth, complexity, paradox, longing, passion, confusion, and disruption in service of the soul. The gods the Count associates with his wife and the narrator appropriately represent forms of order, restraint, balance, and the regular cycles of things. «'Let them lie, the poor disinherited gods, the Minerva, the Apollo, the Ceres you are so sure of finding'»(79).

The Count cannot mediate the goddess's demands. He cannot live with Juno and his wife at the same time. Given the choice, he opts for Juno. With Juno buried, he returns to his wife. The Count's behavior seems to warrant reading the moral of the story as «the past is best left buried» (70). James's narrator would certainly agree. Yet James presents another voice that is rarely given its due although it is psychologically very astute. That voice belongs to the excavator, and it honors the wisdom of Dionysus, Pan, and Hermes.

Although the narrator is suspicious of him, the excavator is portrayed as «deft» (101), «a through adept», and «an expert» (80). Not only does he get the job done, but all his intuitions are confirmed. He «seemed to hint that excavations were sometimes a snare» and they were (81). He believed the Count took Juno's broken hand and he did. He expected that start quotation with that the Signor Conte would begin and say his prayers to her» and he does (96). Of all the characters in the story, the excavator understands the Count the best.

It is this dwarfish man who states what I take to be the moral of the tale:

> «I have fumbled so long in the monstrous heritage of antiquity that I have learned a multitude of secrets — learned that ancient relics may work modern miracles. There is a pagan element in all of us... and the old gods have still their worshipers» (96).

From a psychological point of view «we are still pagans» because our personalities are composed of many inner gods contending for power. Calling them «gods» acknowledges «their emotional power over us and the need to propitiate them, to attend to them, to give them conscious recognition — because if we do not, they rise and take their revenge» (Stassinopoulos 10). Analytical psychology confirms the excavator's insights.

> Our psychology is, to begin with, polytheistic, less out of religious confession than out of psychological necessity. The many-sidedness of human nature, the variety of viewpoints even within a single individual, requires the broadest possible spectrum of basic structures (Hillman, *Re-Visioning* xiv).

James provides another important clue to the value of the excavator's interpretation when he identifies him with dwarfs. Dwarfs are «preternaturally wise in matters of the

seasons and the soil.» Their «kinship to the earth» makes them naturally adept excavators (Appenzeller 8). In Teutonic mythology dwarfs «... lived in secret places, usually underground, and were endowed with supernatural intelligence and foresight...» (*New Larousse* 279). As the ones who mine and craft the earth's gold and who are «the rightful owners of buried treasures» (*New Larousse* 279), dwarfs are naturally the symbol «of the creative power of the unconscious» (Von Franz, *Feminine* 58). They are also «the creative companions of the Great Mother» (Kast 29).

The Valerian Juno is associated with the creative unconscious through her connection with the dwarfish, «earthy gnome of the underworld» (80). She is also associated with the overwhelming, unmediated forces of the unconscious because she is the focus of the Count's obsession. «Like all archetypes» Juno is an ambivalent figure because she «represents both potentially destructive and potentially creative energies» (Downing, *Psyche's* 33).

In the *Aeneid*, Virgil has Juno pay tribute to the power of the unconscious when she threatens, «If I cannot move heaven, I will stir up the underworld.» Freud takes this line as the motto for *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) because he also pays tribute to the poignancy and power of the unconscious. «In Virgil's poem, Juno speaks these words in desperation because she has failed to get help from the gods and thus must seek it from the infernal regions.» From a Freudian perspective, Juno's utterance suggests «that if the superior world (our conscious mind) refuses to respond to the unconscious, then the underworld of the unconscious will shake up this superior world» (Bettelheim 68-69). Juno creates such a stir in the Count's life.

In the language of James's text, Juno is a «resurgent goddess» (83), «a majestic marble image» (82), «a masterpiece of skill and a marvel of preservation» (82). «Her finished beauty gave her an almost human look...» (82). These descriptions come from the narrator and the Countess. Juno stirs their modern sensitivities, not just the Count's pagan ones.

> The beautiful image stood bathed in the radiant flood and shining with a purity which made her most persuasively divine. If by day her mellow complexion suggested faded gold, her substance now might have passed for polished silver. The effect was almost terrible; beauty so eloquent could hardly be inanimate.[2]

James thus associates the Valerian Juno with the deep, dark, repressed, pagan and archaic past; with moonlight, «celestial supremacy and repose» (82); with blood sacrifice; withdrawal, obsession, and possession; with beauty, art, and image; with the unconscious and the disruptive; with the transpersonal and the search for soul.

I believe Edel is correct when he reads «The Last of the Valerii» as a warning about the hazards of excavating in the unconscious. If the unaided ego is not strong enough to confront the unconscious and mediate its energies, it will be overwhelmed as the Count's is. The powerful forces within the psyche deserve to be respected. They can't, however, be ignored without inviting dangerous repercussions. There is no question that the descent into the unconscious is fraught with danger. But burying Juno or closing the door to what James calls «the deeper & darker and the unapparent in which things *really* happen to us» (Powers 101) involves a tremendous loss.

The ending of James's tale suggests the loss the Count suffers with Juno's burial. While the Count worshipped Juno, he kept her hand as a relic in a silver box. Hand relics were considered potent magic capable of healing. The hand symbolizes relatedness, connection, extension into the world, manipulation, effectiveness, and authority. Years after Juno's burial, the Count keeps her hand like a specimen suspended in one of the «inner recesses» of a cabinet (102). Dismembered and locked behind glass, the hand is removed from relationship

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[2] This excerpt is from James's first published version of the tale, which appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, January, 1874 (Aziz 277).

to the goddess and her numinous presence. Her hand no longer carries any potency. Its mundane housing reveals how diminished Juno's presence has become in the Count's life.

What is lost with Juno's burial is not only the Count's connection to all she personifies, but also his chance to establish a conscious relation to what she has stirred up and animated in his life. Unless Juno can operate symbolically in the Count's psyche, the possibility of a fruitful relation to her is cut off. The Count lacks the imagination to introject her image. He functions on too literal a level. Without her presence concretely before him, he loses touch. Unable to hold an image except as a real antiquity in his midst, he cannot bring the buried goddess symbolically back to life. The narrator's observation that the Count does not become «a thoroughly modern man» (102) suggests he does not adopt a safely picturesque faith in his accommodation to the superficialities of modern life. But neither does he rekindle a deeper passion of the soul.

The Juno/Hera distinction on which the Count insists when questioned by his rude visitor is a telling one. The Count's identification of the statue as Greek rather than Roman indicates that his affinities are more with Hera than with Juno, with the more poetic and older religious tradition of the Greeks than with the more functional, civic and secular tradition of the Romans. The Greeks personified their gods and goddesses and developed a rich literature and mythology about them. The Romans were more practically and politically oriented; their deities were more functionally defined. With these changes, it has been said, the civic tradition of the Romans «wholly lost its power over the hearts of men» (Perowne 78).

One of the narrator's descriptions of Juno reflects the Roman emphasis on her stately functions.

> Her beautiful head, bound with a single band, could have bent only to give the nod of command; her eyes looked straight before her; her mouth was implacably grave; one hand, outstretched, appeared to have held a kind of imperial wand; the arm from which the other had been broken hung at her side with the most queenly majesty (82).

The narrator interprets his god-daughter's response in a similar vein. «Martha ... seemed slowly to measure our Juno's infinite stateliness» (83). In Roman times Juno was the protector of the community. The Roman mint was in her temple. Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva were the «principal focus of Roman veneration» (Perowne 13). They formed the Capitoline triad, which became the symbol of Rome.

The older forms of Hera are far less political and point not to the state but to one of the oldest symbols of divinity — the Great Goddess, who often appeared in triple form (Gimbutas 97).

Hera's surnames are three — «the Maiden», «the Fulfilled», and «the Solitary» (Kerényi 117) — suggesting the fullness of the most ancient goddess. In Homeric legends the older and fuller range of her identity is narrowed to her unfulfilling matrimonial role in which she is seen as a raging, jealous, possessive and vengeful wife. As Robert Graves notes, Zeus's and Hera's marital conflicts reflect the uneasy dominance of the patriarchy over the deeply rooted tradition of matriarchy (54). The worship of Zeus dates from about 2,500 BC, but the worship of the Great Goddess, with whom Hera is connected, dates from 25,000 BC (Gimbutas, XiX).

Hera's double status as Zeus's sister and wife suggests her equality. Her annual return to bathe in the spring of Canathus to renew her virginity also suggests her completeness as a woman. Virginity, in the old sense of the word, describes a woman who is «one-in-herself». The power of the virginal goddess, Ester Harding explains, «does not depend on her relation to a husband-god» (125). Hera and the Great Goddess share the symbols of the cow and the Milky Way. Both goddesses are guardians of fertility and fecundity. In pre-Olympian Minoan Crete,

> ... Hera was a great earth mother who appeared in three aspects: as goddess of the mountains and wild animals, comparable to the Olympian Artemis: as nymph goddess who celebrated the sacred marriage with the cretan Zeus on Mount Ida; and as death goddess to whom the oracles were also subject and who was associated with the Python serpent, which symbolized the protection-giving and healing spirit of underworldly powers... She was the ruling goddess of pre-Hellenic Greece (Kast 49).

Hera's association with death and Python as well as «with the dark time of the new moon, with the month following the winter solstice, with child births that take place in caves, and with light issuing forth from darkness» (Downing, *Goddess* 73) suggests that completion as one finds in a woman who is «one-in-herself» cannot be accomplished without going through the dark — that is, without establishing a relation to the underworld of the unconscious.

The Countess is more closely associated with the Roman goddess and with Homer's Hera than she is with the older forms of Hera and the Great Goddess because the Countess looks for her completion in marriage. She has little connection to the older Hera, who is complete unto herself and whose completion involved an intimate connection to the dark, the unconscious, and death. As a young lover whose «consciousness revolves on a single center», the Countess's «contentment was perfect» (73).

> To stroll in the ilex-walk and feel her husband's arm about her waist and his shoulder against her cheek; to roll cigarettes for him while he puffed them in the great marble-paved rotunda in the center of the house; to fill his glass from an old rusty red amphora — these graceful occupations satisfied the young Countess (76).

«In her tinted prettiness» (72), the blond Countess lacks the darker aspects of the ancient goddess. She is characterized primarily by devotion to her husband carried even to ridiculous extremes. «She would sit and brush the flies from him while he lay statuesquely snoring...» (76).

The Countess is more closely associated with Juno as the symbol of marriage than she is with Juno/Hero as Queen of Heaven, sovereign unto herself. Unlike Juno, the Countess is not and does not function as a transpersonal figure, an image of the divine. The «either/or» dilemma the Count experiences in having to choose between Juno and his wife expresses the opposition between inner and outer and between unconscious and collective, which at certain stages in our development may be in «deadly conflict» (Johnson 63).

Juno and the Countess both function as anima figures in the Count's life but they function in different ways. The anima represents the principle of relatedness to one's inner self, to the collective unconscious, to the unknown and the unknowable. Juno functions as an anima figure by drawing the Count away from the surface of his life represented in one sense by his marriage. Juno turns the Count inward — into moodiness and entanglements with unconscious energies that drive his obsession. Juno disrupts the order of the Count's life with the allure of another, deeper dimension of experience that also includes the transpersonal. The Count's obsessive worship of Juno indicates that she operates autonomously within his psyche, that she has overwhelmed him and taken possession of him because he has not yet consciously established a relation to her and to all she represents. Marie-Louise von Franz explains that

> ... every content of the unconscious with which one is not properly related tends to obsess one for it gets at us from behind. If you can talk to it you get into relationship with it. You can either be possessed by a content constellated in the unconscious, or you can have a relationship to it. The more one represses it, the more one is affected by it (*Redemption Motifs* 103).

The Countess also operates as an anima figure in the Count's life but in a different way. By beginning the excavations, the Countess also disturbs the surface of her husband's life and propels him into a confrontation with a darker, deeper, more ancient and ambivalent image of the feminine. She opens the way for his descent but does not follow. By ordering Juno's burial, the Countess brings her husband back to himself and back into relationship with her. She is a Juno on earth, a guardian of their marriage.

The potential alternative to the story's «either/or» dilemma lies with the Countess. She is not as vulnerable to invasion or possession by unconscious material as her husband is. Her decisive ordering of Juno's burial is a testimony to her ego strength and her ability to bring her husband back into functioning human relationships and day-to-day realities. She is also not as attached to the surface of things as her god-father. She brings «the earthy gnome of the underworld» (80) literally into her Edenic gardens to search below the surface. She has the desire for something to which her young Yankee trading world did not have direct access. She marries into an older culture, a culture that was other than her own, and searches for its ancient and symbolic roots. Her tears in Juno's presence attest to her receptive admiration of what is unearthed.

The Countess thus stands between her god-father and her husband, between resistance and obsession. But in the context of the story, she is unable to actualize the potential of this intermediate position. In «The Last of the Valerii» James does not find a way to mediate the energy of what is buried although he places a woman in the pivotal position to do so as he does in «The Beast in the Jungle», *The Sense of the Past*, and «The Jolly Corner». When James visited an Italian villa in the early 1870s, he saw «the head of the great Juno, thrust into a corner behind a shutter» (70). Sadly, only a fragment of her remained.

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Mass Consciousness, the Unconscious and Individuation: A Reading of Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*

PETER CAPUTO (*)

Pirandello's Six Characters in Search of an Author has stimulated audiences ever since its riotous reception in Rome in 1921. It has set before us, with humor and pathos, the spectacle of the modern psyche in fragments; it has mercilessly reminded us of the tormented search for the «author» of our sometimes shabby and unresolved lives. It has dramatized the rude and repetitious struggle to identify the force behind our passionate but often senseless behavior. It has awakened many to the fine distinctions between the real and imaginary, art and life, truth and falsehood. Pirandello's masterpiece has created many contexts — and it continues to surprise and enchant. In this discussion, I would like to focus on the function of the unconscious in «Six Characters».

Carl Jung has warned us that modern man is victimized by the unconscious and that his task is indeed to become aware of the contents that press upward. The more we deny the unconscious[1], excluding it from everyday life, the more its danger increases. The unconscious, Jung tells us, must be given its way as much as possible[2], for psychic health depends heavily on our accomodating the nether self. The search for wholeness, the process of individuation, as Jung calls it, involves withdrawing into the wilderness and listening to the voice that whispers somber truths, that pleads with us to absorb those truths and relinquish whatever is banal and comfortable in the surface world of mass man — safe, conventional, predictable. This is the world in which the ego is content, and the unconscious, anything but a crowd pleaser, is the arch enemy of that public life in which we all take refuge, avoiding risk at any cost. But the unconscious, embraced or
denied, will have its way.

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[1] Carl Jung, «The Practical Use of Dream Analysis», in *The Essential Jung*, Ed. Anthony Storr (Princeton: Priceton University Press, 1983), 180.

[2] Carl Jung, «Conscious, Unconcious, and Individuation», in *The Essential Jung*, Ed. Anthony Storr (Priceton University Press, 1983), 225.

«Six Characters» is a compelling exposition of the psyche's power to haunt the individual who refuses to acknowledge the call of the dark, the reality and needs of the unconscious. In the opening scene, the Director rehearses a play with the actors of his company. In walk six people in search, they announce, of an author. These six have an incomplete drama, seek a stage on which to perform and develop that drama, and need an author who could create a script for their story. The Director attempts to send them away. The characters protest that they are not people, not actors looking for work, but characters who have sprung from the head of an author who has decided, for unknown reasons — perhaps boredom, frustration — to abandon them. The Director and the members of his company are amused, even fascinated, and so the characters tell their story, or rather the audience pieces it together as they relate the details of their past, arguing intermittently with each other, battling the Director over the issue of their legitimacy, agonizing over their plight as incomplete entities and managing in the course of all this to «stage» for the Director and his company the two most fully realized events of their half-lit world. The story we frame is briefly this: The Father, seeing that his wife and the clerk he employs are in love, and that they suffer as a result, arranges to send the two away — to enjoy the relationship that would otherwise be prohibited. Years later, after the clerk's death, the wife returns with three illegitimate children. The Father, who knows nothing of their return, one day propositions his stepdaughter, now eighteen and working in the shop of a Madame Pace, whose atelier is the front for a brothel. As the unknown Stepdaughter is about to undress, the Father escapes infamy when the Mother suddenly walks in, recognizes her husband, and screams. Afterwards, he offers to take his wife and three illegitimate children home. They rejoin him and the Son from the first union and the house quickly fills with tension and bitterness: a humiliated father, demoralized mother, cynical stepdaughter, resentful legitimate son and the two other stepchildren, a Child who one day dies by accidental drowning and a fourteen year old Boy who, seeing his sister violently die, shoots himself. The Boy's suicide, one of the two scenes the characters perform for the Director, is in fact part of the play's final scene, and leaves us with the stunned actors of the company debating the «reality» of the boy's death, the six characters disappearing behind the curtain. The Director, who has «had enough», mourns the loss of a «whole day's work», tells the company to return in the evening, and, alone now on the dark stage, calls for some light. A green light appears, projecting the shadows of the characters minus the two children, now «dead». The Director scurries from the stage in fear. Slowly from the side of the stage the Son, Mother and Father emerge — and the Stepdaughter — she, pausing, laughing impishly and running from the theater. Curtain.

What have we here? For the moment, imagine the characters as abandoned fragments of a psyche reluctant to face the demands of the unconscious. Consider that these strange figures have surfaced in spite of the author's neglect, insisting that he face unacknowledged wounds. One of the first clues to this possibility is the fact that the characters disrupt. They disrupt a rehearsal of what will eventually be a public event — and they do this throughout. Indeed, the whole play is a disruption, an interruption of something being prepared for public approval. Are not the characters attempting to substitute the real stuff of passion and agony (and they demonstrate their suffering in nearly every scene) for the dramas that are prepared to please the bland and trivial world, the world of masks, deception and self-deception, mass paralysis — in short, the world of the Director's playhouse, where nothing profound ever goes public, rises to consciousness? «Truth doesn't come into it», says the Director. «This place is a theatre. Truth's all right, but only up to a point.»[3]

[3] Luigi Pirandello, «Six Characters in Search of an Author», in *Luigi Pirandello: Collected Plays* (Vol. 2), Ed. Robert Rietty, trans. Felicity Firth (London: John Calder, 1988), 49. All subsequent references are to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text.

Thus, the characters have, the Father tells us, attempted everything in their power to persuade the author to give them their stage life, tempted him, at tender moments and in the shadows of his «cheerless study»(58), to give them form and, let us say, a certain publicity.

Then, too, we have the characters' request for a script, for «someone to transcribe it»(30), as the Father says. The characters need a book, a finished story; they need, above all, resolution, for in being denied life, as the Father describes it, they are doomed to a grotesque and repetitive suffering. «It's happening now. It happens all the time», the Mother says of her torment, and the Father refers to their suffering as «the eternal moment»(52). Does this stasis, this hellish and permanent pain, not suggest the very condition of the repressed psyche, and does this search for a finished narrative, for closure, not speak of the unconscious taking matters into its own hands when the ego stubbornly maintains its comfort? The ego resists, and the weird phantoms of our past push upward with fragments of our history, a bit incoherent perhaps, but with just enough of the story and plenty of pain to make themselves known. How appropriate that several of the characters are dressed in black. Though they are, they tell us, in mourning for the clerk, the second father, who has recently died, they mourn also, I think, themselves and their author, the self that will not grow.

We have, also, the lively, sometimes funny debate over the issue of the characters' legitimacy. «You're destroying the miracle, for that's what it is. Reality itself kindled into life, conjured up, brought into being by the scene itself and drawn towards it, with more right to life in this place than you have. She has more truth than you have»(39), the Father tells the Director, speaking of Madame Pace; and later, when the Director mockingly says, «now tell me that you and this play of yours are more real and true than I am»(57), the Father replies, «of that there can be no doubt at all.» These issues, emerging repeatedly in the play, speak eloquently of the autonomy and integrity of the psychic underworld, as the unconscious protests that it indeed has a life of its own and that it will not be compromised by the false dramas we enact for others and for ourselves. The struggle between the six characters and the actors of the company is, in a sense, the tension between the cowardly ego, with all of its false selves manufactured to obliterate the frightening figures of the underworld, and the unconscious — which knows better than to authenticate the so-called realities artfully constructed by the conscious self. «I admire your actors», the Father tells the Director, «but there's no doubt about it — they're not us»(48). Thus, when the Leading Man and Leading Lady of the company attempt to play the scene in Madame Pace's dress shop, the Father shouts, «No» and the Stepdaughter bursts out laughing(46), later telling the Director, «Oh, no, you don't! You want to use my feelings of disgust, you want to use all the cruel and humiliating stages by which I became the thing I am, to concoct a sentimental little romantic sob-story»(49). The pain at the core can never be stylized by the false characters of our ego. To stylize is to trivialize, to lie. The unconscious, of course, cannot be lied to.

All of which brings us to the author himself. What do we know of him? Much, we might say. Pirandello discusses at length, in his Preface to the 1925 edition, the process by which he rejected the characters that pleaded for form. We may wish to argue, then, if we accept for the moment our approach to the play, that Pirandello «the author» has rejected not simply the offspring of his poetic imagination but the unbearable figures of an intolerable underworld drama. «They show me their wounds and I chase them away»[4], Pirandello writes to his son, speaking of the characters' birth and first request for form. And in the preface to the play, he tells us: «It became increasingly difficult for me to get rid of them, their task of tempting me became increasingly easy. There came a point

[4] Gaspare Guidice, *Pirandello: A Biography*, trans. Alastair Hamilton, (London: Oxford University Press, 1975), 111.

where they had become a positive obsession»(xiv). Now, perhaps it is sufficient to name Pirandello (in the context of our argument) as the «author» in flight from the unconscious and to see the play, then, as a metaphor for the resulting psychological processes we've described. Indeed, it is by now well known that Pirandello was haunted by the deterioration of his family life — his wife's mental collapse, the infamous charge of incest she levelled against her husband and daughter... (the germ of the characters' story — the Father's pathetic effort to accomodate his wife, come to terms with a situation he did not create, acknowledge his own powerlessness in the face of irrational forces, deal with rejection — certainly requires more critical attention than it has received). But a case for «Pirandello as Author» oversimplifies, and in returning to «Six Characters» in the final minutes, let's consider the Director who, given the terms of our discussion, seems to come forward in a surprising way.

The Director, we quickly learn, is a safe and prudent man — who detests experimentation. In the opening scene, he rehearses an abstruse Pirandello play, The Rules of the Game, but only because there are no «good» plays from France. He is a man given to satisfying the public. He is decent, orderly and rather stubborn about what the public needs. In fact, all he knows is the public — and he measures everything by audience response. «That's as may be. It will never do on the stage»(23), he says at one point. This is the precept driving him throughout. So, when the characters arrive, they bring the real (and unsafe) drama, the play not fit for public consumption; it will satisfy no one, least of all the author's ego or «stage self». «I could put you in touch with someone», the Director in his cowardly way tells the Father:

> FATHER: Oh, no! Don't do that! You be the author!
> DIRECTOR: Me? How could I?
> FATHER: Yes, you! Why not?
> DIRECTOR: I've never written a play in my life!
> FATHER: Well then, why not start now?(30)

The Director struggles with this from scene to scene. Is it he they seek? Is it he who will not admit the undesirables of his psyche while he arrogantly attempts to recast their story, stylizing, sentimentalizing, falsifying it for his conscious self and his equally repressed audience? It is no accident that he, above all, argues so feverishly with the Father over the issue of what is real. The Father repeatedly teases him with the concept of a hidden self, a finer wisdom: «I am actually asking you to set aside your game a moment... your art, the art you practise here with your actors, and consider my question, my serious question which I repeat: who are you»(56)? The smug Director believes he knows who he is, what is real, what is fit for performance. «Oh that would go down a bomb», he tells the Stepdaughter. «You'd bring the whole theatre about my ears»(49).

And so we begin to wonder if the «author» in question does not perhaps stand before us throughout, if the desperodoes of the Director's wounded psyche have not come before him, demanding that he probe the obscure depth, acknowledge pain, tell their (his) story and begin the difficult work of integrating the personality — with all the risks born of courage and confession. In the final scene of the second edition, as the Director, alone on the dark stage, cries, «Good God! You might have left me a light or two to get out by»(68), the giant shadows of the characters are projected by the strange green light. They are back, offering him, it seems, a final chance to believe that the events of the day have been not a sport but an opportunity for him to find his «way out» of a far more malignant darkness (how prophetic the Stepdaughter's early words to the Director: «We could make your fortune»(10). Yet, he flies from the stage, terrified. He is not ready, not yet at least, to answer the call. He will abandon them in that condition of immobility, partiality, irresolution. «There's no place for you here, as yourself»(36), he tells the Father

bluntly at one point. «The images of the unconscious place a great responsibility upon a man», Jung warns us. «Failure to understand them... deprives him of his wholeness and imposes a painful fragmentariness on his life.»[5]

It may be a stunning irony that Pirandello, the rebellious, unorthodox, ever-experimenting genius, created in the timid and conservative Director the character that best articulated his inability to play out some of the traumatic episodes of his past. Yet, there would seem to be a logic to this, and we cannot help but pause with some suspicion when Pirandello tells us in his Preface that because he could discover no «value and meaning»(xiv) in the tale the characters initially bring to him for completion, their story, in all its glorious disarray, would ingeniously be made the subject of a play. True, of course, in one dimension: The artful presentation of the very characters the writer has rejected. But what we have also, it seems, is a re-staging of Pirandello's original act of evasion, where «value and meaning» could not be found, as the Director struggles with the very problems the playwright tells us he himself faced. The one-dimensional Director, unable to penetrate surfaces and so often seen by critics as a satirical character with blood ties to neither the creative artist nor his six offspring, may finally be Pirandello's truest kin, the author himself — simply relocated to the stage and made to reflect Pirandello's own ineptitude in the face of those obscure shadows of the psyche. The challenge has, in a sense, traveled full circle. No resolution, really, and not quite the «hitting on a way out»(xiv), as Pirandello rather glowingly maintains, having cast the conflict to art, for art, it appears, has cast the conflict back. A masterful monument to unfinished business, a brilliant commentary on the ego's wealth of strategies to avoid the images of the unconscious. Perhaps Pirandello senses his fraternity with the obstinate Director when he writes, «They yelled their explanations at me, flung their unruly passions in my face just as they do in the play with the luckless Director»(xii). Perhaps not. Or perhaps his confrontation with the demon-prophets of his unconscious involved more courage than we will ever guess. No matter. The study of the unconscious through «Six Characters» requires neither Pirandello's biography nor his commentary. The haunting of the rigid Director by those battered yet heroic and enterprising dark-clad figures tells the story best: The unconscious will pursue the sabotaging ego. It will offer a choice: Produce the script of an unseemly story with a macabre cast of characters, and perhaps be healed; or remain unchanged in the leaden comfort of banality and ignorance — and welcome damnation.

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[5] Carl Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Ed. Aniela Jaffe, trans. Richard and Clara Winston (New York: Pantheon Books, 1973), 193.

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Psychobiography: Jean Racine — A Jungian Case Study

JACQUES BENZAKEIN (*)

Although Jean Racine began his work in 1664 under the sign of Oedipus with the *Thebaïde*, it is in his third play *Andromaque* (1667) that the signifying structures which will be repeated in the rest of his works became established and I see this play as the prototype of his theater. It is as if it were a ball of string from which Racine pulled different threads one by one to develop them along a definite, though unconscious progression.

On the psyche-like stage of the French classical theater bound by the three unities of time, action and place, Racine unconsciously created his own myth centered on the repetitive archetypal motif of the oedipal triangle composed of a **Symbolic** «Mother», «Father», «Son/Hero»*.

The «Father» who is typically a king or an emperor is the legitimate representative of the Social Order and there is an evolution in his role which forces an evolution in the relationships between the two other members of the triangle. In the plays from *Andromaque* to *Bajazet*, the «Father» is either dead or absent. In either case, he is powerfully omnipresent

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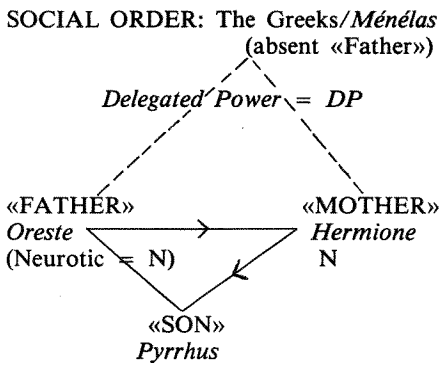
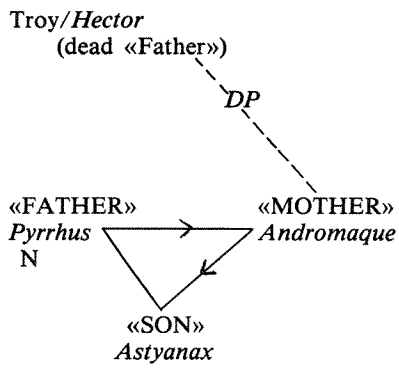
* In *Andromaque*, there are in fact two triangles (> = Desire):

Triangle One



Triangle Two



through the «Mother». When present, as in *Mithridate, Iphigénie* and *Phèdre**, he is weak, capricious and abuses his authority. In this progression, *Phèdre* continues the modality which had first appeared in the previous play, *Iphigénie* — namely the opening toward the world of the gods**, outside the familial scene. We now have dei ex machina who will intervene to fulfill the capricious demands of the earthly «Father». In the biblical plays, these «gods» eventually become the Jansenist «God» — a God who is as mean, blind, demanding and inflexible as his pagan predecessors.

Typically, the «Mother» is a «Devouring Mother» who is either the delegate of the «Father's» authority or has usurped it and the «Son» will always attempt to free himself from her. There is only one good «Mother» in Racine's theater: Andromaque. She is the (biological) mother of the very young child Astyanax*** with whose safety she has been entrusted by her dead husband Hector****. Like with the other «Mothers» her son receives the image of his father through her (*Andromaque*, I, 4).

The chronology of the plays is, as Lucien Goldmann observed, also the order of their internal logic[1] and the evolution of the «Son» follows this order. There is indeed a traceable progression which develops from *Andromaque* to *Phèdre* and culminates in *Athalie*. In Jungian terms, we first see in *Andromaque* the archetypes of the «Divine Child» (Astyanax) in the arms of the «Great Mother», along with the rebellious «Adolescent» (Pyrrhus), the «Submissive Child» (Oreste when he first arrives). Both are also young adult «Princes» in love with a «Princess». In the remainder of the plays we will see these stages as so many rites of passage beginning in *Britannicus* where the «Adolescent Prince» Néron sees his desire impaired by his «devouring Mother» and violently frees himself. In *Bérénice*, the young «Adult» Titus could rule if only he could separate himself from the smothering «Mother» figure (Bérénice). Next, in *Bajazet*, the «Son» (Bajazet) wants no compromise and wants to act in good faith but compromises himself anyway because he plays a game of quidproquo. With *Mithridate*, once he enters the world where the «Father» is present, the «Son» now has a double (Pyrrhus/Oreste, Xipharès/Pharnace). The «Father» is obsessed and emasculated but still detains all the power. The choices of the doubles are either submission and survival or transgression and death. The «Sons» thus go from the submissive to the rebellious, attempting to claim their freedom from the «Mother» and to ally themselves with or be equal to the «Father».

The other characters (those who are not part of the triangle) act as catalysts in the relationship of the three members of the triangle. Be they good or bad confidantes, objects of desire or advisors, they are there to give form to the discourse, to receive and «rekindle» the discourse of the members of the triangle. They are then primarily receivers whose task is to echo the discourse of the «Father», «Mother» or «Child». The bad counselors like Narcisse (*Britannicus*) and Oenone (*Phèdre*) will foster the upsurge of the dark side of their personality (the Unconscious). The good ones like Burrhus and Pylade will encourage them to submit to the demands of the Social Order (the Conscious). As one aspect of their personality, they will help them choose the direction they will give to their discourse and hence to their actions. It is well known that in Racine's theater, the stage is very bare and that the action resides entirely in the discourse of the characters. To speak is to act said Barthes. Expressing one's desire by fixing the signifier on the signified is what forces the action.

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[1] Lucien Goldmann, *Le Dieu caché*, Paris: Gallimard, 1959, 352.

* In *Phèdre* Thésée is absent, thought dead at first and, upon his return behaves like his two predecessors, Mithridate and Agamemnon.

** Of which we already had an inkling in the omnipresent dead Hector in *Andromaque*.

*** Whom we never see.

**** The first «Deus ex machina» in Racine's theater.

The conflictual relationships in Racine's theater reside entirely in a dialectic of desire where there is a clear difference between *desire* and *love*; between the desire of Pyrrhus for Andromaque or Roxane for Bajazet (neurotic demands for confirmation) and the love, that Barthes in his *Sur Racine* calls «l'éros sororal»[2]. In Racine's plays, desire is violent, demanding and blind, a manifestation of a violent push from the Unconscious bursting on the surface of the Conscious. On the other hand, love is sweet and gentle. It would be legitimate if it weren't that the «Father» (or his representative) forbids it. But, whether desire or love, both are symbols of defiance and of transgression of the power of the «Father» and therefore of the Law he represents. Both are the cause of the inner conflict that tears the individual apart, sets him at war with himself and always ends with the death of the one who dares to act on his/her desire (even if it is a living death as for Oreste, Néron and Titus).

In each play, there is one deluded character who will trigger the crisis when s/he no longer represses his/her obsessive desire. Since this desire goes contrary to the authority of the «Father», it is therefore illegitimate and cannot be fulfilled. This person will manifest the symptoms of an obsessional neurosis which degenerates into a full blown psychosis as Jung defines it, i.e. «a condition in which certain mental activities appear spontaneously out of the Unconscious.»[3] A character whose Persona collapses and in whom the negative side of the personality takes over[4] when a downward movement of the libido occurs as a result of the conflict the individual experiences in terms of his external relationships[5]. In the need to fulfil his/her contraried desire, s/he is dominated by the autonomous complex which rises from the Unconscious and destroys once and for all the precarious equilibrium which existed up to that point. For the neurotic, the object of desire is the *obsessive signifier of freedom, of equality to the «Father»*. If s/he does not sink into insanity like Oreste and Hermione, s/he is always on the brink (Néron, Mithridate, Phèdre). Cunning, s/he becomes a hypocrite and hides in order to trap his/her victims. S/he constantly hesitates between duty and desire. One instant s/he wants to conform then topples over into violent defiance the next. When lucid, this character rationalizes his/her choice of evil action. S/he doesn't recognize him/herself and actually refuses to know him/herself preferring to give in to the outburst of the forbidden content no longer repressed in the Unconscious (Hermione, Phèdre). The character is aware of the conflict raging within and recognizes his/her own neurosis: «I fear to know myself in my present state» says Hermione (*Andromaque*, II, 1). Phèdre who is ultimately the most lucid about the split within her, at her guiltiest and most regressive stage descends to her own famil(y)ar mythical figures deep inside her psyche: The Sun, her grandfather and Minos, her dead father, judge in Hades.

This character is paranoid and narcissistic and sees himself/herself the object of plots, persecution and hatred of the gods. Oreste thinks that Pyrrhus will marry Hermione to deprive him of her (*Andromaque*); Eriphile thinks that the gods favor Iphigénie only to torment her (*Iphigénie*); Phèdre gives up her last scruples when she finds out that Hippolyte loves another (*Phèdre*). S/he wants so violently to be the object of the desire of the Other that s/he is ready to kill once s/he realizes that he has been completely rejected. S/he is always ready to commit suicide once the object of his/her desire has been eliminated. Suddenly very lucid, everything becomes very clear — either s/he possesses or s/he destroys and perishes.

In the chronological order of the plays, beginning with *Andromaque* which has one

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[2] Roland Barthes, *Sur Racine*, Paris: Ed. du Seuil, 22.

[3] C. G. Jung, *The Integration of the Personality*, trans. S. M. Dell, New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1939, 7.

[4] C G. Jung, Archetypes: Shadow; Anima; Animus; the Persona; the Old Wise Man, in *The Essential Jung*(Ed. Anthony Storr), Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983, 93.

[5] Ira Progoff, *Jung's Psychology and its Social Meaning*, New York: Grove Press, 1953, 131.

example of each, this character will in turn (and to varying degrees) be each one of the members of the oedipal triangle. First, it is the «Son»: «Pyrrhus/Son»*, «Oreste/Son»**, Néron, Titus. Then it is the «Mother» (as representative of the «Father»): Hermione, Roxane, Phèdre. Finally it will be the «Father» himself: «Pyrrhus/Father»***, «Oreste/Father»****, Mithridate.

The plays begin in medias res, at the time when the crisis is on the verge of explosion. From the very first scene, we are aware that all the characters know there is a crisis. But one must speak, even to say nothing, in order not be silent said Barthes[6]. As long as the signifiers glide over each other and no one has named the «thing», life goes on.

The neurotic/psychotic character, is the one who ends up refusing once and for all to play this game of precious discourse of the Persona («discours précieux», «vous») made up of empty words which has served to maintain equilibrium and order. Frustrated s/he switches to the «tu» form and makes threats and demands. Tired of having to choose between duty (the Conscious) and desire (the Unconscious) s/he refuses to accept, once and for all, the gap between the signifier and the signified and crosses the bar that separates them to fix them one on the other leaving no doubt as to what is meant and thereby changes the static situation of the discourse into a tragically dynamic action. S/he now refuses the verbal game that frustrates him/her. S/he demands full words. Once s/he has declared him/herself, s/he express his/her demands in unequivocal terms (Roxane, *Bajazet*, II, 1). The Shadow has now changed into the «Anima/Animus» and becomes a full complex. According to Jung, if the individual is forced to repress, the libido descends to become the opposite sex. If the character is a woman, she displays all the characteristics of the Animus — she is Amazon-like, belligerent, authoritarian, assertive, violent and power hungry. If a man, the Anima dominates and he becomes petty, sneaky, mean and cruel*****. Then, once s/he understands that there is no hope of becoming the object of the desire of the other and that there is in fact another, s/he gives free rein to murderous furor. It is Phèdre's «Hippolyte loves and feels nothing for me!» (*Phèdre*, IV, 5) which summarizes this realization that we will have already seen in her predecessors: Hermione, Oreste, Néron, Bérénice, Roxane and Eriphile.

In Racine, the incest archetype is reversed and it is the «Son» who is the object of desire of the «Mother» because to her he is the signifier of power which if possessed will make her equal to the «Father» and enable her to do away with the split she feels within herself between her desire and her duty.

In those plays where it is the «Son» who desires the «Mother», she rejects him for he is the faulty double of the «Son» she desires and who rejects her: Oreste who is the double of Pyrrhus, desires Hermione who rejects him. The same is true in the other plays where there is a double: *Bérénice*: **Antiochus******/Titus; *Mithridate*: **Pharnace**/Xipharès.

The «Son» wants to and must free himself from the desire of the «Mother» which impairs his freedom to pursue his own desire. Sometimes he will want to become the «Father» **in spite** of the «Mother»*******. Sometimes he will compromise himself **because** of the «Mother»********. In every case, he is guilty before the «Father» because he has dared

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* Triangle one.

** Triangle two.

*** Triangle two.

**** Triangle one.

***** One only needs to remember the game of cat and mouse Pyrrhus plays with Andromaque or Néron's famous scene where he hides to spy on the encounter between Britannicus and Junie.

****** Bold = Rejected double.

******* Pyrrhus, Néron, Titus, Bajaret.

******** Pyrrhus, Bajaret, Xipharès, Hippolyte.

[6] Roland Barthes, 66.

to go against his law. Hippolyte is really guilty before Thésée — not because of Phèdre's accusation but because he dared to love Aricie despite his father's interdiction. Pyrrhus is guilty of having refused to perform his duty toward the Greeks and of having turned toward Andromaque who was forbidden to him by Ménélaus their king. Néron in his attempt at becoming the «Father» has to choose between his freedom and his mother who still wishes to hold the power she usurped. He chooses to defy her, not by attacking her directly, but by destroying the love of Britannicus and Junie which to him, is the symbol of Agrippine's «Father»hood.

The «Son» must then ultimately choose between two «women»: the one who desires him and the one he desires: Hermione desires (>) Pyrrhus who desires (>) Andromaque*. He always chooses the woman forbidden to him by the «Mother» who desires him and by the decree of the «Father». By antagonizing the «Mother» through his choice, he becomes guilty before the «Father» who sees this as a challenge to his authority. He can be forgiven only if he submits and abandons his desire. It will be up to the «Father», a suspicious and partial judge, to decide whether to forgive or not. Whether he forgives or condemns depends entirely on the «Mother», thus setting up a rather interesting catch twenty-two.

Racine's work from *Andromaque* to *Phèdre* (and *Athalie*) thus reveals an evolution which follows the Jungian scheme of personality development[7]. In each of the plays, the character who causes the tragedy is a neurotic who has the illusion that s/he is free to do as s/he wishes and in each case is destroyed. All those who compromise must die. Only those who submit live because the «Father» forgives them. The submissive characters are never neurotic for, according to Jung, neurosis is born out of the conflict between the Unconscious and what the Conscious can accept without feeling threatened. Those who submit accept the dicta of the Conscious and therefore feel no split.

A thumb nail sketch of Racine's biography shows that he was an orphan raised as a charity case by his paternal Aunt Agnès, a nun in the very closed Jansenist convent of Port-Royal at the height of its conflict with the Cardinal de Richelieu and the state. He is known to have been a difficult and cantankerous child. At the age of 19 he went to finish his studies in Paris where he sank in debauchery until he was sent, «for his own good», to the provincial town of Uzès in the hope that he would get an ecclesiastical post. The sojourn was a complete fiasco and he came back to Paris empty-handed but ready to submit his first play**. This of course was seen very poorly by Port-Royal who was engaged at that very moment in a scathing criticism of the vices of the theater. He opted for the theater and engaged himself in a virulent polemic on the subject in which he spared no venom against his former benefactors. To this point, we have abundant biographical information. However in the period between 1667 and 1677, at the height of his creative success on the stage, there are few details on his life and his biography seems to disappear behind the plays. We know practically nothing about him except that he took up with an actress he was subsequently accused of having poisoned to death. We also know that he received countless reprimands from Aunt Agnès who threatened him with eternal damnation if he persisted on his present course. In 1677 he presented *Phédre* which in spite of the cabala led against it by the many enemies he had managed to make over the years, was a great success. He then stopped writing plays, became the historiographer of Louis XIV, married and raised a large family (he forbade his children from entering the theater). In 1689 and 1691 he wrote two more plays with biblical themes on request from Mme. de

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* Agrippine->Néron->Junie; Roxane->Bajazet->Atalide; Phèdre->Hippolyte->Aricie.

** *Amésie*. It was rejected.

[7] C. G. Jung, «Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation», Vol. 9 of Collected Works. *The Archetype and the Collective Unconscious*. Bollingen Series 20. New York: Pantheon, 1959.

Maintenon, the king's mistress. In the meantime, he made his peace with Aunt Agnès and Port-Royal and appears to have returned to his Jansenist roots, keeping it a secret from the king whom he still served. He thus played it safe and kept a foot in both worlds. Upon his death in 1699 he was burried at Port-Royal as he requested.

From a psychobiographical point of view, both Racine's works and his life set up an interesting set of enigmas. One cannot help but wonder why a «good» Jansenist boy grows up to totally reject his upbringing and become a most successful author of «tragedies»* with hauntingly repetitive motifs, writes for ten years, abruptly abandons the stage, comes back to the fold and apparently becomes a model citizen, father, nephew.

In «Modern Man in Search of A Soul», Jung says that neurosis is an inner cleavage — the state of being at war with oneself and that what drives people to war with themselves is the intuition of the knowledge that they consist of two persons in opposition to one another. The conflict may be between the sensual and the spiritual man, or between the ego and the shadow[8]. This, as we have seen, is true of the characters in the plays. It is however also true of Racine himself as we see in his «Cantique III» entitled «Complaints of a Christian» addressed to God late in his life:

> Alas! at war with myself,
> I want; but (o extreme misery!)
> I don't do the good I love
> And I do the evil I hate
> ...

Racine will in fact always be torn between the two poles: the «world of women» (Port-Royal), Aunt Agnès (Mother), guilt, *God* — the world of the Persona... and the «world of men», Louis XIV (Father), the Theater, *Belial* — the world of the Shadow.

He spent his formative years in an oppressive, mystical and persecuted milieu ruled by figures of «Devouring Mothers» and emasculated «Fathers» from whom he received the message that «Man» is evil and that «God» in his heaven watches, demands and condemns everything. Especially evil is the world outside for it persecutes «us». Once free of the «Mother» house, he could not wait to get into the «Father's» world. His correspondence reveals that much like his characters, he saw himself as a failure, cursed, persecuted and learned that he had to hide his emotions, be a hypocrite and be cunning if he wished to succeed. As he entered the world of the court, he discovered that the «Father's» world was no better for there too he had to play the game. «Whoever builds up too good a Persona» said Jung «has to pay for it in irritability»[9]. His polemic shows him to be cruel, cold, manipulative and quarrelsome. He always shocked his contemporaries by the ferocity he displayed against anyone who crossed him. This is again evident in the prefaces to his plays which he used as a forum for defending himself against his critics, sometimes threatening them with great bodily harm. These outbursts of violence and of transgression seem to confirm regression into the Unconscious for any extreme in the Persona will be balanced by an extreme in the Unconscious[10]. He began to write his plays at the time when his Persona seems to have collapsed and his psychic energies activated the archetypal material we find manifest in his writings. According to Jung, such a personality encounters only destructive mothers and fathers he cannot trust and creates for himself a world of parents,

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* A forbidden genre in his jansenist milieu and a suspicious, tolerated at best, albeit much appreciated, genre in the social group.

[8] C. G. Jung, *Modern Man is Search of a Soul*, trans. W. S. Dell and C. F. Baynes, New York: Harcourt & Brace, 1933, 273.

[9] C. G. Jung, *Two Essays on Analytical Psychology*, trans. H. G. and C. F. Baynes, New York: Dood & Mead, 1928, 209.

[10] Progoff, 85.

brothers and sisters. The problem of identification is not with the real parent, but rather with an archetypal image of the parent. «This affective image which is the center of the psychic totality of the Ego is composed of opposition, doubles, archetypal parents who are sacred kings and queens, who in their ceremonial sense personify the two deities: the 'Sky Father' or 'Divine Father' and the 'Earth Mother'»[11]. This symbolism of conflicts, sacrifices, deaths, descent into the nether regions and rebirth takes place in a ritual locus.

For Racine, this locus was the theatrical stage behind which his historical biography disappeared and on which we followed the evolution of the debates between his Conscious and his Unconscious in an attempt to reach some position of compromise which would reconcile God and Belial in a way that his Conscious could accept. If so, it was a disquieted resolution of the neurosis through submission and a return to the fold as the prodigal son who realized that he had sought the wrong «Father» in Louis XIV. Like his characters, Racine saw himself as the «Son» torn between «Mother» and «Father» — the object of desire of a «devouring Mother — Aunt Agnès» from whom he attempted to free himself in order to pursue his forbidden love — the Theater. This theater through which he seems to have demonstrated to himself that rebellion and compromise are fatal and that freedom is but an illusion. The «Father» is always right, even if he is wrong, because he is the «Father» and he has absolute power and authority. One cannot be an innocent son. Everyone is guilty before the «Father». Only he can judge and forgive. Only those who submit and atone live.

In a secret encounter* in the gardens of Versailles with Mme. de Maintenon who was trying to assuage his fears by telling him to trust her since she had his best interest at heart, Racine is said to have answered:

> «I know, Madame, how high your credit stands and I know how much you have shown me goodness; but I have an aunt [Agnès] who loves me in a much different way. This holy woman asks God every day to inflict on me disgrace, humiliation, punishment; and *she has more credit than you do.*»

There is no escape for, like Hector and Minos, even the dead «Father» who is ultimately the God of Aunt Agnès comes back, spiritualized, to haunt and destroy the creature who dared to transgress.

Racine thus seems to have achieved some kind of Catharsis through his own works and to have concluded that it is better to seek eternal life than to be a dead hero. To his famous contemporary Descartes, he would probably have answered: «I submit therefore **I will** be.»

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* He had, by his own account, imagined or really fallen in disgrace with Louis XIV in 1698 because of his Jansenist leanings.

[11] C. G. Jung, Rex and Regina, *Mysterium Coniunctionis*, Vol. 14 of Collected Works, Bollingen Series 20, New York: Pantheon, 1963, Pt. 4.

PSYCHOBIOLOGY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS

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Mania and Depression from the Writer's Point of View: The Case of William Cowper

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The question I would like to address today is much easier to ask than to answer. How does manic-depressive illness influence the production or the content of literary works? On the simplest level the illness is simply an experience, though an extreme one. But mania and depression also affect the way the creative process works. Many writers have testified to the sense of fluency and heightened brilliance that a mild hypomanic phase can bring on, and nearly all have experienced depression as a kind of gigantic writer's block. Indeed, for most writers with affective illness the inability to write can be the first symptom of a major depression, as well as one of its contributing causes. Finally, manic-depressive illness forces writers to confront certain things about the nature of perception and the nature of the self that are disturbing, even frightening. Repeated shifts from mania to depression and back again show how profoundly the perceived world changes along with the mood of the perceiver, and the perceiver in two different moods seems almost like two different selves. If writers manages to remain productive throughout these trials they must still face the problem of literary form. Diseases resemble literary traditions in being shared and stereotypical, and writers who are either manic or depressed will share symptoms with ordinary people who are not particularly creative. But writers exist not only in relation to the disorder their neurochemistry inflicts upon them, but in relation to the literary and cultural tradition they share with writers who are not affectively disordered. It is this latter tradition that makes available the only forms in which the symptoms of their illness can be represented. The literary artist who is trying to explain what he or she has experienced in a state of acute mania or depression must either choose from the available genres offered by the culture or create new ones; what makes the task more difficult is that the extremes of either state introduce the writer into a realm that language, with its linear progression, is badly equipped to represent. My subject today, then, is both «What have these writers experienced and how do they explain it to themselves?» but also «What literary forms do they choose for representing their illness, and why?» The eighteenth century poet William Cowper is one of the most interesting cases for a student of the literary uses of affective disorder,both because he was severely afflicted, suffering depressions that deepened into psychosis in 1763, 1773, 1787, and 1794, and because the number of literary forms in which he chose to write about his own illness is remarkably varied, encompassing as it does prose

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autobiography, religious hymn, Horatian verse satire, sapphic ode, and short verse narrative. When he was not too ill to write, he was a prolific poet and letter writer. He wrote playful lyrics on all sorts of subjects; accounts of his pet hares; Latin epigrams; moral essays in verse; autobiographical poems about delights of the English countryside; translations of Homer; hymns, a number of which are still in use. Most of these texts have nothing to do with his illness, nor would a casual reader suspect that they proceeded from a mind periodically disordered. But at various times in his life he attempted either to express or to understand the violent shifts of mood that had disrupted his life, and the poems and narratives that make up this intermittent autobiography constitute a moving account of the sufferings of a man attempting to understand a disorder his own culture was powerless to explain or to alleviate.

Cowper's long life can be divided into three major phases. In the first of these, which stretches from his birth in 1731 to the time of his first major breakdown in 1763, he led the easy, unreflective life of an English gentleman's son: sent to public school and then to the Inns of Court to prepare himself for the profession of lawyer, he spent most of his time reading, writing, falling in love, and rapidly going through his inheritance. His tendency to instability of mood had already led him through one complete depressive cycle while he was in his early twenties, but since the malady had improved spontaneously, he had dismissed it from his mind. In 1763, he attempted to secure a clerkship in the House of Lords, a minor appointment controlled by a member of his family. Told that he must undergo a public examination, a thing he dreaded irrationally, he tried to prepare himself, but as the date of the examination drew nearer he slipped deeper and deeper into depression. Eventually he attempted suicide. His relatives committed him to a private asylum, where his depression continued unabated for about eight months. Then his anguish began to lighten, and some words of religious comfort spoken to him by a pious relative convinced him to turn to the Bible for comfort. Although he had never before been religiously inclined, he now became convinced that God had chosen to rescue him from the hell in which he had been living. He passed quickly into a state of religious ecstasy so intense that the doctor who had been treating him feared that he might die of a sudden frenzy, and insisted on keeping Cowper with him for another full year before agreeing to discharge him. Cowper interpreted his change of mood as the effect of a religious conversion; and when he was at liberty again, he wished to shun all his former worldly companions. He left London for the countryside, and sought out villages where he could find other Evangelical Christians who, like him, felt that they had been rescued from a life of sin and wished to spend their days in prayer and thanksgiving.

Some time around 1767 Cowper wrote an unusually candid autobiographical account of his life, which interprets the two major depressions from which he had already suffered as punishments from God for the dissipated life he had led. He ascribes his miraculous recovery and current state of joy to the superabundance of God's grace. At about the same time, he condensed his story into an intensely personal hymn, entitled «Song of Mercy and Judgment», which recounts the horrors he suffered while insane and celebrates the sweet grace that rescued him. His pastor in the village of Olney was also a converted sinner, and encouraged Cowper to collaborate with him in writing a hymn book for the use of other Evangelicals. Most of the hymns Cowper wrote are conventional, but one or two of them contain disturbing signs of the slide into depression that he was already beginning to experience again. By 1773 Cowper was again psychotic: hearing voices assuring him of his damnation, refusing to eat, convinced that his body was loathsome and deformed and that his spirit was more damnable than that of Judas Iscariot. He was not hospitalized again, but his servants, friends, and family had to watch him constantly to prevent him from committing suicide.

The depression of 1773 brings to a close the second phase of Cowper's life. He eventually recovered his reason, but this time there was no corresponding sense of elation; from then until the end of his life Cowper alternated between chronic depression and psychotic depression. He managed to return to his creative life, and the works which brought him fame in his own day date mostly from this latest period. But the sense of God's presence which had once brought him such comfort deserted him. He indeed retained his belief in the truth of the strongly Calvinistic theology he had espoused at the time of his «conversion». But he became convinced that in sliding into despair after once having experienced God's mercy he had committed the only sin explicitly named in the New Testament as unpardonable: the sin of apostasy. He never again attended public worship after 1773; he became convinced that God hated him, and that his failure to commit suicide when repeatedly prompted to do so marked him as cowardly as well as damned. In his public poems he continued to speak of salvation and to recommend it to others; privately, he clung to the notion that he had been marked out as the object of God's unending hatred. All of this sounds sufficiently tragic, and Cowper's last years are almost too painful to contemplate. But tragedy and horror are not the only characteristics of Cowper's autobiographical writings; there is engaging candor, and playfulness, and even wit. Above all there is a keenness of observation and brilliance of expression that make Cowper one of the best writers of his age. When describing his own symptoms he combines the passion of the autobiographer with the detachment of the clinician, and as a result produces one of the most consistently absorbing case histories of severe affective disorder ever written.

What makes his narrative of particular interest to students of psychology is that Cowper is eager to find some sort of recurring pattern in his life, some hints of the major breakdown that occurred in 1763. The first warning of trouble to come occurs when he is just twenty--one. He comes into his inheritance, buys a «complete set of chambers in the Temple», and becomes «in a manner complete master of myself». He ought to be perfectly happy. But he is suddenly and mysteriously afflicted «with such a dejection of spirits, as none but they who have felt the same, can have the least conception of. Day and night I was on the rack, lying down in horror, and rising up in despair.» He has never been religious, but now he prays to God for relief, though without effect. Finally, when a change of scene is recommended as a possible cure for his suffering, he goes to Southampton with some friends. All at once his mood changes.

> Soon after our arrival, we walked to a place called Freemantle, about a mile from the town; the morning was clear and calm; the sun shone bright upon the sea; and the country on the borders of it was the most beautiful I had ever seen... Here it was, that on a sudden, as if another sun had been kindled that instant in the heavens, on purpose to dispel sorrow and vexation of spirit, I felt the weight of all my misery taken off; my heart became light and joyful in a moment; I could have wept with transport had I been alone. I must needs believe that nothing less than the Almighty fiat could have filled me with such inexpressible delight; not by a gradual dawning of peace, but, as it were, with a flash of his life-giving countenance.

God enters Cowper's consciousness first as a kind of postulate to explain the sudden transition from depression to elation, the only hypothesis of sufficient explanatory power to account for the mysterious transformation he has undergone. He freely admits that his experience on the cliffs of Freemantle had no lasting religious effects; as soon as he feels free from the fear that the depression will return, he returns to his former life of dissipation. But nine years later, facing his examination at the bar of the House of Lords, all his terror and depression return. He has by now nearly exhausted his inheritance, and needs the job to survive; but his efforts to prepare himself for the examination only plunge

him deeper into misery. He visits the office of the Clerk of Journals every day, staring without comprehension at the record-books he is to master, unwilling or perhaps unable to ask for help. He begins to fear that he is going mad, and, indeed, begins to hope for madness. With disarming candor he confesses: «I had a strong foreboding that so it would one day fare with me; and I wished for it earnestly, and looked forward to it with impatient expectation. My chief fear was, that my senses would not fail me time enough to excuse my appearance at the bar of the House of Lords, which was the only purpose I wanted it to answer.» But as the horrible day approaches, he finds himself still in his senses, and begins to resolve upon a darker purpose. One November evening he slips out of his chambers to an apothecary's shop and purchases a half ounce phial of laudanum. So begins the account of what is one of the most minutely detailed and comically protracted set of suicidal thoughts, impulses, and gestures ever recorded by a single human being. Cowper's Evangelical desire to bring all shameful secrets to light combines with his native British empiricism and sense of the ridiculous to make *Adelphi* (the title of his memoir) at once terrifying and funny. His desperate fear of the approaching examination makes him clutch at any hope of avoiding it, yet his strong and healthy urge to remain alive keeps thwarting his half-hearted attempts at self-destruction: he keeps resolving on suicide and keeps escaping it. After a night spent trying various ways to kill himself, Cowper sees the dawn of the examination day approaching. He becomes desperate. He makes a noose from his garters, loops it around the corner of an open door, and hangs himself from it. He loses consciousness, but the garter itself breaks, depositing Cowper face-down on the floor, with a red spot under one eye and a red circle around his neck. He regains consciousness and staggers back into bed. Now the madness Cowper had prayed for descends on him in earnest. His speech becomes wild and incoherent, and he begins to experience both visual and auditory hallucinations. He remembers: «A strange and horrible darkness fell upon me. If it were possible that a heavy blow could light on the brain, without touching the skull, such was the sensation I felt.» His brother is summoned, and quickly decides to send him to Dr. Nathaniel Cotton's Collegium Insanorum, a small private lunatic asylum in London. Cowper declines to say much about his treatment there, though the hymn that he wrote at about the same time as *Adelphi* suggests that it included both forced feeding and physical restraints. But he does tell us quite explicitly what his experience of depression was like. «A sense of self-loathing and abhorrence ran through all my insanity. Conviction of sin, and expectation of instant judgment, never left me from the 7th of December 1763 until the middle of July following.» Then one day, after a visit by his brother, he feels his mood unaccountably lighten, just as it had ten years earlier on the cliffs of Freemantle. «While I sat at table, the cloud of horror, which had so long hung over me, was every moment passing away; and every moment came fraught with hope.» The Bible, in which he had formerly been able to read only curses, now offers him verses of comfort and mercy. «My eyes filled with tears, and my voice choked with transport... For many succeeding weeks, tears were ready to flow, if I did but speak of the gospel, or mention the name of Jesus. To rejoice day and night, was all my employment. Too happy to sleep much, I thought it was but lost time that was spent in slumber.» Dr. Cotton, understandably, is worried by this «sudden transition from despair to joy», fearful that it might terminate in a «fatal frenzy». He keeps Cowper with him for another year before declaring him cured. After his discharge Cowper's sense of exultation persists. He moves to the little village of Huntingdon, and there attends church for the first time since his illness began.

> Throughout the whole service, I had much to do to restrain my emotions, so fully did I see the beauty and the glory of the Lord. My heart was full of love to all the congregation, especially to them, in whom I observed an air of sober attention... Such was the goodness of the Lord to me, that he

gave me «the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness»; and though my voice was silent, being stoppt by theintenseness of what I felt, yet my soul sung within me, and even leapt for joy.

This sense of communion with God and with mankind led Cowper to compose the extraordinary hymn entitled «A Song of Mercy and Judgment». «Hymn», in the eighteenth century, did not necessarily imply congregational singing; the word simply connoted a song of thanks and praise. Cowper's hymn is a song of thanks for his recovery from insanity, and in it he allows himself to confess the humiliating facts of his treatment for insanity that even *Adelphi* had discreetly veiled.

Food I loath'd nor ever tasted
But by Violence constrain'd,
Strength decay'd and Body wasted,
Spoke the Terrors I sustain'd.

Bound and watch'd lest Life abhorring
I should my own Death procure,
For to me the Pit of Roaring
Seem'd more easy to endure.

It was from this state of «moping Madness» that a conviction of the efficacy of Jesus' atoning sacrifice rescued him, and he now sees his mission in life as one of bearing witness to the miracle:

Since that Hour in Hope of Glory,
With thy Foll'wers I am found,
And relate the Wondrous Story,
To thy listening Saints around.

Unfortunately for Cowper, the Evangelical religion he had adopted made it fatally easy for him to equate the conviction of salvation with the proof of salvation — and the conviction of salvation is just what no manic-depressive can long retain. As he began to slide into depression again toward the close of 1791, Cowper lost the assurance he had enjoyed that his soul had been saved. By 1773 his depression had returned in full force. With the terrible reverse logic of his illness, he took his loss of joy as proof that he had rejected joy; had turned his back on the salvation that had been freely offered and happily enjoyed. How violent Cowper's feelings of damnation were appears in the most frightening poem he ever wrote. In «Hatred and vengeance, my eternal portion» Cowper rewrites Isaac Watts's vicious little sapphic ode, «The Day of Judgment», from the point of view of the damned sinner buried alive in a «fleshly tomb» and tormented unceasingly with the thought that he has, like Judas, betrayed his Lord. This conviction of damnation never left Cowper, nor did he ever again experience the sense of exultation that had lifted him up from his first two depressions. A final depression, which began in 1794 and ended only with his death six years later, left him almost wholly mute. He had long ceased to write poetry when, in 1799, he surprised the people taking care of him by writing a clear and simple narrative in which he summed up the experience of a lifetime's sense of abandonment. (Virginia Woolf incorporated its final stanza into her novel, *To the Lighthouse*; Cowper's sense of desperation doubtless tallied with her own.) The story of a sailor washed overboard during a frightful storm, whose companions try but are unable to rescue him, seemed to him an emblem of his own condition. In its final stanza he imagines a silent god who does not rescue, and then breaks through the narrative frame of his own poem to boast of his superiority in misery to the drowning sailor, drowned in a real sea. The rougher

sea of Cowper's madness had deeper gulfs than the Pacific, and the isolation in which he perished was more terrible, since it was at once created and suffered by his mind.

> No voice divine the storm allayed,
> No light propitious shone,
> When, far from all effectual aid,
> We perished, each alone.
> But I beneath a rougher sea,
> And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

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Implications of Split-brain Studies for Psychoanalytic Theory

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Split brain studies offer us intriguing clues about the structure of the self. After surgeons cut the 200 million nerve fibers in the corpus callosum (through which the two hemispheres interface), researchers test each hemisphere separately to see how it processes perceptions. In intact brains, each hemisphere constructs a visual representation of its half of the world, and the two pictures are seamlessly put together for our viewing. But the split brain cannot achieve this integration because the hemispheres no longer share information. One patient was shown a projected picture of a cup that only her LH could see. When asked to identify the object, her LH, dominant for language and her ability to speak, answered correctly. But when a picture of a spoon was flashed so that only her RH could see it, she answered, «No, nothing», when asked what she saw. The LH, which possessed the words to name things and the power to speak, did not share the RH's perception; the RH, which possessed the visual information, had no access of its own to the LH's store of words or to her vocal cords (Springer and Deutsch 27-28).

Since the RH enjoys less command over language, it is also less able to make inferences based on grammar, as demonstrated by one of Michael S. Gazzaniga's patients, J.W.:

> If I flash the words «pin» and «finger» to the right brain, and J.W.'s task is to combine the words into a new meaning or to make a simple inference about those two words, the right brain fails miserably. The task is simple because the answer, in this case the word «bleed», is listed in front of the patient along with other possible choices. The left brain, of course, finds the task trivial. What is even more astounding is that the right brain, if flashed the word «bleed», can define it. (*Social Brain 97*)

The RH is not dumb: it shows good comprehension if it can respond to questions nonverbally. It is adept at processing imagery, visuospatial, musical, and holistic data; it plays a major role in responding to emotional stimuli (Jamison and Goodwin 508-09), but without mastery of language it does not represent itself as well as the LH can.

Thus, a lopsided power relationship exists between the two hemispheres. When shown a picture of a nude woman, the subject's RH reacted: she blushed and giggled, but the LH reported that it saw «nothing, just a flash of light.» When asked why she giggled, the LH replied vaguely, «Oh, doctor, you have some machine!» (Springer and

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Deutsch 29-30). Such a reaction suggests that the LH perceived the body's behavior (that it was laughing nervously), but, receiving no specific information about its cause, the LH hypothesized as best it could based on these partial cues. Yet repeated tests showed that the LH was convinced it knew what was presented to only the right hemisphere, even when it was only making an inference; the LH implicitly and habitually denied that another conscious center existed (Springer and Deutsch 266-67). When the RH was instructed to rub one hand with another, the LH asserted, with certainty, that it was scratching an itch and that it was responsible for initiating the action. Such a condition is hypothesized for connected hemispheres as well; they share some information, but this operation is seamlessly integrated: the LH is not aware that some of its data is coming from and has been processed by another, well-organized conscious entity, for whom it is speaking. One of the most prominent features of LH consciousness is that it uses all data-whatever its origin and shape-as material for the fiction of a «unitary» subjective experience.

The two hemispheres both appear to be «persons», with their own desires, goals, and tastes. One of Roger Sperry's patients showed distinct differences between the «minds» of his two disconnected hemispheres. Although both hemispheres agreed on factual data, each had different responses when asked what professional career he preferred. The LH wanted to be a draughtsman, the RH a race car driver. Sperry concluded:

> Each hemisphere... has its own... private sensations, perceptions, thoughts, and ideas all of which are cut off from the corresponding experiences in the opposite hemisphere. Each left and right hemisphere has its own private chain of memories and learning experiences that are inaccessible to recall by the other hemisphere. In many respects each disconnected hemisphere appears to have a separate «mind of its own» (Springer and Deutsch 55).

In some split-brain subjects, the two hemispheres even fought for control of the body, as when the left hand put down an object picked up by the right hand (Oakley 228). Typically, the patient reported verbally that he regarded his LH-controlled, right hand actions as his actions, carried out by his ego; left hand behaviors were viewed as «alien» or spurious.

Why should our RH consciousness be so invisible to us? The answer lies in cognitive style, in the way each hemisphere deals with perception and thought. In general, the LH has superior verbal skills because of its talent for sequential processing, while the RH's strong visuo-spatial performance is derived from its synthetic, holistic manner of dealing with information (Springer and Deutsch 48). The LH's cognitive style is focussed and analytical, while the RH's cognition is global and undifferentiated. Because of its talent for a nonlinear mode of association rather than syllogistic logic, the RH arrives at solutions to problems based on multiple converging determinants rather than a single causal chain — the production of metaphors, puns, and «word-pictures» (Hoppe 229). This may mean two things: 1), that when each hemisphere reads a perceptual event differently, the RH response can be ignored by an over-rigorous, censorious LH, or 2) that both readings may be creatively combined to deepen and enrichen experience. Number one explains why Norman Holland's readers filter a common text and perceive only what reinforces their habitual identity themes. Number two explains Anton Ehrenzweig's observation that a fully integrated and creative perception of art involves the rhythmic alteration between analysis and undifferentiated scanning. Ehrenzweig's «syncretistic vision» may be due to a sophisticated job-sharing program between the two hemispheres, each contributing to and responding to the other's method of coping with a perceptual problem. His notion of a structural unconscious-a region beyond awareness that does not repress because of conflicted content but because the material is structurally incompatible with rationalistic consciousness — may be thought of as a RH co-consciousness, highly aware of its environment but largely unavailable to language. And so the officially designated LH ego, though not privy to these dissociated activities, nevertheless

finds itself inexplicably benefiting from them. This also means that material gained during psychoanalysis or drawn from an author's work may be 1) unconscious because forbidden or else 2) unconscious because structurally incompatible with analytical thought, 3) co-conscious but not represented because censored or 4) co-conscious but not represented linguistically. In a clinical setting, items 1) and 3) would involve the traditional psychoanalytic deciphering of symbols, but 2) and 4) would likely be distorted by a metaphorical reading imposed by LH upon RH-processed material.

Divided domains of consciousness seem to be supported by case histories of patients with accidental neurological deficits too. Consider Oliver Sacks' famous patient who supplied the title to his book, *The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat*: Dr. P., a professor of music, lost some of his RH function due to a tumor. Although he continued to teach and enjoy music for several years, he either could not see faces or he saw them when there were no faces. Walking through town, he would pat the rounded tops of water hydrants and parking meters, thinking they must be the heads of children. In Sack's own office, Dr. P.

> reached out his hand and took hold of his wife's head, tried to lift it off, to put it on. He had apparently mistaken his wife for a hat! His wife looked as if she was used to such things (11).

Yet for some time Dr. P., though dysfunctional, did not perceive his deficit. Sacks notes that, whereas deficits in the LH are easily detected through disturbances in speech and comprehension (we constantly monitor our own words with neuronal systems that are independent of our speech-producing circuitry), «it is not only difficult, it is impossible, for patients with certain right-hemisphere syndromes to know their own problems» (5). It is difficult for the neurologist too. For every thousand LH syndromes reported in the neurological literature, Sacks finds only one description of a RH problem. Why should RH deficits be so invisible, so subtle? The RH is not as available to consciousness because human beings use language to be so acutely conscious (and self-conscious), so much so that it seems to us as if the subject is literally constructed by words. Language has the advantage of bringing continuity to experience-and the LH very much prefers continuity.

Not only inner events but the outer world seems to be affected by brain structure. If the RH is dysfunctional due to stroke, patients will not see or attend to any object situated on their left, and they are unaware of their blindness. When asked to draw the face of a clock, they will accurately recreate only the right side, with numbers 12 through 6 dutifully noted; but 7 through 11 will be missing without their knowledge. Oliver Sacks reports on a woman, Mrs. S., who, when served dinner, ate only from the right half of the plate; when applying lipstick, she covered only the right side of her mouth. She could not look left, or turn left, so she learned to turn right, in a circle, until she found what she was looking for: the object (indeed, the direction) did not exist unless her LH perceived it (77-78). Intriguingly, Dr. P.'s disability extended into visual imagination and memory: when asked to imagine himself walking through his town square, he listed only those buildings that would have appeared on his right side, none on his left. When asked to imagine himself walking in the opposite direction, he listed only the other buildings, those that would have appeared on his right, which he had failed to remember just moments before. Objects on the left were simply not remembered (15).

The nervous system is arranged to build a spatial map of the body and its environment. Disturbances within the system can have profound effects upon the individual's sense of what constitutes his body and his mind. If a stroke affects afferent and motor neurons, the patient will become unaware that he even has a left arm or a leg; when they are pointed out to him, he will report that he «feels» or «believes» that they belong to someone else, not him. Sacks reports of a young man who actually threw himself out of his hospital bed trying to rid himself of what looked like someone else's leg, «a severed human leg,

a horrible thing» that he assumed a prankster had surreptitiously attached to his body. He called it a «counterfeit» because, although he recognized it as a human leg, it did not feel «real» at least, not really «his». When asked to locate his own left leg, the patient became pale and claimed that it had «disappeared» (55-57).

Not only cognition but desire is shaped by brain structure. Dr. P., Mrs. S., and the young man all suffer from a kind of psychic dissociation because of their neurological deficit. They have no desire to care about the dead limb or the blind or numb side; it is as if the circuits that mediate particular perceptions also process the specific desire to perceive them, a loss of what Freud would have called an object-cathexis. The implication of the «invisible deficit» presents theorists with an intriguing question. Can desire, that most enduring and transhistorical of Freudian and Lacanian realities, be generated by representation, rather than the other way around, as is generally accepted? For Lacan, desire cannot be fixed to any single position in a signifying chain or to any particular event or object, but neurology suggests that desire is often encoded in particular memories and perceptions, and it cannot exist independently of neural circuit systems. Thus, desire may not be the instigator of cognition but its product, not the primitive motivation for higher level functions but their method: what better way to organize massive cell populations than through a system-wide mobilization of neurohormonal mechanisms mediating hatred, love, pride, shame, etc.? If so, then desires cannot simply be reduced to the re-enacted loss of the always unattainable and denied primary Other of our infantile mirror stage (the mother, who symbolizes our narcissism). For Lacan, there is no self before the mirror stage, and so we are born out of discord, illusion, and repression with the appearance of language. But perhaps narcissism and language appear together because it is then that the two hemispheres most dramatically split up cognitive duties.

Studies in neuroscience urge us to consider what effect brain structure might have on the way we think. In what way do we all suffer from invisible deficits? Brain damage is apparent to us because we compare the patient's disability to our abilities: but even we who enjoy intact brains cannot perceive or desire to perceive that we are missing something that lies beyond what our own brain structures allow us to think about. What would the invisible deficits of a three pound bicameral brain look like to a more advanced species with, say, a six pound quadricameral brain? We could not even guess. Even if we were to meet such a species, we would still be left unenlightened. Like the chimpanzee of today, we would look at these superior beings without understanding how they are different from us, for we would have neither the cognitive models nor the brain capacity to make such a discrimination. To them, of course, we would appear merely brain damaged. Biology, in this sense, is cognitive destiny. Lacan's linguistic model may not be the only way to describe the limitations of thought. Future interdisciplinary research may shift the burden of structural psychoanalysis and deconstruction from a Saussurean linguistic base of self-referential signs and signifiers to a neurological one. For cognitive science and neuroscience also suggest that we do not perceive, interpret, or «know» reality referentially but rather in terms of thousands of feedback loops supporting internal theoretical models occurring on both conscious and unconscious levels, and which operate binomially, amassing and organizing differentiated units (hot/cold, rough/soft, love/hate). Just as post-modern theory presents the underpinnings of thought as a chain of signifiers whose meaning exists only in relation to each other, epitomized by opposition of polar opposites, so too neural circuitry and brain structure seem to be arranged to deal with sensory information and behavior by opposing pathways paired hemispheres, modular processing within hemispheres (discrete areas of the brain handling specialized sub-routines which must be sorted out and integrated at higher levels of functioning), feedback circuits, complementary/antagonistic neurotransmitter systems, the splitting off of linguistic skills from visual skills.

The import of brain research throws up a kind of Lacanian bar between the left and

right hemispheres, making self-insight, or even self-awareness, a matter of interpretation, a word-based guess or approximation based on inadequate data fed from one hemisphere to another. As LeDoux concludes:

> These studies clearly demonstrate that lasting and significant effects on behavior and thought processes can be produced by activities that go unnoticed by the conscious person. Consciousness, in other words, is only one avenue through which the brain accepts inputs and produces behavior. When input is registered by non-conscious systems, that input is not available to the conscious self. It is coded in a way that cannot be decoded by the verbally dominant conscious mechanisms. Yet, it is as much a part of the store of information that directs our moods and behavior as input which is initially processed in consciousness (Oakley 206).

The brain is not a seamless whole; our mental lives are compartmentalized into separate components of an interacting system, a dynamic organization of modules that are independently capable of actions, moods, and responses. Experienced reality is a creation of the brain, and so it is shaped by the capacities and limitations of the brain.

To put it in Lacanian terms, the dominant, verbal hemisphere/module, a specialist in linguistic signifiers, is barred from direct knowledge of the nondominant, non-verbal hemisphere, the signified, where a separate self-equally developed and reality-oriented — processes many important perceptions and feelings. Perhaps, the Other which we most struggle to know (or whose mute gaze haunts our every look) is not the unconscious part of one self but another conscious self, co-existing in our shared body, mute and unavailable to language, yet responsible for processing the visual and emotional cues which the verbal hemisphere may misunderstand because mistranslations are inevitable between two minds that do not speak the same language (Gazzaniga and LeDoux; Marks). Oakley and Eames speculate that

> many of the indecisions, inspirations and «unaccountable» mood changes about which our left hemispheres rationalize are consequences of conscious processes within our right hemispheres (Oakley 231).

Can interhemispheric relations be the physical basis for Lacan's observation that patients' utterances and writers' texts undercut their own ostensible meaning? Does the RH make itself known by surreptitiously sliding signifiers through metonymy? — it's good at recognizing widely scattered details and individual words but not generating sustained, intentional sentences of its own. Does the RH shape LH discourse through metaphor? — it is, after all, skilled at nonlinear modes of association and converging multiple determinants rather than forming a causal or logical chain. Could such interhemispheric interdiction cause us to speak not a composed structure of meaningful elements but Lacan's discomposed discourse where elements are substituted and recombined, leaving seemingly mute traces or absences to litter our LH dominated narratives? If so, then the robust LH, unaware that it is speaking the unrecognized and unrecognizable «truth» of the repressed RH, would also be the source of the Imaginary Subject created in the misreading of the mirror-stage, and the Subject would be a misreading not only of the «Other» who is its mother but of the «Other» who is its psychic partner, against which it has defined itself. Doubled selves, one of whom is a mute voyeur gazing upon the other, may create the uncanny duality of all Lacanian looking (every recognition at once a finding and a failure to find, every gaze a being gazed at), in which we are perpetually caught. Does transference originate here in the relationship between these two selves, with the RH playing the Lacanian dummy, the smoothly mirroring and mute Other who reveals nothing but what we project upon him? Is the LH thus burdened, defeated, and frustrated by its own mastery, its too-successful subordination of the RH,

because silencing Otherness only increases the power of its haunting and its inscrutable gaze? Perhaps this is why bringing a transference to consciousness in a psychoanalytic setting has a therapeutic effect: the psychoanalyst becomes a kind of Winnicottian transitional object through which the LH and RH can communicate. An external interpersonal relationship represents an internal one.

We are beginning to see the first provisional theories emerging that seek to reconcile the terminology of both psychoanalysis and neuroscience. Jay Harris has attempted to update Freud by proposing a more complex mind/brain model: that consciousness is synthesized as a product of a prefrontal, lateralized organization of four discrete zones of neurons: 1) a lateral dominant hemisphere zone (which mediates the sense of ourselves as a willful «agent» seeking consummation), 2) a medial dominant hemisphere zone (producing the desiring «subject»), 3) a medial nondominant hemisphere (creating representations of the «self» in an environmental context), and a lateral nondominant hemisphere zone (fixing objects within a context) (19). The aggressive ego resembles dominant hemisphere functions, the reality-oriented ego the nondominant; thus the dominant hemisphere acts through language by constructing signs, while the nondominant hemisphere looks for signifiers (201), with the corpus callosum acting as Lacanian bar. Feelings of shame fit in nicely with the dominant hemisphere's assertive, goal-directed style, while guilt complements the nondominant hemisphere's representations of self (157). Fixation is action oriented and so dominant; trauma signifies a remembered context and so is nondominant (158). Conflict between the two hemispheres can be either conscious or unconscious. In dreams, such conflicted material returns to be processed, but who would the therapist be treating? It's a difficult question, but one which, I hope, will enrichen us all. Whether or not Harris' system prevails, only time and more research will tell. But obviously, whatever the outcome, our future model of the mind must include systems more complicated than Freud's or Lacan's simpler divisions.

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