

The Naked Prompt
A Semiotic Study of Pirandello's Plays

A thesis supervised by Anna Laura Lepschy and submitted at University
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by
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ABSTRACT

My study examines the nature of Pirandello's so-called "revolutionary" drama and its links with the historical *avant-garde*. This involves principally a discussion of the way Pirandello's work is influenced by Cubism and Futurism, and there is a re-assessment of the critical tradition regarding Pirandello.

I pay attention to theories of the stage in order to draw out the influences of Pirandello's precursors and to discuss the problems of modernist drama. The use of semiotic methodology, I argue, is justified in terms of the specific metalinguistic and metatheatrical concerns of both Pirandello's plays and his theoretical writings. In the Prologue, I describe how his work is particularly suited to the deconstructive procedures of psychoanalytic and post-structuralist literary theory: for instance, his concepts of "azione parlata" and of "umorismo"; and his use of theatrical repetition, deferred action and acting out of an "original" scenario.

In chapter I, I consider Pirandello in terms of the historical moment: I investigate his relation to fascism and to the discourses of the *avant-garde*. I undertake a discussion of the position of women in the new industrial society, by giving special attention to the way Pirandello deals with "the woman question" [his essay, "Feminismo"]. There is also an effort to account for the consumption of his cultural artefacts in an expanding mass-society.

In chapter II, "Mirror-image/Collage", I examine Pirandello's renovation of the naturalist stage. This discussion is set in the context of Cubist and Futurist theory. By means of an intertextual analysis, I argue that Pirandello's shift to the dramatic genre is determined by the crisis in signification at the turn of the century: mimetic naturalism is inadequate

to express Pirandello's complex perception of the problems of representation in language and in the aesthetic sign. I demonstrate how the linear strategies of narrative are temporarily relinquished for the contradictory simultaneities available to drama. I also anticipate how he will later restore "coherent" mythic fabulation and retreat from the subversive effects of his "revolutionary" phase.

In the subsequent chapters III and IV, I provide readings of the dramatic texts and the performance texts respectively. By analysing the theories of "l'azione parlata" and "parole in libertà", I show the discursive ruptures Pirandello effects, and I assess the innovative aspects of his rendering of female speech. I argue that dissidence, verbal lunacy, repetition and sexual confession accompany silence and laughter in his texts, and that his writing vacillates between danger and desire.

My interest in non-verbal means of communication leads, in chapter IV, to my giving relief to the function of the performance, and in particular, to the use of Futurist scenography. In order to produce a model of reading not limited to the playscript, this chapter involves a discussion of the roles of the audience, disguise and landscape. I submit that the revolutionary adventures of social fascism are eclipsed by the apocalyptic visions in Pirandello's last oneiric texts.

Theatre semiotics thus allows me to establish the multiple workings between the dramatic texts and the stage spectacles. It assists in accounting for the web of meanings which bind audiences, authors, actors, directors, texts and readers.

In the Epilogue, I sum up my argument by suggesting an explanation for Pirandello's enigmatic title to the collections of plays, *Maschere nude*. The oxymoron, the "naked prompt" [a pun on Marinetti's *Il suggeritore*

nudo] permits me to forward the idea that in effect superficial words are all, and "free speech" but an illusion. This echoes Pirandello's repeated stance that words cannot be stripped of irrelevant clothing, or be made bare and transparent to "truth". A semiotic analysis reveals that behind the plenitude of the social mask, there is nothing but a mirroring void. Pirandello's plays are poised at this signal edge of a catastrophic abyss.

For my parents

In tristitia hilaris, in hilaritate tristis.

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Adriana Asti as L'Ignota, Maria Fabbri as Lena, and Alessandro Esposito as Salesio in *Come tu mi vuoi*, directed by Susan Sontag (Teatro Stabile di Torino, Stagione 1980-81), Act II.
[Maurizio Buscarino, Via Cadore, 4, Bergamo, Italy.]

Adriana Asti as L'Ignota in *Come tu mi vuoi*, directed by Susan Sontag (Teatro Stabile di Torino, Stagione 1980-81), Act I.
[Maurizio Buscarino, Via Cadore, 4, Bergamo, Italy.]

PREFACE

Criticism of Pirandello is as prolific as the writer's own work. In the course of my research, it became apparent that despite the diversity of analyses, there was no single full-length study of the theatricality of his plays from a socialist-feminist point of view. My approach in this study is as much a sign of the times as a symptom of my own particular interests.

My semiotics has been generated by the developments in literary theory in the 1970s. The present crisis in literary studies is marked by the structuralist and post-structuralist revolutions which raised the problems of the *literariness* and the social determinants of a text. The theories of Marx, Freud, Saussure, Gramsci, Lacan and Barthes, among others, are my main influences here.

I have attempted to account for the way Pirandello's texts bear the traces of fascism and sexuality. Despite their manifest silences, they are eloquent about the death of narrative, and they offer a compromise in the open-ended play. The deferred meanings lead to constant and pleasurable re-readings of his work. I would like to note here that I have paid attention to Pirandello's own theoretical writings and that my analysis concentrates on a manageable selection from his forty-four plays. I am aware that I have made many omissions, but I am also under the impression that now that I have a thesis, this study will never end.

It is hoped that my analysis will encourage more women to develop a post-feminist criticism which can regard male writing as historically instructive instead of as largely oppressive; and that it will also lead some scholars to consider new, modern and topical aspects of Pirandello's work. It is Gramsci whose reference to his work on Pirandello in a letter from prison of 19th March, 1927, inspires one to negotiate the Scylla and Charybdis of critical toleration and derision in order to continue writing "senza esempio".

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University of Essex, 1982.

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"Mirror-image/Collage: Reality, Representation and Revolution in Pirandello", in *The Politics of Modernism*, vol.1 of 1936: *The Sociology of Literature*, edited by F. Barker *et al.* (Colchester, 1980), pp.185-206.

"Il Belfagor di Pirandello: Machiavelli rivisitato", in *Pirandello Poeta*, edited by P.D. Giovanelli (Florence, 1981), pp.180-96.

"Beyond Desire: A Critique of Susan Sontag's Production of Pirandello's *Come tu mi vuoi*", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society*, edited by J. Stone, no.1, 1981, pp.35-47.

"La firma di Pirandello: i saggi e la semiotica", in *Pirandello Saggista*, edited by P.D. Giovanelli (Florence 1982 - forthcoming).

"Pirandello's Picassos", *The Italianist*, edited by Z. Barański and B. Jones, no.2, 1982 - forthcoming.

Chapters III.3.b.v and IV.2 are based on my paper, "*Enrico IV: A Semiological Approach*", delivered to the Pirandello Section of the Modern Languages Association, Chicago, December 1977.

"L'Herbier, Cinéaste" was a paper I delivered at the third annual conference of the British Pirandello Society, University of Warwick, May, 1982.

Textual Note

All references to Pirandello are to the six volume edition, published by Mondadori, Milan, in the series *I classici contemporanei italiani*, directed by G. Ferrata. The dates of publication of each volume are listed below.

Novelle per un anno I, vol.1, IX edition, 1973.

Novelle per un anno II, vol.2, IX edition, 1973.

Tutti i romanzi, vol.3, VI edition, 1971.

Maschere nude I, vol.4, V edition, 1971.

Maschere nude II, vol.5, V edition, 1971.

Saggi, Poesie, Scritti vari, vol.6, III edition, 1973.

All references to Freud are to the Standard Edition in twenty-four volumes of *The Complete Psychological Works*, edited by J. Strachey, and published by The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, London, 1978.

Abbreviations

Throughout this study, the following abbreviations have been used:

NA I: *Novelle per un anno* I.

NA II: *Novelle per un anno* II.

TR: *Tutti i romanzi*.

MN I: *Maschere nude* I.

MN II: *Maschere nude* II.

SPSV: *Saggi, Poesie, Scritti vari*.

SE: Standard Edition of *The Complete Psychological Works*.

Prologue: Semiotic Analysis

BEATRICE. Che intendete dire?

CIAMPA. Niente. Mi pare che lei abbia la bocca ... non so ... come se avesse mangiato sorbe, ecco, stamattina.

BEATRICE. Sorbe? Miele! Ho mangiato miele, io, stamattina. Scusate, non vi sto dicendo anzi ... ?

CIAMPA. Oh Dio mio, non sono le parole, signora! Non siamo ragazzini! Lei vuol farmi intendere sotto le parole qualche cosa che la parola non dice (MN II, 370).

This dialogue between Beatrice and Ciampa in *Il berretto a sonagli*, points to one of the main areas of interest in Pirandello's plays - the relationship between a word and its meaning. The Father and Enrico IV share in this search for the referent¹: they also attempt to unscramble the codes they use in order to divulge the truth about events in their past.

These events seem to bear no direct relation to the ways in which they are portraying them. The gap between the word and the thing renders their language opaque to those who are listening to their rationalisations. Ciampa's own bewilderment is evidence of this fact: "Parlare? E che bisogno ha piú di parlare? Dopo il fatto!" Fifi then explains: "Ma il fatto, caro Ciampa, non è come voi forse v'immaginate!" and Spanò adds, "Negativo! negativo! verbale assolutamente negativo!" (MN II, 394-95). There is no common recognition in the words they speak. Their fundamental breakdown in communication only begins to make any sense at all when it is acknowledged as such. It is in the shift from narration about events, to commentary about the narration, that Pirandello situates himself as a modernist. Traditional thematic studies of the "malentendus" of his plays can describe this transition, but they cannot account for it. A semiotic approach provides the critical

instruments for an analysis of the processes of signification in the plays. There follows a brief outline of semiotic methodology.

i. A "Science" of Signs

Pirandello's texts declare themselves as metalinguistic - they address the problems of theatrical language, as well as of language in general. This deconstructive process dissipates the illusion of naturalist mimesis and destroys the integrity of the coherent dramatic text. Very seldom are his plays concerned with mimetic representation: when they are, they can scarcely not reveal the impossibility of locating the referent. In theoretical terms, Pirandello's texts explore the tenuous relation between signifier and signified. The theatrical sign consists of these two terms and it cannot signify in itself; the sign takes up a meaningful position only in difference from other signs: this difference occurs along two axes - in the syntagmatic juxtapositions in the signifying chain, or in the paradigmatic relations with words that are absent but associated.²

According to Peirce, a sign is "something which stands to somebody for something in some respects or capacity".³ Morris proposes the definition that "something is a sign only because it is interpreted as a sign of something by some interpreter.... Semiotics, then, is not concerned with the study of a particular kind of objects, but with ordinary objects insofar (and only insofar) as they participate in semiosis".⁴ Eco amplifies this definition by proposing that a sign is "tutto ciò che, sulla base di una convenzione sociale previamente accettata, possa essere inteso come *qualcosa che sta al posto di qualcos'altro*" [his italics].⁵ He modifies Morris's definition by adding that "*l'interpretazione da parte di un interprete,*

che sembrerebbe caratterizzare il segno in quanto tale, deve essere intesa come interpretazione *possibile* da parte di un interprete *possibile*"⁶ [his italics]. This virtuality of the sign is important when one considers the "representational" aspect of theatre. Elsewhere, Eco writes succinctly: "Si le théâtre est fiction, c'est seulement parce qu'il est avant tout signe".⁷ The signifier is relatively arbitrary but is inevitably yoked to a signified - in the last analysis - or to a multiplicity of signifieds depending on the "interpretant".⁸ Eco explains that "l'interpretante non è l'interprete del segno L'interpretante è ciò che garantisce la validità del segno anche in assenza dell'interprete".⁹ Thus, for Peirce, the sign, or "representamen"¹⁰ involves a triadic relation: the sign itself (e.g. a physical object, image, quality, thought etc.); what the sign stands for (its object); and the equivalent sign or interpretant which the first sign creates in the mind of the person apprehending it. This second sign, the interpretant, is another representation which is referred to the same object, "and so on *ad infinitum*",¹¹ writes Peirce. The interpretant interprets by bringing the sign into a relation of equivalence with the object. This involves a choice and combination from interpretative possibilities already existing, or articulates a representamen requiring future interpretation. The sign does not denote a real object which can furnish the foundation of cognition - it requires the collective consensus of the speaking community to recognise the reference to the "real". Semiosis occurs when there is a community of sign references and does not depend on the "truth" or "reality" of the "real". Peirce wrote that "every proposition which we can be entitled to make about the real world must be an approximate one".¹² The production of an infinite series of signs is delimited by the interpretative possibilities of the community. The interpretative function of establishing an equivalence between representamen and object depends on the complex of previous signs and interpretations.

The denotative level where the signifier seems to refer to a signified is supplemented by a connotative level where the signifier itself is a sign - there arises a signification conveyed by a previous signification.¹³ This apparently infinite series of connotations marks the beginnings of a process which Eco has called "la semiosi illimitata".¹⁴

The problem of the theatrical sign can be summed up in the view of a group of Czech semioticians writing in the 1930s and 1940s. They state: "Everything that makes up reality on the stage - the playwright's text, the actor's acting, the stage lighting - all these things in every case stand for other things. In other words, dramatic performance is a set of signs."¹⁵ I shall expand on the specific concerns of theatre semiotics below. The specific qualities of dramatic discourse are similar to the representative qualities of language itself. This example implies that dramatic discourse reveals these aspects in a privileged way. Rather than stating that "dramatic performance is a set of signs", it would perhaps be preferable to repeat after Peirce that everything can be taken as something standing for something else, i.e. can be a sign in a set of signs. It is almost tautological to insist that dramatic discourse is any different from ordinary language since they both share in the oblique relations between the sign and its referent. For any social activity to be meaningful, it consists of a set of signs, not necessarily verbal ones: the sign system or code is a precondition for meaning to be deciphered. In this semiotic model, the possibilities for denotation or for a literal language - "whatever that may be"¹⁶ - recede as denotation implies an unproblematic relation between the plane of expression and the plane of content.¹⁷ A connotative semiotics has as its plane of expression an already constituted sign, another semiotics. Barthes,

in his later analyses, reveals the difficulty of accepting his earlier definition of denotation: "la dénotation n'est pas le premier des sens, mais elle feint de l'être; sous cette illusion, elle n'est finalement que la *dernière* des connotations" [his italics].¹⁸ Thus, what this semiotic model does provide for, is polysemy, where each language-user draws on a reservoir of potential meanings, "ciascuno a suo modo".

The fundamental dichotomies between "langue" and "parole"; and signifier and signified, as outlined by Saussure,¹⁹ can increase an understanding of Peirce's polyhedron sign since they provide a closer analysis of individual usage and of the actual constituents of the sign: this adds another dimension to Peirce's views on the relations of the sign to the referent and on the process of communication. For Saussure, the sign consists of a sound image (signifier) and a concept (signified). The process of production of meaning (i.e. signification) of the sign is determined by the place it occupies in the syntagmatic chain (i.e. the differential relations it bears through combination to other signs in the chain) and by the paradigmatic or associative relations it bears through substitution to other signs absent from the enunciated chain. Saussure writes:

On peut donc concevoir *une science qui étudie la vie des signes au sein de la vie sociale; ... nous la nommerons sémiologie (du grec sēmeion, 'signe'). Elle nous apprendrait en quoi consistent les signes, quelles lois les régissent.... La linguistique n'est qu'une partie de cette science générale, les lois que découvrira la sémiologie seront applicables à la linguistique ...* [his italics].

He also compares language with a sheet of paper: "la pensée est le recto et le son le verso; on ne peut découper le recto sans découper en même temps le verso; de même dans la langue, on ne saurait isoler ni le son de la pensée, ni la pensée du son...."²¹ The relatively arbitrary signifier (sound image) and its signified (concept) are inseparable in the classical Saussurean model. [The

usefulness of the metaphor of a sheet of paper for a discussion of Pirandello's "azione parlata" will be outlined in section iii, below.] Yet the potential indeterminacy of this attachment between signifier and signified will be the concern of subsequent theorists, especially the followers of Lacan [see section ii, below].

The quotation from Pirandello at the beginning of this Prologue, indicates how he too is preoccupied with the fleeting relations between signifier and signified; between a word and its meaning. He will express the problem in dramatic terms, "così è (se vi pare)". The suitability of this mode of analysis for a study of Pirandello's plays should now begin to emerge. As I have shown above, ¹⁷semiotics, in its simplest form, pays attention to this problematic relation between signifiers and the meanings that are attached to them through social consensus. To set out on an analysis of the spoken word in Pirandello's plays would soon reveal a wide range of significations and show how the context serves to "disambiguate"²² the sign by helping the reader/audience decide on one particular meaning. But, in true Pirandellian style, this semiotic security is merely temporary, since like the snake up Pietro Damiani's sleeve,²³ one meaning slips away or co-exists with another in a connotative chain. Syntactical order oscillates with meaningless chaos. Semiotic analysis attempts to chart the processes of slippage that occur to produce a multiple (but certainly not infinite) range of meanings for any one sign.²⁴

ii. The Psychoanalytic Process

Saussurean procedures, in association with Lacanian psychoanalysis, can lead to a further unravelling of the rhetorical strategies employed by Pirandello. Lacan is said to have

(mis)appropriated Saussure, according to Saussurologists.²⁵

However, Lacanian theory has been adopted by post-marxists as it is claimed that it provides the conditions for the development of a materialist theory of language and of the constitution of the self.²⁶ Textuality theories which return to Freud are a branch of semiotic analysis which uses the psychoanalytic process as a model for literary criticism: these theories allow the critic to dispense with the primacy formerly granted to the referent.²⁷

Freud first imagined that when his analysands were narrating either traumatic events in their past, or their dreams, they were referring to real events. His early symptomatology attempted to restore an original experience as if it were a portable object, like a photograph: he erroneously viewed the symptom as if it were an uncanny sign or reflective trace of the primal event.²⁸ Freud soon realised (after 1897) the extent to which discursive revisions take place when the narrator will produce a fictional fantasy of a primal seduction scene; this scene is constructed retroactively - it may never have happened.²⁹ Through the mechanisms of condensation (metaphor) and displacement (metonymy), the patient edits an event through the narration.³⁰ Statements become performances.³¹ The utterance produces perlocutionary effects on the listener and its status as a propositional act is secondary. This example serves to reveal the way mimetic representation becomes increasingly difficult. To claim that the discourse is purely referential would be fallacious.³² The referential fallacy is proved by Pirandello's example of the way in which art can produce life:

La fantasia si sarebbe fatto scrupolo, certamente, di passar sopra a un tal dato di fatto; e ora gode, ripensando alla taccia di inverosimiglianza che anche allora le fu data, di far conoscere di quali reali inverosimiglianze sia capace la vita, anche nei romanzi che, senza saperlo, essa copia dall'arte (IR, 480).

The narrator takes refuge in figurative language. The psychoanalytic process provides a practice of reading signs which does not take words at their face value. The task of the analyst is to chart the play of meaning: the narrative text can be shown to be wrought with reorganisations and shifts in focus. This process of narrative rearrangements becomes the object of the reader's attention, instead of any attempt to consider the referential content of the narration. The exchange between the analyst and the analysand comes to have priority: this is described as the discourse of the "other" and is subject to the conditions of transference and countertransference.³³ This model of reading avoids reducing the literary artefact to a dream or fantasy. The relevance of this type of approach is immediately evident when one considers Pirandello's long analytic sessions with his characters. The refusal to hear their story and his presentation of their version in truncated and revised form are classical defences which speak of countertransference. In a discussion of the rehearsals of the event in Pirandello's trilogy, and especially in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, I shall be drawing on Freud's theatrical metaphors for the repetitive acting out which occurs in the analytic situation.³⁴

Transference is one of the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis: it directly affects the practice of reading literature as case history, dream, fantasy, rhetorical exchange or psychoanalytic process. According to semiotic analysis, the text cannot exist in itself but it requires a relation to be set up between text and reader, or even between text and text. This intertextuality is a condition of signification.³⁵ In the theatrical situation, these interrelationships become increasingly complex, since the act of "repetition" requires the presence of actors, audience and director (not to speak of characters). Pirandello, as author, is also

present in the process of "realisation" of the event, and despite his own modernist textual strategies of self-concealment, and of declared absence, he too lurks in the text. In the analytic situation, all kinds of prejudices and cultural or ideological determinants prevent an "innocent" reading or communication. It can be seen how a semiotic analysis assists in mapping this inter-subjective warfare which Pirandello confronted directly in the trilogy.

There are two ideas basic to Pirandello's writing, which lend themselves to semiotic analysis: these are his theories of "azione parlata", and of "umorismo". The theory of "azione parlata" (1899), bears a close resemblance to Saussure's paper metaphor mentioned in section i.³⁶ If language is like a sheet of paper, where signifier and signified are in effect inseparable, then so are action and speech. For Pirandello, action is speech and speech is action: "che si trovi cioè la parola che sia l'azione stessa parlata, la parola viva che muova, l'espressione immediata, connaturata con l'azione ..." (SPSV, 1015-16). This perception places language, instead of events, at the centre of Pirandello's dramatic enterprise.³⁷ The non-linear plot or "sjužet", in Formalist terms, can be reduced to a basic story-line or "fabula", but it is not equivalent with the simplification:³⁸ Pirandello dramatises the discursive strategies, revisions, repetitions, interventions, ellipses, parapraxes, hyperboles and displacements which prevent the narration from making the original event immediately accessible. The metalinguistic asides of his characters are testimony to his obsession with the tropes of textuality. Enrico IV will spit this revisionary process out: "E salutatemi tutte le tradizioni! Salutatemi tutti i costumi! Mettetevi a parlare! Ripeterete tutte le parole che si sono sempre dette! Credete di vivere? Rimasticate la vita dei morti!"

(MN I, 350). The story is nothing, it is the recounting of it that tells. The reciter requires a listener.

The second idea which is suitable for semiotic analysis is "umorismo" (1907). "Umorismo", ("the grotesque drama of an impossible definition"),³⁹ is an ironic device: negative and positive meanings are available simultaneously to the reader, as in Pirandello's graphic example of a woman who is like mutton dressed up as lamb (SPSV, 127). In Aristotelian terms, the comic occurs when the normal sequence of events is disrupted: here the incident of realising what the woman should look like breaks the normal sequence of expectation.⁴⁰ The passage from the comic to "umorismo" is when the original expectation is not fulfilled: one expects the old woman to look her age. The comic moment occurs when the original expectation is defeated by the spectator's noticing that she does not look as she should ("un avvertimento del contrario"). This observation is accompanied by "il sentimento del contrario" (SPSV, 127). In Pirandello's theory of "umorismo", the comic moment is sentimentalised. The one state does not replace the other, but both codes co-exist at once and this contradiction performs the labour of an alienation device. The paradigmatic situation of antithesis in "umorismo" can lead to a knowledge of the processes of literary signification. Irony has a similarity with paradox, where the utterance goes against (para) the grain of established belief or received opinion (doxa). Pirandello exhumes the cruelty behind the conventional joke. Freud argues in his work on the interpretation of dreams and in his essay on the antithetical sense of primal words, that the coexistence of opposite senses in a single word is similar to the way ambiguous or ambivalent emotional states occur in the analysand.⁴¹ In Lacanian terms,

this feature of language is the grounding condition for emotional ambivalence in the fragmented and contradictory human subject.⁴²

In semiotic terms, Pirandello's theory of "umorismo" gives his signifiers dual meanings and makes contradiction the formula for language itself: it annihilates the certainty of an unproblematic sign. Coherence, like the primal scene, is irretrievable.

The reality-reference remains elusive: whilst the doubting subject, according to Kierkegaard, seeks to penetrate the elusive object which is still thought to exist, "with irony, the subject is always seeking to get free of an object that never acquires reality...".⁴³ With "umorismo", word-play comes to substitute the primary perception. Pirandello's theory relates closely to Freud's analysis of jokes where he reveals how the mechanisms of wit conceal a secondary [rather than use the classical term "repressed"] meaning. He gives an example of a joke which works by the technique of absurdity:

Two Jews met in a railway carriage at a station in Galicia. "Where are you going?" asked one. "To Cracow", was the answer. "What a liar you are!" broke out the other. "If you say you're going to Cracow, you want me to believe you're going to Lemberg. But I know that in fact you're going to Cracow. So why are you lying to me?"⁴⁴

In his gloss of this joke, Freud adds: "But the powerful technical method of absurdity is here linked with another technique, representation by the opposite, for, according to the uncontradicted assertion of the first Jew, the second is lying when he tells the truth and is telling the truth by means of a lie."⁴⁵ [Così è (se vi pare)!] The lies told by Pirandello's characters are the illusions of their own reality. Semiotics has been defined as "la teoria di ogni cosa che serve a mentire".⁴⁶ How many of Pirandello's characters communicate something to which no real state of things corresponds. Another of their characteristics is to be "ridens".⁴⁷ In Pirandello's

texts, laughter succeeds to rationality. These specific qualities make his work available to semiotics which is also the science of "ogni cosa che possa essere usato per far ridere o per inquietare".⁴⁸

A distinguishing factor of wit, for Freud, is that a joke needs an audience.⁴⁹ For Freud, the narration of the "original" event is always a re-elaboration of the primal scene: this scene undergoes distortion or may even have been invented and thus is never able to be recreated in its original form. Similarly, the dialogic situation, when a joke is told, not only produces a "translated" version of the unattainable "original" meaning, but provokes laughter in a social relation. In this study, I shall be arguing that Pirandello's theory of "umorismo" requires him to abandon the solitary stance of successive narration for the simultaneity of dramatic dialogue.⁵⁰ The pleasures of joke-sharing anticipate Pirandello's "umorismo" which will rely on the theatre ambience to present conflicting versions of reality at the same time. Pirandello's humourist perceptions force him to become a dramatist and effect a radical break from naturalist means of portrayal. The presence of an audience becomes a necessary condition for the elaboration of Pirandello's existential joke about the impossibility of establishing truth.

iii. Theatre Semiotics

At this juncture, the relatively new branch of semiotics, theatre semiotics, will provide additional tools for analysis. Theatre semioticians have supplemented traditional semiotic theory by concentrating on the dual nature of the play text: this has been divided into dramatic text (DT); and performance text (PT); a dichotomy which takes into account the specific quality of the

"representation" of a play, as distinct from the original written script.⁵¹ The battle-cry of theatre semioticians can be summed up as follows: "il s'agit désormais de passer d'une considération du texte (écrit) comme spectacle à celle du spectacle comme texte (sémiotique)."⁵² The separation between DT and PT has been productive in terms of developing the critical instruments adopted unsatisfactorily from narrative theory. The most common objection to this approach is when the question arises of how one can analyse an "absent" object such as the PT of a play that might never have been seen or have even been performed.⁵³ How, one is asked, is it possible to conjecture about a potential or "model" performance?

In addition to the wealth of semiotic clues that lie in the stage directions, theatre semioticians aim to defy the "imperialism" (or cultural prominence) of the written script. An analysis of the PT has the result that the several heterogeneous non-verbal signifying systems which compose the dramatic event, come into consideration. Apart from gesture, action, setting, costumery, lighting, stage props, music, mime, etc., theatre semiotics also examines the interrelationships of these different signifying systems. The complexity of this model emerges when the analysis is then related back to the words on the page, or DT. Para-linguistic features such as pitch, loudness, tempo, timbre and non-verbal sounds become an important feature of the analysis: this aspect is then related to the kinesic (gestural) and proxemic (spatial) codes.⁵⁴ Modifications in the plane of expression supply additional information: a single phrase can be repeated in a multiplicity of different ways, and when accompanied by signals in other mediums such as movement, lighting etc., a variety of meanings can be transmitted. The static binary opposition between written text and performance is transformed through dialectical analysis of the

interplay between DT and PT, i.e. an analysis which accommodates contradiction and overlap and which does not give precedence to one single element over another.

In broad terms, theatre semiotics leads to a radical shift in the critic's attention: the problematic no longer consists of plot, action, characterisation and thematic content, but of the structures and processes for signification and communication in theatre itself. Theatre semiotics provides a language for speaking about stage practices and about the selection of DT elements in the performance, i.e. the problem of invariance between DT and PT. In some analyses, the *mise-en-scène* takes priority over the written script. Other theorists isolate the deep narratological structures of drama by means of anthropological models.⁵⁵ In this study, however, I am less concerned with these kinds of readings (which sometimes lead to computerised lists of deictic devices, for instance, or of the regularity of ostensive words in dramatic discourse)⁵⁶ than with a sociological examination of the ideological assumptions of certain kinds of theatrical practices. It is intended to avoid a certain type of analysis which fails to account for the social determinants of the linguistic sign. This theoretical lapsus disseminates an unacceptable "hedonism" of the sign [see section iv, below].

My application of theatre semiotics to Pirandello's texts will be directed towards his theories of improvisation and I shall discuss the relation between what he calls the "original" (DT) and the "copy" (PT). In contrast with the written script, Pirandello describes the performance as "la rappresentazione scenica, traduzione o interpretazione di essa [l'opera d'arte], copia piú o meno somigliante che vive in una realtà materiale e pur fittizia e illusoria" (SPSV, 224). This distinction between the original and the translation echoes what Freud calls, "the well-known cry: 'Traduttore-Traditore!'"⁵⁷

The humour of this juxtaposition, Freud explains, lies in the slight modification of the words, i.e. a phonemic alteration, which results in two similar signifiers which point to the connection of the signifieds. Pirandello shares in Freud's logocentric fetishisation of the written script whose translator performs "crimes against his original".⁵⁸ Theatre semiotics can reveal how Pirandello is flustered by the relative autonomy of the PT:

Io parlo del libro: vorrei dire, del testo che ne hanno sotto gli occhi i lettori, in luogo della traduzione che ne hanno avuto e ne avranno davanti gli spettatori: parlo cioè dell'espressione unica e immediata dell'autore; non di quella varia e necessariamente diversa, che per mezzo della loro persona, della loro voce, dei loro gesti, ne hanno data e ne daranno gli attori. Questa dura una sera, più sere, una stagione, e passa; il libro resta (SPSV, 1007).

Elsewhere, Pirandello will give the *commedia dell'arte* as the supreme example of "la libera creazione dell'attore" (SPSV, 224). Yet he will qualify this acclaim by pointing out that the *commedia dell'arte* is trivial because of its improvised nature which does not allow it to reveal the idealised concentration of high art. I shall provide a critique of his notion of improvisation as a spontaneous, unscripted and expressive performance by illustrating what constraints operate on the PT. I intend to explain how both the DT and PT consist of a design and of events: the events in each case are restrained by the design. The design determines the invariant features of the events and sets up the limits of the variations. This applies to the textual events of the DT or to the delivery events of the PT.⁵⁹

In the passage quoted above, Pirandello also anticipates the semiotically troublesome body of the actor. This "real" body becomes the object of possible signs as it is able to be photographed, verbally defined or designated. Yet it has to be detached from its real context and to be constituted as a sign: it is also a signifier of movement and of the space where movement is inscribed. Theatre

semiotics has to denaturalise this "real" body by displaying its artificial, arbitrary and unconventional aspects. The parable of Pirandello's novella "Il pipistrello" affords an exceptional tool for semiotic analysis: there he describes how an extraneous element, a bat, interrupts a performance and causes distress to the leading lady who suffers from a phobia. This is how Pirandello describes the non-verbal effects of the "maledetto pipistrello" which, attracted by the lights, is fluttering "come impazzito":

La piccola Gàstina ne aveva un pazzo terrore. Era stata tre volte per svenire, le sere precedenti, nel vederselo ogni volta passar rasente al volto, sui capelli, davanti agli occhi, e l'ultima volta - Dio che ribrezzo! - fin quasi a sfiorarle la bocca, con quel volo di membrana vischiosa che stride. Non s'era messa a gridare per miracolo (NA I, 237).

This protrait of a sexual hysteric embattled against an "insolentissimo" bat provides a challenge to theatre semiotics. I shall utilise what I have called the "pipistrello principle" in order to extrapolate the complexity of the unrepeatable and unique performance event which relies on, but is distinct from its scripted determinations. The bat naturalises the actor's body by breaking the theatrical illusion. Yet, simultaneously while breaking the frame, the bat is also a "licensed means of confirming the frame by pointing out the pure facticity of the representation".⁶⁰ [This modernist demythologisation of the sign will be discussed in more detail in chapters II and IV.]⁶¹ Theatre semiotics allows one to perceive the contradictory processes of the PT which, as I have mentioned, Pirandello described as "una realtà materiale e pur fittizia e illusoria" (SPSV, 224).

The dramatic fiction is articulated in the body of the actor and in the conflicts between actors and characters.⁶² The ruptural element of the bat points to the radical way in which Pirandello's texts interrogate conventional stage practices. His philosophical concerns about the nature of illusion and reality can be translated

into conflict in the arena of the sign. Theatrical illusionism becomes a trope for the way ideology naturalises inequality and conceals power:

Il est juste de dire que beaucoup de signes ne sont pas des fictions, dans la mesure où ils prétendent au contraire indiquer, dénoter, signifier des choses qui existent réellement: mais le signe théâtral est un signe fictif, non pas parce qu'il s'agit d'une feinte ou d'un signe qui communique des choses inexistantes (et, du reste, il faudrait décider ici ce que cela signifie de dire qu'une chose ou un événement sont inexistantes ou faux),⁶³ mais *parce qu'il feint de ne pas être un signe.* [My italics.]

This elaborate theoretical comment can be simplified by referring to the lucid remark Pirandello placed in the mouth of the Stepdaughter: "Che cos'è un palcoscenico? Ma, vedi? un luogo dove si giuoca a far sul serio" (MN I, 111).

iv. A Note on Discourse Theory

An awareness of the economic and social conditions of production of "literary" texts will permeate all the chapters of this study; however, for the pragmatic and heuristic reasons outlined below, I have given this problem most attention in chapter I.

Before embarking on a detailed analysis of the playscripts and spectacles [in chapters III and IV], I shall attempt to situate Pirandello within the social context of emergent fascist Italy. This first chapter is a result of the need to avoid the excesses of semiotic "hedonism" which consists in upholding the complete autonomy of a set of signs, as if it had no relation to any material conditions of production, or even to a referent. In order to anchor my analysis of the sign in material reality, I shall argue here that the sign has a relative autonomy from social constraints, but is conditioned by concrete reality in the last instance.⁶⁴

For the purposes of this study, I have assumed a working

familiarity with the limitations of a standard marxist approach which supplies a base/superstructure model where aesthetic objects are seen to "reflect" the economic and social background; and where structural homologies are said to exist between the text and reality.⁶⁵ This rather mechanistic model has been labelled "vulgar marxist" or "reductionist", since Althusserian theory provided the more flexible concept of the "relative autonomy" of the superstructure (i.e. text, ideology etc.) so as to allow for the "overdeterminants" on the aesthetic object.⁶⁶ A concept deriving from Freud, "overdetermination"⁶⁷ helps rid the analysis of primary causes, and of purely genetic concerns, by attributing a multiplicity of determining factors to the formation of the object under study: the analysis then concentrates on the plurality of elements which can be organised in different meaningful sequences of relative coherence.⁶⁸ The Althusserian model has also been subject to criticisms and revisions, since it cannot account for intertextual transpositions and new articulations at the superstructural "level"; and since, in some analyses, it maintains the utopian notion of acquiring a "true" knowledge of concrete reality, through a "science" of the text: the text is regarded as simply veiling this concrete reality by means of the mechanisms of false consciousness.⁶⁹ Some revisions will refer to the conditions of *literary* production, but this seems merely to transpose the metaphors of economism to the literary domain, without accounting satisfactorily for intertextuality, contradictions and inconsistencies in the writing.⁷⁰

At this juncture, Foucauldian discourse theory, which arises dialectically out of (and so gives a critique of) Saussurean linguistics; structuralism and semiotics; Lacanian psychoanalysis; as well as Marxist political economy and aesthetics; and Althusserian theories of ideology, seems to provide somewhat more helpful tools

than the revised marxist model, which remains ultimately reflectionist - even when acknowledging the multiple mediations between base and superstructure. Discourse theory offers a way of distinguishing the differences among several signifying practices, yet also of showing how power circulates their unities and regularities (rather than deploying "levels" behind which hides some concrete real).⁷¹

If it is then accepted that all knowledge and all social antagonisms are constructed in discourse, then the concrete real, in the "truest" sense, remains unknowable, if not unthinkable: this is not the same as saying that it does not exist; nor that its effects as exercised by power are not experienced in "spontaneously lived ideologies".⁷² Hence, an "asceticism" of the sign [!] bears out the "truth" of its concrete determinations, but does not mirror them. One can then chart the discursive strategies which distance the referent, but which cannot annihilate it. Discourse analysis spells out more directly the *political* relations among sets of signs as they are articulated in statements and discourses. [I shall expand on this type of reading practice in I.1.]

My general intention is to examine the areas of semiotic consistency and regularity, as well as the areas of difference, between Pirandello's texts and the fascist discourse in dominance: this will avoid collapsing the texts into ideology or reading them as simply "reflecting" material conditions. To point out the facticity of a discourse, and so to confirm its relative autonomy, is not to ignore the referent, or its concrete conditions of existence; to denaturalise the sign is also a way of displaying its "mythology", as Barthes has shown.⁷³ Even lies and dreams are constructed through the *history* of the subject who lies or dreams. This subject, in turn, is also "written" or "spoken" by these lies

and dreams (i.e. the subject is anticipated in and by a discourse which writes or speaks her/his social constitution). Thus the paradigmatic selections and syntagmatic arrangements and reorganisations of the utterance as explained in ii, [above], betray the process of subjectification. It is at this stage that the insights of psychoanalysis aid a negotiation between the self and society.

I shall employ this psychoanalytic model in order to expose how hegemonic discourses thus construct or "interpellate" social subjects who are inscribed in discourses which pre-exist them.⁷⁴ The process of subjective recognition and identification with the discourses which "hail" them, provides a temporary security of "person".⁷⁵ This mythical individual is socially positioned through suppressing contradiction and disavowing alienation. An investigation of the splitting in the subject, who is apparently homogenised in the process of socialisation, makes it possible to speak of revolution; of different subject positions; and of the constitution of new subjects - they can then act collectively on concrete reality, to transform that reality and to reconstitute new selves.⁷⁶ Throughout this study, I shall draw on all the above theoretical developments to forward my analysis of the way in which Pirandello's texts are inscribed in fascist discourse, which they also compose.

v. Chapter Divisions

In chapter I, the methodology of discourse analysis [outlined in iv, above] will permit me to explore the workings of fascist discourse: I shall provide examples of the way it unifies the heterogeneous elements of socialist, nationalist and patriarchal rhetoric. I shall also undertake a discussion of the position of women in the new industrial society, by giving special attention

to the way fascism deals with "the woman question": this particular analysis will reveal the way fascist discourse constructs acceptable subjects; and will be useful for my subsequent assessment of the female figures in the plays (I.1).

I contextualise Pirandello's sign production in this chapter, therefore, in order to dispel the notion, which he himself forwarded, that his art is not *political*. The playwright was producing texts which were determined by the growth of a mass-culture. The relative autonomy of the literary artefact from instrumentalisation by the regime makes this form of enquiry reveal the multifacetedness of theatrical discourse in the period: dramatic traditions are now colliding with technological advancements and with political transformations (I.2). Not only the conditions of material production, but the social patterns of demand, consumption, reception and control are thus inscribed in his texts. Discourse analysis prevents the reductionism of a vulgar marxist approach to these problems.

In chapter II, "Mirror-image/Collage", I shall further my contextualisation of Pirandello by exploring his links with contemporary artists - primarily with the Cubists and the Futurists. This will lead me to dwell not only on the nature of Pirandello's dramatic "revolution", but also on the problems of mimesis and representation (II.1). I also intend to expose how the general crisis in signification ties Pirandello to the theatrical preoccupations of the time and gives him a special intertextual relation to the Cubists and the Futurists (II.2). Thus, I intend to develop my thesis that Pirandello's shift from narrative to drama does not rely on an act of will, but is "overdetermined": linear succession is temporarily relinquished for contradictory simultaneity. He will later restore "mythic" fabulation: the final plays unsuccessfully attempt to conceal the scission in the self portrayed in his most "revolutionary"

phase (II.3).

In the subsequent chapters III and IV, I shall provide close readings of the dramatic texts (DT) and performance texts (PT) respectively. Chapter III, "Playscripts: A Wilderness of Words", will concern itself with an exemplification of what Pirandello means by "azione parlata" (III.1); and with the ways in which he adopts some of the discursive tactics employed in the Futurist liberation of the sign - "parole in libertà" (III.2). By giving special attention to the language of madness, I intend to show the linguistic ruptures Pirandello effects, and to assess the revolutionary aspects in his rendering of female speech (III.3). Dissidence, verbal lunacy, repetition and sexual confession accompany silence and laughter in his texts. His writing vacillates between danger and desire.

The interest in non-verbal means of communication will lead, in chapter IV, "Spectacles: The Visual Illustration", to an archaeology of Pirandello's use of Futurist scenography (IV.1). This chapter also involves a discussion of the role of the audience (IV.2); of disguise and of the problems of identity (IV.3); and of the symbolic effects of the dreamscapes he provides in his last plays (IV.4). I submit that the revolutionary adventures of social fascism will be eclipsed by apocalyptic totalitarianism in Pirandello's last oneiric texts.

After the Epilogue, there is an Appendix which consists of a critique of a recent performance of *Come tu mi vuoi* (Teatro Stabile di Torino, Stagione 1980/81, directed by Susan Sontag). In the Epilogue, I shall sum up my argument by attempting to explain Pirandello's enigmatic title to the collection of plays, "Maschere nude". The oxymoron, the "naked prompt", will permit me to forward the idea that in effect superficial words are all, and "free speech"

an illusion. As Enrico IV puts it: "Parole! parole che ciascuno intende e ripete a suo modo" (MN I, 349). A semiotic analysis will reveal that behind the plenitude of the social mask, there is nothing but a mirroring void: Pirandello's plays are poised at the signal edge of a catastrophic abyss.

If chapter I appears as a tentative and relatively discrete area in this study, it is largely due to the present state of development - if not crisis - in marxist epistemology and critical theory; and also due to the complexity of the problematic.⁷⁷ Semiotic analysis is but a part of discourse theory: obviously, in this study, my main focus is on the intertextual relations between Pirandello's texts and those of his contemporaries; and on the transpositions in the texts themselves. My primary task is to chart the process of literary signification rather than the relations between the text and the social formation *per se*. Semiotics, as I have explained above, applies more suitably to the former terrain, which does not mean that it precludes the wider political concerns of discourse theory from permeating the analysis - all the chapters will be informed by what one might call (for the sake of convenience) a "sociological" dimension. Finally, this study is written without any claims to provide a "science" of the text, nor to bring forth the concrete real. It is merely interlaced with socialist wish-fulfilment - with John Donne's edenic moment and metaphysical desire: "To make dreames truths; and fables histories."⁷⁸

I. The Playwright in a Mass Society

I.1. Fascism and Revolution

What are the connections between *avant-garde* discourse and fascist ideology? Fascism has its historical beginnings as a subaltern discourse: I shall attempt to explain how it is installed into acceptability through its correlations with other discourses, which include what one might call "literary" discourse.¹ These discourses do not act as "props" in mutual support of one another, or of the institution "Literature". Rather, I would argue, a former series of parallel and even contradictory discourses is articulated in a "new" and different signifying web/nexus: this guarantees a relatively consistent and unified set of meanings.² The various discourses work in relative coherence to achieve consent and to become hegemonic or dominant.³ "Everybody [or nearly everybody] wants to be a fascist."⁴

In 1934, Pirandello received the Nobel Prize of Literature as a recognition for his prodigious literary output. The first production of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* in Rome, in 1921, was greeted by hissing and catcalls - signs of moral outrage. Yet thirteen years later and more than halfway through the "Ventennio nero", Pirandello had achieved the highest honours of the literary establishment. Along with another "enfant terrible", Marinetti, he had been made a member of the Italian Academy, founded in 1927. Both had once been considered "revolutionaries" in terms of cultural activity. Yet they were to take the vows of membership of the

Fascist Party, so declaring the middle-aged rites of passage from subversion to canonisation.⁵ Despite their later token resignations and formal disassociation from the organised fascist regime, Pirandello and Marinetti together provide evidence for the way in which the discourse of fascism achieves consent: its hegemony is corroborated by aesthetic discourses and cultural figures.

This is not to argue that Pirandello and Marinetti's writing is "fascist", nor is it to distill characteristics which may, or may not, typify the dominant "reactionary" discourse. I am merely pointing out that aesthetic discourses co-exist with, and are conditioned by, the discursive mechanisms of the dominant ideological formation. The various discourses work in relative coherence to become hegemonic - the term "hegemonic" avoids the notion of force or coercion. Thus, the several discourses in their "new" co-existence achieve a regularity and continuity which constitute the fascist "discursive formation".⁶ Discursive formations are a composition of ideological formations, (the complex assembly of attitudes and representations), which while being neither individual, nor universal, are related to the discursive position of the writer, which is not interchangeable with "class position". Ideological formations govern discursive formations which are recognisable from their systematic dispersal (or from the laws operating this dispersal); and from their regularities of orders, correlations, positions, functionings and transformations. The ideological determinants of *avant-garde* discursive formations can be revealed by drawing out the conformities relating the text to its referent, and to its conditions of production; and by deciphering the code which renders the signs produced significant. A semiotic approach to the *avant-garde* text deconstructs the text by taking apart the logic of

signification to expose the sign processes at work. In relating the *avant-garde* text to fascist ideology, it emerges that the dominant discursive formation is a hegemonic effect, which along with other means, is culturally sustained.

It is not simply a matter of Pirandello's texts reflecting or bearing a homological relation to the structures of fascist discourse. I would prefer to speak of the co-existence of various discourses, including literary discourses which themselves are constituted by various other discourses. A writer's language is not innocent and he/she cannot say no matter what, no matter how, no matter when.⁷ The constitution of the speaking subject within ideology, (i.e. its interpellation - the subject being "always already" spoken);⁸ or "the individual act of appropriation of language" is conditioned by discursive mechanisms which pre-exist that speech act.⁹ With these theoretical models in mind, one can then attempt to discover the discursive position of the writer within a specific discursive formation. It is advisable not to conflate the signifier with ideology (so reducing literary discourse to ideology, or super-imposing ideology on literary discourse);¹⁰ it remains necessary to consider "literary" discourse as it is articulated with the dominant discourse. In other words, "Literature", in the strictest sense, ceases to exist: it is but another set of discourses with some recurring specificities.¹¹

Discourse analysis can serve to reveal how the hegemonic discourse co-opts and defuses "alternative" (*avant-garde*) discourses; and how particular discourses act to reinforce a certain hegemony or acceptance of domination. This policing of discourse by a deliberate power tends to defuse the radical potential of the *avant-garde*.¹² The utterance is determined by the discourse in power, when power is the multiplicity of force relations immanent in the domain in which they

act. Literary discourse does not overtly assume the interests of power - unlike propagandistic or programmatic writing which allows one to read off equivalencies directly. A semiotics of the discursive position of the writer who produces a text - inevitably interlocked with the dominant discourse - indicates the web of complex connections between ideology and text.¹³

This complexity of heterogeneous discourses is articulated in a relative or apparent coherence or unity: like the single signifier, or element, in a signifying chain, it can only signify in relation to other elements, and not essentially, in-and-for-itself, in isolation.¹⁴ The apparent unity of a dominant set of discourses "naturalises" itself, and conceals power relations in order to produce itself as the only version of a mythological "reality".¹⁵ Thus, a knowledge of social relations can only take place in the area of the discursive, that is, within language(s) or signifying systems; these "take the ideological form of commonsense discourses which appear to the human subject (which is constituted by them) as 'natural', 'spontaneous' and 'obvious'".¹⁶ The subject recognises her/himself in the obviousness of this discourse (i.e. in the interpellation which conceals that the contradictory subject is in process).¹⁷ This model provides for the disarticulation of some of the discourses (or elements of a single discourse), and for their re-articulation in different sets or systems of signification; these different webs, in turn, can enter into contradiction with the dominant series and produce a "ruptural unity" or a crisis in signification.¹⁸

Marinetti and Pirandello were neither censored, exiled, nor imprisoned. Their texts, I submit, cohere and are compatible with, fascist discourse, even when these texts seem to "rupture" or apparently subvert the discourse in power, or in the process of

assuming power. The transformations which occur in Pirandello's textual productions can be marked by various stages which are regular and continuous with fascist discourse. The divisions are as follows: the early years where naturalism is disarticulated in the anti-bourgeois plays; the middle period with its devices of anti-representation, and with the plays of self-consciousness, when the constitution of the play itself is taken as the object of its own discourse (i.e. metatheatre or "play within the play"); and the hypersymbolisations of the last period.¹⁹ These three moments in his writing interconnect with the organisation of the radically disaffected "arditi" into anti-capitalist "fasci"; the "revolutionary" rhetoric of social fascism before the assumption of power and in the early years of the regime; and the consolidation of the reactionary regime.

In its conception, fascism is acknowledged as having been in an antagonistic relation with the liberal democratic *status quo*. A movement which encapsulated the discontents of a specific petty bourgeoisie in the grip of capitalist social relations, fascism adopted the rhetoric of social revolution in order to effect its own changes in favour of the middle classes. The "popular-democratic" range of its discourse determined its appeal beyond specific class fractions, so that a single class connotation cannot be disarticulated from its mass following.²⁰ This concept of the "popular-democratic" range of fascist discourse leads one out of the defiles of class reductionism and of vulgar, economistic and reflectionist analyses of the "literary" text. In Pirandello's case, the text may be produced and consumed within the dominant discourse, but it is not uniform, nor self-consistent, so it cannot directly expose the "pure" ideological or class position of the author. Thus, it

is not a matter of proving a writer like Pirandello to be either "fascist" or "petty bourgeois", but of accounting for the contradictions through and across his textual production. One cannot disarticulate a single connotation, but should consider the relative unity of the discourse in dominance - this avoids a theory of structural homologies between "literature" and "society".²¹

In fascist discourse, the "revolutionary" elements are linked with the more transparent aspects of "reaction". The emptying of significance of the early radical rhetoric and its redeployment in an oppressive fascist code of meaning have been made evident in particular reference to the term "National Socialism".²² The notion of fascism as "conservative revolution", coined by Rocco - an architect of fascism - points to the contradictory aspects of early fascism which is not a homogeneous discourse of reaction.²³ While confronting the working class, fascism also re-examined traditional bourgeois ideology: fascism's heretical version of revolutionary syndicalism forwarded the ideal of class co-operation through a new autonomous labour movement, initially opposed to the absorption of workers into corporations dominated by the employers and controlled by the State.²⁴ Later the fascist trade unions were to collaborate in "the national interest" with employers to counter big business: this led to the emergence of mixed corporations consisting of disaffected members of the urban labour movement, intimidated by *squadristi* violence; of skilled artisans; and of a following among the middle and lower middle classes, with tacit support from the police and the army. All former apparently proletarian loyalties were now devalued: class co-operation became an expression of the fascist corporatist state. The fascist trade unions and the syndicalist movement were run ultimately by bureaucrats on behalf of the State, instead of labour leaders acting in the interests of the workers.

This paradoxical phenomenon of a "revolutionary" petty bourgeoisie acting in self-defence against both capital and the working-class, has been described, in an amendment, as "rivoluzione con l'aiuto dei conservatori", revolution *with the aid* of the conservatives [my italics].²⁵ Class collaboration (an ahistorical compromise, in this case), is summed up in the paradox: "Radical reaction is revolution against the revolution."²⁶

It now becomes apparent how European socialism's classic marxist model of revolution is assimilated by fascist discourse: led by the *avant-garde*, and proletarianised by industrial revolution, the "huge majority" of the masses rises up. This is the fascist revision of the socialist scenario. In these terms, the notion of a literary *avant-garde* "rupturing" and "subverting" established literary practices, cannot be sacramentalised in isolation: it should be conceived of according to its "realisation" or "restoration" to a position as dominant discourse.²⁷ It is thus crucial to locate the moment when the "literature of performance", absorbs and neutralises the so-called "subversion".²⁸ The way in which elements are defused or co-opted into a dominant set of discourses can help explain why the literature of "subversion" is re-articulated into a literature of "performance" where dominant sign processes are restored. The Futurists recuperate their "scandalous" selves: "*L'ordine è un vecchio poliziotto che non ha buone gambe per correre; noi futuristi, creiamo il nuovo ordine del disordine*" [his italics].²⁹

While the dominant set of discourses maintains the cohesion of the social formation, there are few areas where antagonistic, different or contradictory discourses can destabilise this closure: history has shown that these spaces are neither simply in class discourse - The Voice of the Proletariat - nor in a privileged cultural activity - Radio Voice of the *Avant-garde*. It could be argued that the anti-

bourgeois and anti-literary aspects of Pirandello's work are less revolutionary than the way the women figures are spoken in his texts. In this study, I intend to give examples of how the Female Voice (whose monologue is her form of revenge), shatters the relative discursive unities in the plays. The female subject is never made completely safe for fascism, but interrupts the process of subjection. Fascist discourse co-ordinates the elements of inferiority traditional to patriarchal discourses of capitalist and socialist societies alike: the figures of femininity and motherhood confine women, like Lenin's cook, to the kitchens of history. This is not to say that women do not make history for men: the support by women for fascism provides an indispensable foundation garment for the decorative trappings of fascist display - Mussolini, the "mannequin-vedette" and death-squad dress-designer. "Female" qualities, such as chastity and fidelity, are adopted by fascist discourse in order to bolster the family, and to secure the sacrificial devotion of wives, mothers, sisters and widows to the fatherland.³⁰ Their dedication guarantees the reproduction of the labour force and of cannon-fodder for their universal husband, the Duce. Mussolini was to prohibit all newspapers from publishing photographs of women with pet dogs, so as to encourage them to pamper babies instead.³¹ Despite the financial bonuses for families, the birthrate will fail to increase. Only when men are at the front [as was Pirandello's own son], is the household hearth substituted by the time-clock at the munitions factory. The traditional incapacities of women are opportunistically disregarded when there is a political need to exploit the female reserve army of labour to cope with the patriarchal state of emergency.

It is possible to substantiate my assertion that anti-feminist precedents permeate fascist discourse, by mentioning Mussolini's chief source of ideas. He systematically forwarded the view that

women were incapable of "synthetic" (i.e. theoretical and abstract) activity and that they were sentimental foreigners in the male realm of ideas. In 1925, Mussolini wrote: "Non divaghiamo a discutere se la donna sia superiore o inferiore; constatiamo che è diversa. Io sono piuttosto pessimista ... io credo ad esempio che la donna non abbia grande potere di sintesi e che, quindi, sia negata alle grandi creazioni spirituali."³² He drew his notions directly from Alfredo Oriani's essay, "Femminismo", which appears in his book, *La rivolta ideale*, first published in 1906.³³ It is interesting to note here that Pirandello, almost simultaneously, published his essay, "Femminismo", in the journal, *La preparazione*, in 1909.³⁴ Oriani wrote:

La storia depone contro la donna: religioni, imperi, civiltà nulla è femminile, benché questo elemento sia in tutto: invece le donne hanno fallito e falliranno sempre in tutte le opere, nelle quali il sentimento debba essere dominato dall'idea. Ogni sintesi essendo loro impossibile per difetto di astrazione, la politica come serie di pensieri e di atti sintetici, nei quali gli individui spariscono negli interessi e gli interessi nelle idee, lo diventa forse peggio di ogni altra. A tale potenza di astrazione corrisponde naturalmente un sistema muscolare e nervoso, che esse non hanno, e poiché la vita animale non deve disturbare l'esercizio delle altissime funzioni intellettuali, l'uomo che diventa padre in un attimo vi è meglio disposto della donna, che impiega nove mesi nella gravidanza e un anno e mezzo nell'allattamento.³⁵

Oriani's text was reprinted in 1930 and 1933, during the period of high fascism; and one Benito Mussolini wrote the preface to these editions.³⁶ This preface, according to a footnote in the 1930 edition, was originally an oration made at Oriani's tomb by Mussolini in 1924. Filled with homage, Mussolini proclaims his indebtedness as follows:

Ci siamo nutriti di quelle pagine e consideriamo Alfredo Oriani come un Poeta della Patria, come un'anticipazione³⁷ del Fascismo, come un esaltatore delle energie italiane.

The fascist programme for organised "leisure" (Dopolavoro), among other cultural activities, abetted the constitution of female

subjects who would gladly "cook and sew, make flowers grow...".³⁸

Oriani's text substantially endorses this stereotypical sexism and, like Pirandello, he attacks the current political movement for female emancipation and for universal suffrage.

Oriani advances a biologicistic argument which naturalises female milk and mothering, in contrast with male brawn and brains. Paternity, for Oriani, is a spiritual exercise which compensates for the flaccidness of the female body, "senza una accentuazione di muscolo".³⁹ In a passage which, as I shall demonstrate in subsequent chapters, is uncannily consonant with Pirandello's attitudes to the role of the father, Oriani states:

L'uomo domina sulla famiglia, non perchè vi sia materialmente il più forte, ma perchè la sua paternità è una fede puramente spirituale. La sovranità maschile non ha altra base: la natura non consentì all'uomo la gioia o il dolore di sentirsi veramente padre: invece egli ama, o anche non amando prende una donna, questa partorisce un bambino ed egli per fede nella donna, per pietà del bambino, meglio ancora per un istinto profondo della razza accetta di essere padre. Ma lo è davvero? La sua scienza, la sua coscienza non vanno al di là: la voluttà, che lo sedusse, è la cortina di un mistero; la donna sola può dire al bambino le parole tenere e superbe: tu sei il sangue del mio sangue!⁴⁰

["Tutto per bene"!]

He offers the maxim: "la donna non oltrepassa mai la mediocrità."⁴¹

All philosophical, scientific and artistic achievement of any merit is masculine, since "il genio è maschile".⁴²

Imitation of male activity simply denaturalises women: "Quando la donna ripetè la nostra opera, snaturò se stessa."⁴³ He is unable to cope with the threat of female rivalry for employment. Pirandello will echo this description of the New Woman as "rivale nel lavoro, antagonista nella carriera, e costretta a disertare la casa, a non sentire che se stessa, e allora inaridisce e si deforma. Il suo danaro costa assai più di quanto vale: può aiutare la spesa, non la vita della famiglia."⁴⁴ For instance, Pirandello will write:

Ma tutta questa loro *rivolta ideale* [my italics] contro i così detti pregiudizii sociali, tutte queste loro prediche fervorose per la così detta emancipazione della donna, che altro sono in fondo se non una sdegnosa mascherata del bisogno fisiologico, che si muove sotto? Le donne vogliono lavorare per trovar marito, signor mio. È un rimedio, questo, suggerito dal loro naturale buon senso. Ma, ahimè, il buon senso, il buon senso è nemico della poesia! E anche questo capiscono le donne: capiscono cioè che una donna, la quale lavori come un uomo, fra uomini, fuori di casa, non è più considerata dalla maggioranza come l'ideale delle mogli, e si ribellano contro a questo modo di considerare, che frustra il loro rimedio, e lo chiamano pregiudizio. Ecco il loro torto, in fondo in fondo scusabile però. Supporre che la donna, praticando continuamente con gli uomini alla fine si debba immascolinar troppo; prevedere che la casa, senza più le cure assidue, intelligenti, amorevoli della donna debba perdere quella poesia intima e cara, che è la maggiore attrattiva del matrimonio per l'uomo; supporre che la donna, cooperando anch'essa col proprio guadagno al mantenimento della casa, non debba aver più per l'uomo quella devozione e quel rispetto, di cui tanto essa si compiace: non sono pregiudizii; sono tristi necessità per cui la composizione ideale del femminismo si scompone e si scioglie nella questione più vasta delle tristissime condizioni economiche e sociali dei giorni nostri. Si scioglie, senza lasciar residui, signor mio, creda pure. Soltanto, quel po' di pellacchia sgonfiata... (SPSV, 1071).

Oriani too adds an attack on feminism: "I grandi uomini non amarono mai che donne semplici: nessuna delle grandi donne moderne è femminista."⁴⁵

He then lets slip this choice witticism:

Davanti ad una donna femminista mi sono sempre ricordato l'amaro motto del poeta: soltanto la bara è abbastanza stretta, perchè una donna non possa sdraiarsi al nostro fianco.⁴⁶

[One wonders whether it is only chance that the subsequent essay in the volume is entitled, "Il danaro", where Oriani confesses his fear of sexuality in a passage moralising against Carnegie's spendthrift philosophy: "Carnegie, un miliardo americano, ha proposto in un libro il problema del danaro, nel come spendere il superfluo, quando questa sua quantità superi troppo la potenza egoisticamente dispensatrice delle passioni e dei vizi; il libro è riuscito quale doveva, sciocco e volgare...."⁴⁷]

That the joke is on us feminists is made evident by fascist discourse's eloquent absorption of these male paradigms. In chapters III and IV, the importance of Oriani's proto-fascist declarations will

become even more apparent when I refer to the Futurist policy on women, and to Pirandello's essays, notebooks and plays. The middle class fear of massification which is apparent in the discourse of free-love and which abolishes emotional hierarchies, promotes the appeal of fascism for women endangered by a radical theory of unpossessive pleasures and bodies: the seducer-performer exercises control by means of the customary spell-binding resources of patriarchal discourse.⁴⁸ The power game of sado-masochism is played out in political discourse which eternally fixes the gender identities of the male victor and the female vanquished. At times, the proletariat is reduced to femininity in fascist discourse which eroticises this consent to domination.⁴⁹ In a different context, Sibilla Aleramo referred to this parallel subjectification of women and the proletariat. In her article, "Appunti sulla psicologia femminile italiana", written in 1910, and published for the first time in 1978, she comments: "La donna è ancora un'energia incognita, precisamente come la massa proletaria su cui conta il sindacalismo per rinnovare la spiritualità umana."⁵⁰ [The feminist Aleramo was also a member of the Fascist Party and of fascist organisations such as the Società degli Autori and the Donne Professioniste Italiane.]⁵¹ In chapters III and IV, I intend to chart the patterns of female desire and show how Pirandello cannot always "represent" women successfully. The gender antagonism is spoken by the several signifying systems, verbal and non-verbal, that sometimes serve to undermine patriarchal signification. Without succumbing to gender reductionism, it can be shown that the feminist hand that had to rock the cradle might yet turn the page of history. The Futurist *avant-garde* simply turn the page upside-down, experimentally and temporarily.

This study will examine the processes whereby an ultimately reactionary society recuperates *avant-garde* literary shenanigans:

it may then become apparent how the "revolutionary" pretensions of Pirandello and Marinetti need to be considered in terms of their ideological effects, and in relation to popular culture. In the final analysis, I submit, they do nothing more than sustain the hegemonic power effects of fascism. The verbal prolepsis of the *avant-garde* brings to mind Sartre's admonitions against the possibilities of describing communism before its event. In addition, the intellectual gymnastics of the *avant-garde* - examples of which would be the inaccessible poetry of the Futurists and the "cerebralism" of which Pirandello has so often been accused - underline how far removed this field of "literary experiment" and "abstract ideological debate" is from the masses and from engaged social activity.⁵² [The mummification of Dada and Surrealism in the museums of the establishment signifies the way progressive aesthetic movements are embalmed, inevitably it seems, by the institutions of bourgeois power.] It has been pointed out, quite correctly, that the relation of literary linguistic experiment to the disparate "Italian language today", requires careful examination:

Most of the Italian literary movements of the 20th century, from the Futurists down to the Hermeticists, the Neo-realists, the Neo-experimentalists and the Neo-*avant-garde* of our own day are characterized by being minority phenomena, ineffectual on the level of popular culture.⁵³

I.2. Culture and Commerce

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"Libro e moschetto, fascista perfetto." That fascism does not gain power simply through the barrel of the gun is made evident in this slogan of the period: books are as important as rifles to achieve cultural and political ascendancy. The cultural institutions of the regime promoted fascist hegemony and constructed

ideological conformity. This process of socialisation established a community of values and was an attempt to displace popular culture with mass culture.⁵⁵ Due to the longevity of the regime, this control of discourse - aided by the growth of media technology - was to a large extent effective in homogenising local and regional differences. The censor's panopticon restricted any proliferation of alternative of subversive discourses, for, as he was to observe: "Non è tempo oggi di ripetere scandali."⁵⁶

The *avant-garde* was to be appropriated by the regime in its strategy for the "normalisation" of culture. This process has been defined as follows: "Ed è implicito che in teatro 'normalizzazione' significa essenzialmente ripararsi sotto l'ala protettiva dell'industria, la quale maggiormente riuscirà ad integrare il lavoro teatrale quando si tratterà, per giunta, d'una industria di regime."⁵⁷ It has also been suggested that the co-option of the Futurists and of Pirandello failed to produce what was intended: namely to stimulate and standardise an Italian national culture, and to establish a successful State Theatre. In this section, I am more concerned with how the regimentation of the experimental *avant-garde* will affect their textual production: a discursive analysis of the alterations can lead to a knowledge of the way fascism achieves consensus and cultural acceptability. The procedures for building a fascist hegemony need to be understood in order to account for the ultimate failure of aesthetic nationalisation. This failure is not sufficiently explained by providing the documentation of the period, together with the correspondence between Pirandello and Mussolini concerning the foundation of the Teatro d'Arte in anticipation of a Teatro di Stato. Nor is it sufficient to account for Pirandello's collaboration as being financially advantageous to his theatrical enterprise; and then to whitewash his complicity with the regime by giving examples

of his dissenting speeches from the apron-stage. The process of normalisation and absorption of *avant-garde* discourse by fascism cannot be manoeuvred or resisted by an individual writer alone. Instead of this form of biographical rescue-work, I intend to indicate how fascist discourse achieves hegemony by exploiting signification and by eliminating signifieds incompatible with its own ideological ends: this liquidation of semiotic resistance takes place in the mass arena of the aesthetic sign; and the homogenisation of acceptable fascist subjects is effected through an attempted standardisation of language. As Gramsci illustrates, for the *avant-garde* (as for any political movement) to acquire a mass hegemonic status, it ought to have "la concezione netta e chiara che l'epoca nostra, l'epoca della grande industria, della grande città operaia, della vita intensa e tumultuosa, doveva avere nuove forme di arte, di filosofia, di costruzione di linguaggio".⁵⁸ This insight was to be useful to fascism in the age of mechanical reproduction.⁵⁹

In this section, I shall attempt to demonstrate how two aspects of the regimentation of discourse are enacted in Pirandello's texts: these consist of the eventual recommendations against dialect by the regime; and of the plans for the construction of a National Theatre. The explicit utterances of the regime were also anticipated in the cultural activism of the Futurists. I also hope to reveal how the commercialisation of culture and State intervention undermined the *avant-garde* and rigidified class and gender differences. Mussolini, in 1926, at the inauguration of the Società degli Autori was brutally direct about the authors' function in advancing fascist "spiritual imperialism":

Quale deve essere la missione degli scrittori italiani nel periodo storico che attraversiamo? È evidente che io taglio fuori dalla famiglia degli scrittori, esilio dalla repubblica delle lettere, tutti coloro che fanno del mercantilismo puro

e semplice e che non sono ispirati da ragioni di ordine superiore e spirituale. Anche qui ci sono delle gerarchie da stabilire, ci sono dei valori da difendere. Non si può mettere tutto allo stesso livello. L'ineguaglianza è nella natura, nella vita, nella storia.

Quale è dunque il vostro compito, il compito di coloro che creano? Bisogna che tutti gli scrittori italiani siano all'interno e soprattutto all'estero i portatori del nuovo tipo di civiltà italiana. Spetta agli scrittori di fare quello che si può chiamare "imperialismo spirituale" nel teatro, nel libro con la conferenza. Far conoscere l'Italia non soltanto in quello che essa ha di grande nel passato [...] Portare che cosa? La conoscenza del nuovo Stato italiano come lo ha fatto la guerra e come lo sta facendo la rivoluzione fascista.⁶⁰

This speech finds an uncanny echo in Marinetti's calculated estimation of the task of Italianising an Empire. One could well imagine him, like his manufacture Mafarka, proceeding - metaphorically, of course - with an eleven metre phallus in hand to territorialise female bodies and other uncivilised peoples. He writes:

È assurdo discutere - come tentano alcuni passatisti - sui caratteri più o meno italiani o nordici del genio di Luigi Pirandello. L'italianità è vasta come il mondo e contiene Dante, Michelangelo, Rossini, Verdi, Bellini, Boccioni, Pirandello e il sottoscritto.

Questi grandi italianissimi hanno influenzato e influenzano artisticamente il sud e il nord della sempre più italianizzabile terra.⁶¹

Half the battle to expand the fascist sphere of influence had already been won: the consensus of the silent majority was achieved before 30th October, 1922, the date of the March on Rome; thereafter, the regime survived Matteotti's assassination on 10th June, 1924; this blatant criminal illegality signalled the impending dictatorship which was formally announced on 3rd January, 1925. Thus, by 1926, Mussolini could well make manifest the means whereby fascist subjects were to be suitably consolidated through authorial discourses.

The "Fasci di combattimento" had been founded on 23rd March, 1919; and the groundwork for cultural "renovation" had been done by the Futurists. The Futurists and Pirandello had begun to besiege Italian literary traditions: besides a policy of disdain for women, a

fundamental demand of the Futurist Manifesto (1909), was to assail "passatismo" and to replace static museum artefacts with images of movement, action and rebellion. They wrote: "Il coraggio, l'audacia, la ribellione, saranno elementi essenziali della nostra poesia"⁴ ... Noi vogliamo distruggere i musei, le biblioteche, le accademie d'ogni specie, e combattere contro il moralismo, il femminismo e contro ogni viltà opportunistica o utilitaria."⁶² Many years later, this identity between *avant-garde* renewal and anarchic fascism was made manifest by Marinetti - with all the facile wisdom that comes after the event - in a declaration, in 1939, concerning Bragaglia:

Nella mia qualità di creatore del Movimento Futurista Italiano sono lieto di dichiarare che Anton Giulio Bragaglia con le sue numerose audaci iniziative spirituali d'avanguardia e futuriste fu sempre fra noi, identificando letteratura teatro arte con patriottismo di punta rinnovatore squadrista fascista.⁶³

While the "squadristi" of fascism were congregating out of the disbanded "arditi", the unemployed veterans of the First World War, their "literary" comrades continued to hold a warrior stance of outrageous audacity before the aesthetic inheritance. A popular song of the period presents us with the guerillas of the *avant-garde*:

Scavalca i monti - divora il piano ⁶⁴
pugnai fra i denti - le bombe a mano.

These figures were to be institutionalised in an official school textbook of 1936, where the departure of some "squadristi" for the March on Rome is described in a paraphrase from the popular film, *Vecchia Guardia* (1934).⁶⁵ The scene evoked is one where a family is helping a "squadrista" prepare to leave: the Father has cleaned his "moschetto", the Sister has sewn the emblems on his shirt, and the Mother has prepared some food. The fourteen-year old brother is moping about, fondling the rifle and putting on the black fez. After repeating his usual question, asking his brother to take him with him, the boy, a "squadrista" at heart, repeats the refrain,

"Bomba a man, carezze di pugnàl".⁶⁶ His age group were to be provided for, once Mussolini got into power. The "Fasci Giovanili", incorporated into the GIL (Gioventù Italiana del Littorio) had a special division for 14-17 year olds who were called, "Avanguardisti". It is interesting to note that girls in this age group were simply "Giovani italiane". Both boys and girls become "Giovani fascisti" at the age of 18.⁶⁷

The political and aesthetic discourses of the period are united by the common element, the "avant-garde". The received image of the literary guerilla, grenades in hand and breaching new aesthetic promontories is to be repeated by a Pirandellian critic and important witness to early productions - Gramsci. In attempting to account for the way in which Pirandello was "revolutionising" current theatrical taste, he wrote:

Luigi Pirandello è un "ardito" del teatro. Le sue commedie sono tante bombe a mano che scoppiano nei cervelli degli spettatori e producono crolli di banalità, rovine di sentimenti, di pensiero. Luigi Pirandello ha il grande merito di far, per lo meno, balenare delle immagini di vita che escono fuori dagli schemi soliti della tradizione, e che però non possono iniziare una nuova tradizione, non possono essere imitate, non possono determinare il cliché di moda.⁶⁸

Gramsci realised that Pirandello would have little effect on popular culture. However, he acknowledged Pirandello's corrosion of the audience's Thomist thinking and his shattering of their bourgeois preconceptions. Gramsci expressed reserve in regard to Pirandello's setting up a new literary tradition, due to the abstraction of philosophical argument implicit in his work. But despite this typical resistance to the "cerebralismo" in Pirandello's theatre, Gramsci motivated his assessment of Pirandello's cultural and literary importance according to his noteworthy considerations concerning the language of the productions and the "creation" of a national-popular literature. A national-popular literature needed to be detached

from scholarly masterpieces that are inaccessible to the masses and meaningless to the majority in an Italian world "dove si parla una lingua che non si scrive".⁶⁹

The problems of cultural hegemony which preoccupied Gramsci and which were intrinsically linked with language, lead to his privileging Pirandello's dialectal plays as being the more theatrically and culturally valuable. The bucolic fable *Liola* with its Sicilian setting and local folklore, its fertility rites and spontaneity, was to become for Gramsci, the Sardinian, an example of non-rhetorical production, without Pirandello's "verbosità inutile".⁷⁰ Later, in prison, he was to recall this example in a more considered statement on the relation of national language to popular culture. As Pirandello became a fascist cosmopolite, so he abandoned the dialectal forms in favour of a linguistic erudition, the barrenness of which is an index to the false attempts at nationalisation of the linguistic patrimony by the fascist regime. Political domination implies a homogenisation of language difference and the organisation of the educational apparatuses to promote a "standard" Italian language and culture. Throughout Italian history, local resistance to standardisation has weakened political coherence, with particular dialectal versions of Italian acquiring more prestige than others, as for example in the northern "industrialised" varieties.

Pirandello, who had written his thesis on the dialect of Agrigento, was aware of the problems of cultural insularity in contrast with national linguistic anonymity.⁷¹ In the Preface to his first translation of *Liola* into Italian, in 1917, he lamented: "Una letteratura dialettale, in somma, è fatta per rimanere entro i confini del dialetto" (MN II, 642). He realised that an acquaintance with the specific culture was required for full enjoyment. With some resistance, he concedes that a translation will make his work

more accessible to a Roman audience who are unable to understand the vernacular in its purest form. This difficulty is due to the fact that he does not write in what he calls, "quell'ibrido linguaggio, tra il dialetto e la lingua, che è il così detto *dialetto borghese* [his italics]. He then amplifies his definition: "*dialetto borghese*" che, con qualche goffaggine, appena appena arrotondato, diventa lingua italiana, cioè quella certa lingua italiana parlata comunemente, e forse non soltanto dagli incolti, in Italia" (MN II, 641). The growth of a mass industrialised society produces the need for a cultural "esperanto". Gramsci's notion of a national-popular culture was intended to provide a solution to the disadvantages of the dialect or of language. Cultural specificity is easily cannibalised by the colourless totalising of a "dialetto borghese", as Pirandello's disparaging comments show. Nevertheless, ideological factors beyond Pirandello's conscious control were to lead to his "de-provincialisation". Gramsci, in 1928, remarked on this process which led to Pirandello's writing in an erudite "esperanto". He reveals how Pirandello's change in language offers a historically false resolution to popular disharmony present in a language which reflects dialectal fragmentation.

10 La lingua non ha ancora acquistato una "storicità" di massa, non è ancora diventato un fatto nazionale. *Liola* di Pirandello in italiano letterario vale ben poco, sebbene il *Fu Mattia Pascal*, di cui è tratta, possa ancora leggersi con piacere. Nel testo italiano l'autore non riesce a mettersi all'unisono col pubblico, non ha la prospettiva della storicità della lingua, quando i personaggi vogliono essere concretamente italiani dinanzi a un pubblico italiano.⁷²

The suppression of the historicity of the language and the annihilation of local differences are evident in a passage from Pirandello's revised translation (1927) of *Liola*. The following quotations, I submit, provide a remarkable example of the way the popular-democratic range of fascist discourse operates in Pirandello's revisions of the text:

Sicilian version (1916):

LIOLÀ. Cc'è ca vinni 'na liggi nova, zû Simuni! fatta apposta pi nnàutri, p'alliggiiriri li pupulazioni di li Calabrieri e di la Sicilia! (MN II, 666).

Italian version (1917):

LIOLÀ. Hanno messo una legge nuova, fatta apposta per noi per alleggerire le popolazioni delle Calabrie e della Sicilia! ⁷³

Italian version (1927):

LIOLÀ. Hanno messo una legge nuova, fatta apposta per noi. Dico, per alleggerire *le nostre popolazioni* [my italics] (MN II, 667).

In this regard, it is also interesting to note that it is the 1927 version which appears alongside the Sicilian in the Standard Edition of Pirandello's works.

Pirandello's trajectory from dialect to Italian language not only marks his installation as a cultural figure removed from his origins by the commercial success of his theatre, but is also an indication of the fascist government's aspirations towards national unity. The propagandists dispensed the notion of an ideal "retrievable" Italian language distinct from dialectal forms - in other words, a linguistic pipe-dream:

Noi non chiediamo che sia decretata la soppressione dei dialetti, ma solo ci auguriamo che coll'estendersi dell'istruzione, i dialetti cessino di essere come sono in parecchie regioni un velo alla conoscenza della lingua, così che questa lingua così ricca ed armoniosa possa pienamente fondersi coll'anima di tutta la nazione ed essere la limpida rivelazione del progresso di tutta la sua vita spirituale.⁷⁴

In 1924, Pirandello was given the task of setting up a National Theatre. [I shall expand on the implications of this, below.] The prescriptive means whereby fascism attempted to secure its hegemony through cultural devices of control and inauthentic linguistic palliatives are in striking contrast to Gramsci's aspirations for a common national-popular language to develop through, and not at the expense of, the dialects. The insights offered by Gramsci concerning the measure of

dislocation between the language as actually spoken, and as written, will be helpful in the discussion, in subsequent chapters, of Pirandello's last play, *I giganti della montagna*.

Fascist discourse not only encouraged the elimination of dialectal forms, but made revolution against the abject form of polite address, "Lei" which was also unacceptable because of its feminine quality. In an effort to purify the language of "alien pollutants", the use of "esotismi" was prohibited: for instance, "ponte" supplanted the game "bridge" (but the word, "sport" was retained).⁷⁵ Like the youth, women were organised in "Fasci femminili" (sometimes called "Donne Fasciste") and the wives of farmers into the "Massaie rurali". It is interesting to note that particularly in Sicily, there was little success in rallying middle-class "signore" or peasant "donne" because of the traditional taboos against women appearing in public.⁷⁶ Once the regime was installed, there occurred a paradoxical return to pastoral values after the excesses of Futurist "modernolatria". The clash between town and country, in literary terms, "stracittà" and "strapaese", was symptomatic of the deepening economic malaise of the regime: industrial growth brought with it the depopulation of the countryside and the emergence of a troublesome social group - the unemployed. In order to vitalise agricultural production, the itinerants were encouraged to evacuate the cities. "Erma bifronte" is a suitable emblem to describe the tension between the progressive and regressive aspects of fascist discourse. Increasingly, there is a nostalgia for an edenic society free from the tyranny of the machine. In addition, women are urged to return to their domestic niche. In an article titled "Macchina e donna", Mussolini could not have been more explicit about the demographic effects on a society where women work: they are masculinised; they cause unemployment among men; they cause the birth-rate to drop; and they cause men to

lose their virile self-esteem. He wrote: "Oggi come oggi, macchina e donna sono due grandi cause di disoccupazione."⁷⁷ Pirandello was also to inveigh against the devouring machine: "La macchina è fatta per agire, per muoversi, ha bisogno di ingojarsi la nostra anima, di divorar la nostra vita (TR, 1112). The celebration of bucolic values in *Liola*, instead of being a vivid assertion of the specificity of peasant culture, comes to serve the regime in its efforts to regenerate country folklore. The following passage from the play, when articulated as an element among other elements in fascist discourse, can only assist in constructing female subjects adapted to the requirements of the regime.

LIOLÀ. E come no? Anche questa legge possono mettere domani. Scusi. Qua c'è un pezzo di terra. Se lei la sta a guardare senza farci nulla, che le produce la terra? Nulla. Come una donna. Non le fa figli. - Bene. Vengo io, in questo suo pezzo di terra: la zappo; la concimo; ci faccio un buco; vi butto il seme: spunta l'albero. A chi l'ha dato quest'albero la terra? - A me! - Viene lei, e dice di no, che è suo. - Perché suo? Perché è sua la terra? - Ma la terra, caro zio Simone, sa forse a chi appartiene? Dà il frutto a chi la lavora. Lei se lo piglia perché ci tiene il piede sopra, e perché la legge le dà spalla. Ma la legge domani può cambiare; e allora lei sarà buttato via con una manata; e resterà la terra, a cui getto il seme, e là: sfronza l'albero! (MN II, 669).

Several features of agrarian fascist discourse are registered here: these include the socialist rhetoric against the landowner; the reclamation of the countryside; and the procreative role of women. In subsequent chapters, I shall supply more details of the way in which Pirandello's last texts are in consonance with this shift in the discursive regime. The institution of the idyllic myth has been described as a "rifiuto della civitas industriale e recupero dell'archetipo materno".⁷⁸ Gramsci described the pastoral duties of the fascist ^{graval} master who re-subordinates the truant *avant-garde*:

I futuristi. Un gruppo di scolaretti, che sono scappati da un collegio di gesuiti, hanno fatto un po' di baccano nel bosco vicino e sono stati ricondotti sotto la ferula della guardia campestre.⁷⁹

Bragaglia was another Futurist who had harboured illusions about the prospects for creative co-existence with the "radical" regime: "il regista ancora s'illudeva che Mussolini fosse consapevole che il vero teatro fascista poteva nascer solo dal teatro d'eccezione e non da quello commerciale...".⁸⁰ In regard to the formation of a National Theatre, Pirandello's pronouncements were also made compatible with the cultural aspirations of the regime. The economic factor of reliable State subsidy was an important consideration in a period when it was widely recognised that private entrepreneurs restricted the creative artist. The anti-capitalist rhetoric against aesthetic speculation made the regime the "Deus ex machina" for the Arts. In a proposal outlining their plans for a "Teatro Drammatico Nazionale di Stato", presented to Mussolini in 1926, Pirandello and Giordani stated:

Il disegno, secondo il quale si può giungere, in breve tempo, con atto di volontà fascista, alla fondazione del Teatro drammatico nazionale di Stato comporta la proprietà da parte dello Stato di tre teatri di Roma, Milano e Torino, poiché, in qualunque altro caso, si avrebbero interferenze di interessi industriali che arrecherebbero gravi pregiudizi alla buona riuscita dell'impresa artistica.⁸¹

While Giordani did not hesitate to proclaim his fidelity to the regime, he and Pirandello had been at odds over Pirandello's conduct after the assassination of Matteotti. Pirandello quotes him as writing: "Avete fatto commettere al Pirandello l'ultima sua coglioneria."⁸² It seems, however, that 1925 was a crucial turning-point in Pirandello's relation with the regime in another respect in that his declaration of faith made him available to promote the acceptability of the regime through a National Theatre. The political "error" is linked to the substantial decline in his "revolutionary" creative powers: Pirandello too was "normalised".

The prostitution of art to capital, be it State-capital, had been identified by the Futurists in the Manifesto, "Pesi, misure e

prezzi del genio artistico" (1914): Corradini and Settimelli devise the futurist "misuratore" to systematise art in society, and to make the economic relation of consumption, which art always conceals, explicit. They show, in a radical departure from the tradition of artistic "genius", how the laws of consumption produce the laws of production. They conclude: "Bisogna pesare il pensiero e venderlo come una merce qualunque; ... Il genere dell'opera non ha per sè stesso nessun valore; può acquistare un valore per le condizioni dell'ambiente in cui è prodotto...."⁸³ But even these perceptions of the cash nexus binding Art to Money are themselves marketable. The modernistic exposure of the writing device has the appearance of cultural revolution, but, in effect, "il mercato mercifica il rifiuto del mercato. Il massimo della liberazione dall'alienazione coincide con la contemplazione nuda, assoluta ed immobile dell'alienazione".⁸⁴ The Futurist science of "criticometrics" aims to assess art as an exactly measureable cerebral secretion. A new language of energetic cerebration and fantastic discovery is to replace the passatist terms of traditional critical discourse dependent on spirit, genius and inspired artists. The economism of this new criticism is not without links to the box-office: the "mercificazione" of the theatre is related directly to the Futurist manifesto strategy for reaching a large audience. Propagandistic in purpose, their short and easy-to-consume plays provided quick service in order to expand the cultural market. *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* could be said to be Pirandello's hit "manifesto" play, popularising the Einsteinian shifts in perspective as remarked on by Gramsci.

The new age of mechanical reproduction caused a re-evaluation of the function of the author: the traditional means and sites of expression needed renovation. The theatre had come to terms with the technocracy of film and with the mass appetite for images. In

a memorandum to Mussolini, Bragaglia states: "E per rinnovare il teatro (per potere avere p.e. un teatro italiano) bisogna dare agli autori il *mezzo* della rinnovazione. Codesto non può essere che ⁸⁵ *tecnico*"[his italics]. He then explains how the audience is affected by the spectacular technical innovations of his "Luce Psicologica": the coloured lighting is a "mezzo di suggestione insidioso ed ⁸⁶ efficace".

In his "Discorso al convegno 'Volta' sul teatro drammatico" (1934), Pirandello was to reveal his own perturbation at the rival growth of the cinema and was to make some proposals so that the theatre could be more competitive:

Giacché, se è vero che il teatro non può morire, non è men vero che esso ha bisogno d'esser difeso, o per dir meglio, d'esser messo in grado di difendersi, anche da sé, appunto nella concorrenza con altri spettacoli che, o hanno già validi sostegni, larghi sussidii e dotazioni da parte dello Stato o di altri enti pubblici, come ad esempio il teatro lirico, o hanno il favore del momento, come i ludi sportivi, per cui si fabbricano ovunque nuovi stadii, o sono spettacoli nuovi, che per l'enorme vantaggio della loro riproduzione meccanica e la conseguente facilità della loro presentazione, possono ripetersi anche più volte al giorno in vastissime sale di nuova e appropriata costruzione, o senza bisogno d'apposite costruzioni, mediante un piccolo apparecchio, comodamente possono farsi teatro d'ogni casa privata (SPSV, 1039).

His plans collude with fascist designs for a mass theatre: he employs the now recognisable elements of socialist rhetoric in fascist discourse to imply that there will be equal access to culture on a mass scale. Pirandello suggests that the construction of new theatres will be the best means of drawing in the populace, and of fulfilling "nello spirito, l'auspicato teatro di masse" (SPSV, 1040). He recommends that the architecture should be suitable to accommodate audiences large enough to bear the costs of the production; and that the price of the seats should be on a par with the cinema. He then adds an observation which indicates the way fascist discourse organises democratic antagonisms round the popular discursive pole

of social "equality": "i posti senz'altra distinzione tra loro che quella inavviabile della maggiore o minore distanza dalla scena" [!]
(SPSV, 1041). No costs should be spared to supply these theatres with new technical equipment so they are as appealing to the mass audience as the cinema.⁸⁷

Pirandello's clumsy attempts at imitating the strengths of the cinematic medium in reaching a mass audience are symptomatic of his misjudgements on this issue as a whole: in 1929, he had been anxious enough to speculate whether "il film parlante abolirà il teatro". He misguidedly relies on a metaphysics of the actor's bodily presence to counteract the alienation of the recorded voice from the image. He writes: "Quando il progresso tecnico sarà riuscito a eliminare questo friggio e a ottenere la perfetta riproduzione della voce umana, il male principale non sarà in alcun modo riparato, per l'ovvia ragione che le immagini resteranno immagini e le immagini non possono parlare" (SPSV, 1033). He does not concede the representative qualities of the theatre which for him is authentic life, as opposed to film which is "una copia fotografata e meccanica del teatro" (SPSV, 1032). In the following chapter, "Mirror-image/Collage", I shall continue to chart the effect of photographic reproduction on the processes of signification in the plays.⁸⁸

The new geometrisation of theatrical space is linked to the restoration of the symbol: the imperialism of the fascist imagination provides a utopian and timeless setting. The retreat into hypersymbolisations and the open air arenas relate to consumer demands for a mass spectacle without the territorial limits of the proscenium arch. The "carri di Tespi", or itinerant acting troupes of fascism, in outdoor performances, were a direct response to the growth of the audience.⁸⁹ The repertoire is eclectic and the audience composition

"popular-democratic": the range of material presented includes plays, grand operas, lightweight contemporary comedies, farces in dialect and Pirandello's *Ma non è una cosa seria* and *Pensaci, Giacomino!* The large disparate audience varied in size from 1,000 - 2,000 and is composed of blue-collar workers, white-collar employees, petty officials, members of the armed forces - the lumpenproletariat on welfare is admitted free.⁹⁰ The "traditional" antagonisms of such an audience - which represents so many different subject positionalities - are hegemonised in the populist process of the spectacle: the mass event constitutes a "unified" popular subject apparently disarticulated from all democratic struggles.⁹¹ Pirandello was to clarify painstakingly this particular fascist discursive tactic, and was to comment on the persuasive potential of the theatre to produce a co-operative and satisfied audience.

Omitted from the standard edition of Pirandello's works, is an important essay, "Introduzione al teatro italiano" (1936), where he makes a plea for textual modernisation and for a type of cultural populism.⁹² He confronts History and asserts that "il Teatro non è archeologia".⁹³ He will also attempt to persuade his fellow writers not to resist the "rimaneggiamenti" of the original text, so that it can be brought up to date, and made consonant with current popular tastes.⁹⁴ Pirandello abandons the authority of the writer in the name of a mass authorship: the observing public participate in the artistic "creation". He explains the inevitable loss of authorial autonomy in the new age of mass consumption, as follows: "Perchè l'opera d'arte, in teatro, non è più il lavoro di uno scrittore, che si può sempre del resto in altro modo salvaguardare, ma un atto di vita da creare, momento per momento, sulla scena, col concorso del pubblico, che deve bearsene."⁹⁵ [I shall continue this discussion of the problem of the author's presence in II.3; and of the relations

between the DT and PT in IV.] Pirandello will also reveal how the *a-priori* social classes of radical rhetoric are elided in fascist discourse which re-articulates the discursive Diaspora (or "gente") into a unified "popolo" without democratic antagonisms.

It is worth discussing at length another remarkable passage in this article where Pirandello shows how the theatre can effectively perform this unifying role of incorporating the scattered "gente" into a coherent "popolo". He makes an analysis of the initially heterogenous composition of the typical audience, and then goes on to show how the theatre's spiritual value rests in its homogenising function. He describes how the theatre, in its current form, merely provides harmless diversion ("un po' d'onesto svago") for people ("gente") who have worked all day.⁹⁶ He then examines the constituents of this social group: "Si può dire in coscienza che sia 'il popolo'? 'la Città'? No: è appena un po' di signori e di borghesia, e qualche artigiano."⁹⁷ He adds that the contemporary theatre no longer has any value "nella vita dei popoli", but is simply a pastime. He will then recall the mass events of ancient religious festivals, and he claims that they should be models for the role of the theatre today. He writes:

Ciò che prima il popolo, accorrente in massa agli spettacoli solenni delle festività religiose, faceva del Teatro, cioè un atto di vita associata d'altissimo valore spirituale, oggi il Teatro stesso, di per sè, per sua virtù, quand'è vero Teatro, fa del suo pubblico comunque sia composto, quantunque scarso. Voglio dire che, quando davanti a una sala mezzo vuota, davanti a pochi e sperduti spettatori, si rappresenta un vero lavoro d'arte, ebbene, quella sera, quei pochi spettatori sono diventati né più né meno che "il popolo", per quella virtù magica che la poesia acquista quando i suoi personaggi incarnati prendono vita sulla scena. E peggio per chi non v'era: ha mancato a un atto di vita spirituale che s'è compiuto in tutta realtà nell'ambito della società di cui egli fa parte: e non sarà cosa di cui possa vantarsi l'averlo ignorato.⁹⁸

The "popular-democratic" register of his writing here echoes directly the strategies of fascist discourse in denying class or regional

differences, and in constructing appropriate fascist subjects. The totalising tendency of fascist discourse leads to the negation of particularity and to the subordination of all differences to the "total", "natural", "organic" whole. Fascism creates the impression of complete national integration by eliminating traditional divisive subject positions and by apparently replacing them with the "perfect fascist people". The interpellation of antagonistic groups of the populace is part of what Pirandello, in the same article, calls, the "sacrosanta rinnovazione del costume apportata dal Fascismo" in combating the "irresponsabilità individuali e collettive" towards national values.⁹⁹

In the "Discorso al convegno 'Volta' sul teatro drammatico" (1934), Pirandello had also declared that "true" disinterested art is beyond political instrumentalisation, even while it inevitably will reflect the moral tenor of the times. Yet, I submit, despite his conscious declarations which distinguish programmatic writing ("documento storico") from an artistic monument ("monumento artistico"), this speech plays into the hands of the fascists. Pirandello's theoretical writings on the theatre advance the ideological cause of fascism: his utterances betray the presuppositions of the regime which gained consensus and serviced its power through cultural institutions. Pirandello's contemporaries were able to restrict and re-codify his work so that it acquired a certified fascist meaning. They made him one of them:

Pirandello è - per noi - fra quei grandi scrittori di teatro che hanno visto e compreso la realtà politica del loro tempo e quindi - spontaneamente - anche se attraverso una forma d'arte che appare dominata dal pensiero - la hanno riflessa nei loro drammi. Il problema centrale che anima l'arte di Pirandello, cioè lo sdoppiamento di ogni uomo fra un bisogno irriducibile di essere se stesso, uscendo da ogni costruzione e da ogni schema convenzionale, e la necessità sociale ineluttabile di consistere in questi schemi per poter viver ('fuori della legge non è possibile vivere') è stato da noi confrontato colla crisi rivoluzionaria morale e politica che

si impose all'Europa dopo la guerra e che l'Italia risolve nel '22 col sorgere del Fascismo.¹⁰⁰

The successful instrumentalisation of Pirandello's theatre shows how the dominant discourse not only is effective by words but on words, informing the relations among the participants of the theatrical event and investing the dialogue with its own fascist meaning. In subsequent chapters, I shall discuss how alternative practices of reading Pirandello might deconstruct this secure discursive closure which is a sign of the times.

The task of reconstructing subjects into a fascist "people" will determine the heroic aspects of Pirandello's last "myths".¹⁰¹

for / Identification with the actors substitutes the radical moments of self-consciousness in the earlier plays: these had dramatised the erasure of the ego. "Il credo del fascismo è l'eroismo, il credo del borghese è l'egoismo", went a motto of the era.¹⁰² The individualised bourgeois subject is alienated in the mass consumption of heroic spectacle: this subjective transcendence and identification process gives coherence to the split bourgeois subject vivisected in Pirandello's earlier plays. The consumers are incorporated in the cultural product and social antagonisms are apparently resolved. Yet despite his authorial intentions, Pirandello's texts will still speak of social schisms. In chapters III and IV, I intend to show how Pirandello's pessimism is a camouflage for the fascist gods that failed. On first examining the "myths", it seems that performances have become occasions for cultural and ideological recognition and for identification with the hero, and more particularly, with the heroine, as well as with the heroic mass on the stage. United to the play - both in advance of and during the performance - by the same "spontaneously lived ideology", the audience surrenders easily to the powerful self-representations on the stage.¹⁰³ However, the

contradictions inside Pirandello's texts could ripple the static surfaces of these events. In the last chapter, "Spectacles: The Visual Illustration", I shall explore the possibilities for a new theatrical grammar whereby a progressive director, through alienation effects, might fracture this mirror of self-recognition. A critical reading would establish a distance between the play and the audience, and break through the fascist semiosis of specular capture. There could then emerge "a new spectator, an actor who starts where the performance ends".¹⁰⁴

II. Mirror-image/Collage

II.1. A Shattered Mirror

A stagehand is hammering together some slats of wood. The play, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, has its uncertain beginnings in noise. This sounds a death-knell, marking an end to naturalist theatre. From now on, the audience does not have to suspend disbelief but submits to a new theatrical *trompe-l'oeil*. The convention of the absent fourth wall has been broken - the audience will no longer be deceived into thinking it is spying on someone else's reality. Pirandello, apparently, is refusing the naturalist design which makes the spectator believe that the objects represented on the stage are real.

Gone are the curtains and proscenium arch. The different levels, separating stage illusions from spectator reality, seem to have vanished:

Troveranno gli spettatori, entrando nella sala del teatro, alzato il sipario, e il palcoscenico com'è di giorno, senza quinte né scena, quasi al buio e vuoto, perché abbiamo fin da principio l'impressione d'uno spettacolo non preparato
(MN I, 49).

We are faced with a so-called empty stage and with a repressed playscript. There has been a breakdown in traditional spatio-temporal relations and we see illusion and reality, supposedly, interpenetrating. The author looks as if he is offering the spectator a chance to participate in what, today, has come to be known as a "happening". We are witnessing a single, one-off, unrehearsed and unrepeatable event, a factor which distinguishes

a play from film: the present theatrical performance is different from both the one preceding and the one following.

Pirandello's strategy appears to transgress the boundaries of naturalist portrayal: I cautiously modify my response, since I believe the potential for this is there, but not the effect. I shall be arguing against the view that Pirandello "revolutionised" the naturalist stage. I intend to show that his texts, particularly the trilogy, *Ciàscuno a suo modo*, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, and *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, only theoretically encourage this breach. He presents us with a handbook for theatrical subversion, but not with its practice. A general concern of this study is to pose the question of whether Pirandello does, in fact, succeed in relinquishing the "authority" of traditional dramatic techniques.

In this chapter, I intend to explore what is meant by the terms "naturalism" and "modernism". I shall present Pirandello as a cubo-futurist who attempts to overturn the conventions of the naturalist stage. To advance this claim, I shall draw on Pirandello's own theoretical writings. I shall discuss them in relation to Futurist art/stage theory and scenographic practice. There will be an attempt to reveal how Pirandello creates his precursors and how his work modifies our conception of the Futurists.¹ The alterations occurring in the field of visual arts bear a direct relation to the loss of confidence in naturalist narrative procedures: the examples of events in the plastic arts are important when one is considering such a visual medium as drama. I shall try and explain why a crisis is taking place in conventional forms of signification and what effects this has on Pirandello's writing.² I shall re-examine the notion that he was a reluctant dramatist.³ Instead, I will argue that his use of the dramatic genre is a necessary result of the

failure of linear narrative to accommodate the changes in self-perception which characterise modernism. With the fracturing of the naturalist frame of reference, drama, for Pirandello, is more suitable a medium for the representation of multiple views of the object. The plurality of modernist perceptions requires the layers of levels and the simultaneity of signifying elements, particular to the theatre. In explaining the advent of modernism, it will be useful to refer to theories of cognition and to chart the social and historical determinants of change. Ideas of progressive evolution in cultural activities will be discussed in relation to the emergence of critical contradictions in the societies producing modernist works of art.⁴

The setting is Plato's cave.⁵ The spectators have their backs to the outside world and are watching the shadow-play projected on the backdrop wall. They deduce that these images derive from real men outside the cave. This allegory provides stage theory with its primal scene. Art is shown to be a reflection of reality. The process of mimesis lets the artist imitate reality: he/she creates resemblances and reproductions, rather than representations of independently existing objects. Space is objectively organised. Naturalist modes of perceiving the concrete features of the world develop from this Platonic axiom.

During the Renaissance, representation is attached to its perceptual content with the result that when perspective emerges, it is still confined to empirical reality. The spectator remains separated from the world since the image produced is based on the static viewpoint of a single observer. Euclidean perspective painting insists on the single, fixed and unified point of view. The Realists and Naturalists will endorse this fundamental credo that art is in essence a mimetic, objective representation of outer

reality.⁶ (This contrasts with the intrusion of subjective transfigurations in the work of the Romantics.) The autonomously existing object is within the artist's grasp: it is made available by the discoveries and methods of nineteenth-century science. While the Realists staked out the area of "unbiased objectivity", the Naturalists, armed with certain biological and philosophical assumptions, expected patterns to emerge: race, moment and milieu structure their seeing. The security of their vision leads them to eclipse the author and to extol the ideal of impersonality in technique. The "verismo" of Verga epitomises this approach where the author disappears in his immortal work and the processes of creation are mystified. Verga argued that the evident and necessary effects of the complete and perfect work of art will be that "la mano dell'artista rimarrà assolutamente invisibile, e il romanzo avrà l'impronta dell'avvenimento reale, e l'opera d'arte sembrerà *essersi fatta da sé*...".⁷ The work of art arises spontaneously: this parthenogenesis institutionalises the separation of the observer from the world. The writer is made redundant and no longer composes his/her version of empirical facts for the onlooker, as he/she formerly did. The reader will now find him/herself "faccia a faccia col fatto nudo e schietto, senza stare a cercarlo fra le linee del libro, attraverso la lente dello scrittore".⁸

Pirandello inherits this extension of mimetic realism which casts the author in the role of a scientific, photographic recorder of reality. The model will not be acceptable. With his aversion for imitations, he will individualise ways of seeing. He states: "Teatro nuovo e teatro vecchio: è sempre la stessa questione: d'occhi e d'occhiali: lavoro di creazione ed esercizio di copia" (SPSV, 242). He sums up the "long fashion" for naturalism in his description of Ibsen: "Ma vennero dalla lontana Norvegia ... i

potenti occhiali di Enrico Ibsen a imporsi con ben altra virtù investigatrice di valori ideali e sociali" (SPSV, 230). While Ibsen's clarity substitutes for the "short-sightedness" of his predecessors, he is followed by the successful marketing of the Bataille and Bernstein monocle, before the advent of the inventor with a low-profile, Pirandello. Sustaining the spectacles metaphor, Pirandello gives us his view of himself:

E infine, e purtroppo, senza la minima colpa né il minimo piacere dell'inventore, prese ad esser richiesta un po' dovunque una certa lente Pirandello, a detta dei maligni diabolica, che fa veder doppio e triplo, e di sghimbescio, e insomma il mondo sottospora. Molti se ne servono ancora nonostante che non si tralasci alcuna occasione per far loro notare che ci si sciupano la vista (SPSV, 230).

By 1922, when the above speech was made, Pirandello is at a sufficient distance from the influence of Verga and Capuana to identify himself.⁹

We see that Pirandello has irrevocably skewed the naturalist vision. The gap between art and life ceases to be so certain. The "successful illusion" of realism has been exposed.¹⁰ The fidelity of the image to the object is placed in question. "Vraisemblance" can no longer guarantee a truthful portrayal in a world turned upside down, and where absurd representations multiply. Pirandello's argument is in keeping with the scrupulous revision he made to the insights of *Il fu Mattia Pascal*.¹¹ He points out how this very stupid literary procedure fails to account for the absurdities in life. Life can dispense with "quella stupidissima verosimiglianza, a cui l'arte crede suo dovere obbedire" (TR, 474). Naturalism is shown as an impossible discourse which suppresses contradiction. The incongruous and the unrealistic are compressed into unlikely coherence: "Le assurdità della vita non hanno bisogno di parer verosimili, perché sono vere. All'opposto di quelle dell'arte che, per parer vere, hanno bisogno d'esser verosimili. E allora,

verosimili, non sono più assurdità" (TR, 474). The criteria for truthful representation do not count any more: the mirror of naturalism has been shattered. Art has been given licence to be misleading. It is acknowledged that art does not denote life directly: Pirandello even goes as far as to say that art can, in fact, produce reality. I quote again the important passage already referred to in section ii of the Prologue:

La fantasia si sarebbe fatto scrupolo, certamente, di passar sopra a un tal dato di fatto; e ora gode, ripensando alla taccia di inverosimiglianza che anche allora le fu data, di far conoscere di quali reali inverosimiglianze sia capace la vita, anche nei romanzi che, senza saperlo, essa copia dall'arte (TR, 480).

The author has lost his position of epistemological privilege: he has given up asserting that the connotative relationships within the language of art can be transcended and the "naked and simple" fact known.¹² Knowledge is short-circuited by a subjective language which infiltrates the perception. Pirandello began exploring this problem in 1908, in the essay, "Soggettivismo e oggettivismo nell'arte narrativa" (SPSV, 181-206). His realisations have important consequences for the ways in which he will now present "character".

The break with naturalism reveals art as a second-order system: Pirandello shows how the artist cannot speak of a real object, separate and prior to its integration into a linguistic framework. He has "diabolically" destroyed the transparency of naturalist perception with his modernist double/triple-vision. The link between the word and the thing is complex: the artist cannot strip language to reveal the naked facts. Linguistic signification has surreptitiously, but inevitably, substituted the real object. A connotative collage makes the scientific claims of naturalism inadmissible: artistic signification has become irreversibly self-conscious.

II.2.The Cubo-Futurist Palimpsest

If Pirandello was an illegitimate naturalist, he will also prove to be a delinquent cubo-futurist. In this section, I intend to trace the way in which he first submits to, and then swerves away from, cubist and futurist influences: these cubo-futurist systems of signs will be transposed intertextually into his writing.¹³

Pirandello's manuscript will strive to efface the script of his precursors; and to mask the inventory of traces which pre-exist and constitute his "identity" as a belated cubo-futurist.

Pirandello, I submit, sets out to oppose naturalist method in the guise of a cubo-futurist. I am casting him in this role, since I maintain that his observations in the essays, "Avvertenza sugli scrupoli della fantasia" and "Teatro nuovo e teatro vecchio" are consistent with the tenets of Cubism and Futurism. These essays [discussed in II.1 above], together with the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, arise out of modernist techniques; and are crystallisations of cubist and futurist theory. The play, first performed in Rome on 10th May, 1921, dramatises these contemporary theoretical preoccupations. Pirandello's texts synthesise the effects on perception wrought by cubo-futurism.¹⁴

Pirandello's anxious self-justification is testimony to the influence. Marinetti recognised this debt in his assessment - "misurazione" - of *L'amica delle mogli*, first performed in 1927:

Fra i celebri commediografi contemporanei d'Italia e del mondo, Luigi Pirandello è il più imitato e il più alto, il più profondo e il più futurista. Dopo molti romanzi e innumerevoli novelle Luigi Pirandello raggiunse nel teatro la sua massima potenza.¹⁵

Marinetti sensed that Pirandello's theatre was a culmination: the dramatic genre is best capable of stimulating Futurist effects.

Pirandello produces his predecessors. His drama incorporates a range of cubo-futurist features, subsequently categorised as "modernist".

One can track down "modernism" in Picasso's opinions and in the Futurist manifestos. Picasso maps the ground when he describes how, formerly, a painting was a sum of additions, but for him, it is a sum of destructions.¹⁶ Like Pirandello, with his destructive lens, the Futurist painters, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla and Severini, include the following demolishing demands in their founding manifesto of 1910:

1. - Distruggere il culto del passato, l'ossessione dell'antico, il pedantismo e il formalismo accademico.
2. - Disprezzare profondamente ogni forma d'imitazione.
3. - Esaltare ogni forma di originalità anche se temeraria, anche se violentissima....
5. - Considerare i critici d'arte come inutili e dannosi....
6. - Spazzar via dal campo ideale dell'arte tutti i motivi, tutti i soggetti già sfruttati.¹⁷

The Futurists are sweeping away their inheritance of figurative and objective art, bound to narrative processes. They are supplanting it with a form of visual expression devoid of representational or narrative concerns.¹⁸ They add to the anti-narrative methods of cubism: "whereas the Cubists set out to show all aspects of an object at once, the Futurists set out to place the spectator in the midst of a dynamic, speeding, flickering twentieth-century world."¹⁹ Linear, sequential narration for a detached observer cannot now take place.

In his "Manifesto tecnico della scultura futurista", written in 1912, Boccioni elaborates on this anti-figurative and anti-episodic stance:

1. - Proclamare che la scultura si prefigge la ricostruzione astratta dei piani e dei volumi che determinano le forme, non il loro valore figurativo.
2. - Abolire in scultura, come in qualsiasi altra arte, il sublime tradizionale dei soggetti.
3. - Negare alla scultura qualsiasi scopo di ricostruzione episodica veristica, ma affermare la necessità assoluta di

servirsi di tutte le realtà per tornare agli elementi essenziali della sensibilità plastica.²⁰

Marinetti argues against naturalist depictions occurring in the theatre. In the age of electricity, this system of representation is outmoded: "Abbiamo un profondo schifo del teatro contemporaneo (versi, prosa e musica) perchè ondeggia stupidamente fra la ricostruzione storica (zibaldone o plagio) e la riproduzione fotografica della nostra vita quotidiana; teatro minuzioso lento analitico e diluito, degno tutt'al più dell'età della lampada a petrolio."²¹ He corroborates Pirandello's feeling that the naturalist method is inadequate. He also challenges its scientific objectivity which excludes emotion. Only "parole in libertà" will subvert the tyranny of syntax: "Malgrado le più abili deformazioni, il periodo sintattico conteneva sempre una prospettiva scientifica e fotografica assolutamente contraria ai diritti della emozione. Colle parole in libertà questa prospettiva fotografica viene distrutta e si giunge naturalmente alla multiforme prospettiva emozionale."²² The transformation in perspective forces a review of the object.

The essential difference between medieval and Renaissance art was the introduction of the third dimension; the ability to render space, distance, volume and mass is accompanied by the appearance of the principle of perspective. For Cubism, space is an all-over extension in which all points are of equal status and are relative to each other. There is no dominance of volume over void.²³ Objects lose their definition and interpenetrate. Carrà writes: "La prospettiva ottenuta non come oggettivismo di distanza ma come compenetrazione soggettiva di forme velate o dure, morbide o taglienti."²⁴ In the experience of collage, fragments of the real world, "papiers collés", intrude upon the artistic entity. Instead of being separate from the work of art, the spectator is implicated

in the processes of composition. He becomes the organising principle of the vision, drawing meaning from the inarticulateness of scattered elements.²⁵ In the catalogue to the exhibition in February, 1912, of works by Italian Futurist Painters, the role of the observer is stressed: "Questa scomposizione non è guidata da leggi fisse ma varia secondo la personalità caratteristica dell'oggetto che è poi la sua psicologia e l'emozione di colui che lo guarda."²⁶ A plurality of perceptions is fundamental to plays like *Costi è (se vi pare)* and *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. Through the device of repetition, Pirandello displays multiple and competing views of the same traumatic event. There is no hierarchy of opinion. The author is unreliable and fails to guarantee any version of the "truth". As the Father demonstrates, it is the listener, the audience or addressee, who furnishes the sense:

Ma se è tutto qui il male! Nelle parole! Abbiamo tutti dentro un mondo di cose; ciascuno un suo mondo di cose! E come possiamo intenderci signore, se nelle parole ch'io dico metto il senso e il valore delle cose come sono dentro di me; mentre chi le ascolta, inevitabilmente le assume col senso e col valore che hanno per sé, del mondo com'egli l'ha dentro? Crediamo d'intenderci; non c'intendiamo mai! (MN I, 65).

The theory of subjective meanings is a commonplace of Pirandello criticism; however, what is not usually established is that Pirandello dramatises the early twentieth century crisis in signifying practices. In this study, I try to account for the development in the material forces and for the changes in social relations which produce a knowledge of contradiction [see iv and I, above]. The alteration in Pirandello's worldview cannot be ascribed simply to the influence of Bergson, Binet, Einstein, Marchesini or Nietzsche. His texts and concerns are embedded in the social events of the time. This is evident in the intertextual parallels between Pirandello, and the Cubists and Futurists: they are also concerned with the unconscious, as it was dissected by

modernism and psychoanalysis.

The example of the plastic arts depicts how form is no longer fixed: visual shape has given way to abstract organisation. The clearly defined boundaries between objects and observers have ceased to exist. Pirandello dramatises this fundamental credo put forward by the Futurists: "La costruzione dei quadri è stupidamente tradizionale. I pittori ci hanno sempre mostrato cose e persone poste davanti a noi. Noi porremo lo spettatore nel centro del quadro."²⁷ The old-fashioned spectator has been submerged, in much the same way as Pirandello removes the divisions between audience and actors in the plays of the trilogy: the spectator both constructs and is constructed by the work of art. Illusion and reality interpenetrate: closed contours are avoided, edges are dissolved and the different planes of art and life merge. Conflicting impressions and speeches occur simultaneously. [I intend to provide examples of these multi-layered effects in chapters III and IV.] The dramatic genre allows Pirandello to accommodate a plurality of meanings, in a way which narrative procedures do not. The primary means of achieving this, is the involvement of the spectator.

The audience is enclosed in the linguistic space of the representation. Space is no longer the empty container surrounding solid objects. Objects spill over their limits. In establishing Pirandello's Futurist qualities, Marinetti wrote: "Potenza tipicamente futurista di simultaneità che fa straripare il dramma fuori dal palcoscenico senza limiti di tempo e di spazio."²⁸ It is interesting to recall Pirandello's use of the word, "straripare", in 1908, in the essay, "L'umorismo":

In certi momenti tempestosi, investite dal flusso, tutte quelle nostre forme fittizie crollano miseramente; e anche quello che non scorre sotto gli argini e oltre i limiti, ma che si scopre a noi distinto e che noi abbiamo con cura incanalato nei nostri affetti, nei doveri che ci siamo

imposti, nelle abitudini che ci siamo tracciate, in certi momenti di piena straripa e sconvolge tutto (SPSV, 151-52).

The fiction of form succumbs to the flood of life. Boccioni, in 1912, defined this idea as "compenetrazione": "La pittura s'è rinsanguata, approfondita e allargata mediante il paesaggio e l'ambiente fatti simultaneamente agire sulla figura umana e su gli oggetti, giungendo alla nostra futurista compenetrazione dei piani."²⁹ He refers the reader to "La pittura futurista: manifesto tecnico", where it was proclaimed that movement and light destroy the materiality of bodies.³⁰ A vivid example is provided of the way forms have become fluid: "I nostri corpi entrano nei divani su cui ci sediamo, e i divani entrano in noi, così come il tram che passa entra nelle case, le quali alla loro volta si scaraventano sul tram e con esse si amalgamano."³¹ Boccioni has declared an end to the limit: "Rovesciamo tutto, dunque, e proclamiamo l'assoluta e completa abolizione della linea finita della statua chiusa. Spalanchiamo la figura e chiudiamo in essa l'ambiente."³²

³³ Transgression is an action which involves the limit. Pirandello had already expressed this Hegelian view, that to know the limit simply sets up the possibility of transcending it:

Le barriere, i limiti che noi poniamo alla nostra coscienza sono anch'essi illusioni, sono le condizioni dell'apparire della nostra individualità relativa; ma, nella realtà, quei limiti non esistono punto (SPSV, 149).

Pirandello will use this knowledge to produce strange stage effects: the appearance of Madama Pace defies logic. She is conjured up by metonymic association with the objects of her trade. Figure and environment interpenetrate. Marinetti was to use this event to further demonstrate Pirandello's affiliation with the Futurists. He wrote that "specialmente per certe scene alogiche inattese come quella dell'entrata della Signora Pace nella commedia *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* egli fu anche nettamente futurista".³⁴ Carrà

confirms the tendency to suppress the material identity of the object in favour of an undifferentiated blurring: "La pittura dei suoni, dei rumori e degli odori vuole ... la continuità e la simultaneità delle trascendenze plastiche del regno minerale, del regno vegetale, del regno animale e del regno meccanico."³⁵

The dissolving object is coupled with a collapse in temporal boundaries. Pirandello will dramatise this process in *Enrico IV* where history and memory overtake the present action. The cardboard walls of time shift easily. In "L'umorismo", he wrote:

Non soltanto noi, quali ora siamo, viviamo in noi stessi, ma anche noi, quali fummo in altro tempo, viviamo tuttora e sentiamo e ragioniamo con pensieri e affetti già da un lungo oblio oscurati, cancellati, spenti nella nostra coscienza presente, ma che a un urto, a un tumulto improvviso dello spirito, possono ancora dar prova di vita, mostrando vivo in noi un altro essere insospettato. I limiti della nostra memoria personale e cosciente non sono limiti assoluti (SPSV, 149-50).

In a similar way, the Cubists were employing "mobile perspective".³⁶ Instead of depicting objects from a single viewpoint, they moved round objects, simultaneously recording not only different images of the same object, but the near and far, the seen and remembered.³⁷ The Futurists aim to draw the spectator in, by the hypnotic overlapping of past and present: "Per far vivere lo spettatore al centro del quadro, secondo l'espressione del nostro manifesto, bisogna che il quadro sia la sintesi di quello che si ricorda e di quello che si vede."³⁸

Pictorial reality is constructed from a combination of elements, in much the same way as sentences are generated from basic grammatical units. It is the combination of elements, not the elements themselves, which are significant. The image no longer pretends to mirror reality. Modernist technique displaces the passive consumption of signifieds (or meanings) onto the active organisation of signifiers (or images). The spectator is compelled

to construe the idiolect of a particular representation. The act of parsing is one of participating in producing the work. Carrà writes: "La pittura dei suoni, dei rumori e degli odori vuole ... come soggetto universale e sola ragione d'essere del quadro, la significazione della sua costruzione dinamica (insieme architettuale polifonico)."³⁹ This monarchy of signifiers subverts the history of literary and artistic forms, obsessed, until now, with signifieds.⁴⁰ The "passatista" disdain of the signifier is replaced by its celebration. Pirandello insisted on the process of decomposition which absorbs the observer:

Ebbene, noi vedremo che nella concezione di ogni opera umoristica, la riflessione non si nasconde, non resta invisibile, non resta cioè quasi una forma del sentimento, quasi uno specchio in cui il sentimento si rimira; ma gli si pone innanzi, da giudice; lo analizza, spassionandosene; ne scompone l'immagine (SPSV, 127).

[For an elaboration on Pirandello's use of the ironic device, "umorismo", to disassemble the image, see III.]

In collage, the elements are disordered. They combine to allow painting to approach the conditions of language. The value of the work lies in the relations among elements, and not in a pre-determined sense given to an absolutely autonomous entity. Pirandello is aware of the importance of these formal and structural elements. In the essay, "Illustratori, attori e traduttori", written in 1908, he does not valorise signifieds over signifiers, but insists that they are inseparable: "L'esecuzione insomma è la concezione stessa, viva in atto" (SPSV, 211). In his debate with Croce, he uses the metaphor of painting to further his argument: he is discussing the way poetry might be translated onto a canvas. The long passage, quoted below, is remarkable, since it anticipates a "semiotic" analysis which does not privilege words above other signifying systems. Pirandello abandons the traditional hierarchy

where the plane of content has more weight than the plane of
⁴¹expression: he demonstrates how the ordering of signifiers produces
 the concepts themselves. He writes that it is an aesthetic problem:

problema estetico, che il Croce a torto, credendo che il rapporto tra il fatto estetico, ossia la visione artistica, e il fatto fisico, ossia l'istrumento che serve d'aiuto per la riproduzione, sia puramente estrinseco, dichiara inesistente.

Ora per me, in arte, ciò che il Croce chiama attività teoretica è men che niente se il fatto estetico non è integrato dall'attività pratica divenuta tutt'uno con esso; né i mezzi comunicativi della rappresentazione estetica (parola, suoni musicali, colori, ecc.) e la tecnica hanno un rapporto estrinseco col fatto estetico interno; ma sono anzi, in arte, il fatto estetico stesso, né un solo fatto estetico, ma questo o quel fatto estetico. Per me, la tecnica, insomma, è l'attività stessa spirituale che man mano si libera in movimenti che la traducono in un linguaggio d'apparenze; la tecnica è il libero, spontaneo e immediato movimento della forma. Dallo spirito del pittore il quadro discende nelle dita di lui, le muove, e non cessa d'agire se non quando esso si è riflesso su la tela (SPSV, 210-11).

For Pirandello, the artistic sign is therefore a compound of signifier and signified.

When the reader/spectator is confronted with a modernist work of art, an act of decipherment is needed: the representation is like a picture puzzle, a rebus, and not like a simple pictorial composition. It requires a reading of the symptoms, as the deceptive image does not invite a perception of the "unknowable" thing in itself.⁴² The representation of "manifest content" translates the "latent (dream) thoughts".⁴³ It is helpful to compare the process of making the modernist signs significant with Freud's concept of "dreamwork".⁴⁴ The analyst's task is not to establish the dream thoughts themselves, because this is to attempt the impossible [see ii, above]. The thoughts are knowable only in the narration, in the dream as text.⁴⁵ It is not a matter of discovering the real object, or traumatic event, per se, which produces the image. The job is to decode the distortions, displacements, condensations and

secondary revisions of the unattainable original material: the object of analysis is the dreamwork or *mise-en-scène*.⁴⁶ It is through an examination of these rhetorical and stylistic strategies, that signification is reached. Similarly, the reader/spectator, in the process of reading, discovers the connecting paths, i.e. produces the meanings, rather than seeking them out as residing in the work itself. The work of art seems perpetually open and available to further readings, or "overinterpretation". These subsequent readings can be developed after a first one which is consistent and apparently complete. Each reading allows for the possibility that there are additional meanings.⁴⁷ Picasso hints at this means of composition, when he writes that it would be very interesting to preserve photographically, not the stages, but the metamorphoses of a picture; he adds that possibly one might then discover the path followed by the brain in materialising a dream.⁴⁸

I intend to pursue the above method of analysis in chapters III and IV, especially in regard to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. I shall comment also on the use of dream material in Pirandello's later plays. In *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, we are presented with several different readings of the original traumatic event: the family members vie with one another, and with the producer and actors, while the audience creates yet another version. The "truth" of the primal scene in the brothel can never be reproduced: the real-life incident is permanently refracted. According to the producer, it is "unrepresentable":

IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma tutto questo è racconto, signori miei!
 IL FIGLIO (*sprezzante*). Ma sí, letteratura! letteratura!
 IL PADRE. Ma che letteratura! Questa è vita, signore!
 Passione!
 IL CAPOCOMICO. Sarà! Ma irrepresentabile!
 IL PADRE. D'accordo, signore! Perché tutto questo è
 antefatto. E io non dico di rappresentar questo. Come
 vede, infatti, lei
indicherà la Figliastrà

non è più quella ragazzetta con le treccine sulle spalle -
 LA FIGLIASTRA. - e le mutandine fuori della gonna!
 IL PADRE. Il dramma viene adesso, signore! Nuovo,
 complesso (MN I, 69).

Each performance is a new interpretation. The incompetent Prompter's shorthand script is a faltering attempt to sort out the "pack-ice" fragments, into a logical, linear and syntactical sequence.⁴⁹ The Producer is keen to secure an unerasable trace of the successive actions - an inscription to ensure that they can be reproduced.⁵⁰ A shorthand copy guarantees an authentic record, unlike mere notes or an outline:

IL CAPOCOMICO (*al Suggestore*). Lei, intanto, prenda posto. Guardi: questa è la traccia delle scene, atto per atto.

Gli porgerà alcuni fogli di carta.

Ma bisogna che ora lei faccia una bravura.

IL SUGGERITORE. Stenografare?

IL CAPOCOMICO (*con lieta sorpresa*). Ah, benissimo! Conosce la stenografia?

IL SUGGERITORE. Non saprò suggerire; ma la stenografia ...

IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma allora di bene in meglio!

Rivolgendosi a un Servo di scena:

Vada a prendere la carta nel mio camerino - molta, molta - quanta ne trova!

Il Servo di scena correrà, e ritornerà poco

dopo con un bel fascio di carta, che porgerà al Suggestore.

IL CAPOCOMICO (*seguitando, al Suggestore*). Segua le scene, man mano che saranno rappresentate, e cerchi di fissare le battute, almeno le più importanti! (MN I, 79).

The free-association of the re-called events on stage threatens the unidimensionality of linear signification. The collage of ambiguous events is multifaceted and defeats syntagmatic coherence. The narcissistic producer relies on narrative structures: he cannot afford the free-association (or the paradigmatic simultaneities) which menace him with disintegration.⁵¹

Pirandello has lost faith in mimesis. Only the dramatic genre can accommodate the crisis in signification produced by the collapse in traditional naturalist representation. Pirandello dramatises the loss of the real object.⁵² He replaces the referent with a search for meaning. He has realised that coherent sense is unattainable. He

distinguishes himself from Capuana and Verga, and their referential fallacy.⁵³ Pirandello can no longer sustain "la così detta 'impersonalità' nella narrazione e l'oggettività nell'arte narrativa" (SPSV, 396). In the speech on Verga (1920) he wrote:⁵⁴ "Il mondo non è per se stesso in nessuna realtà se non gliela diamo noi; e dunque, poiché gliel'abbiamo data noi, è naturale che ci spieghiamo che non possa essere diverso. Bisognerebbe diffidare di noi stessi, della realtà del mondo posta da noi" (SPSV, 399).

It is this distrust of the senses, together with the loss of confidence in a coherent authorial self, which cause the crisis in Pirandello's faith in narrative procedures. He will resort to drama to reveal how both life and art are fictions. He added an important comment to the above passage, when in 1931, he repeated his speech on Verga:

Non solo per l'artista, ma non esiste per nessuno una rappresentazione, sia creata dall'arte o sia comunque quella che tutti ci facciamo di noi stessi e degli altri e della vita, che si possa credere "una realtà". Sono in fondo una medesima illusione quella dell'arte e quella che comunemente a noi tutti viene dai nostri sensi (SPSV, 419).

Because Pirandello suspects that the world might be different from what it seems, he is "un umorista", while Verga is not. Perhaps this is why Pirandello is a playwright too. I am arguing against the received idea that Pirandello was a reluctant dramatist.⁵⁵ I intend demonstrating that Pirandello's concerns demand the poly-languages of the theatre. I plan to explain how the playscripts are a necessary and inevitable outcome of the crisis occurring in his narrative procedures [see II.3].

Pirandello has described the pressures on narrative methods, once thought safe. He has caught a glimpse of the fault-line in the naturalist mirror. This leads him to make his stage debut. In chapter I, I considered some of the "sociological" factors conditioning

his engagement with the theatre, including his involvement in the enterprise of a State theatre. At this point, I am more concerned with the structural (or linguistic) determinants of his transition: I believe that, for Pirandello, the dramatic genre apparently supplies an emergency exit from the impasse in narrative signification. He is unable to reconcile the demands of modernist signifying practices with narrative technique: the polycentrism, simultaneity and multi-media of modernism cannot be absorbed by the succession and unfolding linearity of the *novella*. It seems that the drama can permit the multidimensional effects indicative of modernism. This observation may lead to a historical understanding of Pirandello's work, through the mediation of the literary institution to which it belongs. The figure of Signora Ponza might demonstrate more vividly the point I am making: her veiled presence, at the end of *Così è (se vi pare)*, allows her to signify several identities simultaneously. The signifying chain is ruptured to provide paradigmatic choice. This freeplay of signifiers is not encased in words, but rests on her mysterious physical appearance. Such a device is unavailable to Pirandello, *novelliere*. She is a silent signifier of desire.⁵⁶

However, when she does speak, the representation submits once more to the narrative machinery.⁵⁷ When subordinated to language, she is compelled to enumerate her different identities, successively, "con un parlare lento e spiccato" (MN I, 1077). The interpenetrating selves of the silent masked woman now take on a series of distinct forms.

This destruction of paradigmatic relations is, for me, the promise and the defeat of Pirandello's plays. It is the reason for my caution when talking about Pirandello as "revolutionising" the theatre. It is why I have claimed that drama only apparently compensates for the inflexibility of narrative. While the dramatic

genre provides more possibilities for portraying a modernist loss of faith, it too, inevitably is recaptured in the trap of language or of authorial control. There is a scene in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* which warrants discussion, in this regard. It reveals a Futurist preoccupation with the simultaneities of space and time.⁵⁸

At the end of the play, we are informed, at the narrative level, of the Mother's presence in the Son's bedroom: her lack of vigilance provided the fateful circumstances for the Little Girl's drowning. The problem of simultaneity, in the sense of the Futurists, will arise at this moment when the Producer insists on mounting the scene between the Mother and the Son. The impossibility of linear narration is brought out by the fact that the two different events happen at the same time; stage conventions cannot accommodate this form of overdetermination which requires a flexibility beyond a single stage setting. The Producer has decided in favour of setting the scene in the garden. Yet the Son clings obstinately to his authentic memory of the other scene. As a further defence, he denies any such event having taken place: "Ma che contemporaneamente! Non è vero, signore! Non c'è stata nessuna scena tra me e lei!" He insists on the original locale: "Nella mia camera, ha inteso? Non nel giardino!" (MN I, 112). In resolving the conflict, the Producer refuses to reduplicate the primary version; the conventional means of dramatic representation at his disposal, will not allow him to do so. Pirandello does not let him revolutionise his stage.

In an act of self-concealment, Pirandello displaces this control onto the Producer. The naturalist stratagem of impersonality appears to remove the author from what he is unavoidably endorsing. The paradox is that Pirandello cannot but take up the position of Hinkfuss: in other words, he fails to go as far as he might in terms

of experimentation. Thus, through a kind of theatrical reductionism, the topography becomes definitive. Linearity presides over simultaneity: the garden and the room are elided into the garden. "Ma questo non ha importanza!" shouts the Producer. "Bisogna raggruppar l'azione, ho detto!" (MN I, 112).

The potential modernist exposure has been reintegrated. The Producer's words substitute the original inchoate experience. The Prompter's manuscript becomes the new textual authority, a testament to order. Despite his protestations, the Son will submit to re-enacting the scene verbally, to play his part in the garden. The dialogue at this juncture focuses on a moment of transition: from a resistance to syntactical sequence, there is now a re-engagement in the narrative stage grammar. The Son surrenders to the law of the Father.

Before this resolution, it seemed that the dramatic mode was going to enable Pirandello to go beyond the structural limits of successive narration: these boundaries are exemplified by the *novella*,⁵⁹ "Il lume dell'altra casa", first published in 1909. Here, there is a juxtaposition of two rooms, separated by an abyss of desire. When the mother, Margherita Masci, is united with her lover, Tullio Buti (a former occupant of the second little room), she is divided from her children. The lovers return to this evacuated space, in order to steal a glimpse of them:

La sera dopo, come due ladri, essi vennero. Entrarono quasi rantolanti nella cameretta al bujo, e attesero, attesero che s'inalbasse ancora del lume dell'altra casa. Di quel lume dovevano vivere ormai, così, da lontano. Eccolo!
Ma Tullio Buti non poté in prima sostenerlo. Lei, invece coi singhiozzi che le gorgogliavano in gola, lo bevve come un'assetata, si precipitò ai vetri della finestra, premendosi forte il fazzoletto su la bocca. I suoi piccini ... i suoi piccini ... i suoi piccini, là ... eccoli ... a tavola ... Egli accorse a sorreggerla, e tutti e due rimasero lì, stretti, inchiodati, a spiare (NA II, 584).

One cannot help noticing the excessively visual dimension to this narration: the fixated spectators watch through a transparent fourth wall. The *novella* demands theatricalisation. When the Producer plans to convert the Six Characters' *novella* into a play, he collapses two simultaneous scenes into one. Even the scope of a bare stage does not make Pirandello break out from the narrative straitjacket: he represses the scene in the bedroom and reiterates the taboo on touching.

Marinetti was faced with a similar situation. Yet he at least tries to remain loyal to the avant-garde attack on mimesis. In *Simultaneità* - a "compenetrazione" from his "Sintesi teatrali" of 1915 - he experiments with overlap.⁶⁰ The room of a cocotte is superimposed on that of a bourgeois family: her lavish dressing-table contrasts with the family table doubling as a desk. "La famiglia non vede questa scena".⁶¹ The two distinct narrative spaces intersect, but only in the eyes of the audience. The Son is expelled into the Cocotte's area, without any of the stage occupants' noticing: "Il ragazzo sedicenne si alza poco dopo, va alla libreria, passando vicinissimo alla toletta, come se questo non ci fosse, prende un libro, riattraversa la sala, torna a sedersi alla tavola e si rimette a scrivere."⁶² The ironic dialogue underlines their mutual oblivion. The Son comments: "Nevica ancora ... Che silenzio!" The Father adds: "Questa casa è veramente troppo isolata."⁶³

Marinetti's daring points to Pirandello's stage-fright. Yet Pirandello's genuine achievement will be to sustain his theatrical reforms beyond the brief, meagre and laconic duration of Marinetti's "sintesi". Cumulatively, Marinetti performs no more than a series of disparate and superficial innovations: he is only able to adventure as he does because he flies so completely in the face of inherited dramatic forms. By contrast, Pirandello operates within

the unified tradition while respectfully transforming it. Nevertheless, Pirandello will find he truncates some aspects of his precursor's endowments in the process.

Where Marinetti does succeed, is in forcing the circumscribed stage space to frame his interpenetration of different planes. However, although the ambiances mesh, he still does not entirely circumvent naturalist conventions. Some fictions of invisibility are maintained: "Tutti, con naturalezza, attendono alle loro occupazioni. La Cocotte, a parte, continua ad abbigliarsi, invisibile alla famiglia."⁶⁴ The dark devices of naturalism are only partially illuminated: the standard blindness of the audience has simply been displaced onto the actors. The latter suspend disbelief and re-install the internal dramatic ironies. The actors make the bricolage coherent: they forestall the anarchy of signifiers, which could have suggested connections among objects not ordinarily associated.⁶⁵ The play instinct is lost in the dramatic work. The paradigmatic simultaneities are sabotaged by a naturalist logic. "Plot" is in control, but "character" is not. It is interesting to note the symbolic parallels in *Simultaneità* and *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. The Family figures are typed: both authors lance the private self. The paradigms threaten individual identities with defeat.

Marinetti's semi-naturalistic letters betray the avant-garde spirit of simultaneity. Despite his experimental attempts, life still remains compressed by art - to only a slightly lesser extent than in Pirandello's work with its residual naturalism. The inevitable frame always causes the cubo-futurist venture to fail, when transforming its theory into practice:

Spieghiamoci ancora per via d'esempi. Dipingendo una persona al balcone, vista dall'interno, noi non limitiamo la scena a ciò che il quadrato della finestra permette di

vedere; ma ci sforziamo di dare il complesso di sensazioni plastiche provate dal pittore che sta al balcone: brulichio soleggiato della strada, doppia fila delle case che si prolungano a destra e a sinistra, balconi fioriti, ecc.

Il che significa simultaneità d'ambiente, e quindi dislocazione e smembramento degli oggetti, sparpagliamento e fusione dei dettagli, liberati dalla logica comune e indipendenti gli uni dagli altri....

Bisogna rendere l'invisibile che si agita e che vive al di là degli spessori, ciò che abbiamo a destra, a sinistra e dietro di noi, e non il piccolo quadrato di vita artificialmente chiuso come fra gli scenari d'un teatro.⁶⁶

The Futurists make a plea to include the excluded/unconscious. The "return of the dead" (naturalism) will meet with the "return of the repressed".⁶⁷ The Futurist example of *Simultaneità* does indeed move some way towards effectively representing these supplementary scenes. Marinetti believed he was using the dramatic medium to go beyond the possibilities of cinematography:

mentre nel 10° atto della *Figlia di Iorio*, i fatti si muovono sulla scena, ma con realismo troppo esteriore e, diremo così, cinematografico, nella mia sintesi *Simultaneità* io ottengo un dinamismo assoluto di tempo e di spazio, con la compenetrazione simultanea di due ambienti diversi e di molti tempi diversi.⁶⁸

For the *metteur-en-scène* of Pirandello's plays, however, it seems that perhaps only the panning devices of the movie camera can transcend the rigidity of narrative, always forcing its return to the stage, despite the *avant-garde* sorties on linearity.⁶⁹

What I hope to have demonstrated, is that the shift into the dramatic genre results from compulsion, not choice: in order to cope with the crisis in the signifying chain, Pirandello requires the spatio-temporal and non-verbal dimensions available to the theatre. His writing plays is not simply a result of the extensive dialogic content of the *novelle*.⁷⁰ He must try to dramatise the cerebral. Visual and acoustic criteria operate as much as the contribution of the "novella dialogata". He has registered the structural crisis in serial narration.

Pirandello repeatedly tries to make sense of his transition, to

rationalise his ambivalence. His resistance to the systematicity of drama, is replaced by a recognition of its specific advantages. He comes to acknowledge the "double character" of dramatic language.⁷¹ In the essay, "L'azione parlata", published in 1899, he wrote:

Intendo: il dialogo drammatico. Stimo opportuno richiamare alla mente dei lettori questa bella definizione non mia, considerando come quasi tutta la produzione drammatica contemporanea abbia fondo più che altro narrativo, tratti cioè argomenti più da novella o da romanzo, che da dramma; e male, necessariamente: prima, perché una favola d'indole narrativa, in generale, mal si lascia ridurre e adattare al congegno delle scene; poi, per il soverchio e, secondo me, malinteso rigore della tecnica moderna, vero letto di Procuste, la quale tutto quel congegno uniformemente restringe e ammisce. Tolsè, è vero, anche lo Shakespeare l'argomento d'alcuni drammi da novelle italiane: ma qual drammaturgo mise in azione più di lui, dal principio alla fine, una favola, nulla mai sacrificando alle esigenze sciocche d'una tecnica solo esteriormente rigorosa? Ogni sostegno descrittivo o narrativo dovrebbe essere abolito su la scena (SPSV, 1015).

He will examine and expose Doctor Hinkfuss's reliance on his "rotoletto" - the absent script. Through improvisation, he intends to dispense with narration: "Ho in questo rotoletto di poche pagine tutto quello che mi serve. Quasi niente. Una novelletta, o poco più, appena appena qua e là dialogata da uno scrittore a voi non ignoto" (MN I, 207). The authenticity and authority of narrative is challenged here: it no longer is exhaustive of multi-dimensional reality. Doctor Hinkfuss verbally provides the "monologic" script with its excess of "carnival" signification. But the transgression is the always already there.⁷² He is merely using the additional signifying resources specific to the theatre.

IL DOTTOR HINKFUSS. Magnifico! Magnifico quadro! Avete fatto come dicevo io! Questo, nella novella, non c'è!
L'ATTRICE CARATTERISTA. Eccolo qua il nuovo!
L'ATTORE BRILLANTE (*sopravvenendo da sinistra*). Ma è stato sempre qua, con gli elettricisti, a governar di nascosto tutti gli effetti di luce! (MN I, 288).

The cubo-futurist enterprise is doomed to re-integration in the economy of linear narrative. The dramatic mode permits flashpoints

when the representational and iconic functions scatter in the play of the signifier. Pirandello's absorption and transformation of modernist procedures, begets his plays. He relinquishes his naturalist fathers, Capuana and Verga, and produces himself. The intertextual relations with the Futurists signal the birth-process.⁷³ His anxiety will end in solipsism, "quando si è qualcuno". In the last plays, he will continually repeat the still-birth of naturalism. It is my task, in this study, to chart the waters of passage.

In the present chapter, I hope to have outlined Pirandello's search for origins, (and mine for his). Despite his swerving attempts at modernistic breach, linearity appears unavoidable. Thus far, it seems the supremacy of the doctrine of "the linear character of the signifier", remains unshaken.⁷⁴ An analysis of his plays tends to reveal the orthodoxy as inviolate. Narrative or drama, the linguistic constraints of signification make Pirandello's "revolution" impossible. He dramatises a paradox: the avant-garde metalanguage of the "teatro nel teatro", is perpetually held back by the naturalist residues in his dramatic language.

II.3. From Narrative to Drama

J'appelle *fable* ce que le sujet se raconte et raconte. C'est un récit hors du temps de l'histoire du sujet; mais non hors du temps de l'analyse, bien sûr, puisque la fable ponctue le transfert. C'est dans la mesure où faits et personnages sont ainsi repris dans un récit et s'y organisent en référence à des signifiants, non plus à une vérité historique, qu'ils peuvent constituer une fable.⁷⁵

The narrator of a narration "organises" facts and characters regardless of historical truth. In this section, I intend to examine the problems encountered by Pirandello as narrator. I

shall provide a symptomatic reading of his essay, "Soggettivismo e oggettivismo nell'arte narrativa" (1906); of the play, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*; and of its Preface, in particular, in order to reveal how Pirandello represents the crisis in the role/identity of the author. I shall argue that his anxious self-effacement is a sign of the naturalist residues in the text; and is simultaneously "the death of the author" - a characteristic trope of modernism.⁷⁶ This modernist narrative artifice, I submit, simply revises the ratios of authorial invisibility that naturalism asserts [II.3.a].

I shall go on to discuss how the debate on authorial identity in Pirandello's writings is a symptom of the modern crisis in signification which makes "objective" narration impossible: the inevitable subjective stance of the narrator leads to the loss, not of the author himself, but of the referent. It is both here, as well as in regard to the author's function, that the modernist "revolution" takes place - yet this "revolution" is often no more than a swerving repetition which differs slightly from the recognisable naturalist tack. In order to demonstrate my thesis that Pirandello (absurdly) can no longer narrate, I shall supply a reading of Pirandello's long poem, *Belfagor*. From this analysis, it will emerge that the act of narration is under siege: all that Pirandello can narrate is a narration about the insecurities of narration. I shall argue that this early poem, *Belfagor*, written in 1892, anticipates the preoccupations of his later "revolutionary" period of the *teatro nel teatro* where the difficulties of writing are examined by the writing itself [II.3.b].

The problem of the author and of the narration lead Pirandello to seek out the relative anonymity of the dramatic genre. It will

be clear then that his shift into the dramatic genre cannot simply be a result of the personal persuasions of Musco or of Martoglio; nor of the enterprise of the State Theatre.⁷⁷ It also cannot be argued that Pirandello is a "reluctant" dramatist. I submit that the transition to drama is determined by the critical condition of a language which has ceased to guarantee the validity of its processes of representation. Pirandello will attempt to dramatise the collapse of the autonomous writer/reader. [The defeat of the empirical author/reader is spelt out in the semiotician's substitution of a Model Author and Reader: these are described as two strategies for textual co-operation - "La cooperazione testuale è fenomeno che si realizza, lo ripetiamo, tra due strategie discorsive, non tra due soggetti individuali".]⁷⁸ In my readings which follow, I shall argue that there was no other exit for the disconcerted narrator, Pirandello, except to experiment in drama. This foray too, however, was to fail eventually: he will end by resurrecting "qualcuno", the mythical presence of the person/author to control the inevitable anarchy of signs, if not the pledged relativist psychosis of his "revolutionary" period.⁷⁹

In this section, therefore, I intend to demonstrate the crisis in authorship and the breakdown of fabulation, before showing in subsequent chapters how Pirandello restores the mythic fable and writes over the cracks he has discovered in the authorial/observing selves. Fascist power regulates this meaningful project and the linear doctrine of the signifier rules [OK]. It seems that for final signification to take place [as shown in II.1 and 2 above], the temporary simultaneity of ruptural and contradictory meanings will inevitably be harnessed into linearity. Pirandello is unable to sustain the "rappresentazione simultanea" (MN I, 237) attempted by

Hinkfuss in the "Intermezzo" of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*. In the stage directions, Pirandello will innocently advance the paradox inherent in this failed dramatic revolt: "Queste scenette sparse e simultanee sono qui trascritte, per necessità di spazio, una dopo l'altra" (MN I, 237). His spurious typographical justification does not cover up the impossibility of his project which inevitably submits to the law and order of linear signification. Fascism, as it were, then becomes a metaphor for all power which inhibits and controls the proliferation of subversive meanings or even of meaninglessness [which might also mean that power is a condition of language itself]: "Mais la langue, comme performance de tout langage, n'est ni réactionnaire, ni progressiste; elle est tout simplement: fasciste; car le fascisme, ce n'est pas d'empêcher de dire, c'est d'obliger à dire."⁸⁰

II.3.a. *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*: Modernism and the Death of the Author

The problem of authorship obsessed Pirandello, as the title *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* indicates: yet these characters in search of an author are trapped in the anxiety-laden sediment of Pirandello's residual naturalism; for, like Verga, he is simply concealing the hand of the author. He causes the Producer to proclaim ironically: "Ma qui non c'è nessun autore, perché non abbiamo in prova nessuna commedia nuova" (MN I, 56).. The characters go on an adolescent quest for their origins ["Là origini - Mai c'è stata origine"]⁸¹. This search for descent is also a disavowal of origins - they are "rejected".⁸² Any prospective author will only imitate the anterior gestures of their story.⁸³ Pirandello is

apparently heedless of his characters' dilemma: he will spurn his analysands after listening to them expound "la miseria dei loro casi particolari". He claimed to have relinquished all authority over his scripts, and to have pushed his characters into the hands of other authors, "uno qualunque" (MN I, 56). Pirandello pretends the characters are "*rifiutati: in cerca d'altro autore*" (MN I, 40). He will characteristically hide behind the ostentatious sign on his study door:

AVVISO

Sospese da oggi le udienze a tutti i personaggi, uomini e donne, d'ogni ceto, d'ogni età, d'ogni professione, che hanno fatto domanda e presentato titoli per essere ammessi in qualche romanzo o novella.

N.B. Domande e titoli sono a disposizione di quei signori personaggi che, non vergognandosi d'esporre in un momento come questo la miseria dei loro casi particolari, vorranno rivolgersi ad altri scrittori, se pure ne troveranno (NA II, 1197).

Paradoxically, by proclaiming his absence, he is doing nothing more than asserting his fictional presence. He will plagiarise his characters' tales and feign his demise in the writing. The Father will give the aetiology of their "abandonic"⁸⁴ status and will define their sense of desolation. "Sperduti", he echoes the Stepdaughter, and then adds:

Nel senso, veda, che l'autore che ci creò, vivi, non volle poi, o non poté materialmente, metterci al mondo dell'arte. E fu un vero delitto, signore, perché chi ha la ventura di nascere personaggio vivo, può ridersi anche della morte. Non muore più! Morrà l'uomo, lo scrittore, strumento della creazione; la creatura non muore più! E per vivere eterna non ha neanche bisogno di straordinarie doti o di compiere prodigi. Chi era Sancho Panza? Chi era don Abbondio?

Eppure vivono eterni, perché - vivi germi - ebbero la ventura di trovare una matrice feconda, una fantasia che li seppe allevare e nutrire, far vivere per l'eternità! (MN I, 58-59).

The Father's speech is directly antithetical to Pirandello's avowed creative process. The trope of authorial invisibility is ironised: Pirandello has a character that has acquired a textual

presence, strain our credulity by insisting that he hasn't. Unless the reader suspends disbelief, the irony must disfigure the traditional gesture. The meaning of the Father's words is undone and we commit a modernist "misreading"⁸⁵ of naturalism. This is not the same as asserting that the text is essentially modernist: it merely demonstrates that the digression on the problem of the author produces a reading against the (naturalist) grain. The revised naturalist strategies discomfort the reader and result in a modernist stance. What distinguishes *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is its self-conscious debate on authorial tyranny and on the failure of the naturalist device of authorial concealment.

The two plays, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, show Pirandello feigning an incapacity to assume the name of author - in the former, he is absent; in the latter, he evacuates the text for a so-called "improvisation". He will obsessively orphan his writing. His denial of paternity is a textual ruse in order to mask, or disfigure, his authorial self. This self-effacement is also an erasure of the history of his texts - a repudiation of *verismo* and a resistance against becoming "qualcuno". But the desire for the fictional state of absentee authorship was bound to be short-lived: in the play, *Quando si è qualcuno*, written in 1933, the famous Pirandello will resolve his conflict by accepting - with lamentation - a fixed authorial identity.

Pirandello carries with him therefore the inherited baggage of "residual phenomena"⁸⁶ which lacerate the text of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. In this play, the naturalist residues persist alongside, if not constitute, the new modernist elements: sometimes they are mistaken for novelty. Many of the "revolutionary" tropes in this play are the return of the repressed tradition, a refiguring of naturalism.⁸⁷ The chief example of this phenomenon is the death

of the author which is supposed to coincide with the advent of modernism.⁸⁸ Such a progressive wake tends to neglect the ideology of authorial impersonality that marks naturalism. The hidden or withdrawn author, rather than being a revolutionary departure, emerges as a dominant trope of the period, and is by no means an original break. While the textual figuring of Pirandello's death may be occurring, the event is not: the author's signature persists despite claims to the contrary.

The play, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is without doubt written by Pirandello who inscribes himself throughout: the writing produces the authorial self, Pirandello. Yet he will make the futile attempt to empirically vanish by transforming the authorial "I" into the third person, "Pirandello". The distanciation is false, as similarly when he has Hinkfuss display him as "uno scrittore a voi non ignoto" (MN I, 207). His presence emerges in the double negative of his self-denial. The parody of his style is a repetition of the self-disowning comments in the first scene of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* where the actors are rehearsing *Il giuoco delle parti*, by one Pirandello. The Producer empties him out:⁸⁹

"Ridicolo! ridicolo!" Che vuole che le faccia io se dalla Francia non ci viene più una buona commedia, e ci siamo ridotti a mettere in iscena commedie di Pirandello, che chi l'intende è bravo, fatte apposta di maniera che né attori né critici né pubblico ne restino mai contenti? (MN I, 53).

In order to break with himself, the truant Pirandello has constructed himself as his own precursor.⁹⁰ He produces a travesty of himself in evidence of the anxiety Pirandello exerts on Pirandello.⁹¹ Such is the price of fame! *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is the defence of a text not written: Pirandello is apparently evading himself in this act of repudiation. His morbid fear of repetition makes him not want to ape himself. Yet the evasion is a lie which is but a

variation of his naturalist guise.

In the shift from narrative to drama, Pirandello is able to mask more effectively the textual signs referring to the author. Even in the autobiographical genre, it is seldom acknowledged that the individual who says "I" is only a character: there exists another invisible "I" - the narrator.⁹² Drama is distinguishable from narrative for, in a play, the "objective" narrator almost always gives the impression of being completely "absent". Pirandello himself was to make the distinction between narration and spoken action. As early as 1906, he can be seen reaching for a dramatic solution to the problem of authorship:

Dicono questi tali: ogni scrittore, nel trarre comunque dalla vita presente o passata una favola qualsiasi da narrare, sia breve, sia lunga - novella o romanzo - potrà sempre farne un racconto o lungo o breve: questo poco importa; sarà racconto per il modo particolare che adotterà nell'esporsi. Giacché racconto, più che uno speciale componimento d'arte narrativa, è una maniera d'arte, senz'alcuna determinazione di lunghezza o brevità, indipendente insomma dall'estensione o dalla complessità maggiore o minore della favola. Questa, nel racconto, viene esposta o riferita dall'autore stesso o da un personaggio che parli in prima persona, più che rappresentata o messa in azione. Non che manchi nel racconto la rappresentazione, ma certo la parte per così dire espositiva o descrittiva predomina, e la rappresentazione stessa non è mai diretta, oggettiva, ma atteggiata subiettivamente da chi narra o descrive; e gli altri personaggi, oltre all'autore che parla in prima persona o a quell'altro da cui il racconto si finge narrato, non assumono voce in questa rappresentazione subiettiva, se non quando, per maggior efficacia il raccontatore lo stimi opportuno. Ove la rappresentazione diretta prendesse, per così dire, la mano al raccontatore, un grave difetto d'arte ne deriverebbe al racconto; si può riferire un breve dialogo; non, per disteso e minutamente, un lungo discorso con la viva voce di chi lo proferì; né tanto meno, oggettivamente, una scena complessa di parecchi collocutori (SPSV, 186-87).

Pirandello then describes his own *mélange* of the narrative and dramatic genres, by paying attention to the discursive position of the author who employs dialogue in a "racconto" which he qualifies as "rappresentazione soggettiva": "I lunghi dialoghi a la conversazione possono non offenderci affatto, se il raccontatore riesce a dare -

in un dato momento - l'illusione di una rappresentazione: noi dimentichiamo la persona che racconta" (SPSV, 187). Yet the narrator can be forgotten only temporarily due to the essentially subjective properties of the act of narration.

Unlike narrative, drama does not present us with a self-evident author. In the novel or short story, personal pronouns; adverbs of time and place; and the conjugation of verbs are all clues to an authorial presence.⁹³ These signs stand for a "second self" who is absent in the drama where it is less easy to talk of the scission between the actual writer and the fictional narrator.⁹⁴ The concealing narrative "shifters" in dramatic texts provide the conditions for the author's erasure. In mapping Pirandello's desire to dispossess himself of an authorial identity, it becomes possible to provide further reasons for his switch in genre. The functions of narrator bind him in authorship: it is only the relative anonymity of the dramatic form which can fulfil his wish to evanesce. Narrative requires that pleasure be taken in the narration⁹⁵ [Ludovico Nota], whereas the drama will allow Pirandello to divest himself of his scriptor's duties in a textual breakdown of authorial subjectivity. Pirandello surrenders, and then struggles to assert the difference (blurred in the drama) between the "I" of the enunciation and the "I" of the character:

Non so immaginare, perciò, con che fondamento mi fu mosso l'appunto che il personaggio del Padre non era quello che avrebbe dovuto essere, perché usciva dalla sua qualità e posizione di personaggio invadendo, a volte, e facendo sua l'attività dell'autore. Io che intendo chi non m'intende, capisco che l'appunto viene dal fatto che quel personaggio esprime come proprio un travaglio di spirito che è riconosciuto essere il mio. Il che è ben naturale e non significa assolutamente nulla (MN I, 40-41).

This flight from autobiographical involvement will force Pirandello into historical and mythical drama where he no longer can be seen to intervene directly as speaker. If the dramatic genre

will depersonalise his narrative, then the historical play and myths will eclipse him: the events will seem to recount themselves. It is in the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* that this conflict between the subjective stance of the author and the objective fable of the characters is most explicit: the dramatic text explodes in the battle of signatures. Yet the Preface to the play will be Pirandello's retrospective attempt to counteract the apparently chaotic exploit of the play itself. A huge rationalisation in order to resist the personal connotations of the scene between the Father and the Stepdaughter, the Preface is written after the event: it is a desperate narrative effort to regain coherence; to still the play of differences in the dramatic text; and to fix authorial signification. Our absent author now seems almost to regret his textual transcendence: he realises that he is inscribed in the writing where the disavowal of his person paradoxically produces his presence. He contradictorily affirms that he is merely giving the appearance of chaos and of loss of authority: in fact, he claims, he is writing chaotically, only to contain this chaos in "*un'altra commedia che essi non sanno e non sospettano*" (MN I, 45). He demonstrates that it does matter who speaks. In an over-reaction to the influence of the subjective effusions in Romanticism, he justifies his "umorismo":

Che qualcuno ora mi dica che essa [l'opera] non ha tutto il valore che potrebbe avere perché la sua espressione non è composta ma caotica, perché pecca di romanticismo, mi fa sorridere.

Capisco perché questa osservazione mi sia stata fatta. Perché nel mio lavoro la rappresentazione del dramma in cui sono involti i sei personaggi appare tumultuosa e non procede mai ordinata: non c'è sviluppo logico, non c'è concatenazione negli avvenimenti. È verissimo. Neanche a cercarlo col lumicino avrei potuto trovare un modo più disordinato, più strambo, più arbitrario e complicato, cioè più romantico, di rappresentare "il dramma in cui sono involti i sei personaggi". È verissimo, ma io non ho affatto rappresentato quel dramma: ne ho rappresentato un altro - e non starò a ripetere quale! - in cui, fra le altre belle cose che ognuno secondo i suoi gusti ci può ritrovare, c'è proprio una discreta satira dei

procedimenti romantici; in quei miei personaggi così tutti incaloriti a sopraffarsi nelle parti che ognun d'essi ha in un certo dramma mentre io li presento come personaggi di un'altra commedia che essi non sanno e non sospettano, così che quella loro esagitazione passionale, propria dei procedimenti romantici, è umoristicamente posta, campata sul vuoto (MN I, 45).

Pirandello has written another anti-Romantic metaplay of which he is the author, therefore, he can seem to flirt with surrendering his rights to the Father: *"Se il Padre fosse partecipe di questa attività, se concorresse a formare il dramma dell'essere quei personaggi senz'autore, allora sí, e soltanto allora, sarebbe giustificato il dire che esso sia a volte l'autore stesso, e perciò non sia quello che dovrebbe essere" (MN I, 41).* Ultimately, Pirandello refuses to let him participate in the activity of author. The most unfathomable comment of all in this *mise-en-abîme* of authorship, is the one concerning the Son who, in his resistance to paternal authority, requires a different kind of author altogether: *"È insomma il solo che viva soltanto come 'personaggio in cerca d'autore'; tanto che l'autore che egli cerca non è un autore drammatico" (MN I, 45).* This multiplying of authorial functions is trick dramaturgy: the Supreme Author, Pirandello, has all under control, and, he has insisted on his hidden presence, in the claim *"rappresentare un caos non significa affatto rappresentare caoticamente, cioè romanticamente" (MN I, 45-46).* The Son is *"privo di qualunque senso e perciò senza neanche bisogno della voce umana" (MN I, 46).* As a result, all the Son does need is his own unaided death, *"apparentemente non assistito dal poeta" (MN I, 46).* Our forgotten author is alive and well in the wings from where he surveys his creation: *"Il poeta, a loro insaputa, quasi guardando da lontano per tutto il tempo di quel loro tentativo, ha atteso, intanto, a creare con esso e di esso la sua opera" (MN I, 46).*

This cruel and implacable writer in repudiating his creatures has, like God, not deprived them of an existence. He plays on the fraud. By granting the characters "independence", Pirandello has attempted to abscond from his text. The Father outlines this illusory doctrine of free-will:

Non l'ha mai visto, signore, perché gli autori nascondono di solito il travaglio della loro creazione. Quando i personaggi son vivi, vivi veramente davanti al loro autore, questo non fa altro che seguirli nelle parole, nei gesti ch'essi appunto gli propongono; e bisogna ch'egli li voglia com'essi si vogliono; e guai se non fa così! Quando un personaggio è nato, acquista subito una tale indipendenza anche dal suo stesso autore, che può esser da tutti immaginato in tant'altre situazioni in cui l'autore non pensò di metterlo, e acquistare anche, a volte, un significato che l'autore non si sognò mai di dargli! (MN I, 105).

In chapters III and IV, I shall resume this discussion concerning the autonomy of the character/actor/reader. I shall take up again the question of Pirandello's authoritative relationship to his texts: in particular, I intend to explore whether it is possible for excess signification to overthrow the writer's dictatorship. In chapter IV, I shall examine how the stage performance could destabilise the tyranny of the dramatic text. I shall be asking if Pirandello's claims concerning improvisation are true, and if it is ever possible to enact Artaud's brave gesture - "Ainsi, nous renoncerons à la superstition théâtrale du texte et à la dictature de l'écrivain".⁹⁶

One of the main attributes of modernism is that it reveals the mechanisms of writing: it declares the tools of production.⁹⁷ Modernism displays, rather than effaces the signifier. In the work of "forcing the signifier to float",⁹⁸ the text supposedly deconstructs and the author is said to decompose. Pirandello adopts the disguise of modernism - he does not effectively practise it. I hope to have demonstrated that the naturalist residues in his text militate against categorising him apocalyptically as a "revolutionary" modernist: if

anything, I submit that these residues are intrinsic to a definition of "modernism" which is a far less radical stance than commonly conceded. Pirandello can only feign the "unnarrability"⁹⁹ of his text: he will never admit it. Like Faustino Perres, another of his author-characters, he retrieves the textual object, rather than lose it in the imminent authorial silence of modernism: Perres "ritirò la sua commedia, e non se ne parlò più" (NA I, 244). Pirandello cannot speak his own destruction, that other scene, "*non starò a ripetere quale!*" (MN I, 45). We have witnessed the "*tormento segreto*" (MN I, 36) of the doomed naturalist and of the hesitant modernist. Pirandello resorts in the Preface to the language of taboo in order to avoid placing his own authorial ego in jeopardy.

In conclusion, the danger of the modernist view that the author of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is dead, is that it leads to an optimistic glorification of polysemy, or of the interpretative role of the reader, the productivity of whose reading is all that counts.¹⁰⁰ There is no acknowledgement of the constraints operating on the reading: this form of disavowal of the way the reader is hemmed in by the author and the text is a curious form of anxious overcompensation for the subjective excesses of Romantic authorship which Pirandello found himself compelled to resist. How else can one explain the "enigmatic link"¹⁰¹ between the author and the text - a puzzling relationship which Pirandello confronted so innovatively in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*? A more satisfying critical approach seems to be to talk about the "author function" (which¹⁰² arises out of the distance between the actual writer and the fictional narrator); or of the way the author is the unifying principle of a text.¹⁰³ The shape of the author's opus emerges from the series of continuities (or residues) in his development, as well

as from the play of differences. It can then become evident how an author such as Pirandello intervenes in discourse and initiates a new "discursive practice";¹⁰⁴ that is, how tradition is shot through by innovation.

While one remains duly suspicious of the absolute nature and of the creative role of the originating subject, it does seem more sensible not to abandon entirely our author as he claims to have abandoned us. It is too easy to fall into the self-congratulation of the deconstructionists on getting rid of the pristine voice and ultimate authority of the writer already constituted outside the text. The trope may be the chief means whereby language exhibits its strategies for freedom from the constraints of authorial presence, but the text's potential for meaning is not endless. The regulating constraints of the "author function"¹⁰⁵ delimit the semantic field, as I have argued in the case of Pirandello. A radical reading can undermine the author's sovereignty, even defy his "intentions", but it cannot make him vanish. To give a text an author is not necessarily a closure of meaning:¹⁰⁶ it is simply to acknowledge the discursive strategies for textual cooperation (if not transference) between a model author and reader. While power may sustain the privileges of the empirical author, we mere readers cannot wish him away.

Pirandello's "heresy" was precisely to seem to make himself disappear. He rendered visible the conflictual relationships among author, producer, characters, actors, readers, critics and audience as they are enmeshed in cultural institutions. He re-examined the myths of authorial invisibility, denaturalised them, but he failed to hand over authority to us. He assaulted the theocracy of the author,¹⁰⁷ but his disappearance is held in check by the fact that the modernist self-transcendence is only apparent. As the Preface

declares, the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* remains resolutely logocentric, anchored by a transcendental signifier in the shape of the author, Pirandello. The potential chaos of the performance text is recuperated by the Preface. After the temporary agony and festive release of his "revolutionary" play, Pirandello revives himself in the Preface. It is interesting to note here that the opening phrase in the earlier French version is suppressed in the standard edition: "J'ai écrit les *Six personnages en quête d'auteur* pour me délivrer d'un cauchemar."¹⁰⁸ With the nightmare now over, Pirandello retreats from the chaotic drama into an ordered narrative whereby the author prefaces, and so polices, his "radical" play.

II.3.b. Pirandello's *Belfagor*: Machiavelli Revisited

Nowhere is Pirandello's indebtedness to a previous author so evident as in his early poem, *Belfagor*, based on Machiavelli's *novella*:¹⁰⁹ the "embellishments" of the original fable will not mask the modern storyteller's search for a tale. Machiavelli's figure of Belfagor is said to derive from the middle-eastern god, Baal-Peor, who corresponds to the Greek divinity, Priapos, a symbol of phallic procreation.¹¹⁰ The "favola" or *novella*, *Belfagor*, evinces the way in which social power and privilege accumulate around the phallic signifier: patriarchal social relations permit the phallicisation of the penis so that Belfagor, much like Marinetti's Mafarka, can territorialise the dark continent of women.¹¹¹ Whilst the demon can euphemistically "possess" even the daughters of Kings, he fails to subdue Amerigo Donati's daughter in the shape of a wife.

This *novella* is symptomatic of Machiavelli's two chief preoccupations - women and politics - and it is consistent with his view, expressed in *Il principe*, that fortune, too, is a woman whose submission will almost certainly require beatings and coercion.¹¹² For Machiavelli, as it happens, wives are a scourge too terrible even for devils to bear. Elsewhere, in one of his *Canti carnascialeschi*, "Di amanti e donne disperati", Machiavelli saw infernal torment as a feature of the condition of lovers in general, not of spouses in particular: "perché da tante pene tormentati/ fummo in quel tempo, amando già costoro,/ ch'agli infernal ci diàn per fuggir loro."¹¹³ Likewise, in the novella, Belfagor's preference will be to abandon his guise as Roderigo, the husband, and to return to hell. This action is a reversal of Orpheus's visit to Euridice: without a backward glance, Belfagor "volse piú tosto tornarsene in inferno a rendere ragione della sua azioni [sic] che di nuovo con tanti fastidii, dispetti e pericoli sottoporsi al giogo matrimoniale. Et cosí Belfagor tornato in inferno fece fede de' mali che conduceva in una casa la moglie".¹¹⁴

In Pirandello's poem, *Belfagor*, it is clear from the start that this type of misogamy is not the central issue. Elsewhere, Pirandello has given us evidence of his anti-feminism (something rather different from sheer misogyny) in the essay, "Femminismo", written in 1909, where he suggests that social freedom masculinises women and subverts the attractions of marriage.¹¹⁵ Yet, as it has been pointed out, Pirandello's sense of marriage as being a trap might have led him initially to Machiavelli's critique of the institution.¹¹⁶ Pirandello's love of women is not in question, as is shown by an early fragment of the poem which was later included in *Mal giocondo*;¹¹⁷ here Pirandello presents us with a sensuous portrayal of the charms of Florentine women in particular, as they reveal themselves to

Roderigo. Roderigo, "dal desio d'amor portato", arrives in Italy, "poi che seppe ch'è il paese de l'amore" (SPSV, 465). He is seduced by the language, climate and fruitful soil, "ma il nero occhio pensieroso/ de le donne del paese,/ il crin d'oro pettinato/ e le labbra fine e accese/ di piú certo gli han garbato" (SPSV, 465). In "Allegre", VIII, Pirandello adopts what will become a characteristic stance in praise of adultery: whilst the sketch of Florentine life avoids any description of Roderigo's termagant wife, Pirandello will exclaim: "Viva l'amor furtivo!" (SPSV, 466).

Nevertheless, as all versions of the poem, *Belfagor*, reveal, Pirandello's concerns in appropriating Machiavelli's *novella*, go far beyond the questions of women and marriage. Capuana was one of the first critics to comment on the range of this poem. He wrote in 1896: "Questa volta il buon arcidiavolo non viene quassù dall'Inferno, per fare una nuova inchiesta intorno ai mariti e alle mogli, probabilmente perché i mariti hanno ora ben altre ragioni di dannarsi, che non le cattiverie delle mogli. Lo scopo e le peripezie del viaggio i lettori li sentiranno narrare con bonaria e fine ironia dal poeta."¹¹⁸ It was Capuana who was to encourage Pirandello's narrative potential, as Pirandello himself stated in his "Lettera autobiografica" of 1924, where he claims to have destroyed the manuscript of his poem, *Belfagor*:

Fino a tutto il 1892 non mi pareva possibile che io potessi scrivere altrimenti, che in versi. Devo a Luigi Capuana la spinta a provarmi nell'arte narrativa in prosa (e dico arte narrativa in prosa, perché fino a poco tempo fa avevo nel cassetto il manoscritto di una lunga narrazione in versi, un poema su l'arcidiavolo *Belfagor*, composto anch'esso prima che partissi per la Germania, e anch'esso umoristico) (SPSV, 1286-87).

Before pursuing the problem of Pirandello's narrative development, I would like briefly to mention the difficulties attached to establishing a coherent or "final" version of the poem, *Belfagor*,

which exists in various fragments and revised versions. I refer the reader to Providenti's article which clearly documents these different versions.¹¹⁹ My own analysis will focus primarily on the first canto, subtitled, "La visita", which appeared in *Tavola rotonda*, 10th July, 1892, and which is the only version to appear in the standard edition of Pirandello's work.¹²⁰

The period of composition is important, since later versions indicate that Pirandello composed the poem in Germany, and that the narration about Belfagor is substituted by a nostalgia for his native land, Sicily. Capuana wrote: "Altri sogni avevano attratto il poeta nella sua nativa terra siciliana. Il poeta li ricorda con rimpianto."¹²¹ In addition, Providenti is able to substantiate Pirandello's claim above that the elements of "umorismo" are present in his work prior to any contact with German culture: for Providenti, Pirandello's chief innovation is his presentation of the scepticism produced by the modern crisis of faith.¹²² In this respect, it may be seen that Pirandello's poem is retrospective only in the sense of a longing for past certainties. At the end of the first canto, Belfagor will confirm the bitter-sweet pleasures of life on earth which, unlike Machiavelli's figure, he wishes (paronomastically) to prolong: "... di vivere/ amo, e assai la vita amare/ è il mio solo desiderio./ Può far lei, che per la pace/ dei suoi morti, in odio or mutisi/ quest'amor, ch'è la mia face?" (SPSV, 701).

In this section, I intend to explore further how the supplementary "philosophical" concerns and nascent "umorismo" of Pirandello's poem serve to transform Machiavelli's tale and to undercut its phallogocentrism. I shall attempt to explain how the "poetic" meanings reside in the paradoxical language of "umorismo" where domestic strife is a metaphor for human existence. Contrary to the views of the critics mentioned above, I shall be arguing that

Pirandello is not advancing towards narrative in *Belfagor*, but that the technique of this poem undermines linear narrative procedures and establishes Pirandello on an inevitable route towards the dramatic genre. It is important to cite here the crucial evidence which appears in Pirandello's letter of 9th February, 1887, where he actually presents a draft section of *Belfagor*, the "Prologo nell'Inferno" in the form of a *dramatic dialogue*.¹²³ [This playlet does not appear in the 1892 version of the standard edition.]

with / Pirandello's concern with the "recitation" of the performance text (the delivery event) emerges in the curious explanation he provides his family: "Vi mando due tratti del *Belfagor*, una parte del prologo nell'inferno e la prima ballata. È un lavoro bello e originale. Come facevo ragazzo, leggendo le mie sciocchezze alla mamma, amo ancora che il primo giudizio venga da voi.- Sentitene l'intreccio ispiratomi da una certa novella del Machiavelli: i dannati a l'inferno crescono a dismisura."¹²⁴ After summarising the plot, he adds: "Questo è il nodo secco, secco. Io l'ho abbellito a mio modo e gli ho dato un sentimento allegorico e filosofico tutto proprio."¹²⁵ This early example of his dramatic writing does not necessarily make him a dramatist: it simply provides some empirical data in support of my theoretical claim that Pirandello would inevitably exploit the dramatic genre as a result of his difficulties as a narrator. [In some sense, the theoretical hypothesis produces the facts.]

Not only does the poem, *Belfagor*, subvert the monarchy of Machiavelli's phallic signifier, but it produces a drama where Pirandello graphs the problems of textual presences and absences through a discussion of writing itself. In rewriting Machiavelli's tale, Pirandello encounters a crisis of fabulation. Whereas Machiavelli's tale is a representative fiction, Pirandello's

secondary revision is remote from the "original" events, and it reveals the impossibilities of mimesis. There is an anticipation of many of his later theoretical and artistic preoccupations. I shall also show how this exercise in translating Machiavelli's text serves as a forerunner to Pirandello's later dramatisations of his own *novelle*: this poem displays the visual dimensions of his imagination, as well as the modern crisis of mimetic signification, which propel Pirandello into drama. It is in the procedures of drama which allow for simultaneity or co-existence of overlapping scenes, that Pirandello resolves the crisis in linear narration. I submit that this crisis of fabulation occurs in the poem, *Belfagor*.

II.3.b.i. Poetry: The Language of "Umorismo"

In an almost uncanny way, this poem, based on marital strife, prefigures Pirandello's domestic tragedy (which, in turn, itself might have been overdetermined by Pirandello's pessimistic view on marriage already evident here). The narrator makes an immediate attempt to demarcate the domains of madness and sanity: " - Signor mio, se un manicomio/ ella cerca, non è mica/ qui. Qui è casa mia. Vuol prendersi/ di me gioco? ..." (*SPSV*, 692). Whereas in Machiavelli's tale the household situation is relatively circumscribed, serving merely as a pretext for the events of the plot, in Pirandello's poem, it acts as a metaphor for human existence: "mésalliance" is indicative of the intolerable impasse of modern consciousness. The discourse on madness provokes the confusion of formerly separate sites of meaning, and leads to a pandemonium of ambiguity: earth and hell, the home and the asylum, become inextricable. Pluto, for instance, is offered a throne on earth, "... perché, dicono,/"

che la terra è un vero inferno" (SPSV, 698).

Machiavelli simply exchanged the features of hell for those of earth; but Pirandello will collapse all geographical boundaries through an assault on rationality - his unanchored modern perspective prevents him from sustaining the notion of transcendental devils exterior to language: "che già contro a tutti i diavoli/ la scienza nostra ha emesso,/ ella ignora? e vuol sul serio/ che la creda? proprio adesso? -" (SPSV, 692). Only when he temporarily suspends his disbelief, does he come to learn that "l'inferno è di delizie/ divenuto ora un paese" (SPSV, 693). Conventional expectations are defeated, and there arises a paradoxical affinity between seemingly opposite states of being - reality is certainly not what it seems.

The playful tale ¹²⁶ assumes a menacing dimension, according to Pirandello's later description of "questo libro, dove orribili/ ridon tutti i suoi dolori".¹²⁷ The narrator's first response had been to laugh at Belfagor's claim that he bore a letter from Machiavelli: "Nicolaus? Mi metto a ridere./ L'altro sta tra serio e mesto" (SPSV, 691). The ~~humoristic~~ nature of this encounter is evident from the admixture of laughter and seriousness. "Non è scherzo" (SPSV, 691) claims Belfagor, it is "una cosa seria". During the painfilled process of acquisition of human consciousness, Belfagor undergoes an epistemological breakdown when his fellow devils instruct him in the ways of men: "Né bastò! che poi mi vollero/ ragionar la lor follia./ Sapienza essi la chiamano,/ io direi ch'è malattia!" (SPSV, 700).

Belfagor's overriding desire is to unravel the complexities of human folly and he is loath to return to hell simply in order to confirm the thesis of the damned: "e altre ancora, altre scempiaggini, / ch'or mi giran per la mente! / Ah perdio! dite sul serio? / Questo è il senno che ha la gente?" (SPSV, 700). The narrator's earlier sceptical tone is replaced by an acknowledgement that there remains no solution

to the ineffable mystery of life which "dura tanto poco. Quasi / pare un sogno, è un sogno ..." (SPSV, 700). The logic of perception is annihilated and all processes of empirical verification are made redundant: "In area / perché mai dovete i nasi / tener sempre e gli occhi in estasi? / Ma imitate il savio armento, / per cui il vero è l'erba tenera, / che gli cresce sotto il mento!" (SPSV, 701).

Pirandello's theory of "umorismo" is implicit in this attack on system and on the separate realms of experience - contradictory concepts and emotions are shown to co-exist ("il sentimento del contrario").¹²⁸ Apparently unassociated ideas are made equivalent through linguistic substitution and antithetical lexical selection with a resultant building up of a sequence of poetic meaning (madness = sanity / hell = paradise / dream = reality); the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection is projected into the axis of combination or of "poetic" contiguity.¹²⁹ The poetic function of the language of "umorismo" emerges when similarity is superimposed on contiguity.¹³⁰ The antithetical equivalences are constitutive of the poetic sequence. Irony, antitheses and oxymorons are used to build a contiguous sequence of overwhelming irrationality and "poetic" despair. We witness the mischievous "umorista": "pur dannate, discendeano / ne l'inferno col sorriso / su le labbra: quasi andassero / tutte quante in paradiso!" (SPSV, 693). The rhetorical figures reach a climax in Belfagor's wish to convert love into hate: "in odio or mutisi quest'amor ..." (SPSV, 701). The poetic language of "umorismo" reveals how the signifiers (e.g. "madness", "hell", "love") take their meanings from the cluster of verbal interrelationships and have no essential or inherent sense of their own.¹³¹ These terms encompass a range of ironic or paradoxical meanings, i.e. they are polysemous in a way which brings to mind Freud's description of the antithetical sense of primal words.¹³² For Freud, the dream, significantly, is a compromise formation of coexisting contradictory aspects, similar to the compound words of archaic languages where contrary meanings are united in

a single term. In *Belfagor*, earth simultaneously signifies hell, and madness is interchangeable with sanity.

In the classical topography of Hell, the River Styx, "la morta¹³³ gora", provides a definite frontier. The loci of earth and hell are inverted by Machiavelli, but completely eclipsed by Pirandello. An equivalent design of the mind is to be found in Freud's model of the id/ego/superego - a "buried architectural metaphor" for the bourgeois house with its cellarage/living quarters/attic.¹³⁴ While Machiavelli performs an inversion of the traditional topos, making the dark (id) forces of the harridan wife supplant the rational male ego in social primacy, Pirandello razes the double-storey and supplies an unlayered and continuous textual surface of antithetical contradictions.

This stylised concentration of poetic meanings is given relief by the harsh expression, redolent of Dante's attempted "anti-rhetorical" use of language, "rime aspre e chiocce", in *Inferno* (xxxii, 1) in order to evoke a diabolical atmosphere so that "dal fatto il dir non sia diverso" (xxxii, 12). One could say that Pirandello, similarly, might have expressed the wish: "Così nel mio¹³⁵ parlar voglio esser aspro." It is interesting to note that in the essay on "Femminismo", Pirandello endows the masculinised Pietra Post with "una voce gutturale, maschile" (SPSV, 1069). In *Belfagor*, Pirandello writes: "(e qui in turbine d'orribili/ urli, gemiti, grugniti)" (SPSV, 694). The air is thick with tangible sounds, "una zuffa di clamori" (SPSV, 694). The chorus of the damned repeats the¹³⁶ litany, "Pluto re mite e benevolo", a phrase which has a similar contrastive effect to Dante's smooth "lingua che chiami mamma o babbo" (xxxii, 9). There is a further example of explosive and consonant-bound language in the description of the cacophony which climaxes the narrative (but which Pirandello effectively elides):

"Io scappo tra un pazzo strepito/ di trombette e tamburelli .../
ma narrato ha questa istoria/ degnamente il Machiavelli" (SPSV, 696).
In the section in *Mal giocondo*, Pirandello refers again to the
historical narrative in popular memory and he draws attention to the
sound, as well as to the "campanilista" sense of his lines:

Ogni onesto fiorentino
sa da un pezzo quest'istoria,
e l'onesto cervellino
con onesta e grave boria
la rivolge, accarezzando
l'amor proprio cittadino
(ogni e dura aspirando
da sputato fiorentino):
(SPSV, 465).

II.3.b.ii. Metalanguage: The Crisis of Fabulation

These overt references to Machiavelli's tale, together
with Pirandello's ellipsis of the events in the plot, lead to the
consideration that the poem is a metadiscourse, a narration about a
narration. The poetic use of language involved placing together in
sequence items which were semantically, conceptually or rhetorically
(rather than grammatically or phonologically) related. This chain
of poetic signification in the poem is counterbalanced by an analysis
of writing: a diametrical opposition occurs when the sequence is used
to build an equation.¹³⁷ Pirandello makes sequential use of equivalent
units in Machiavelli's tale in order to suggest synonymity or
similarity, $Belfagor_2 = Belfagor_1$. Yet the intertextual appropri-
ations will transform the tale by means of antonymity and
dissimilarity to the extent that $Belfagor_2 \neq Belfagor_1$. This pseudo-
imitation occurs not only as a result of the addition of Pirandello's
broader philosophical interests, but also because of the way in
which he revises or shifts the scaffolding of Machiavelli's tale
itself, and reworks the epic model.

Both Machiavelli and Pirandello challenge the classical epic paradigm where the odyssey is a metaphorical search for truth. Machiavelli overturned the traditional model of descent to the underworld in his allegory of hell as an external representation of the self. His reversal of values provides the discursive space for Pirandello to overcome this internal/external dichotomy and so reveal the truth of the inescapably isochronic and isotopic existential maxim, "L'enfer c'est les autres".¹³⁸ Both texts utilise the pattern of a quest, and are bound up with the desire to detect the truth: while Machiavelli can verify his presuppositions and return Belfagor to hell, Pirandello cannot effect any resolution where the interior and exterior aspects of the self are no longer so sharply differentiated.

Just as Pirandello's play, *Liola* is Machiavelli's *La mandragola* rewritten in a Sicilian context, so this poem undoes Machiavelli's teleological structure and motivated plotline: the modernist Pirandello, typically, scrambles the code and gives us a puzzle which defies the coherencies of the precursor's narrative procedure.¹³⁹ The ironic device of "umorismo" deconstructs ("scompone") the sequence of events in order to produce a new and different set of narrative contiguities. Whereas poetic language, according to Jakobson's definition, uses metaphorical equivalencies in order to produce a sequence, Pirandello here operates these laws in reverse so that a metadiscourse on the problems of narration results.¹⁴⁰ Through narrative breakdown, he emphasises the practice of writing, rather than the product, or tale, itself. The discussion of writing illustrates the textual nature of language and the intertextual position of the poem. His fragmented repetition of the "original" events offers the opportunity for relatively free association - for narrative improvisation. Here follows a breakdown of Machiavelli's narrative

moments as compared with Pirandello's disordering of the plot line. The alterations imply additions on Pirandello's part, indicated by the letters x, y and z.

Machiavelli's *Novella*:

- A What is written in the old chronicles of Florentine history and the narration of the holy man.
- B The complaint that wives produce misery. Disbelief.
- C Minos and Radamanto give judgement.
- D Pluto's reaction.
- E Pluto requests advice on strengthening his rule.
- F Various suggested lines of action.
- G Belfagor appointed emissary to earth.
- H Roderigo's lavish life.
- I Roderigo's flight from his debtors and the bargain with Gianmatteo.
- J The musical instruments and the ensuing clamour signalling his wife.
- K Roderigo is duped and he returns to hell.

Machiavelli: A B C D E F G H I J K

Pirandello: A K D C B F G H J_x E_y -z

It can be seen that Pirandello anticipates the conclusion early on (K). Pluto reacts (D) before asking assistance from Minos and Radamanto (C). The sequence F, G, H remains the same but is drastically reduced to a sparse 5 quatrains in Pirandello's text. The Gianmatteo incident is omitted completely, and in the middle of the percussion (J), the tale is foreclosed (as shown above). At this point Pirandello inserts his new material which alternates with the original.

- x The continuing chaos in hell after Belfagor's return.
- y Belfagor's doctorate and second mission to earth.
- z The existential dream.

Pirandello thus presents us with a second visit by Belfagor who instructs the reader in the "original" fable: the text produces a literary analepsis by reflecting on itself. There is an action re-play, a difference in repetition. The subtitle of the poem is "La visita", which prefigures Pirandello's surrealist *novella* featuring the mysterious presence of Anna Wheil. The rocking

rhythm of the verse/chair induces a form of reverie which immediately breaks down the divisions between truth and fiction, reality and illusion: "Su la vecchia sedia a dondolo/ mi spingeva innanzi e indietro,/ quando udii con molta grazia/ dar tre colpi a l'uscio a vetro" (SPSV, 691). In contrast with the confident opening of Machiavelli's tale where the old chronicles and holy man give authority to the narrative, Belfagor is a shadowy, anonymous figure "un signore sconosciuto" (SPSV, 691) until he acquires a presence through the legitimacy of dead script. This being enters but has yet to assume a form of selfhood; Machiavelli's tale is unproblematic and representative in the sense that Belfagor simply "doveva venire nel mondo, e sotto forma di uomo prendere moglie e con quella vivere X anni e di poi fingendo di morire tornarsene e per esperienza fare fede"¹⁴¹. In Pirandello's poem, the shadowy figure refuses to be seated until the narrator has actually read the letter of introduction which is constitutive of Belfagor's identity. He re-emerges from the netherworld as a trace and his words are insufficient to ascribe him a credible textual presence. He urges the narrator: "Oh no, scusi! prima legga" (SPSV, 691). Memory and the Latin letter with the inscription, "Nicolaus segretario fiorentino" (SPSV, 691) produce a chronological distancing. The seductive torn envelope is a connotative object, with Belfagor as a "facteur de la vérité",¹⁴² conveying the message. The pale blue envelope on the mahogany table in Madama Pace's salon will echo this mnemonic sign of an (unequal) exchange relation: "LA FIGLIASTRA: Il tavolino, il tavolino di mogano per la busta celestrina" (MN I, 78). Belfagor will attain a textual identity only through the scriptural legitimacy of Machiavelli's signature - the narrator does not get as far as even reading the letter of reference. The non-phonetic signs leap off

the page and establish the materiality of writing and the meta-textual nature of the poem: "Io mi metto dunque a legger;/ ma quei segni agili e snelli/ su la carta par che saltino .../ Chi mi scrive è il Machiavelli!" (SPSV, 691). The prominent signifiers are sustained by an exotic (foul) odour which emanates from the writing paper, to reinforce the primacy and intelligibility of the written word: "'Non è scherzo; legga, e subito/ capirà' dice il signore,/ sempre serio. Da la ruvida/ carta sal non so che odore" (SPSV, 691).

The mention of Pirandello's precursor, Machiavelli, announces this poem as a metacommentary on the novella. Our narrator effaces his revision by placing the narration of the "original" events in the mouth of Belfagor. The analeptic strategy allows Belfagor to repeat the tale and the author apparently to absent himself because of Machiavelli's authoritative version which vouchsafes the truth: "Credi a ciò che il grande storico/ fiorentin scrisse per te" (SPSV, 692). The reconstruction of the primary event takes place with Belfagor installing the referent retroactively - the myth of Belfagor, the primal scene, has no direct link with the writer's "reality". Pirandello's writing is intransitive and is not concerned with a representation of real, lived experience, but with the "activation" or "deferred revision" of an original scenario.¹⁴³ The distorting device of rememoration - rather than recollection per se - allows Belfagor, the narrator, to produce a fictive prehistory, "sogno o forse no". Like Freud's Wolf Man, the repetition of the tale produces the memory of an archetype. Belfagor's presence constructs mythical origins retroactively. The reverse chronology anticipates the distancing effects of Pirandello's "canocchiale rivoltato"¹⁴⁴ whereby one defends oneself against the painful present by consigning it to history. The mythical re-enactment of the primal scene rationalises the perceptions of the moment. The field

of memory traces thus constitutes not only the "character" Belfagor, but also the narrator, author and reader. A multiple authorship is testimony to the repetition of archetypal perceptions always already known to the decoding self.

The poem emerges as a rhetorical product, a text among texts. The archetype derives in part from the oriental collection, *Quaranta*¹⁴⁵ *Visiri*, where there is the tale of Ahmed, the poor butcher of Baghdad, his shrewish wife, the genie down the well and the daughters of Kings. Machiavelli substitutes a demon for the genie in his Christianised version. Whereas Pirandello's predecessors recount the tale naturalistically, Pirandello exposes the framing devices by discussing the tale intertextually: he presents the coded material as a tale within a tale. By superimposing his metanarrative, he offers an originary point which uncovers the frame of his own poem so that the object of the narration recedes in favour of the practice of narration.

The intrusion of linguistic instruments and the exposure of the frame is evident in the way in which the damned recuperate the devils back into writing (textuality) by refusing to accept their material concrete existence:

Ma se pur qualcuno accingesi
a trattar male un dannato,
questi trova un mezzo esplicito
per non esser molestato.

Lí, con quanti ha mai retorici
artifizii la parola,
gli dimostra che lui, diavolo,
non è altro che una fola;

che l'inferno, leova, gli angeli,
marionette de la fede,
sono anch'essi vuote favole,
cui nessuno ormai più crede
(SPSV, 697).

Pirandello's modern reading of Machiavelli's *Belfagor* is incredulous of the reality of devils: he provides an explanation of his

precursor's referential fallacies by defamiliarising their naturalist effects.¹⁴⁶ Devils are determinate objects produced in discourse without any use value; they are indicative of the melancholy of modernist self-consciousness and of the loss of social signification. The Edenic transparency between language and the object has ceased so that fiction and reality have become indistinguishable:

A siffatto raziocinio
dato l'í, tra naso e muso,
resta il diavol malinconico,
come un coso uscito d'uso.
Pajon tanti Amleti. Vansene
ruminando il gran mistero,
e han finito ormai col credersi
ombre e favole davvero
(SPSV, 697).

The poem figures the crisis of fabulation which paralyses action and produces a play of signification - language is not referential, lying is a condition of language and no longer can a signifier be fixed to a signified in a guarantee of authentic social identity. This poem charts the modernist crisis and it prefigures the stage metaphor in *Il fu Mattia Pascal*, where the marionettes reveal an open-ended subjectivity, the gap between "la maschera" and "il volto", between art and reality. Just as the "pipistrello" intervenes to expose the dramatic frame, so Oreste "rimarrebbe terribilmente sconcertato da quel buco nel cielo" (TR, 383). Belfagor, like Oreste, is textualised when the illusion of self-consistency is shattered: "Oreste, insomma, diventerebbe Amleto. Tutta la differenza, signor Meis, fra la tragedia antica e la moderna consiste in ciò, creda pure: in un buco nel cielo di carta" (TR, 384).

II.3.b.iii. Drama: A Play of Voices

The opening of Pirandello's poem is markedly dramatic - the author sets the scene with a single rocking chair, when the shadowy figure of Belfagor knocks on the glass pane. There is an obvious parallel between this scene and Pirandello's later "colloqui¹⁴⁷ coi personaggi". Capuana comments on the profound impression Machiavelli's figure made on Pirandello: "Da un pezzo quest' arcidiavolo gli frullava nella fantasia. Aveva anche cominciato a prender forma, poi rimase lì, posto da canto".¹⁴⁸ Pirandello¹⁴⁹ himself wrote, in an unpublished fragment of 1890:

Belfagor arcidiavolo
io dirò ... - dicevo allora,
e son corsi anni, e il diavolo,
paziente, aspetta ancora.
Oh begli anni andati! Oh nuvole
di quel fresco autunno, i dì
in cui questa allegra favola
prima in mente mi fiorì!

The obsessional nature of this encounter will be repeated in the meeting with the Six Characters and with Pirandello's refusal of their tale. In the poem, he lends a sympathetic ear to Belfagor's description of the primal scene which prefigures the Father's desire to unburden his repressed story. Belfagor's second visit performs differently the rehearsed gestures of the first. The anonymous figure of Belfagor, like the Six Characters, seeks realisation in the dramatic representation of his own fable.

The strength of the scenario portrayed by Pirandello's poem emerges in the scripting of the multiple voices: Pluto, Minos, Radamanto, the devils and the chorus of the damned all afford Belfagor's narrative a multidimensionality, and give it the immediacy of the living spoken word which distinguishes the dramatic event. Unlike the "Prologo nell'Inferno" in the letter of 1887, discussed

above, this dialogue appears phenomenally in poetic, not dramatic, form. Belfagor reproduces the voices of the damned: "'Pluto, re mite e benevolo,/ (e qui: bravo! ebbene! evviva!/? venga a noi la pece liquida,/ venga a noi la fiamma viva!'" (SPSV, 693). The poetic percussion supplies a non-verbal signifying system which creates the visual stage effects and the background acoustics of Hell.

History repeats itself in the contemporary chaos which persists in Hell even after Belfagor's first reconnoitre. Since the look of the damned no longer constitutes the devils as devils, they are forced to relinquish their traditional roles. This state of disarticulation conforms with Pirandello's radical critique of individuation and of social function: I am "come tu mi vuoi". The poem reveals how the "characters" are simply bearers of forgettable social roles.

There is the obviously theatrical metaphor of Belfagor adopting the guise of the husband, Roderigo and then abandoning it: this process is supplemented in the second visit when Pirandello, before allowing Belfagor to return to earth, makes him acquire a doctorate in the fundamental constituents of humanity, "coscienza ed intelletto" (SPSV, 700). Role-play is also apparent in the case of Pluto whose kingdom is under siege due to his diminishing powers of punishment. The epistemological underpinnings of his kingdom have been turned upside down by the paradoxical responses of the damned.¹⁵¹ In the first instance, he attempted to re-confirm his role as husband: "Restò il dio come una statua,/ restò lì muto, intontito .../ Forse mai, come in quell'attimo,/ si sentì tanto marito" (SPSV, 694). On the second occasion, he continues to be petrified by their revelations of the tyranny of wives' Medusa-like lust:

"Capirà che Pluto, il povero/ nostro re, di questo passo/ non può andar piú avanti. Attonito/ sta a guardar, par già di sasso" (SPSV, 698). As a consequence, he is about to be made bereft of his role as king: "Quei, s'imagini,/ gli hanno offerto un trono eterno/ su la terra;" (SPSV, 698).

Apart from being a critique of Umbertine Rome,¹⁵² this poem is also a satire of 19th century sociological analyses of progressive statehood. The diversions from Renaissance theocentricity, and the collective loss of transcendental certainties, have placed authority in question. The discourse on Plato's (Pluto's) republic echoes Machiavelli's idealist political longings. In an aside, there is a parody exposing the illusions implicit in scientific ideologies of the state:

Fonderà lo Stato-esempio,
specchio in tutto del progresso,
se però l'ajutan chimici
e ingegner', come han promesso.

Tutti i sogni inattuabili
che la mente d'ogni eletto
su la terra sconcertarono,
finalmente avranno effetto.

Molti stan per la repubblica
di Platone, chi sa poi
come andrà questa baldoria
a finir! Torniamo a noi
(SPSV, 698).

The suspension of the king's identity enforces a collapse of textual authority and promotes the arbitrary compulsions of chaotic signification. The loss of absolute identity that is incurred shows there to be no self beyond culture. As if existing in the flickering light of Anselmo Paleari's lantern, the figures of this poem are mere shadows, or traces of themselves.

The poem displays the means of production of myth, and spotlights the elements of writing effaced by the original narrative. Pirandello shuffles the syntagmatic series in a reproduction of

modernist calamity: the antique full presence of participant selves is supplanted by a modern absence of identity. Linear narration fails to comprehend the crisis in fabulation and is incapable of portraying conflicting realities simultaneously. The associative or metaphoric axes of poetry permit this type of paradigmatic and mnemonic totality. The modernist catastrophe of signification demolishes the security of the narrative sequence: this makes it impossible to resolve the plot, as Machiavelli does, through the devices of Belfagor's escape and his verification of empirical evidence. The meaning of the interpretative quest is eternally deferred: the text leaves unrequited the desire for delivery from a nightmare.¹⁵³ Pirandello can only offer an oscillation of opinions and a multiplicity of uncertain viewpoints:

Se Dio esiste o no, se l'anima
 è mortale od immortale,
 come spiegasi il fenomeno
 de le cose, ciò che è male,
 cio che è ben, qual sia la regola,
 qual de l'esser sia lo scopo,
 se ebbe il mondo o no un principio,
 se avrà un fin; che avverrà dopo ...
 (SPSV, 700).

This poem, as a putative dramatisation of Machiavelli's tale, will be followed by Pirandello's effective engagement in the genre: only in the theatrical medium will he be able to depict simultaneously the flux of contradictory viewpoints and to explore the slippages of identity, "così è (se vi pare)". The poem, *Belfagor*, maps the breakdown of absolutes; he will dramatise the relativity of knowledge, as summed up by Hamlet: "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so" (II, ii, 259). In the drama, Pirandello will develop what he has exercised here: the look and the voice are constitutive of social role, and the disguise conceals an empty space.

III. Playscripts: A Wilderness of Words

III.1. "L'azione parlata"

Wordiness predominates in Pirandello's plays. He will maintain that words are the equivalent of action. The dramatist's brief is to find "la parola che sia l'azione stessa parlata, la parola che muova, l'espressione immediata, connaturata con l'azione ... " (SPSV, 1015-16). Pirandello advances this anti-Aristotelian argument¹ in the essay, "L'azione parlata", written in 1899, a year after the publication of his first play, *L'epilogo*, later retitled *La morsa*.² In this essay, he confronts directly the dramatic tradition centred on the construction of "character". Not surprisingly, the humourist Pirandello reverses the classical priorities: "Non il dramma fa le persone; ma queste il dramma" (SPSV, 1016). He will then elaborate on the welding of character and spoken action which together constitute "subjectivity", and provide being with its coherent totality:

Ora, fondere la subbiettiva individualità d'un carattere con la specialità sua nel dramma, trovar la parola che, pur rispondendo a un atto immediato della situazione su la scena, esprima la totalità dell'essere della persona che la proferisce: ecco la somma difficoltà che l'artista deve superare (SPSV, 1018).

This essay has enormous theoretical implications for Pirandello's future dramatic writing; it also bears out my argument in II.3 above, concerning his self-negation as author. Here he drafts what the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and its later Preface complete: all his future "creatures" are embryonic in this argument which also repeats the naturalist stance. In an idiosyncratic definition of

dramatic style, Pirandello makes clear his developing but mistaken penchant for the "objectivity" of drama over and above the other genres. Only a belated naturalist (or an anxious modernist) could affirm so confidently that the language of the characters is distinct from the author's:

Quando noi diciamo *stile drammatico*, intendiamo comunemente uno stile rapido, vivace, incisivo, appassionato; ma, parlando in ispecie dell'arte del teatro, il senso di questa parola *stile* dovremmo estenderlo molto, anzi forse intendere altrimenti la parola. Giacché lo stile, l'intima personalità di uno scrittore drammatico non dovrebbe affatto apparire nel dialogo, nel linguaggio delle persone del dramma, bensì nello spirito della favola, nell'architettura di essa, nella condotta, nei mezzi di cui egli si sia valso per lo svolgimento. Che se egli ha creato veramente caratteri, se ha messo su la scena uomini e non manichini, ciascuno di essi avrà un particolar modo d'esprimersi, per cui, alla lettura, un lavoro drammatico dovrebbe risultare come scritto da tanti e non dal suo autore, come composto, per questa parte, dai singoli personaggi, nel fuoco dell'azione, e non dal suo autore (SPSV, 1016-17)

With his logocentric valorisation of speech over writing, Pirandello in a criticism of D'Annunzio, will protest against the textuality of character:³ "Quest'opera cioè appar fatta troppo dal suo autore e per nulla o ben poco *nata* dalle persone stesse del dramma: cosa *scritta* e non *viva*" (SPSV, 1017) [his italics]. He accuses D'Annunzio of not having renounced his own style and means of expression, and of not having given any of his personages "una propria individualità, indipendente dalla sua " (SPSV, 1017).

In keeping with a humanist aesthetic, Pirandello ascribes his own characters a "libera individualità umana" (SPSV, 1017), and he imagines they have an autonomous being beyond the intentions of the creator. Many years later, in his assessment of Goldoni, in the essay "Introduzione al teatro italiano", published in 1936, he will read his juvenile theory back into quite a different historical break, and thus pinpoint the origins of the modern theatre:⁴

A questo punto, dopo aver visto quanto sia falsa l'opinione che il Teatro italiano sia, prima del Goldoni, un deserto o un cimitero, e dopo l'accento, che meriterebbe un più lungo discorso, sulla reale grandezza del genio di lui, ben maggiore di quella che comunemente gli è accordata in patria, vorrei dirvi qual peccato commettiamo noi lasciando giacere inerte e dimenticata tanta ricchezza, che farebbe, ripresa con uno spirito rianimatore del tutto legittimo nel Teatro, la gloria e il decoro nostro in questo campo.⁵

In this section, I intend to further explore what lies behind Pirandello's tenacious support for the sovereignty of his characters. I shall argue that this compositional process not only results from his residual naturalism, but also from the conservative views he holds on language: his naïveté about the "objectivity" of linguistic imitation will lead to a theoretical complacency as regards the rendering of the individualist speech of his characters. In III.3, I intend to develop the way this position, in particular, disregards the problems of reproducing female speech when the author is unaware of his patriarchal filter.⁶ It is somewhat astonishing that Pirandello's canny intuitions about the relativist and subjectivist dimensions of judgement are not matched by his estimation of the possible mimicry of speech patterns. Within the body of his work, as I have shown above, there lies a contradiction between traditionalist, or residually naturalist views on the one hand concerning the absent author, and the modernist realisation of the crisis in the referent, and of the prison-house of subjective language on the other. In the case of character portrayal, his attitudes to their language lag behind his understanding of the radical consequences that the loss of objective truths has for the modern fragmenting self. In the essay, "L'azione parlata", there is no suspicion of the decomposition of "L'umorismo", but there is an overturning of the concept of plot when he makes language, instead of events, supreme. Typically, we find him speaking the Einsteinian disorientations traditionally due to the contradictions in his project of overcoming the

past.

Yet the careful attention Pirandello is paying to linguistic issues arises almost certainly from the nature of his training and of his academic thesis, *La parlata di Girgenti*.⁷ In his notebooks, he variously tried to define when and how language is acquired. His notions are idealist and display a rupture between the thought processes and language: "In ogni caso il pensiero precede il linguaggio; questi due termini non devono essere confusi, il linguaggio non è che uno strumento del pensiero" (SPSV, 1253). His interest in these matters is for the sake of his impersonal theory of creativity where the work of art appears to be self-generated. The Preface to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* will repeat the attitudes of "L'azione parlata" where Pirandello imagines himself able to make a character speak without any risk of authorial contamination: their independence is supposedly absolute, as is indicated by the Father who is the *porte-parole* of Pirandello's revised naturalist method. Pirandello sees the function of the author as a linguistic medium who gives expression to the autonomous and individualised thoughts of a separate self-sufficient character. He does not acknowledge the linguistic refraction or distortion imposed by his own voice, and nor is he aware of the fact that his characters are textually authorised. It is indeed an illusory freedom he has granted both himself and them.

The essay "L'azione parlata" thus illumines the unself-conscious way in which Pirandello conceives the verbal utterances of his characters. He presupposes linguistic objectivity where none can exist. His traditional theory of absolute linguistic detachment is at variance with the relativist insights of "L'umorismo". Pirandello, I submit, never completely overcomes, or even attempts to cancel these two contradictory stances. In chapter IV, I intend to explain how this

preservation of naturalist elements leads him to give a special status to the written "copione" which effectively prohibits the actors' freedom of expression. Ultimately his theatrical practice can be shown to be consistent with the old-fashioned views of "L'azione parlata". However, the dramatic immediacy of his texts emerges from the tension between his secure compositional control and his relativist thematic: inevitably, subjective meanings will be conferred on the objective stock of language. Although he will never renege on the autonomy he has granted fantasy, his texts will confront the difficulties of his creative doctrines.

In particular, the Stepdaughter confounds her creator's own premise: "Metta fuori la voce! Mi dica con voce nuova, come uno che venga da fuori: 'Buon giorno, signorina ...'". To this rendition of the Father's speech, the Producer objects: "Oh guarda! Ma insomma, dirige lei o dirigo io?" (MN I, 89). In fact, Pirandello makes the Producer carry out to the letter the ideas of "L'azione parlata". He argues for the necessary concatenation of the characters' speech with the actors' actions. Yet in upholding this tenet, he actually strengthens the argument against the objectivity of expression. He is made to look ridiculous before the Father's search for an authentic and recognisable voice. The Father's critique of the mimicry shows how subjective expression is, despite the expanded semiotic of "azione parlata". The failure of the actors to reproduce the authentic voice of the characters, in an objective way, says something about Pirandello's aspirations to do the same. In defending the Father's subjective individuality, Pirandello is subverting his own dicta: the idealism of "azione parlata" is shown to be inadequate to realise a "full" character, and the actor's feeble imitation points to the impossibility of duplicating another's speech. Pirandello's superiority as author, rather than actor, does not rescue him from

the paradox he unfolds in this play. The passage in question now follows:

LA FIGLIASTRA. Ma non dicevo per lei, creda! dicevo per me, che non mi vedo affatto in lei, ecco. Non so, non ... non m'assomiglia per nulla!

IL PADRE. Già, è questo; veda, signore! La nostra espressione -

IL CAPOCOMICO.. - ma che loro espressione! Credono d'averla in sé, loro, l'espressione? Nient'affatto!

IL PADRE. Come! Non abbiamo la nostra espressione?

IL CAPOCOMICO. Nient'affatto! La loro espressione diventa materia qua, a cui dan corpo e figura, voce e gesto gli attori, i quali - per sua norma - han saputo dare espressione a ben più alta materia: dove la loro è così piccola, che se si reggerà sulla scena, il merito, creda pure, sarà tutto dei miei attori.

IL PADRE. Non oso contraddirla, signore. Ma creda che è una sofferenza orribile per noi che siamo così come ci vede, con questo corpo, con questa figura -

IL CAPOCOMICO. (*troncando, spazientito*) - ma si rimedia col trucco, si rimedia col trucco, caro signore, per ciò che riguarda la figure!

IL PADRE. Già; ma la voce, il gesto -

IL CAPOCOMICO. - oh insomma! Qua lei, come lei, non può essere! Qua c'è l'attore che lo rappresenta; e basta!

(MN I, 82)

Pirandello thus seems to be disowning his theory of "azione parlata" by dramatising its inadequacies. The problem of authentic duplication, this time of actions rather than words, arises in *Vestire gli ignudi*. Here, Ludovico Nota is accused of mistranslation by Ersilia: "Mi pare un tradimento, scusa, che tu ci debba vedere un'altra." He laughs this off: "Oh, bella! Come un' appropriazione indebita, ti pare?" Ersilia confirms: "Ma sí, dei miei casi, della mia vita" (MN I, 858). When she expresses her identification with the novel *L'Esclusa*,⁸ Pirandello once again subjects us to his authorial presence by making Ludovico deny him as "scrittore, che io anzi particolarmente non posso soffrire" (MN I, 858). Nevertheless, in both these plays, we witness the fruitful aspects of the theory of "azione parlata" where the proairetic (or action) dynamic of the play consists of intersubjective discourse on the problems of authenticating "character" through language.

This linguistic self-consciousness will extend throughout the Trilogy where the dramatic text is equivalent to that which it speaks; it is mythomorphic since the plane of expression resembles the plane of content. These plays are metalinguistic since their semiotic's content plane is a semiotic itself.⁹ The signifiers of actor, character, producer etc. do not find a meaning in the part they play, or the character they adopt. Their signified is already a sign (Actor/character)- the sign of an actor whose signified is a character. It thus becomes impossible to read these plays literally, or denotatively, since the actors, as shown in the discussion above, cannot indicate a character through mimetic language. Both actors and characters ^{as in Barthes's scheme]} can only be read connotatively such that/their signified is about the actor in search of a signified.¹⁰ The mythic dimension of these plays can be found in the constellation of discourses about the impossibility of representation. If the texts were not concentrating on "azione parlata" but on action represented by reliable speech, they would not challenge traditional assumptions about character. It is because Pirandello forces the dialectic between speech and action that we are faced with a garrulous Moebius strip about the flight from representation. In his efforts to give characters a subjective plenitude through language, Pirandello has unwittingly revealed the self's grounding alienation in discourse. No one can ever see the characters for what they are, and even when they repeat themselves they cannot retrieve their lost meaning. "L'azione parlata" becomes "l'azione mancata". The function of both character and actor is faulty [cf. Fehlleistung],¹¹ which determines the misreadings and bungled actions of these meta-plays.

The theory leads to a nostalgia for cosmos and a search for authority. "L'azione parlata" undermines Pirandello's dramatic project so that he will write the Preface in order to rescue his

experiment from catastrophe. He declares the contradictions: "Tanto grande questa confusione, quanto perfetta l'intima legge d'ordine che, in tutto obbedita, fa classica e tipica la mia opera e vieta ogni parola alla sua catastrofe" (MN I, 46). The search for sublime order is an edenic desire to restore the transparency between signifier and signified and to reintegrate the polyhedral multifacetedness of being:

In ogni nostro atto è sempre tutto l'essere; quello che si manifesta è soltanto relazione a un altro atto immediato o che appare immediato; ma nello stesso tempo si riferisce alla totalità dell'essere; è insomma come la faccia d'un poliedro che combaci con la faccia rispettiva d'un altro, pur non escludendo le altre facce che guardano per ogni verso (SPSV, 1018).

His theory tries to situate every action within a chain of signification. He offers a system to ward off the chaos of unmotivated and inexplicable events. In a letter to his son Stefano, dated 23rd July, 1917, Pirandello informs him about the novel he is planning to write: "E una stranezza così triste, così triste: *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*: romanzo da fare." He then describes how the characters who are caught up in a "dramma terribile", have approached him "per esser composti in un romanzo". He reveals the impulse towards interpretation which will organise their incoherence, "- e così alla fine il romanzo da fare verrà fuori fatto" (SPSV, 1256). This letter underlines the way drama is less restrictive than narrative, and is useful for my earlier argument concerning the necessity of Pirandello's dramatic development. In defending himself against the polysemy of the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, the novelist Pirandello tries to argue its coherence in the Preface. Yet his apparent control of his enunciation is undercut by the enunciated which utters a precocious modernist lament for system.

Out of the wilderness of words, comes the rationale of the drama - the voice is substantive and not superimposed. If the unconscious is

structured as a language, then Pirandello's dramatic action is structured as a dialogue. The interpenetration of speech and action marks the radical contribution made by Pirandello concerning the role of language in drama. Whilst some forms of theatre semiotics shift attention from the words to the action, it becomes evident here how the words of Pirandello's figures (whether actors or characters), have far wider dramatic resonances than simply being excerpts from the written dramatic text: their connotative value, together with the paralinguistic features direct us to the performance text. It is only in performance that the functional dramatic value of Pirandello's theory can emerge. The dramatic dialogues take on a specially significant role in the performance text: there is far more at stake than simply reciting the words on the page and then illustrating them with stage props and actions. By insisting on the words as action, Pirandello displays dramatic speech as signifiers which are an index to the sign "Actor/character". You are what you speak. Thus, despite its conventional goals, the essay "L'azione parlata" contributes to a semiotics of dramatic dialogue: no longer an element among elements, discourse becomes the overriding determinant of meaning in the play. Pirandello's essay breaks with the norm which views dialogue as separate from action, and as commentary which follows or anticipates the action of the plot. For Pirandello, it is the logorrhea which counts - the rest is incidental to the privileged gossip of his plays. Eric Bentley has provided the following insight into the play *Così è (se vi pare)*:

"What do the actors do on stage?" I was asked by a famous actor who was worried at the absence in the script of all allusions to eating, drinking, and smoking, and the various activities which his naturalistic technique would be helpless without. I do not believe the answer is to insert them; they contribute nothing. "Necessary" means "necessary to the play as Pirandello conceived it", a classic comedy, an elemental tragedy, a slender thriller - anything but a

piece of genre painting. What do these people do? They gossip. The furniture of gossip is - the chair. It therefore seemed to me in keeping with Pirandello's fanatic lean-mindedness to provide the actors with nothing but chairs.¹³

This chat-show phenomenon reduces the stage paraphernalia. Instead of the luggage of props, only speech is a necessary condition for action. Speech is also the guarantee of a character's presence as Pirandello's description of the Son reveals. Deprived of speech, he has no stage meaning and vice versa; Pirandello describes how the Producer is "volgarmente ansioso di conoscere come si svolse il fatto". He then adds:

16 *questo fatto è ricordato dal Figlio nella successione materiale dei suoi momenti, privo di qualunque senso e perciò senza neanche bisogno della voce umana, s'abbatte bruto, inutile, con la detonazione d'un'arma meccanica sulla scena, e infrange e disperde lo sterile tentativo dei personaggi e degli attori, apparentemente non assistito dal poeta. (MN I, 46).*

This passage on existential futility shows the *dramatis persona* under erasure if he is not endowed with voice. (Pirandello cannot resist the final naturalist turn of the screw which re-informs the reader of his authorial impersonality.)

The critical attitudes which convict Pirandello of verbosity and its concomitant cerebralism can now be shown to be completely off the mark. The modernist intervention consists in making the word action/the action word, without the creation of a referential world by a transcendent author. Despite Pirandello's ambiguities on the role of the author, he parades the gap between the signifier and the signified as inevitable: the metalanguage installs him as the initiator of a new discursive practice¹⁴ - dramatic modernism - and distinguishes him from his precursors. Dialogue is not a dramatic device, it is the temporary totality of the play.

The Saussurean metaphor of a piece of paper,¹⁵ as outlined in the Prologue, can further illuminate the irreducible, if arbitrary

synthesis of action and dialogue: each is a condition of the other's possibility. This interdependence makes dialogue interior to action instead of subordinate. For Pirandello, dramatic immediacy lies in the words and in their potential repetition. The repetition is distinguishable from the original delivery event¹⁶ which is always already a trace: thus every performance text exploits the *hic et nunc* of the present enunciation. He writes:

Così, sempre, ad apertura di libro, troveremo Francesca viva confessare a Dante il suo dolce peccato; e se centomila volte di seguito torneremo a rileggere quel passo, centomila volte di seguito Francesca ridirà le sue parole, non mai ripetendole meccanicamente, ma dicendole ogni volta per la prima volta con sì viva e improvvisa passione che Dante ogni volta ne tramortirà. Tutto ciò che vive, per il fatto che vive, ha forma, e per ciò stesso deve morire: tranne l'opera d'arte, che appunto vive sempre, in quanto è forma. (MN I, 43-44)

It is interesting to note how this narrative is praised for its dramatic qualities. One can also now view the traditional themes of "vita/forma" in a different light.

The essay "L'azione parlata" thus effects an important shift of focus in dramatic theory. It counters the tradition even though much of what Pirandello expresses is itself conservative (for instance, his impersonal theory of objective enunciation by an autonomous character). Yet it is by making the spoken word commensurate with action that Pirandello deconstructs traditional concepts of a character whose words refer to events and things. This aspect of his argument transforms his dramatic dialogue into a metalanguage where the connotative function of words referring to words becomes the action itself of the play. But Pirandello's modernist perception is undermined by his notion of the autonomous text being consumed in all its freshness by the virgin reader. His delight in the renewability of Dante omits acknowledgement of the constraints operating on the delivery event. He confuses repetition as renewal, with

repetition as difference. [This problem will be elaborated in chapter IV.]

The liberal ideology of freedom of speech permeates his theoretical text and causes him to overestimate the autonomy of his figures and readers. The significance of his essay is that it leaves us in no doubt about the evanescence of empirical facts. It shows how the self is a tissue of words. The essay also leads to a rejection of naturalist ways of reading which would isolate the melodramatic incidents of the plot. *Vestire gli ignudi*, for example, can also be read as a play concerning metanarrative: a writing about writing where the primal trauma is a pretext, and where the car accident simply echoes farcically the tragic loss of the referent for Ludovico who can only record Ersilia as a teller of lies:

Le bugie - già! - che si chiamano anche storie. Ma non ha mica nessuna colpa, sa? di non esser vera, questa storia. Importa assai che non sia vera; se poi è bella! Sarà riuscita male a lei, nel fatto; ma ciò non toglie che possa riuscire bene a me, scrivendola. (MN I, 907).

These metalinguistic, rather than the sentimental concerns of *Vestire gli ignudi* should be emphasised, since it was first performed in 1922, only a year after *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. Ersilia's search for a phatic discourse - the metaphor of "un abitino decente" (MN I, 914) to clothe her nakedness - is an echo of the Father's need for a non-referential vocabulary and syntax to still the pain: "Frase! Frasi! Come se non fosse il conforto di tutti, davanti a un fatto che non si spiega, davanti a un male che ci consuma, trovare una parola che non dice nulla, e in cui ci si acquieta!" (MN I, 64).

III.2. "Parola in libertà"

Another and far more concerted war was to be waged on language in the decades which follow the publication of Pirandello's "L'azione

parlata". The Futurists will consciously engage in the demolition of syntax: agrammaticality will be promoted as a requisite for their anarchist politics. Using the medium of the manifesto, their message is that language cannot be taken at its face value, and that expression is a site of struggle.¹⁷ Their programme for the resuscitation of social clichés through a futurist parlance goes beyond Pirandello's relatively timid musings - yet it is doubtful whether even with all the noise and thunder, the Futurists actually equal the substantial Pirandellian gains.

My purpose in sketching Marinetti's theory of language is not only to make it serve as a foil to Pirandello's more sober writings. The intertextual comparison can produce a better knowledge of the temper of speech in the period prior to Pirandello's "revolutionary" productions. In addition, Marinetti's distinctions concerning the gender values of language will be helpful in my account of the way Pirandello's female figures are made to talk. This section serves thus as a prelude to "Gender and Speech" which follows.

The attack Marinetti launches on language is similar to Pirandello's which liberated the semantics of words like "verità" and "sanità" from their familiar fixed meanings. Apart from his own bombast against the flowery over-ornamentation of D'Annunzio's *belles-lettres* style, Marinetti did seriously consider the problems of language in two noteworthy articles, "Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista" (1912),¹⁸ and "Distruzione della sintassi, Immaginazione senza fili, Parole in libertà" (1913).¹⁹ His declared purpose is to destroy the canals of syntax which he calls the "intermediary", and the driving motive is a "bisogno furioso di liberare le parole, traendole fuori del periodo latino!"²⁰ It is in these articles that one can find some quite modern intuitions of the way narrative and poetry work. There is also an understanding of how different grammatical functions alter general meaning when used in

unexpected syntactical relationships. In order to free words from their syntactical chains and to produce a more poetic and multidimensional effect, Marinetti proposes to suppress all non-mathematical/musical conjunctions, non-infinitive verbs and non-semaphoric adjectives and adverbs. He then plans to write purely with substantives, in a mode reminiscent of surrealist free-association.

These "parole in libertà" have a paradoxically anarchic significance, and they mark the fracture from logical and ordered discourse. The way in which Marinetti suggests these associations operates through similarity and substitution, and his method is, in fact, nominalist, since it is essentially a way of naming things. His destruction of language advances through metaphor and thus is of a "poetic" order, quite different from normal means of grammatical narration and communication. Marinetti calls this process "analogical": it is basically a selective mechanism germane to poetic discourse. It is also a process of abstractions which is particular to a masculine self-perception in language. With the technocratic progress of the male flying-machine, the Futurists were able to rework the corny image of men being capable of poetic flight, while women remain earthbound. His argument soars as follows:

Voi avrete certamente assistito alla partenza di un Blériot, ansimante e ancora imbrigliato dai meccanici, fra i terribili schiaffi di vento che dà un'elica ai suoi primi giri.

Ebbene: vi confesso che noi forti futuristi, davanti a uno spettacolo tanto inebbriante ci siamo sentiti subitamente staccati dalla donna, divenuta a un tratto troppo terrestre, o, per dir meglio, divenuta il simbolo della terra che si deve abbandonare.²¹

The revolution in language will follow this same anti-feminist trajectory. Flight imagery signals male prowess and is at the root of all Marinetti's conceptions: "Liberazione delle parole ali spiegate dell'immaginazione, sintesi analogica della terra abbracciata da un solo sguardo e raccolta tutta intera in parole essenziali."²²

Other Futurists will go on to develop these all-embracing speech patterns which necessarily exclude the Earth-mother. A superb example of this new language is afforded by Ugo Tommei in his "Volata antifemminile" (1914)²³, where he writes:

Ma giù in sotterranee bettole fresche tra fumi inebrianti
inni canzoni danze impossibili - ma su in alberghi - città
metalliche e luminose - fra giardini di fiori di stufa - tra
primavere di ventilatori e termosifoni - tra soli elettrici
e muri in tinozza - una nuova bellezza si prepara non mai
esistita sognata desiderata presentita nelle lunghe bige
giornate tentacolari e tormentose alla luce opaca dei vostri
corpi flaccidi e lividi.²⁴

Icarus images dominate Futurist jargon and weight woman down - she is reduced to her so-called "natural" attributes. In a slightly less sexist article, "La morte della donna"²⁵ (1925) Fillia [Luigi Colombo], makes a utopian projection whereby the domestic construct, 'donna', will be supplanted by the Futurist term of sexual appreciation, "femmina". He states:

-è vero, ma come gran parte del pubblico, voi confondete il valore delle parole = io disprezzo la donna ma amo la femmina - il mio impulso maschio d'italiano a sete di piaceri fisici e di avventure -

-Quello che fu per noi ragione di spiritualità diventa superato: l'uomo in conseguenza non a sesso - la donna diventa una irrealtà artificiale, contro natura, creata quando mancava l'equilibrio sensibile, - esistono semplicemente il maschio e la femmina come necessita fisiologica²⁶

Even in this more progressive document women are associated with their natural biological function and seem destined to be evoked through partial features and adjuncts. This is a metonymic device which excludes women from intellectual or "poetic" activity. In I.1, I discussed the anti-feminist matrix of fascist discourse where women are limited to their reproductive role. The identity of elements in futurist and fascist discourse as regards the construction of the female figure is evident here.

The exclusion of women from hegemonic discourse is reflected in Marinetti's theory of language where metonymic procedures are

given a secondary status: he rejects this aspect of language which relies on sequential logic, and on contiguous or contextual meaning, in favour of analogy which, in his view, is a break from the prosaic and the mundane - a liberation from women. His next step will be to expell the signifiers of difference from his verbal domain. In psychoanalytic terms, the foreclosure or repudiation of difference provides the ideal conditions for hallucination (a "*perceptum sans object*"²⁷). Marinetti's utopian impulsé is to abolish the subject in language and to forbid the use of "io". In the realms of man-made language, this is a typical move which does not suppress female meanings, but which allows men to construct themselves as non-gendered while defining women according to their sexual status.²⁸ Marinetti exercises a discourse where sexual identity appears to be absent, since he has already taken care of the effects of this discourse on women by stating *a priori* that they are marginal. He first naturalises gender difference, and then overlooks it in the name of a universal human tongue. He spells out the reality of male hegemony by pronouncing the semiotic uniformity of Futurist language which celebrates impersonality. The symbolic abolition of difference occurs through his insistence on the virile materiality of language:

*"Distruggere nella letteratura l'io, cioè tutta la psicologia Sostituire la psicologia dell'uomo, ormai esaurita, con l'ossessione lirica della materia Il calore di un pezzo di ferro o di legno e ormai più appassionante per noi, del sorriso o delle lagrime di una donna."*²⁹ His "coup de parole" on the discursive formation - not quite so explicit in its masculinist bias - is to be effected through the means of the infinitive as the only permissible verbal form. In Italian, this usage implies the negative imperative mood which perhaps is a sign of the autocratic sentiments of this theory. Far from collectivising meaning through the suppression of shifters and verb

cases, his notions simply expose the phallocratic assumptions of ordinary language. His so-called universal language repudiates difference and thus sustains the male illusion of being a 'person' which then disallows him from recognising himself as a 'man'.³⁰ The inviolate rule of the fundamental phallic signifier is specially evident in Marinetti's onomatopoeia. Witness his "Risposte alle obiezioni",³¹ where parading the youthful enthusiasm of an "Ardito", he energetically defends, with the example of a cannon, the technocracy inscribed in his "Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista".³² He intones:

Cannone ... corazzate - acciaio - concisione - ordine
 Bandiera-di-combattimento (prati cielo-bianco-di-caldo
 sangue) = Italia forza orgoglio-italiano fratelli mogli
 madre insonnia gridio-di-strilloni gloria dominazione
 caffè racconti di guerra Torri cannoni-virilità-
 volate erezione telemetro estasi tumb tumb ...³³

In his demolition of traditional syntax, Marinetti has emphasised its phallocratic underpinnings. His colonising language refuses the differential subject with the result that his "language" becomes, by definition, the non-language of psychosis. Marinetti's defence consists of a withdrawal of traditional significances, whereby he refuses to valorise the perception of gendered reality: the minimal terms "mogli" and "madre" are assimilated to a male lexis which defines women in terms of their relation to men. Marinetti's fetishisation of language (that disastrous stabilising of the delusional metaphor) perpetuates two incompatible positions simultaneously - he first acknowledges and then disavows difference. His derepressed discourse necessitates the breakdown, or splitting, of the "io" which is left in suspense. His theory reveals the failure of the paternal metaphor since the subject's identity is grounded on the acceptance of difference, that is, of the signification of the phallus which this metaphor evokes in the subject's imaginary. The

Name-of-the-Father appears not to have attained the place of the Other. This structural regression means the rejection of the idea of difference "as if the idea had never occurred to the ego at all".³⁴ Yet what emerges as the bizarre syntax of the unconscious makes evident that this unconscious itself is an effect of masculine discourse. [This is similar to the problem of the history of the subject in the question: how can we speak of a 'perception' being disavowed when an *absence* is only a fact of perception in so far it is related to a possible *presence*?]³⁵ Historical or generic regression to an undifferentiated semantic plenitude is shown to be impossible by the ascendancy of male meanings in Marinetti's poetry.

In this discussion of Marinetti's "parole in libertà", I have employed recent psychoanalytic and feminist theories. I intend to refer back to this politics of language when I undertake the analysis of female speech in Pirandello's plays. Marinetti's linguistic militancy makes him a relatively easy butt for gender criticism. It is hoped that an understanding of the ideological determinants of his vulgar masculinist utterances will provide tools for detecting Pirandello's veiled ones.

After this concentration on the verb, it is likely that Pirandello's titles to his plays will appear less innocent: it cannot simply be chance that in all his plays which express the dilemma of female figures in search of their self that verbal forms prevail. Innovative in their time, titles such as *Come tu mi vuoi*, *Così è* (*se vi pare*), *Vestire gli ignudi* and *Trovarsi* all speak the absence of certainty in their protagonists: the verbal conjugations and de-personalised infinitives seem to be linked to their amorphic beings. The fluidity of these names contrasts with the substantive rigidity - evidently thematic - in the titles *Enrico IV*; *L'uomo, la bestia e la virtù*; *L'uomo dal fiore in bocca*; *Liola* and *Il giuoco delle parti*:

all these plays have strong male protagonists in contrast to Bruno, Signor Ponza, Ludovico Nota and Elj who are less distinctly dominant and who often assume "female" postures related to impotence and sensitivity. [In the Appendix, there is an outline of this area of ambiguity in Pirandello's secondary characters.] Female loss of being and self-doubt is also expressed in the negativity of *Non è una cosa seria*; *Non si sa come* and *Sogno (o forse no)*. The imperative and verbal nouns are used to declare the patriarchal compulsions of the Law in *Pensaci, Giacomino*; *Il dovere del medico* and *Il piacere dell'onestà*. The passage from the real to the imaginary in myth is accomplished by abstract substantives and metaphor in *All'uscita*; *Sagra del Signore della Nave*; *Lazzaro*; *La nuova colonia*; *La favola del figlio cambiato* and *I giganti della montagna*.

The initial implication of this list is that Pirandello seems to be associating personalised verbal forms with women, and nominalist abstractions with men. These titles form an edge, an embankment or stop limiting the text's flow: it is here that his attitudes to the female figures and the measured individuality he plans for them become evident. *Diana e la Tuda* and *L'amica delle mogli* indicate the controlled perspective in which La Tuda and Marta will be held, a status very different from Cia/L'Ignota. There are others that similarly give the impression of an irreversible and unchallengeable trap: *La morsa*; *L'innesto*; *Lumie di Sicilia* and *Il berretto a sonagli* where prejudice is inscribed; the titles advertise Pirandello's foregone conclusions about the offending women, something which the potential of *Come tu mi vuoi* prevents. Sometimes a second dimension is added, and this points to fixed societal attitudes that are intolerant of ambiguity, as in *La ragione degli altri* and *O di uno, o di nessuno*. Adverbial forms, such as *Tutto per bene*; *Ciascuno a suo modo* and *Come prima, meglio di prima* are comparatively indulgent of

the female peccadilloes thus qualified. The dialogic stance of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, which is in itself an essay on desire and loss, remains unparalleled in Pirandello's canon of titles.

These titles all, in their way, hint at what will follow. Their curious preoccupation with articulated verbal language serves to set temporary boundaries on the texts they mark. They are borders which assist an approach to the play, but they are not denotative in that they already require to be *read* since they are signs of mobility and multilayeredness. ["Deconstruction ³⁷ *is* reading."] In this fore-play, Pirandello has begun to tease the reader who is displaced from meaning to meaning. The unfixed signified, and the insistence on the subjective aspect of consumption, "come tu mi vuoi", unsettles the reader from the start. ³⁸ These "futurist" titles hint at the differential fabric of traces where the texts will endlessly refer to something that exceeds what he as author is providing. The titles are metaphoric in their encouragement to flights of fancy, and in their summons to force the edges to fold back into the text. ³⁹

In the following section, "Gender and Speech", I shall elaborate on the distinction between metaphor and metonymy that both Marinetti and Pirandello make. Marinetti's utopian theory of language speaks the prejudices of patriarchal discourse which privileges the paradigmatic axis as male, over the syntagmatic axis as female. ⁴⁰ The social prestige of "synthetic" or metaphorical thought has been shown in I.1, to be directly linked with fascist attitudes to women. Pirandello shares in, and contributes to this discursive formation: in this social network of gender differentiated speech, the phallic signifier is inevitably erected to the powerful position of fundamental (and hidden) sign. ⁴¹ Marinetti's manifestos attempt to supplement the hegemonic domain of male language. Yet, as I hope to have shown, the system of language is not quite so easily available

to appropriation by either gender. It resists the validation of new gender meanings, or its saturation with pre-existent ones. The material constraints of speech as system lead it to resist ideological take-over. Perhaps Marinetti did sense the impossibility of his venture to defeat difference in language. The problems of variability and replication have a bearing on any assessment of the aspirations of the *avant-garde*. It is doubtful how Marinetti could "esprimere parolibaramente" or how "revolution" can occur in language which is restrained by its own syntactical and grammatical rules. I quote Barthes again: "Mais la langue, comme performance de tout langage, n'est ni réactionnaire, ni progressiste; elle est tout simplement: fasciste; car le fascisme, ce n'est pas d'empêcher dire, c'est obliger à dire."⁴² Marinetti's "parolibberismo" is put into question by his own text where he concedes these "natural" boundaries to signification:

Quando parlo di distruggere i canali della sintassi, non sono né categorico, né sistematico. Nelle parole in libertà del mio lirismo scatenato si troveranno qua e là delle tracce di sintassi regolare ed anche dei veri periodi logici. Questa disuguaglianza nella concisione e nella libertà è inevitabile e naturale.⁴³

Whilst disillusioned of his futurist language, Marinetti continues to naturalise and eternalise inequality. If the present political task is for both genders to confront maleness in discourse,⁴⁴ then Marinetti's "revolutionary" thesis can only be seen to repress the different (and unequal) accesses to the means of expression in a world where we are not all free men.

III.3. Gender and Speech

III.3.a. Feminist Foreplay

Every woman adores a Fascist
The boot in the face, the brute
Brute heart of a brute like you.

These quotable masculine lines are written by a woman who is conscious of the way her language is caught in the net of patriarchal signification.⁴⁶ Whether Pirandello's texts ever rival Plath's "Daddy" in its blunt sado-masochistic truth, is unlikely. The erotics of the paternal metaphor emerge more subtly - and so insidiously - in the way Pirandello's dramatic resolutions write female submission. The phallomorphic proportions are usually restored after an "anti-masque" of female ruptures (or msrule).⁴⁷

In this section, I shall outline the way the construction of sexual identity and the social positioning of women is effected through the discourse of the plays. The norms of gender relations are destabilised by the vigour of Pirandello's women's speech. In the figuration of their discourses, the authorial intention is not guaranteed predominance. Since no element of a speech chain is essentially gender-belonging, Pirandello's utterances on behalf of the female population cannot be said to be always necessarily masculinist. The contextual aspect as well as the mobility of the signifieds prevent him from inevitably recuperating a male meaning for his female speech. I intend to discuss how paralinguistic and non-verbal elements subvert hegemonic discourse. The insistence of an ungendered letter in the discursive machinery produces ambiguity in Pirandello's female signs.

In Pirandello's texts, the icon of the silent/ced Mother will signify fragmentation, if not negation, of being. By contrast, the noisy Stepdaughter, with her last maniacal burst of laughter, is a representative of Pirandello's female speech: this appears here as fractured, disparate and marginal to the phallic code organising and interpreting the text. In general, the women's discourse of madness becomes a prop for textual rationality, and is required to create the coherencies and the limits of the master text. The rational and irrational elements are thus inextricably linked: this dialectic serves to break through standard theatrical discourse, while at the same time being inserted in a line of continuity with this discourse. The discourses on aberrant sexuality which generate fables of origin, or which rupture the dominant codes will also be examined with special reference to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and *Enrico IV*.

Only a feminist politics of reading can pre-empt Pirandello's female signs from being reassimilated into a masculinist semantic of madonna/whore. The analysis I shall undertake derives its tools primarily from Kristeva's ideas concerning the way a discourse can contain its own subversion.⁴⁸ She idiosyncratically describes the elements that re-emerge to rupture the stability of a discourse as "semiotic", a pre-linguistic and unconscious material.⁴⁹ This return of the repressed other explodes into the fixity of symbolic discourse and dismantles the dominant phallic economy in favour of chaotic revolution in the word. The maternal body is then imprinted on language. Since Pirandello's female protagonists are all usually coupled with hysterical anti-discourse, this theory, together with some insights from Irigaray,⁵⁰ is suitable in the mad circumstances of their expression. However, some of the notions that both these theorists provide, need to be balanced by an alertness to their biologicistic celebration of the archaic female body which anticipates language, rather than being

constructed through it. It is preferable to theorise the way the female body is inscribed in language instead of excavating a pre-historic already constituted entity. Nevertheless, the ruptures of the "semiotic" which distort the stasis of phallic signification can be usefully applied by a gender criticism which combines both these writers' seminal intuitions with some critiques provided by Lacanian psychoanalysis and by discourse theory. Where Kristeva's value does lie, is in that she does not neglect the political consequences of a disruptive discourse (something which Lacanian theory often does). Hence her appropriateness for an analysis of female language within a fascist conjuncture. I intend to develop her ideas in this context.

Some psychoanalytic schools of critical theory attempt to explain the liberating dissonances which undermine textual unity and revolutionise meaning in terms of the return of the repressed.⁵¹ I shall draw on Foucault's historical work in order to modify this view. It is Kristeva, in particular, who in formulating a theory of the avant-garde, adopts the above explanation of the repression of the drives which erupt in non-verbal or code-breaking ways into a composed discourse. These so-called "pre-linguistic" elements are the rhythmic, gestural, scopic/visual elements in the avant-garde text. In an explicit linking of early fascism with the avant-garde, Kristeva describes the return of the repressed drives which upset the stability of the text and which break down what she calls the political and religious "monologisme". She writes: "Avant d'apparaître sous le nom de Hitler et dans les camps de concentration, le fascisme a pris l'air et a trouvé des complicités dans les réactions antimonologiques: les avant-gardes philosophiques et littéraires s'y sont mêlées (Heidegger, Pound). *Le fascisme est le retour du refoulé dans le monologisme religieux et politique.*"⁵² In her vain search for polymeanings, she gives special emphasis to the discursive complicity of early fascist and

avant-garde discourses. While this aspect of her theory is helpful in coming to terms with the so-called "progressive" sides of social fascism and modernism, her writing does tend to indulge in a romantic nostalgia for violent revolutionary rupture, rather than to concentrate on a programme for social transformations. As a result, in problematising the return of the repressed, she has given a dubious privilege to the heterogenous "semiotic" drives ("pulsions sémiotiques"), over the linguistic organisation of the text: this can lead her to valorise the unconscious and the irrational in a way that is akin to how fascism re-semanticises and utilises these vitalist elements, which, when obscured from direct political analysis, might lead to the concentration camps which Kristeva's theory could indeed be disguising for the sake of the so-called "revolutionary" *avant-garde*. Nevertheless, despite these drawbacks, the theory is worthy of serious consideration in any attempt to account for feminist revolution in the literary sphere, without confusing "advances" there with alterations in exploitative social relations.

In this section therefore, I shall compartmentalise my analysis into areas consistent with "semiotic rupture" which, in my view, is produced *after* the entry into the Symbolic by subjects who have been disarticulated from the orthodox way of speaking themselves. Their "recognition" or reconstitution in alternative discourses permits them to re-articulate their subjectivity in a new signifying chain. These new discourses inevitably bear in their elaboration traces of the former constitutive discourses: the non-gender-belonging elements take on a new meaning in a different context, and even oppressive signs such as "phallus" may be articulated to signify simply difference instead of inevitable subjection. I am by no means trying to conceive of Pirandello's female creatures as "liberated" or independent speaking subjects. I hope to demonstrate how he writes their

radical gender difference through reference to alternative signifying practices: these contradictory discourses are drawn from the network of the contemporary discursive formation, as I revealed in I.1 with the discussion of his article, "Feminismo". Thus, I shall argue that these ruptural elements are a result of lexical choices and discursive contradictions which Pirandello resorts to when he has to communicate all the menace of the New Woman through gender differences. In these passages, Pirandello is spoken as a woman in the process of becoming free. The "drama of revolt" (to plagiarise Brustein's phrase)⁵³ is then apparently recuperated in the textual resolutions where female speech is put in its phallic place. Yet like all festive drama, there is an aftertaste of blissful riot in spite of the re-ordering.⁵⁴ These are the deferred pleasures that can be grasped through a feminist reading of his texts. Fragmented theoretical ideas will be given more body if discussed under the following subheadings: metonymy and metaphor; female dissidence; verbal lunacy; repetition; sexual confessions; silence; laughter.

III.3.b. A Geography of Pleasure

III.3.b.i. metonymy and metaphor

When it comes to the figuration of women, Pirandello, like Marinetti, employs metonymic conceptions: they are partialised and their fragmented body is displayed in what they say. *L'Ignota* tries to trace herself in segmented speech:

L'IGNOTA (*quasi farneticando*). Tu - tutti - non ne posso più - questa è vita da pazzi - io n'ho fino alla gola - mi si rompe lo stomaco - vino, vino - pazzi che ridono - l'inferno scatenato - specchi bicchieri bottiglie - una ridda, la vertigine - chi strepita, chi balla - s'aggravigliano nudi - tutti i vizi impastati - non c'è più legge di natura - più nulla - solo l'oscenità arrabbiata di non potersi soddisfare -

acchiappando Boffi per un braccio e indicandogli Mop:

- guardi, guardi se quella è più una faccia umana! - e lui, là,

indica Salter:

- con quella faccia da morto, e tutti i vizi che gli vèrmicano negli occhi! - e io vestita così - e lei che vuol parere un diavolo - questa casa - ma qua, come dovunque - tutta la città - è la pazzia, la pazzia!

Di nuovo, indicando Mop:

- Arriva. - Io non ne so nulla. Di sera, ero al "Lari-Fari". Chi sa che scena col padre! Ha uno sgraffio qua, dalla fronte alla guancia -

Le acchiappa la faccia e la mostra a Boffi:

- guardi bene, ne porta ancora il segno!

SALTER. Ma non fui io!

MOP. Me lo feci da me - non ci vuol credere!

L'IGNOTA. Io non so nulla: non c'ero! - Torno qua, ubriaca: per forza! rovescio col piede le bottiglie e poi me le bevo - faccio "Spuma di Champagne".

monstrando l'abito:

- vede? - è la mia danza più famosa - per forza, dunque, ubriaca ogni sera! Non vedo neppure, quella sera, chi mi prende e mi porta a letto (MN I, 940-41).

Mop's bodily scar inscribes the phallic taboo. The flouting of the limit produces the law and Mop's cheek is a metonymic substitute for narcissistic plenitude produced only by a total image of the body. In *L'amica delli mogli*, social role restricts a fuller self: it is as mothers, lovers, wives and mistresses that Pirandello's women are disfigured. Through synecdoche (which is related to metonymy), the author succeeds in imparting the boundaries, rather than the potential of their lives. While Cotrone, in *I giganti della montagna* has access to a *vie sans bornes*, Ilse, as the *porte-parole* of her dead lover, is strictly defined and diverted into a secondary cultural activity of endless repetitions. Ludovico Nota by contrast, takes unlimited pleasure in his script, as is indicated by his allegorical

name, whilst Ersilia is tied to the unutterability and scandal of her lived reality. She speaks her lack through ellipsis and tries to make her presence felt through the reference to the materiality of trees and benches. He copies her down:

ERSILIA. (*assorta, tentennando lievemente il capo*). Servire ... obbedire ... non potere esser niente ... Un abito di servizio, sciupato, che ogni sera si appende al muro, a un chiodo. Dio, che cosa spaventosa, non sentirsi più pensata da nessuno! - Nella strada ... - Vidi la mia vita, non so, col senso che non esistesse più, come sognata ... con le cose che mi stavano attorno, le rare persone che passavano per quel giardino di mezzogiorno, gli alberi ... quei sedili ... - e non volli, non volli esser più niente ... (MN I, 854).

Whereas the gendered roles of the Mother and the Stepdaughter indicate their beginning and their end, the same is not true of the Father and the Son who infringe the proprieties of their symbolic functions: they become the incestuous father and the renegade son. While the non-father has flaunted social expectations, the Stepdaughter's outrage reconstitutes the taboos. The women in general are diminished by their unreasonableness in the face of the irreducible Leone Gala, Laudisi and Cotrone. The Father stresses how a man cannot be positioned in a single role - cannot be hanged for one slip alone. He argues in favour of the multiplicity of the self:

Ce n'accorgiamo bene, quando in qualcuno dei nostri atti, per un caso sciaguratissimo, restiamo all'improvviso come agganciati e sospesi: ci accorgiamo, voglio dire, di non esser tutti in quell'atto, e che dunque una atroce ingiustizia sarebbe giudicarci da quello solo, tenerci agganciati e sospesi, alla gogna, per una intera esistenza, come se questa fosse assommata tutta in quell'atto! (MN I, 72-3).

In this speech, the Father argues against "character" judgement which is a metonymic process that reduces the polymorphous self to a single determinant. The irony is that while this rule may hold for men, he does not allow the Mother any alternative but to be a martyr. His reductionism is marked: "Non è una donna è una madre!" (MN I, 62).

The polysemic Father evades Pirandello's view that a woman must fix her identity within social confines: "amante" or "madre" (MN II, 138).

The women are made to utter their secondary participation in this society: Pirandello has Ilse define herself as a sacrificial object mediating the words of the other. The female "characterisation" is linear and uni-dimensional, a succession of roles along a syntagmatic axis in this map of phallogocentrism. This undercutting of women's possibilities has theatrical implications which will be discussed in chapter IV.

Even Pirandellian criticism has been discriminatory in that no woman is ever afforded the dubious tag of being too "cerebral". The only figure who has any reasonable chance of graduation to this level is the Stepdaughter with her debate on the male's hypocritical "solida sanità morale" (MN I, 67). The critical bias echoes Pirandello's where the impression of masculine superiority is distilled in their intellectual language. In III.2, I discussed how the paradigmatic axis of metaphor prevails in male speech. Kristeva has used the same psychoanalytic model of foreclosure when she shows how the casting out of the fundamental signifier and the refusal to admit the real fetishises language in the symbolism of metaphor. However, in this case, she does not explore sufficiently the feminist possibilities of such an explanation.⁵⁵ The monopoly of metaphor in the phallic economy of signs can be detected in Enrico IV's speech about the well. This aquatic device reflects the fatal pond where the Stepdaughter speaks. The two passages are worth contrasting. The Stepdaughter's language is infantilised - a set of stereotypical, patient endearments women are commonly supposed to use in talking to children. The baby-talk is to be the vehicle of her existential dilemmas. The metonymic poverty of her speech will not be echoed in Enrico's abstract philosophising. Her babbling is in sharp difference from the terse and economical references Enrico IV uses. His language will be consistent with Marinetti's theory of analogy mentioned in III.2, a "sintesi analogica

della terra abbracciata da un solo sguardo e raccolta tutta intera
 56
 in parole essenziali". Enrico IV ponders:

Eh, cari miei! Bisognerebbe vedere poi che cosa invece par vero a questi centomila altri che non sono detti pazzi, e che spettacolo danno dei loro accordi, fiori di logica! Io so che a me, bambino, appariva vera la luna nel pozzo. E quante cose mi parevano vere! E credevo a tutte quelle che mi dicevano gli altri, ed ero beato! Perché guai, guai se non vi tenete più forte a ciò che vi par vero oggi, a ciò che vi parrà vero domani, anche se sia l'opposto di ciò vi pareva vero jeri! Guai se vi affondaste come me a considerare questa cosa orribile, che fa veramente impazzire: che se siete accanto a un altro, e gli guardate gli occhi - come io guardavo un giorno certi occhi - potete figurarvi come un mendico davanti a una porta in cui non potrà mai entrare: chi vi entra, non sarete mai voi, col vostro mondo dentro, come lo vedete e lo toccate; ma uno ignoto a voi, come quell'altro nel suo mondo impenetrabile vi vede e vi tocca ... (MN I, 352-53).

In this passage, the images are extended by similarity from the water of the well to the pools, or eyes, of the beloved. As the proverbial portals to the soul, these pupils capture their own dilation which makes them impenetrable to the look of the other. His world will be misread and his desire for the unattainable other is figured in the metaphor of the beggar at the door. Through selective substitution, Pirandello graphs the feelings of a drowning man in a de-centred world. Petrified, he watches it shift, "questa cosa orribile, che fa veramente impazzire". The language implies that the beloved woman is organic to this elusive and relative universe, but is excluded from the heights of the male spirit which contemplates its own desires. Through his metalinguistic argument, Enrico IV argues how truth escapes the transient "fiori di logica". Only through his imagination can he abstract himself from this confounding reality.

These flights of fancy deserve a comparison with the Stepdaughter's down-to-earth speech:

Povero amorino mio, tu guardi smarrita, con codesti occhioni belli: chi sa dove ti par d'essere! Siamo su un palcoscenico, cara! Che cos'è un palcoscenico? Ma, vedi? un luogo dove si giuoca a far sul serio. Ci si fa la commedia. E noi faremo ora la commedia. Sul serio, sai! Anche tu ...

L'abbraccerà, stringendosela sul seno e dondolandosi un po'.

Oh amorino mio, amorino mio, che brutta commedia farai tu! che cosa orribile è stata pensata per te! Il giardino, la vasca ... Eh, finta, si sa! Il guaio è questo, carina: che è tutto finto, qua! Ah, ma già forse a te, bambina, piace più una vasca finta che una vera; per poterci giocare, eh? Ma no, sarà per gli altri un gioco; non per te, purtroppo, che sei vera, amorino, e che giochi per davvero in una vasca vera, bella, grande, verde, con tanti bambù che vi fanno l'ombra, specchiandovisi, e tante tante anatre che vi nuotano sopra, rompendo quest'ombra. Tu la vuoi acchiappare, una di queste anatre ...

Con un urlo che riempie tutti di sgomento:

no, Rosetta mia, no! La mamma non bada a te, per quella canaglia, di figlio là! Io sono con tutti i miei diavoli in testa ... E quello lì ...

Lascerà la Bambina e si rivolgerà col solito piglio al Giovinetto:

Che stai a far qui, sempre con codest'aria di mendico? Sarà anche per causa tua, se quella piccina affoga: per codesto tuo star così, come se io facendovi entrare in casa non avessi pagato per tutti! (MN I, 111).

This passage is weighted by its literalness. The diminutives and suffixes ("amorino"; "carina"; "occhioni"), link it to the real. There is a gravity in the explicit phrases which contrast strongly with Enrico's IV's leaps of the imagination. The metonymic explanation of stage practice leads to the muddy "vasca" where literal games are acted out. Here, all the features are also metonymically evoked through careful contiguities: the garden; fiction and reality; green; bamboo; a mirror; ducks disturbing the surface. The drowning will not be simply a metaphor, but a textual event caused by a materialised "beggar". The procedures are clumsy, emotive and passive so that there is a sense of chaotic loss of control over reality: "Oh amorino mio, amorino mio, che brutta commedia farai tu! che cosa orribile è stata pensata per te! Il giardino, la vasca ... Eh, finta, si sa! Il guaio è questo, carina: che è tutto finto qua!" (MN I, 111). This groping explanation contrasts with Enrico IV's compressed and well-balanced reasoning: "Guai se vi affondaste come me a considerare questa cosa orribile, che fa

veramente impazzire" (MN I, 353). The way in which the Figliastra expresses her own madness is in the vivid representational terms of medieval diagnosis.⁵⁷ She utters her condition as an aside, in the language of the self not specifically addressed to the child: "Io sono con tutti i miei diavoli in testa" (MN I, 111). The devils inside her head are symptomatic of the extent to which women's speech patterns are occupied by the hegemonic discourses of the patriarchal Church and State. Irigaray has described how female language seems incoherent to those who read it according to already constituted male codes; these fail to decipher its capriciousness:

"Elle" est indéfiniment autre en elle-même. De là vient sans doute qu'on la dit fantasque, incompréhensible, agitée, capricieuse ... Sans aller jusqu'à évoquer son langage, ou "elle" part dans tous les sens sans qu' "il" y repère la cohérence d'aucun sens. Paroles contradictoires, un peu folles pour la logique de la raison, inaudibles pour qui les écoute⁵⁸ avec des grilles toutes faites, un code déjà tout préparé.

This discussion of metaphor and metonymy indicates the way in which Pirandello tends to distribute speech figures among his male and female voices. Gender divisions are articulated through a language which differentiates the access to metaphor. Male hegemony is implied through their use of a language seemingly divested of rhythmic or "literal" elements. Since metonymy tends to share more in these "semiotic" elements, the women are sited in nature where their speech apparently partakes of their material bodies. Pirandello is reproducing the standard dichotomy which relegates women to organic noises, while men transcend the flesh. There is thus nothing "revolutionary" in locating his women in the area of the "semiotic". Where the rupture does occur is when the mirror of male dominance is shattered through the semiotic terrorism of the Stepdaughter who appropriates metaphor. She invades this male discursive stronghold, but simultaneously retains her privileged purchase on the "semiotic". The results are

devastating since the combination of the strategies is what is fatal in this context. She draws on her physical nausea in order to decode the way her female body is objectified in the male scenography of mental torment. She takes herself as the object of her own discourse, according to their/metalinguistic style, only to reaffirm the primacy of her physical shudders.

masculine /
No signore! Della mia nausea, di tutte le ragioni, una più crudele e più vile dell'altra, per cui io sono "questa", "così", vorrebbe forse cavarne un pasticcetto romantico sentimentale, con lui che mi chiede le ragioni del lutto, e io che gli rispondo lacrimando che da due mesi m'è morto papà? No, no, caro signore! Bisogna che lui mi dica come m'ha detto: "Togliamo via subito, allora, codesto vestitino!" E io, con tutto il mio lutto nel cuore, di appena due mesi, me ne sono andata là, vede? là, dietro quel paravento, e con queste dita che mi ballano dall'onta dal ribrezzo, mi sono sganciato il busto, la veste ...

IL CAPOCOMICO (*ponendosi le mani tra i capelli*). Per carità! Che dice?

LA FIGLIASTRA (*gridando, frenetica*). La verità! La verità, signore!

IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma sì, non nego, sarà la verità ... e comprendo, comprendo tutto il suo orrore, signorina; ma comprenda anche lei che tutto questo sulla scena non è possibile!

LA FIGLIASTRA. Non è possibile? E allora, grazie tante, io non ci sto!

IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma no, veda ...

LA FIGLIASTRA. Non ci sto! non ci sto! Quello che è possibile sulla scena ve lo siete combinato insieme tutti e due, di là, grazie! Lo capisco bene! Egli vuol subito arrivare alla rappresentazione

caricando

dei suoi travagli spirituali; ma io voglio rappresentare il mio dramma! il mio! (MN I, 96-97).

The Producer is prompted to find a culinary metaphor to describe what he fears in the imminent ruptures: "Ah, comodo, se ogni personaggio potesse in un bel monologo, o ... senz'altro ... in una conferenza venire a scodellare davanti al pubblico tutto quel che gli bolle in pentola!" (MN I, 97).

It is the Stepdaughter's breach of the norm, which establishes the standard for Pirandello's other female figures. In general, the women tend towards metonymy and displace the object of their desire onto apparently insignificant details. The lacunae in their speech

which does not "synthesise" its goals, create an impression of incoherence. The scattered signs are supplemented by shouts, cries, gestures and laughter: there is the cooing maternal language of all of them when placed before children; the decisive "grido" of the Mother at Madama Pace's; song and dance for the cabaret scenes of Cia; Mommima's fantasy opera; veils for Cia, Signora Ponza, the Mother and Delia. Despite her relative articulateness, the Stepdaughter, in introducing her family, will rely on gestures, not words. The stage directions situate her parry of insults and endearments. The sound shape of her final utterance here is more important than its signified for the expression of disgust:

IL CAPOCOMICO (*irato*). Silenzio! Si credono forse in un caffèconcerto?

Tirandosi un po' in disparte il Padre, con una certa costernazione:

Ma dica un po', è pazza?

IL PADRE. No, che pazza! È peggio!

LA FIGLIASTRA (*subito accorrendo al Capocomico*). Peggio! Peggio! Eh altro, signore! Peggio! Senta, per favore: ce lo faccia rappresentar subito, questo dramma, perché vedrà che a un certo punto, io - quando quest'amorino qua

prenderà per mano la Bambina che se ne starà presso la Madre e la porterà davanti al Capocomico

- vede come è bellina?

la prenderà in braccio e la bacerà

cara! cara!

La rimetterà a terra e aggiungerà, quasi senza volere, commossa:

ebbene, quando quest'amorino qua, Dio la toglierà d'improvviso a quella povera madre: a quest'imbecillino qua

spingerà avanti il Giovinetto, afferrandolo per una manica sgarbatamente

farà la più grossa delle corbellerie, proprio da quello stupido che è

lo ricaccerà con una spinta verso la Madre

- allora vedrà che io prenderò il volo! Sissignore! prenderò il volo! il volo! E non mi par l'ora, creda, non mi par l'ora! Perché, dopo quello che è avvenuto di molto intimo tra me e lui

indicherà il Padre con un orribile ammiccamento

non posso piú vedermi in questa compagnia, ad assistere
allo strazio di quella madre per quel tomo là

indicherà il Figlio

- lo guardi! lo guardi! - indifferente, gelido lui,
perché è il figlio legittimo, lui! pieno di sprezzo
per me, per quello là,

indicherà il Giovinetto

per quella creaturina; ché siamo bastardi - ha capito?
bastardi.

Si avvicinerà alla Madre e l'abbraccerà.

E questa povera madre - lui - che è la madre comune di
noi tutti - non la vuol riconoscere per madre anche sua -
e la considera dall'alto in basso, lui, come madre
soltanto di noi tre bastardi - vile!

*Dirà tutto questo, rapidamente, con estreme eccitazione,
e arrivata al "vile" finale, dopo aver gonfiato la voce
sul "bastardi", lo pronunzierà piano, quasi sputandolo*

(MN I, 60-61).

These alternative signifying systems which extend beyond the spoken word will be further discussed in chapter IV. What is becoming apparent is that Pirandello's females will tend to be inscribed in these "semiotic" languages. The veil will be indicative of their indecipherability as signs. Their meanings will be displaced onto the prosody of non-sense. By contrast, the men will persist in symbolic condensation which reveals itself as symptom: their speech is not as impoverished and explicit as the women's. It is symptomatic in that it encourages a multiplicity of readings, since, as Freud explains, a symptom not only corresponds to several meanings at once, it also can express several meanings in succession through time.⁵⁹ This aspect then reinforces the "cerebral" qualities of the male speech which acquires a universal and ahistorical significance. In section III. 3.b.v below, I shall develop this argument with special reference to *Enrico IV*.

The divisions of metaphor and metonymy to distinguish male from female speech are thus helpful to begin an enquiry into Pirandello's

patterns. However, care must be taken not to oversimplify this dualism. The analysis of Marinetti's "parole in libertà" revealed how symbolic language implies political reaction and a phallogratic monopoly on metaphor. Yet the "conservative revolution" was waged through the introduction of the semiotic in symbolic speech in clusters which mobilised, like "eia eia alalà" and "tumb tumb". Kristeva's theory does not account sufficiently for the presence of the "semiotic" in patriarchal discourses. It could be argued that there is a hegemony of metaphor in dominant discourses which repressively tolerate the "semiotic". The phallic economy of this compromise formation is assaulted by the Stepdaughter's use of both poles of language. The play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* speaks the clash between the symbolic and the semiotic through the deployment of female discourse which speaks against the phallogratic grain. It is exceptional in that the women in the other plays tend to be more fixed in traditional signifying practices.

The traditional positioning of the women emerges in the way their ideas are detached of interest or emphasis: the author has them speak of insignificant details and has them give indifferent descriptions of the recent past. The prime examples are the gossiping scenes in *Così è (se vi pare)* and in *L'amica delle mogli*. Their discourse seems to be already decoded in its triviality. By contrast the text of male discourse requires interpretation - hence its cerebral qualities. The eccentricity of the whimsical women associates them with dream of phantasy, as seen in the veiled figures of the play *Sogno (o forse no)*. The women's metonymic speech draws the reader along associative pathways. By contrast, there is a loosening of association and loss of continuity in the metaphors of the males: this relates to the bizarre incoherence of a schizophrenic discourse where repression predominates and where there is a withdrawal of cathexis

from reality, i.e. disassociation. The "cerebrality" can then be read as the unanchored language of the symbolic without a dialectic - the discourse of the madman, Enrico IV. This tendency towards hyper-symbolisation which determines the "Myth" series will be further discussed in chapter IV. It can be argued that the synchronic, surrealist and spatial procedures of the male discourse in Pirandello is as static as Enrico IV's entombment in history. The pleasure of history is in the logic of condensed reasoning:

Mentre voi, invece, già nella storia! con me! Per quanto tristi i miei casi, e orrendi i fatti; aspre le lotte, dolorose le vicende: già storia, non cangiano più, non possono più cangiare, capite? Fissati per sempre: che vi ci potete adagiare, ammirando come ogni effetto segua obbediente alla sua causa, con perfetta logica, e ogni avvenimento si svolga preciso e coerente in ogni suo particolare. Il piacere, il piacere della storia, insomma, che è così grande! (MN I, 355).

By contrast, the unpredictability of the female future is expressed in a diachronic, cubist discourse. It is spoken metonymically and successively through a mobile temporal plane. L'Ignota's account of her past is not frozen in time. She realises how she is positioned in language by other's desires. Yet her hesitant speech confronts their directives - she refuses to "recognise" her symbolic family. The mark of the mole on her thigh is an intertextual signifier derived from Lucia's diary and does not essentialise her identity. She intends to move beyond the margins of the master text:

Capisce? e allora, insozzata da non potersi più ripulire, via, col più stupido di quegli ufficiali - (precisamente, precisamente, come là le raccontai) - via, prima a Vienna, per anni, nel trambusto dopo il crollo della guerra ... - poi a Berlino ... in quell'altro manicomio ... Si vede una sera a teatro la Barth ... s'impara a danzare ... la pazzia s'illumina ... applausi ... un delirio ... non vedi più la ragione di spogliarti di quei veli colorati della pazzia ... puoi anche scendere in piazza, andare per le strade con quei veli ... nei caffè notturni, dopo le tre, tra i buffoni in marsina ... eh, signor Salter? finché non si diventa come diventò lei, lugubre e insopportabile ... e finché non capita una sera tutt'a un tratto, quando meno te l'aspetti,

va verso il Boffi

uno che ti passa vicino, sguisciando come un diavolo, e ti chiama: "Signora Lucia", "Signora Lucia, suo marito è qua a due passi; se vuole, lo chiamo!"

Allontanandosi con le mani sulla faccia:

Ah, Dio, credetti che egli cercasse una che non poteva esserci più! una che soltanto in me comprendesse di potere trovar viva, per rifarsela, non come lei si voleva - (che per sé non si voleva più) ma come lui la voleva!

Scrollandosi per liberarsi da una pazza illusione e andando incontro a Salter:

- Via! via! via! - Lei è venuto a punirmi della mia impostura? Ha ragione! Sa fino a qual punto si voleva farla arrivare, questa impostura? fino a farmi riconoscere da tre persone - mia sorella - mio cognato - mia cognata, sorella di mio marito - che sto vedendo soltanto ora per la prima volta in vita mia! (MN I, 1002).

Pirandello thus employs the dichotomy of metaphor and metonymy in order to demarcate gender differences in language. He will provide a critique of Eleonora Duse which coincides with this framework. He will argue that she has overreached herself by abandoning a "semiotic" stance. [I am compelled to quote Pirandello in English for the reasons outlined by Bentley in the notes.]⁶⁰ He writes:

Whereas the art of Eleanora Duse is intrinsically and peculiarly opposite to all this. In her everything is internal, simple, unadorned, almost naked. Her art is a quintessential distillation of pure truth, an art that works from within outward, which shrinks from ingenious artifice, and scorns the applause of wonderment that mere brilliancy seeks. With her to feel a thing is to express it, and not to parade it; to express it in direct and immediate terms, without circumlocutions, without sonorous or sculptured or painted imagery. Imagery, in fact, was a challenge to Duse. She is natively lacking in that roundness of diction which is a prime requisite for the full elaboration of a word picture. And if she finds it by sheer effort, the effort in the end exhausts her. For her art is wholly and always an art of movement. It is a continuous, restless, momentary flow, which has neither time nor power to stop and fix itself in any given attitude, even for the pleasure of showing for a moment the beauty that a pose may have in the truth of its expression. Here is a shy and retiring art, which at a tragic moment in her career she suddenly put at the service of the least shy and the most assertive poet that ever lived. That is why I ventured to use the word 'distortion' for the effects that D'Annunzio had upon the art of Eleanora Duse.

In another instance of the culinary metaphor, Pirandello uses the simile of the egg. In the play *Il giuoco delle parti*, it is

interesting to note how the traditional female activity of cooking is metamorphosised in male language. Earlier, I quoted the Producer's fear of the semiotic implications of serving up unrestrained emotions. He also took it upon himself to expand on the gender aspects of Pirandello's image: "Sissignore, il guscio: vale a dire la vuota forma della ragione, senza il pieno dell'istinto che è cieco! Lei è la ragione, sua moglie l'istinto: in un giuoco di parti assegnate, per cui lei che rappresenta la sua parte è volutamente il fantoccio di se stesso" (MN I, 53). The positioning of gender through language becomes evident in the exchange between Leone, Guido and Silia. Leone develops his philosophy of social immobility here: it is an elaborate defence which takes the form of hypnotic fixation so that there is an exclusion from life:

LEONE. Difenderti, io dico! Dagli altri, e soprattutto da te stesso; dal male che la vita fa a tutti, inevitabilmente; quello che io mi son fatto per lei

Insomma, via, la salute è qui: trovare un pernio, caro, il pernio d'un concetto per fissarsi

E perciò ti dicevo! Tu devi guardarti di te stesso, del sentimento che questo caso suscita subito in te e con cui t'assalta! Immediatamente, ghermirlo e vuotarlo, trarne il concetto, e allora puoi anche giocarci, Guarda, è come se t'arrivasse all'improvviso, non sai da dove, un uovo fresco

GUIDO. Ma perché un uovo fresco, scusa?

LEONE. Per darti una nuova immagine dei casi e dei concetti. Se non sei pronto a ghermirlo, te ne lascerai cogliere o lo lascerai cadere. Nell'un caso e nell'altro, ti si squacquererà davanti o addosso. Se sei pronto, lo prendi, lo fori, e te lo bevi. Che ti resta in mano?

GUIDO. Il guscio vuoto.

LEONE. E questo è il concetto! Lo infilzi nel pernio del tuo spillo e ti diverti a farlo girare, o, lieve lieve ormai, te lo giuochi come una palla di celluloido, da una mano all'altra: là, là e là ... poi: *paf!* lo schiacci tra le mani e lo butti via.

A questo punto, all'improvviso, scoppia dal salotto da pranzo una gran risata di Silia.

SILIA (*riparata dietro la banda della vetrata rimasta chiusa*). Ah! ah! ah! Ma non sono mica un guscio vuoto, io, nelle tue mani!

LEONE (*subito, voltandosi e appressandosi alla vetrata*). Oh no! E tu non mi vieni più addosso, cara, perché io ti prenda, ti fori, e ti beva!

*Finisce appena di dir questo, che Silia, senza mostrarsi,
gli chiude in faccia l'altra mezza vetrata. Leone resta
un po' lì a tentennare il capo; poi riviene avanti,
rivolto a Guido:*

Ecco un grande svantaggio per me, mio caro. Era una
straordinaria scuola d'esperienza per me. È venuta a
mancarmi.

Alludendo a Silia di là:

Piena d'infelicità, perché piena di vita. E non d'una
sola: di tante. Nessuna però, che riesca a trovare il
suo pernio. E non c'è salute, né per lei, né con lei.
(MN I; 530-32).

In a similar vein, Elj in *Trovarsi* also disassociates himself
from the real. He challenges Donata with her fragmented identity
to overcome herself. She responds: "Non sa neppure il mio nome!
Tanto meglio! La sfido a imbarcarsi con me sulla sua lancia a vela!"
(MN II, 921). Both Silia and Donata are colonised by male metaphor.
The arch-intellectuals (Ciampa; Baldovino; Professor Toti; Leone;
Laudisi; Sirio; and the Father) establish the dominant phallic economy
of language: this hegemony makes the minor males seem effeminate since
they lack verbal prowess (Fifi la Bella [sic]; Giacomino; Signor
Sirelli; Giuncano and the silent Secretary). The women have closer
ties with the emasculated men: Silia chats to Guido with endearments
and she becomes his "bambina folle" (MN I, 535) in sharp contrast to
her strong urges towards verbal parricide when speaking of Leone.
She passively tells Guido, "Pagherei la mia stessa vita, perché
qualcuno lo ammazzasse!" (MN I, 534). In making him her confidante,
she transposes the activity onto him. Belcredi and Matilda indulge
in verbal masochism and Matilda needs desperately to be defined by
Enrico IV's words. As the object of his desire, she imagines herself
present in his every utterance: "No ... no ... parlava di me ... Ha
parlato sempre a me e con me e di me" (MN I, 335). Leone will finally
feel the urge to destroy the semiotic female in himself, in a mode
reminiscent of the Futurist "La morte della donna". He will attempt
to establish once again his supremacy through a text which is coldly

logical and without any of the suggestivity of a dream.

SILIA (*c.s. quasi mendicando una scusa*). Oh Dio, Leone, io temo d'esser pazza.

LEONE. Ma no! che pazza!

SILIA. Sì sì ... d'aver commesso davvero una pazzia ...

LEONE. Non temere. Ci sono qua io.

SILIA. Ma come farai?

LEONE. Come ho sempre fatto, dacché tu me ne facesti vedere la necessità.

SILIA. Io?

LEONE. Tu.

SILIA. Che necessità?

LEONE. (*pausa, poi, piano*). D'ucciderti.

Pausa.

Non credi che più d'una volta tu me ne abbia data la ragione? Sì, via! Ma era una ragione che partiva armata da un sentimento, prima d'amore, poi di rancore. Bisognava disarmare questi due sentimenti: vuotarsene. E io me ne sono vuotato, per far cadere quella ragione, e lasciarti vivere, non come vuoi, perché non lo sai tu stessa: come puoi, come devi, dato che non t'è possibile fare come me

SILIA (*supplice*). Ma come fai tu?

LEONE (*Dopo una pausa, con gesto vago e triste*). M'astraggo.

Pausa.

Credi che non sorgano impeti di sentimenti anche in me? Ma io non li lascio scatenare; io li afferro, li domo; li inchiodo. Hai visto le belve e il domatore nei serragli? Ma non credere: io, che pure sono il domatore, poi rido di me perché mi vedo come tale in questa parte che mi sono imposta verso i miei sentimenti; e ti giuro che qualche volta mi verrebbe voglia di farmi sbranare da una di queste belve ... anche da te, che ora mi guardi così mansueta e pentita ... Ma no! perché, credi: è tutto un giuoco. E questo sarebbe l'ultimo e toglierebbe per sempre il gusto di tutti gli altri. No, no ... Vai, vai ...

SILIA (*esitante, quasi offrendosi*). Vuoi che ... rimanga?

Trema

LEONE. Tu?

SILIA. O vuoi che torni stasera, quando tutti se ne saranno andati?

LEONE. Ah ... no, cara. Tutta, la mia forza, allora ...

SILIA. Ma no, per starti vicina ... per assisterti ...

LEONE. Dormirò, cara. Stai pur sicura ch'io dormirò. E al mio solito, sai? senza sogni (*MN I, 567-68*).

The metaphor for the tamer of female instincts verges on the hackneyed. Donata will object to the suffocation produced by these male metaphors of confinement: "Murata, murata, senza via di scampo, in questo concetto che tutti si son fatto di me" (*MN II, 967*). It could be argued that her expression is also appropriate for the condition of

the males who, like the Father, or Enrico IV find their subjectivity fixed. However, the male figures have access to metaphorical language which acts as a vehicle beyond the view others may have of the self. For the women, the drama of their subjection has to be acted out through "semiotic" weapons. The different nature of the male and female struggles in the texts is a result of their asymmetrical access to language. The female bodies are hystericised through their inscription in the dominant phallic economy of signification. Irigaray explains the process which produces women's inequality in language.⁶² In the subsequent sections, her insights will assist me to trace how Pirandello perpetuates a gender disequilibrium in the language of the plays. Irigaray writes:

L'hystérie, *ça parle* sur le mode d'une gestualité paralysée, d'une parole impossible et aussi interdite ... Ça parle comme *symptômes* d'un "ça ne peut ni se parler ni se dire" ... Et le drame de l'hystérie, c'est qu'elle est schizée entre cette gestualité, ce désir paralysés et enfermés dans son corps, et un langage qu'elle a appris en famille, à l'école, dans la société, qui ne fait absolument pas continuité, ni, bien sûr, métaphore, avec les "mouvements" de son désir. Il lui reste donc, à la fois, le mutisme et le mimétisme. Elle se tait, en même temps, elle mime. Et - comment pourrait-il en être autrement? - mimant-reproduisant un langage qui n'est pas le sien, le langage masculin, elle le caricature, le déforme: elle "ment", elle "trompe", ce qui est toujours attribué aux femmes.⁶³

III.3.b.ii. Female Dissidence

L'Ignota demonstrates the facility that women have in lying and deceiving. Her exploration of a language that has no referents whatsoever is a signal of her self-erasure. She took pleasure in the deception. When Bruno insists, "Tu non ti muovi di qua!", she evades him, "T'ho detto che Cia tu l'hai cercata male!" (MN I, 1003). Her strength comes from her exposure of the family's empirical clues. Pirandello's stage directions are worth noting here: "*Ride; fa per*

scappare; si ferma per aggiungere" (MN I, 1003). She does not need to possess a truth in order to invalidate patriarchal language. She can show how the family's presuppositions and proofs concerning her filial identity amount to nothing. She has utilised sets of signs which have no necessary meaning. She shows how the choice of a role requires the anchoring of language to a fixed signified. Her explosions of this discourse rest not so much on semiotic rupture but on shifting the frame of reference. The dissidence in her case takes the shape of exploiting the language and identity on loan to her. She will then posit an alternative discourse which contradicts what she has upheld so far. It is the clash between the two voices which then unsettles the text.

L'Ignota, like the Stepdaughter, has an atypical measure of linguistic competence which allows her to re-define the boundaries of phallic exchange. She evades her re-integration in the network of family meanings. Pirandello described the Stepdaughter in male terms: "*Se non che il Padre, la Figliastra e anche il Figlio sono realizzati come spirito; una natura è la Madre*" (MN I, 39). Because she has a modicum of reason, the Stepdaughter, like L'Ignota, commits acts of verbal larceny. She will rob the Father of his name as father. In his becoming just another rapacious man, she explodes the paternal metaphor which institutes primal repression. He thus assumes the ambiguous status of "tormentatore/tormentato" (MN I, 42). He is both bearer/breaker of the Law. The drama of the Stepdaughter's rupture of the symbolic is made evident in the speech where he laments his loss of meaning:

Ora lei intende la perfidia di questa ragazza? M'ha sorpreso in un luogo, in un atto, dove e come non doveva conoscermi, come io non potevo essere per lei; e mi vuol dare una realtà, quale io non potevo mai aspettarmi che dovessi assumere per lei, in un momento fugace, vergognoso, della mia vita! Questo, questo, signore, io sento soprattutto. E vedrà che da questo il dramma acquisterà un grandissimo valore. (MN I, 73).

The Stepdaughter's dissident act consists in catching him unawares: she overturns the Oedipal interdict, upsets gendered meaning and breaks through normal signification. The power of her speech rests in the resurrection of the Dead Father who precedes the Oedipal moment. Their universe loses its centre: he is the cleavage in her sane chain of signification - a diabolical Anti-Oedipus: "È vero!⁶⁴ Ma pensi che quegli altri sono egualmente lui, per me Per chi cade nella colpa, signore, il responsabile di tutte le colpe che seguono, non è sempre chi, primo, determinò la caduta? E per me è lui, anche da prima ch'io nascessi. Lo guardi; e veda se non è vero!" (MN I, 98). She speaks the bliss of freedom from the fundamental phallic signifier. The encounter in the brothel is minimised since she claims that he never effectively exercised his symbolic function. His presence as phallus is marginalised in her discourse which dissents with the standard process of socialisation. Her fluency is a result of her not being inscribed in the systems of traditional subjectification - she seems more male than she should. Her critical language can then flagellate the Father for his debauched verbal currency and hypocritical values. She is supported by the Son in this debate:

IL PADRE. Tu sei un cinico imbecille, e te l'ho detto cento volte!

Al Capocomico già nella sala:

Mi deride, signore, per questa frase che ho trovato in mia scusa.

IL FIGLIO (*sprezzante*). Frasi.

IL PADRE. Frasi! Frasi! Come se non fosse il conforto di tutti, davanti a un fatto che non si spiega, davanti a un male che ci consuma, trovare una parola che non dice nulla, e in cui ci si acquieta!

LA FIGLIASTRA. Anche il rimorso, già! sopra tutto.

IL PADRE. Il rimorso? Non è vero; non l'ho acquietato in me soltanto con le parole.

LA FIGLIASTRA. Anche con un po' di danaro, sí, sí, anche con un po' di danaro! Con le cento lire che stava per offrirmi in pagamento, signori!

Movimento d'orrore degli Attori.

IL FIGLIO (*con disprezzo alla sorellastra*). Questo è vile! (MN I, 64).

The deposed Father finds himself unable to quell the onslaught and has to appeal to the Producer - a surrogate Father - to silence them: "Sfido! Assaltato così! Imponga un po' d'ordine, signore, e lasci che parli io, senza prestare ascolto all'obbrobrio, che con tanta ferocia costei le vuol dare a intendere di me, senza le debite spiegazioni! ... Ma se è tutto qui il male! Nelle parole!" (MN I, 65). The Stepdaughter's fluency is in direct dramatic contrast with the Mother's silence. With her waxen and tearful *Mater dolorosa* appearance, her veil, and her heartrending scream, the Mother portrays female incoherence. She can only make monosyllabic interventions in weak protest, "Strega! Strega! assassina! La figlia mia!" (MN I, 88). She fails in her attempt to assume the function of the Law. Structurally, she will never manage to say more than what speaks her lack of being, her "sordità mentale" (MN I, 66). Her answer affirms the Father's supremacy: "Tu sai parlare; io non so ..." (MN I, 66). There is no way she can speak beyond her maternal edges, for, as Pirandello states in the Preface, she is "*fissata ... in ogni parola*" (MN I, 42).

The Stepdaughter is not caught in the banal diction of most of Pirandello's women. She is conceded a "maleness" in language. Yet even her philosophical discourse will be shot through by a vivid "gut" reaction. She can only parody male analysis and expose its simplistic "monologism". Her disgust becomes clear: "Ah, che schifo, allora, che schifo di tutte codeste complicazioni intellettuali, di tutta codesta filosofia che scopre la bestia e poi la vuol salvare, scusare ..." (MN I, 71).

Her assumption of the male text is irreconcilable with her status as woman, lacking a phallus. It is only through parody that a woman

can virilise her own discourse, as Kristeva has shown:

Leur rôle est précisément négatif, il consiste à indiquer les défaillances d'une communauté, c'est-à-dire de son discours. Mais les femmes ne peuvent le dire que par la parodie: dès qu'elle parle le discours communautaire, une femme se fait phallus, mais elle n'y trouvera de jouissance qu'à le parodier, c'est-à-dire à prendre la parole comme un langage à le décaler de la libido et de la vérité que cette parole est censée d'exprimer dans une communauté, justement pour marquer qu'une hétérogénéité travaille le discours communautaire.⁶⁵

The Stepdaughter's presence in language contrasts with the empty chatter of some of Pirandello's women. Her language reconstructs her displaced being and tears away the veils of censure that cloak Signora Ponza, Ersilia and others. Her vitality is in contrast with their muteness. Her power is different from the garrulous Silia's: she can effectively challenge the rules of the game. The Stepdaughter's dissidence is direct, unlike the secondhand language of the actresses who quote their masters' lines. Her refusal of the paternal interdiction on speech leads her beyond the final page of the text. Pirandello spelt out the insanity which accompanies the breach of Oedipus. He could not have anticipated the strengths of the Stepdaughter who speaks against the paradigms of difference. Her language is ungendered in that it participates in both the semiotic and the symbolic without giving precedence to either. Her speech approaches the conditions for full expression since it is not marked and circumscribed by the prestige of the phallus. Pirandello's text is deconstructed by the failure of the law. This failure in symbolic language is what writes the presence of the Stepdaughter for whom difference does not signify inferiority. Pirandello's authorial intentions could not have anticipated the way her potential would be written. The breakdown of phallic signification permits her unhysterical body to be imprinted on his language.

III.3.b.iii. verbal lunacy

In reporting the speech of madness, Pirandello once again uses the device of metaphor and metonymy to depict gender difference. There is no equality of discourse, even in madness. Male insanity continues to show itself in superrational speech which is distinct from the apparently disconnected babblings of Beatrice, L'Ignota, La Demente and Signora Ponza. For Pirandello, madness is a linguistic phenomenon which is most easily detected in monologue. For the men, the language of schizophrenia assumes an economy of compression: a single word ("pozzo", "luna", "guscio") on account of its manifold relations to other signifiers, comes to represent a whole train of thought, and assists in the creation of neologisms. The women remain caught in the web of the semiotic. Although L'Ignota defends her right to speak in madness, it is also her right to *shout*: "le pazze soltanto hanno il privilegio di poterle urlare - chiare - davanti a tutti - certe cose!" (MN I, 941).⁶⁶ Her articulation contrasts with La Demente's incessant verbal flow - a repetitive and meaningless stutter, "Le-na Le-na ..." (MN I, 985). The portrait Pirandello paints of La Demente in the stage directions is alarming: "*La Demente è grassa, flaccida, con un viso di cera, i capelli scomposti, gli occhi svaniti, immobili, e la bocca atteggiata d'un perpetuo sorriso scemo, largo, vano, che non cessa neppur quando emette qualche suono o balbetta qualche parola, evidentemente senza intendere quel che dice*" (MN I, 985). This pitiful body repeats the Futurists' prejudice that all women are "corpi flaccidi e lividi".⁶⁷ Pirandello's view of mad women is one where linguistic flaccidity contrasts with the tautness and intensity of male discourse.

Beatrice is also reduced to bleating, that is, to the order of the semiotic:

BEATRICE. Comincio a gridare?
 CIAMPA. Sì, ecco! Qua! in faccia a suo fratello!

Glielo spinge davanti.

Forza! in faccia al Delegato!

Glielo spinge davanti.

Forza! in faccia a me! E si persuada, signora, che solamente da pazza lei poteva pigliarsi il piacere di gridarmi in faccia: "Bèèè!"

BEATRICE. E allora, sì: Bèèè! ... ve lo grido in faccia, sì: bèèè! bèèè!

FIFI, *(cercando di trattenerla)*. Beatrice!

SPANÒ. *(cercando di trattenerla)*. Signora!

ASSUNTA. *(cercando di trattenerla)*. Figlia mia!

BEATRICE. *(con grida furibonde)*. No! Sono pazza? E debbo gridarglielo: Bèèè! bèèè! bèèè!

CIAMPA, *(mentre tutti fanno per portar via Beatrice, che seguita a gridare come se fosse impazzita davvero)*. È pazza! Ecco la prova: è pazza! Oh che bellezza! - Bisogna chiuderla! bisogna chiuderla! ... È pazza! È pazza! ... Se la portano al manicomio! È pazza! (MN II, 404-5).

Ciampa, ignoring his state of "cornuto" - implied by Beatrice's sounds - assumes command once more. These are some of the semiotic veils behind which Pirandello will conceal his women's impoverished status. L'Ignota will return to Berlin, "quest'altro manicomio", where she haltingly describes, in a *danse-macabre*, how "la pazzia s'illumina ... applausi ... un delirio ... non vedi più la ragione di spogliarti di quei veli colorati della pazzia" (MN I, 1002). Pirandello has captured the image of speech-defect in women. Lacan has described how the masquerade allows a woman to reject all her attributes: "C'est pour ce qu'elle n'est pas qu'elle entend être désirée en même temps qu'aimée"⁶⁸. Elsewhere, he clarifies this: "Telle est la femme derrière son voile: c'est l'absence du pénis qui la fait phallus, objet du désir. Evoquez cette absence ..."⁶⁹ and the masked ball is a guaranteed success.

Verbal lunacy is gender differentiated in Pirandello's texts. The men use logical substitution and well-constructed images to convey their "madness". Here Pirandello employs the metaphoric device to imply a contextual disorder which allows his male characters free

association and volubility without the restriction of time boundaries. He reverses this procedure for the women: their sequential strengths are undermined by a chronic dispossession of "similarity" competence.⁷⁰ This gives an increasingly choppy, uneven impression of a syntactically ordered yet hollow speech, void of the *tours d'esprit* accomplished so easily by the men. It can be seen that these speech disorders vary only slightly from the normal procedures Pirandello adopts to distinguish gender in language. In addition, because the disorder is such a slight variant on the normal pattern, he is able to make the line between madness and sanity more ambiguous. Schizophrenic and psychotic language belong to the men who employ hypersymbolisations and binary oppositions ("illusione/verità"; "uovo/guscio"). Their diction tends to lose all realistic metonymic ballast for the unconscious, in contrast to the substantial discourse of the women. The free-floating and imaginary qualities of the mad philosophers' speech which is without context makes conventional theatrical staging difficult. They are always in danger of becoming extraneous to the performance when, like Leone, they make utterances such as, "M'astraggo" (MN I, 534). The ambiguities of the women figures are more likely to be dispelled by context. This contrasts with the male figures who oscillate between the letter (the real) and the metaphoric (the imaginary). Enrico IV metamorphosises himself into the imaginary, while Baldovino restores himself to the letter. Leone goes from being an effective to a putative husband, while Guido assumes the letter.

Because the women do not share in this level of condensation, they resort to the discourse of dream. Their hold on history means they can trace a path to past experiences. It is in the intervals between their present utterances and their past suffering - the gaps where desire originates and plunges - that their dramatic force is composed. The freedom of male discourse in the texts denies history

and makes them into timeless philosophers. It is the women figures who uncover their fantasies to make the repressed return, e.g. in the plays *All'uscita* and *Sogno (o forse no)*. [The figure of Anna Wheil is archetypical in respect of this kind of madness. May's study isolates the images rather than her language.⁷¹] By concentrating on the women's language, it may be possible to reveal how the unconscious, as discourse of the Other, functions here. In their speech, every desire, through a chain of metonymic shifts, reveals itself as desire for the Other. Their displaced eloquence can now be traced. Phallogocratic "monologisme" is frustrated by this "parler-femme".⁷² In the play *All'uscita*, the "Donna uccisa" returns from the dead to recall the last burning kiss on her deathbed, before going on to share the exotic pleasures of a pomegranate with a boy. The child is vaporised after eating the seeds. The Philosopher comments concerning the boy: "Era quella melagrana il suo ultimo desiderio. Si teneva ad esso con tutte due le manine. Era tutto lì, in quei chicchi di rubino che non aveva potuto assaporare". She answers distractedly to this discourse which negates her own desire: "E io? Il mio desiderio? Ah!" and further on, breaks into tears (MN II, 1057). Pirandello then supplies these stage directions: "*L'apparenza della Donna uccisa si leva in piedi, squassa il capo scarmigliato, alza le braccia disperatamente e fugge come una pazza dietro alla Bambina scomparsa.*" The shade of the Philosopher remains, "alta" and "dritta". The last words of the play are his "Ho paura ch'io solo resterò sempre qua, seguitando a ragionare" (MN II, 1058).

This mysterious passage makes strange sense. The clarity of male consciousness and rationalisation is undermined by fear. Only the women seem to be within reach of uniting their bodies with language. They have the possibility of meshing the grids of the semiotic and symbolic. Madama Pace's and the Figliastro's silent dialogue

draws on historical memory. The clarity of male discourse is menaced by this other voice. Pirandello's stagecraft articulates the language of silence which troubles male linguistic hegemony, so that the Producer resentfully complains: "Ma qui bisogna che si facciano sentire, cara lei!" (MN I, 87).

III.3.b.iv. repetition

The chief function of the Producer is to organise and interpret the re-memoration of the traumatic event in the brothel. He hopes to edit and revise the repetition. The Trilogy is structured round this idea of "rehearsal" rather than "performance": the French word for rehearsal, "*répétition*", indicates the psychoanalytic dimensions of this activity.⁷³ For Freud, the repetition compulsion is an attempt to dominate a trauma and to abreact its adverse affects.⁷⁴ The resistances will determine the sequence of the material in the acting out where the "original" event is relived in all its apparent immediacy. The repetitive stance can also construct the past retroactively by imposing a new reading on events which may never have taken place.⁷⁵ Deferred action, together with repetition combine to provide a graph of the self constructed through language which anticipated the present acting out.⁷⁶ The Figliastra communicates her sense of urgency and need to work the trauma through; her pressures strain against the theatrical conventions demanded by the Producer:

IL CAPOCOMICO (*fermandolo*). Ma no, aspetti! Qua bisogna rispettare le esigenze del teatro! Prima che lei sia pronto ...

LA FIGLIASTRA (*interrompendolo*). Ma sí, subito! Mi muojo, le dico, dalla smania di viverla, di viverla questa scena! Se lui vuol esser subito pronto, io sono prontissima! (MN I, 87).

Repetitions of past episodes, and indeed, repetitions of the same "battute" in the same play are what prevent Pirandello's plays from

being representational. The innovatory aspects of the Trilogy lead the reader into the defiles of metalanguage. The "action-replay" device is linked to the need to accommodate the image of the desired object - not through recall, static reproduction or narration, but through "re-memoration". The discursive process now assumes an immediacy and primacy which transcend the past event: the trauma is reconstructed in the gap between the primal traces and the movement of cancellation which the revision entails. It is by repetition, rather than mere bringing to consciousness of a repressed event, that the drama is played out. It can be seen how the psychoanalytic concept of repetition bears a similarity to Pirandello's "azione parlata" where the discourse is not a substitute for an action, but is the action itself. Pirandello confirms the "presentness" of this dramatic event:

Se il Padre e la Figliastra riattaccassero centomila volte di seguito la loro scena, sempre, al punto fissato, all'attimo in cui la vita dell'opera d'arte dev'essere espressa con quel suo grido, sempre esso risonerebbe: inalterato e inalterabile nella sua forma, ma non come una ripetizione meccanica, non come un ritorno obbligato da necessità esteriori, ma bensì, ogni volta, vivo e come nuovo, nato improvviso così per sempre: imbalsamato vivo nella sua forma immarcescibile (MN I, 43).

The compulsion to repeat is ungovernable: the participants re-enact the old situation under the false impression that the situation is determined by the circumstances of the present moment. The Mother is unaware of a time dimension, and for her, the "truth" of the experience recurs "endlessly" in the very words in which she affirms her willingness to wait for a disclosure of "truth" at the end. She can attain no distancing from the trauma, and as a result she cannot effect the metalinguistic pose of the Father who can pretend to take the event as the object of his language, even while he is in the process of re-enacting it. The Mother is more firmly snared by the web of language which fixes her role, whereas the Father struggles to

detach himself from the self prescribed in language. His momentary victories over certain meanings are continuously undone by the Stepdaughter's endorsements of the Law. She re-integrates the Father into the chain of phallic signification. The risk of slippage in his discourse is what makes the Father so complex a figure. This is in contrast with the predictability of the Mother about whom Pirandello is succinct: *"Ma il fatto d'ignorare d'esser personaggio non le toglie già di esserlo. Ecco il suo dramma, nella mia commedia"* (MN I, 67). While the Father attempts to stand back from the trauma and to explain it, the Stepdaughter shows how detachment is impossible where the metalanguage slides back into language, the explanations into narration. The recurrent search for "truth" is deferred because of repetition:

LA FIGLIASTRA. Qui non si narra! qui non si narra!

IL PADRE. Ma io non narro! voglio spiegargli.

LA FIGLIASTRA. Ah, bello, sí! A modo tuo! (MN I, 65).

Like the Son, he will refuse to recognise that he is still in the grip of the unconscious: he repeats the events he recounts at the very moment when he is claiming to view them "objectively". The Father does to some extent come to realise the difficulties involved after the Son mocks his efforts. To textualise the events would be a way of living with their "representation". But he cannot accept the interpreted version and insists on the novelty and complexity of each new reading or repetition of the trauma. - He is caught in the play of language where meaning is irrecoverably disseminated. He abandons himself to repetition since the narration fails to reveal the "truth":

IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma tutto questo è racconto, signori miei!

IL FIGLIO (*sprezzante*). Ma sí, letteratura! letteratura!

IL PADRE. Ma che letteratura! Questa è vita, signore! Passione!

IL CAPOCOMICO. Sarà! Ma irrappresentabile!

IL PADRE. D'accordo, signore! Perché tutto questo è antefatto. E io non dico di rappresentar questo. Come vede, infatti, lei

indicherà la Figliastra

non è più quella ragazzetta con le treccine sulle spalle -
 LA FIGLIASTRA. - e le mutandine fuori della gonna!
 IL PADRE. Il dramma viene adesso, signore! Nuovo,
 complesso - (MN I, 69).

The disagreements about the details of the primal scene frustrate the Producer who is not so concerned with "authenticity". He introduces arbitrary signifiers which distress the Characters. The Stepdaughter is forced to compromise due to the restrictions in the stock of props:

IL CAPOCOMICO (*al Trovarobe*). Lei veda un po' se c'è in magazzino un letto a sedere.
 IL TROVAROBE. Sissignore, c'è quello verde.
 LA FIGLIASTRA. No no, che verde! Era giallo, fiorato, di "peluche", molto grande! Comodissimo.
 IL TROVAROBE. Eh, così non c'è.
 IL CAPOCOMICO. Ma non importa! metta quello che c'è.
 LA FIGLIASTRA. Come non importa! La greppina famosa di Madama Pace!
 IL CAPOCOMICO. Adesso è per provare! La prego, non s'immischi! (MN I, 79)

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 The substitution of a different colour evokes the constraints on lexical choice when she has to formulate her experience under different conditions. If Pirandello had simply "represented" the coherent memory of the initial trauma, the play would have failed. It is dramatic because it shows the conflict in the repeating self who will always find the means of expression at his/her disposal inadequate to the original facts. The effect of the acting out is to dramatise Pirandello's concern with the unattainability of "truth".

The Characters will alter the events in retrospect: the trauma is re-arranged and subject to a plurality of readings. The Stepdaughter compulsively resists the interpretations of the Producer whose editing is a form of censorship. These alterations imposed by the Producer are materialised in the speech of the Actors. Each compromise will be a repression on her part. The Prompter's notes fix the interpretation in writing. While the Producer instructs the Prompter to note down only the most "important" lines, the Stepdaughter will protest against

the selection which reduces the disseminative scope of the acting out: "Mah! io veramente non mi ci ritrovo" (MN I, 83). Her fragmented body provides a multiplicity of selves which are negated in the Producer's unitary version.

In a reverse sequence, Ersilia will require Ludovico Nota's collection of newspaper reports in order to refind her self. She openly admits to the inadequacy of memory: "Non ricordo piú bene che dissi in quel momento, capirai! - Voglio vedere. Cercalo" (MN I, 855). Yet the moment he begins to extract his version, she contradicts him. The revisionary process begins when she realises that the reports cannot duplicate her words. The play *Vestire gli ignudi* deserves to be placed together with the Trilogy because of this preoccupation with repetition. This compulsion can be detected in *Così è (se vi pare)* where the re-evocation of a previous catastrophe forces the verbal confrontation of mother, son and "daughter". Ersilia speaks this urge to exorcise the past through discourse: "Glielo dica, glielo dica quello che ho fatto, perché se ne vada!" (MN I, 885). In *Ciascuno a suo modo*, the Director comments: "Lo spettacolo ora passa dal palcoscenico sul corridojo" (MN I, 195) where it will be repeated with variations. Ilse is compelled by a desire to repetitively recite her dead lover's words: "Vive in me; ma non basta! Deve vivere in mezzo agli uomini!" (MN I, 1346). In none of these plays is the repetition process a representation or mirror version of the primary event. The effect is not simply the catharsis experienced by Claudius who recognises himself in the images of Hamlet's playlet.⁷⁷ In Pirandello's plays, the passive observation becomes active participation on the part of the stage spectators. This extends to the audience who cannot "identify" with the events on stage. I shall develop this dimension in chapter IV in a discussion of *Enrico IV*.

In Pirandello's plays, there is an adolescent nostalgia for origins in this verbal repetition. Rather than reduplicating a primary event, the subjects are forced to re-enact a revised version while the "original" trauma meretriciously escapes them. Through repetition, it emerges that language cannot objectify the event, it can only elaborate it. Knowledge recedes when the repetition is trapped in a language that is haunted by its own dispersal. The loss of authenticity marks the absence of the self, and every repetition risks unmeaning. The search of the Six Characters for selfhood is inevitably abandoned to the interplay between their original text and the subsequent readings. Barthes describes the necessary impulse of all decentred narration, doomed to repetition: "Tout récit ne se ramène-t-il pas à l'Oedipe? Raconter, n'est-ce pas toujours chercher son origine, dire ses démêlés avec la Loi, entrer dans la dialectique de l'attendrissement et de la haine?"⁷⁹

III.3.b.v sexual confessions

VERRI. Non è vero! Voglio sapere a che pensi! A che hai pensato tutto questo tempo, aspettandomi?

Pausa d'attesa, poiché lei non risponde.

Non rispondi? Eh sfido! Non me lo puoi dire!

Altra pausa.

Dunque confessi?

MOMMINA. Che confesso?

VERRI. Che pensi a cose che non mi puoi dire!

MOMMINA. Te l'ho detto, a che penso: d'andare a dormire.

VERRI. Con questi occhi, a dormire? con questa voce ...?

Vuoi dire, a sognare!

MOMMINA. Non sogno.

VERRI. Non è vero! Sogniamo tutti. Non è possibile, dormendo, non sognare.

MOMMINA. Io non sogno.

VERRI. Tu mentisci! Ti dico che non è possibile.

MOMMINA. E allora sogno; come vuoi tu ...

VERRI. Sogni, eh? ... Sogni, e ti vendichi! - Pensi, e ti vendichi! - Che sogni? dimmi che sogni! (MN I, 277)

Verri's attempt to extract from Mommina a confession of a betrayal that never took place underlines the fictiveness of that other scene.

The phantasy adultery is an originating fiction which justifies his torturer and tortured self. To speak sexuality [after Foucault] is to reveal the way in which power channels and controls desire. In a theory of discursive surfaces, "repression" in its Freudian sense becomes untenable. The classical repressive hypothesis⁸⁰ is abolished when we witness an argument where the crime is constituted by discourse: there was no event which could re-emerge. Like the unconscious, it is invented in the enunciation. Even Mommina's dreams are only knowable when they become a text for surveillance.

The links between confession and repetition appear when one examines how the repeating of an irretrievable genetic moment is not a remembering. For Freud, the cure supposedly is initiated when the analysand recognises the repetition as different from a historical memory of a trauma which can now begin to be worked through. In this section, I intend to examine how Pirandello's texts speak the impossibility of the "cure" - the utterances can only theatricalise history, they cannot restore it. The fictions prevent the analyst from giving a fixed interpretation and the verbal defences of Pirandello's characters show that the only substitute for certainty is the practice of reading: this activity concedes the simultaneity of conflicting meanings as well as the alteration of meanings successively through time. The neurotic conservation of the antique trace defies history and the symptom persists "even though the unconscious thought to which it gave expression has lost its meaning".⁸² All history seems to become a history of the present as the following interchange between "Dora" and Freud shows: "'Something occurs to me,' she said, 'but it cannot belong to the dream, for it is quite recent, whereas I have certainly had the dream before.' 'That makes no difference,' I [Freud] replied. 'Start away! It will simply turn out to be the most recent thing that fits in with the dream'." This compulsively revisionary aspect of reading is shown by the Mother's

torment in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*: "No, avviene ora, avviene sempre. Il mio strazio non è finto, signore! Io sono viva e presente, sempre, in ogni momento del mio strazio, che si rinnova vivo e presente sempre" (MN I, 43 and 99). The concept of repetition can be of assistance in explaining the Tilgherian notion of "forma" where a character like the Mother is fixed in an identity.

The re-enactment of a primal scene, fictional or not, and the quest to validate its authenticity, pattern the structures of several of the plays. The tropes of detection and clues are inscribed in *Così è (se vi pare)*; *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*; *Enrico IV*; *Vestire gli ignudi*; and *Come tu mi vuoi* where a pretext, or trauma, is in question. The obligation to restore the original scenario through a forced confession sets all these plays in motion: there is an unfulfilled wish to know the truth of the earthquake and identity of Signora Ponza; the incident in the brothel and the foreclosed incest; the accident at the masquerade and Enrico IV's identity; the child's accident and Ersilia's affair; and the abduction during the war and the amnesiac L'Ignota's identity. All the motivating events occur before the speeches begin and they construct the edges of the texts. Within the intertextual relations of the plays, there is also an uncanny impulse towards structural repetition: for instance, Mommìna's visible incarceration is an echo of Signora Ponza's narrated one, and the acting out of Mommìna's spiritual and corporeal imprisonment is an index to Pirandello's increasing dramatic sense where a spectacle now mesmerises an audience instead of a tale merely pleasing a reader. Verri's brutality makes Signor Ponza appear retroactively as the closet sadist he is! Sirelli "quasi sillabando" gossips: "La tiene chiusa a chiave!" (MN I, 1015), and provokes the choral pleasure of the women. They accuse Laudisi of wanting to pardon "quel mostro", whereas Laudisi reiterates the obstacles

to establishing the truth. This relatively distanced scene can be contrasted with the melodrama of Verri's attack. Yet somehow, the melodrama is more compelling as a sentence on female annihilation:

VERRI (*smaniando, agitandosi lui, adesso, come una belva in gabbia*). È questo! È questo! Serro porte e finestre, metto sbarre e spranghe, e che mi vale se è qua, qua dentro la stessa carcere, il tradimento? qua in lei, dentro di lei, in questa sua carne morta - vivo - vivo - il tradimento - se pensa, se sogna, se ricorda? Mi sta davanti; mi guarda - posso spaccarle la testa per vederle dentro, ciò che pensa? Glielo domando; mi risponde: "niente"; e intanto pensa, intanto sogna, ricorda, sotto i miei stessi occhi, guardando me, e forse avendo un altro, dentro, nel suo ricordo; come posso saperlo? come posso vederlo?

MOMMINA. Ma che vuoi che abbia più dentro, se non sono più niente, non mi vedi? neanche un'altra, più niente! Con l'anima spenta, che vuoi che ricordi più? (MN I, 278).

In the case history of Ersilia, the transference between the recorder of the confession and the analysand prevents reality from being legitimised. Ludovico Nota, like Laudisi and the Producer, practises the impossible profession of the analyst who cannot give a "definitive" interpretation of the pre-discursive event. The Stepdaughter, like Freud's "theoretical fiction"⁸⁴ Dora, recedes and obliterates any origin: she evades the counter-transference by disowning the nursemaids to the unconscious. This act of dismissal of the Family is the Stepdaughter's revenge on the old-fashioned reader: she interrupts the process of interpretation and is ungrateful for the services rendered. Ersilia somehow is destined to share the fate of all Desiderias, as imprinted in Moravia's *La vita interiore*. In order to master the loss of her, he reinscribes her subjective devastation:

Desideria: Non è così. Io non posso essere, ieri come oggi e come domani, se non quella che sono. Per questo: addio.

Io: Aspetta, non puoi andartene così; tu stessa hai riconosciuto che non hai ancora finito.

Desideria: A Hiroshima, dopo l'esplosione della bomba atomica è rimasta su un muro l'impronta di un corpo umano, come rimane sulla sabbia l'orma di un piede; cioè, un'ombra un po' più scura dell'intonaco, con una testa, un busto, delle gambe. Il corpo che ha lasciato quest'impronta è stato divorato, annientato dalla vampa.

Così io. La tua immaginazione mi ha bruciata, consumata.
Alla fine non esisterò più, se non nella tua scrittura,
come impronta, come personaggio.⁸⁵

This scriptural baptism by fire of the "personaggio" seems to mimic Ersilia's refusal to speak on her own behalf. She too broke off the analytic relationship, only to have her sordid self rewritten:

- Ebbene, no! no! Non ho potuto avere neanche questa!
Lacerata addosso, strappata anche questa! No! Morire
nuda! Scoperta, avvilita, e spregiata! - Ecco qua: siete
contenti? E ora andate, andate. Lasciatemi morire in
silenzio: nuda. Andate! Lo posso ben dire, ora, mi pare,
che non voglio più vedere, che non voglio più sentire
nessuno? Andate, andatelo a dire, tu a tua moglie, tu
alla tua fidanzata, che questa morta - ecco qua - non s'è
potuta vestire (MN I, 915).

Bentley has discussed, in classical Freudian terms, this re-enactment of primal scenes in Pirandello: in a literal reading he links them to Freud's theory of seduction and of the locus of sexual fright.⁸⁶ Perhaps it should be added that Pirandello is supposed to have undergone a primal encounter with a pair of lovers copulating on a mortuary floor. Bentley argues that this scene instituted a Sex-Death identity which can be traced in his work. The story goes too that Pirandello overheard his father seducing a relative and it is possible that these experiences determine his need to work the events through by means of writing, even if he writes against them and disowns his own history as a subject. In a defensive stance, he refusedly declares that the play *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* has "nulla da vedere col dramma della mia esperienza personale" (MN I, 41).

At a later date, Pirandello's reaction to similar textual transferences is to deny scandal by suppressing scenes. In a passage excised from the final version of *Questa sera si recite a soggetto*, "La Chanteuse" shouts: "Il dramma deve venir fuori! venir fuori" (SPSV, 1194). Pirandello subsequently censors Dr. Hinkfuss's censored scenario. There is a double textual revision which does not allow signora

Fein to act out a marital scuffle and to work through the "disgrazia" (SPSV, 1197). Dr. Hinkfuss usurps authority, loses patience and bans the scene in the uncensored version: "Signora, io non posso lasciarle fare questa scena! non posso farle venir fuori dè là gli ufficiali ... " (SPSV, 1197). In order to account for her unacceptable behaviour, Dr. Hinkfuss had earlier investigated: "Ah, questo davvero non me lo sarei mai aspettato! che gli attori mi dovessero diventar personaggi! Scusi, signora Fein, e s'è anche ubriacata per davvero?" (SPSV, 1196). As always, the clues are misleading; so perhaps, if he declares her a textual nonentity, this terrible woman will go away! She whines naïvely, "Non sono nulla?" and he answers, "Proprio nulla! Una povera Chanteuse senza parte!" (SPSV, 1198). At least she knows her textual negation, in contrast to the Mother who "non sa d'avere una 'parte'" (MN I, 41). Pirandello's writing the excision of signora Fein simply rehearses his final removal of this writing.

A discussion of the extent to which Pirandello suppresses painful truths in his texts is not intended to convey the impression that society discourages their elaboration. The self tends to dwell compulsively on the excluded material so that the symptoms are displayed/displaced elsewhere. The syndrome of neurotic repetition discloses an urge to "speak" the trauma, to disclose what Foucault calls a "sexualité bavarde"⁸⁷. Aristotelian catharsis is given a psychoanalytic dimension through repetition. The repetition in discourse finds its dynamic in desire, so that the "mise en discours du sexe" is bound up with an imperative to re-work the incident. This dimension of the plays is grounded in the Catholic tradition of confession: the speaking of the taboo reinstalls the taboo and services power. The confessional mode enables the control of populations where the family structure endorses the strategies of power which institutes desire: "Le rapport de pouvoir serait déjà là où est le désir."⁸⁸ The utterance of desire promises

liberation but, in effect, the self-examination perpetuates power. This "disease" of verbal compulsions helps account for the rise of psychoanalysis in its orthodox form. The allusive preoccupations of Pirandello's dramas about bourgeois triangles so promote the fascist discourse in power, rather than subvert it. The Father speaks his split self by telling us how he cannot speak it:

IL PADRE. Il dramma scoppia, signore, impreveduto e violento, al loro ritorno; allorché io, purtroppo, condotto dalla miseria della mia carne ancora viva ... Ah, miseria, miseria veramente, per un uomo solo, che non abbia voluto legami avvilenti; non ancor tanto vecchio da poter fare a meno della donna, e non più tanto giovane da poter facilmente e senza vergogna andarne in cerca! Miseria? che dico! orrore, orrore; perché nessuna donna più gli può dare amore. - E quando si capisce questo, se ne dovrebbe fare a meno ... Mah! Signore, ciascuno - fuori, davanti agli altri - è vestito di dignità: ma dentro di sé sa bene tutto ciò che nell'intimità con se stesso si passa, d'inconfessabile. Si cede, si cede alla tentazione; per rialzarcene subito dopo, magari, con una gran fretta di ricomporre intera e solida, come una pietra su una fossa, la nostra dignità, che nasconde e seppellisce ai nostri stessi occhi ogni segno e il ricordo stesso della vergogna. E così di tutti! Manca solo il coraggio di dirle, certe cose!

LA FIGLIASTRA. Perché quello di farle, poi, lo hanno tutti!

IL PADRE. Tutti! Ma di nascosto! E perciò ci vuol più coraggio a dirle! Perché basta che uno le dica - è fatta! - gli s'appioppa la taccia di cinico. (MN I, 70-71).

This disarming "true confession" of past peccadilloes recurs in other plays structured by repetition. In addition to those mentioned above, similar speeches can be found in *Ciascuno a suo modo*; *L'uomo, la bestia e la virtù*; *Sogno (o forse no)*; and *Non si sa come*. Bentley has described the Father's need to seek release and to unburden himself in talk as an act of self-preservation. Without Lacanian insights, he is unable to develop the notion of "talking action": the Father has an "anacletic" relation to "parole". Pirandello by granting him and other characters an ambivalent status as "refused", censors their "tristi casi" and "scomposte passioni". (MN I, 35). They are, as a result of the censorship, "la gente più scontenta del mondo" (MN I, 35). Despite his authorial immunity, he has managed to express their sexuality while

claiming to not speak it. The description of Mussolini's displeasure after seeing a production of *Vestire gli ignudi* is an historical incident which reveals how censorship channels desire in the name of power.⁹⁰

The paradox lies in the expression of censorship which speaks the sexuality it claims to exclude. The way Pirandello admits his ambivalences into the text of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is not an act of repression: rather, he is expressing sexuality while saying that he is suppressing it. The ambiguity determines his practice of writing the unspeakable. His defence is self-contradictory: "*Ma si può rappresentare un personaggio, rifiutandolo? Evidentemente, per rappresentarlo, bisogna invece accoglierlo nella fantasia e quindi esprimerlo. E io difatti ho accolto e realizzato quei sei personaggi: li ho però accolti e realizzati come rifiutati: in cerca d'altro autore*" (MN I, 40). The textual strategy of displaced authorship allows him to say what is not allowed to be said. The exercise in textual presences installs their lack. The "repression" is always already spoken, as is indicated in the Father's words: "Non so più che dirle ... Comincio già ... non so, a sentir come false, con un altro suono, le mie stesse parole" (MN I, 81). The unrecognisable signifiers speak loss and desire which are a condition of language for the fractured self.

The male figures tend to speak their shame, whereas the female figures have theirs spoken and dressed up for them. In the next section, I shall attempt to explore their silences. Madama Pace, however, has less difficulty in exhibiting her trade, yet even then, it is behind the veil of a foreign Spanish accent, a kind of bastardised Italian which signals censorship. Similarly, Silia in *Il giuoco della parti* is mistaken for a Spanish Pepita, and is then seduced in French by Miglioriti *et cie*. One of the drunks shouts "Viva la Spagna", while a second suggestively propositions: "Vogliamo una notte tutta spagnuola "

(MN I, 536-37). When Silia objects to their unseemly conduct in her house - "in casa d'una signora per bene" - the third drunk courteously (but euphemistically) protests in French, the language of "amour courtois": "Oh, oui ... mais ... n'exagère pas, mon petit chou! [sic] Nous voudrions nous amuser un peu ... Voilà tout!" (MN I, 537). His gender slip is telling. These examples show Pirandello welding together the exotic, the erotic and the "interdit". They speak in the language of a foreign other who produces ambivalent desire. A similar alternative scene is to be repeated at the opening of *Come tu mi vuoi* where L'Ignota returns home with her entourage of drunks who chime, "*(intonando con la lingua imbrogliata)* ... Clooo-dovèe-o ... Cloo-dovèe-o ..." (MN I, 925). These mysterious sounds are signifiers of a desire which Salter defeats. In an echo of Silia, he shouts: "Fuori, fuori di casa mia!" (MN I, 925). His assertion of the laws of property over L'Ignota are contradicted by the drunks who then risk calling a spade a spade, so that Mop is horrified by their sexual aggression. Her seemingly standard response is revised by L'Ignota's subsequent declaration of fidelity which speaks their nausea as regards the male sex:

TERZO. ... e noi, tutti a coro ...
 QUARTO (*intonando con la lingua imbrogliata*)... Clooo-dovèe-o
 ... Cloo-dovèe-o ...
 PRIMO GIOVANE. ... tristi tutti, fino a morire ...
 L'IGNOTA. Lasciatemi! Lasciatemi!
 BOFFI. Via! Via! Ora basta! - Sì, bravo! - Ma basta
 lo dice lei stessa!
 SALTER. Fuori, fuori di casa mia!
 PRIMO GIOVANE. Ma questa non è la maniera! Dobbiamo bere!
 SECONDO. Ci ha invitato lei, non fare lo stupido!
 TERZO. Dobbiamo finire nudi!
 QUARTO. ... Clooo-dovèe-o ...

Poi, a un pugno in petto:

Brutalità!
 MOP. Vergogna! Questa è un'aggressione!
*Poi, a L'Ignota: abbracciandola per riparerla e tirarla
 dentro il salotto:*
 Vieni! Vieni!

L'IGNOTA (*liberandosi dall'abbraccio ed entrando nel salotto*).
Ma no, per carità, non ci manca altro che il tuo abbraccio,
adesso!

SALTER (*nel corridojo, impedendo col Boffi l'irruzione*).

Signori, vi caccio a revolverate!

BOFFI (*spingendoli fuori dalla porta*). Via! Via! Finiamola,
insomma! Via! Via!

PRIMO GIOVANE (*prima che la porta gli si chiuda in faccia*).
Elma, carezzina!

SECONDO GIOVANE. Il cagnolino!

MOP. Fanno veramente nausea! (MN I, 925).

In an earlier version of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, Madama Pace appears with the tools of her manifest trade: the pair of scissors is reminiscent of Antonietta's castrating menace, since she is supposed to have once threatened Pirandello with a scissors and a hat-pin in hand!⁹¹ The Stepdaughter who speaks against the law is compelled to protect Madama Pace from it: "Le ho potute dir forte io per la sua vergogna (*indicherà il Padre*), che è la mia vendetta! Ma per Madama è un'altra cosa, signori: c'è la galera!" (MN I, 86).

It is interesting to compare how Freud anticipates his readers' potential astonishment and horror at his "daring to talk about such delicate and unpleasant subjects [as sexuality] to a young girl".⁹² He reassures us: "It is possible for a man to talk to girls and women upon sexual matters of every kind without doing them harm and without bringing suspicion upon himself, so long as, in the first place, he adopts a particular way of doing it, and in the second place, can make them feel convinced that it is unavoidable."⁹³ He then boasts how he calls the "bodily organs" by their "technical names" and adds a French idiom to say what he cannot say: "*J'appelle un chat un chat*."⁹⁴ The medical discourse here, like Pirandello's theory of authorship, gives him immunity from the scandal. But then the frank Dr. Freud coyly adds another French saying: "*pour faire une omelette il faut casser des oeufs*."⁹⁵ As this feminist reader writes against the insistence of the phallic signifier in both Pirandello and Freud's texts, I am compelled to repeat Freud - in a return via the narcissistic echoes of Lacan - and to say

that in all these paternal recipes for transparent signification the culinary rule, it seems, is: "pour faire une *hommelette* il faut casser des oeufs"!

Enrico IV: history/hysteria

Another of Freud's maxims was coined together with Breuer: "*Hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences.*"⁹⁶ However, it should be becoming clear that possession of a uterus is not a necessary condition for repeating the past. Enrico IV's "forma" is an endless repetition: but since this implies the future tense, he is not fixed but is subject to a future of similar, rather than different, repetitions. [Perhaps a reformulation of Tilgherian "vita" would then simply be repetition in Derridean difference.]

To master the loss of Matilde, Enrico IV re-enacts it with Frida. His present anxiety retroactively anticipates the originary catastrophe at the masquerade. Like Freud's war-wounded, he relives the trauma.⁹⁷ He goes beyond the principle of present pleasures so that paradoxically the unpleasure [*Unlust*] of the past is masochistically transformed into the "piacere della storia" (*MN* I, 355). His unfulfilled quest is typical of the "need to restore an earlier state of things."⁹⁸ The doubling of events within the text occurs in the Matilde/Frida identification. Structurally, *Enrico IV* resembles *Come tu mi vuoi* in that the Stepdaughter status of Frida is repeated in Mop. There are gender transpositions between the plays which have interesting consequences for the speaking of taboos. In the Appendix, there is a discussion of the lesbian relation between Cia and Mop which echoes Enrico IV and Frida's differently. That both these plays are written through *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is obvious. In this section, I shall discuss *Enrico IV* in terms of this pattern of triangulation. The

Oedipal breach of *Come tu mi vuoi* will be explored in the Appendix. In chapter IV, I intend to discuss further the visual aspects of this structural doubling within the plays as it occurs through the use of portraiture.

The reading of *Enrico IV* proposed in this section is one which cuts across the tendencies in Pirandello criticism that analyse the hero and disregard the other signifying systems of this monumentalised text. What better male "tragic anti-hero" to sabotage with the explosives provided by semiotics! Enrico IV has been extracted from the text as the dominant personage, the philosopher king, despite the messy stage business that goes on around him. This view of the play, pivoting on the theme of madness, distorts and reduces its meanings, and it cannot account for its theatricality. By examining *how* the play signifies, rather than *what* it signifies, the processes involved in producing a successful theatrical text can begin to emerge.

A film was made of this play in 1926, by Palermi, and plans to remake the film in 1933 in the Hollywood mould floundered when the industry decided that a new resolution had to be formulated: commercial sense dictated a "happy ending" with the American director wanting Enrico IV to marry Matilde Spina!⁹⁹ This structural alteration required by Hollywood is significant for the way in which it gives relief to the subtle balance achieved by Pirandello's arrangement of textual elements: the ridiculous imposition of a symbolic closure which restores the family is completely at odds with the subversive relation the play bears to traditional social organisations. Like *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, *Enrico IV* unsettles cultural prejudices and exposes an erosion of the incest taboo. This is taken a step further in *Come tu mi vuoi* where, for a while, the identity of desire and reproduction is challenged. At this point it may be worth referring to the response of the actors in Pabst's film, *Pandora's Box* (1929), where Lulu is said

to have anticipated Pirandello's construction of the bisexual L'Ignota. Louise Brooks, who played Lulu, narrates how the enigmatic and desiring gaze of the "lesbian" Countess Geschwitz was grounded in a male look.¹⁰⁰ The actor, Alice Roberts, who plays Geschwitz, was outraged by the immoral tale. Brooks writes: "Alice Roberts, the Belgian actress who played the screen's first lesbian, the Countess Geschwitz, was prepared to go no farther than repression in mannish suits."¹⁰¹ She then describes the filming of the scene between them:

Her first day's work was in the wedding sequence. She came on the set looking chic in her Paris evening dress and aristocratically self-possessed. Then Mr. Pabst began explaining the action of the scene in which she was to dance the tango with me. Suddenly she understood that she was to touch, to embrace, to make love to another woman. Her blue eyes bulged and her hands trembled. Anticipating the moment of explosion, Mr. Pabst, who proscribed unscripted emotional outbursts, caught her arm and sped her away out of sight behind the set. A half hour later when they returned, he was hissing soothingly to her in French and she was smiling like the star of the picture ... which she was in all her scenes with me. I was just there obstructing the view. In both two-shots and her close-ups photographed over my shoulder, she cheated her look past me to Mr. Pabst making love to her off camera. Out of the funny complexity of this design Mr. Pabst extracted his tense portrait of sterile lesbian passion and Madame Roberts satisfactorily preserved her reputation.¹⁰²

In the Appendix, there is a development of the radical aspect of Pirandello's texts which interrogate the proprieties of Hollywood-influenced movies.

Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore, *Enrico IV* and *Come tu mi vuoi* stand out in the Pirandellian sociolect of predictable dramas where a bourgeois triangle is inevitably judged: lovers are exiled and retribution is usually enacted on the offending parties, as in *La morsa* and *Il berretto a sonagli*. To make an example of adulterous conduct and to portray the subsequent ostracism, serves to repeat *L'Esclusa*. Even in this early novel, (1901), Pirandello provided a humouristic twist in that she is ostracised when innocent and re-integrated when guilty! This model, however, safely encodes femininity and its

socially acceptable limits. The text of *Enrico IV*, like that of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, operates a dispersion of this patriarchal form. The laws of fidelity are stretched to encompass putative incest. In *Come tu mi vuoi*, this breach also occurs between Salter and Mop but the gender rupture of the relation between L'Ignota and Mop is privileged over the paternal one. In *Enrico IV*, the father-daughter relation is imaginatively displaced onto a relative stranger, Frida, the daughter of a possible wife. The avenging overtones of Hamlet reverberate in Enrico IV's attack on "vescovi rapitori": he resists Pietro Damiani's scandal concerning his mother, and refuses to hear "l'oscena voce" (MN I, 323). Yet in spite of the apparently legitimate cover-ups, the structure of symbolic exchange in the play falls far short of exogamy. Censure and displacement within the text mask the evidence of an implicit incestuous relationship between Frida and Enrico IV. A Lacanian reading of this play suggests not the elaboration of a universal psychic sub-plot featuring Oedipal personages, but a capturing of the condensed movements, and the linguistic repetitions and substitutions which admit the scandalous elements. Through the strategies of concealment, Pirandello increases the tensions which accumulate around the potential disruptive encounter between father and daughter. Confusions of identity - the classical Plautine trope -¹⁰³ perform the censorship: the daughter swaps places with the mother. Ostensibly seducing his beloved, Enrico IV is simultaneously seducing both the mother and daughter in his ambiguous request to Matilde. Prostrate at her feet and shut out at the door to the other, he is refused entry back into primal plenitude. Frida, who becomes the visual simulacrum of his desire, overcomes her ambivalence and masters her anxiety by re-enacting the primal scene. She compulsively succumbs with urgent exhilaration; "No, no, non ci resisto fino a sera! ... Appena l'ho visto! La tentazione! Irresistibile ..." (MN I, 339).

All the spectators assist at the erosion of totemic taboos: the play discomforts, if not menaces the even flow of paternal discourse. The moment Belcredi intervenes to rescue Frida from Enrico IV, who is appropriating her for his own, is the same moment of maternal surveillance which forestalls the Father and the Stepdaughter. The Mother and Belcredi both serve as shock absorbers who neutralise the radical effects of the scenes. In the section "Triple Triangles" below, I provide a scheme of the structural echoes in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, *Enrico IV* and *Come tu mi vuoi*. Such resolutions retrieve the law and reinforce order. After the confusion, hegemonic values are seemingly recovered. Yet these texts all leave an aftertaste of pleasure in disturbance.

It also becomes clear that Enrico IV cannot distil his dramatic meaning on his own, but that the theatricality is a result of significant interrelationships. Matilde and Belcredi form a different intersecting triangle: they are both "legitimate" parents of Frida, and when facing Enrico IV, there is also a trace of the adultery paradigm. There is a variant in the bourgeois plot in that the "jealous husband" position is occupied by Belcredi to whom she is not married. Belcredi, her lover is an effective husband, whereas Enrico IV, a putative husband occupies the position of lover. Matilde and Belcredi overdetermine the dramatic meanings and they are not simply to be dismissed as secondary personages, or even as "foils". While Matilde is reduced to being named the "bickering" wife, Belcredi is called "hen-pecked" and as a result, he seems to dissolve into the theatrical machinery where his utterances go unheard. Like the servants, both these figures work to expand the polysemy of this text: Matilde is the pivot of the Enrico IV - Frida confrontation and Belcredi has an important function as the voice of Reason.

Unlike Laudisi's *tours d'esprit*, Belcredi's reasoning does not exercise the same fascination: this is not a result of any faults or illogicalities, but is consonant with the inferior status reason has in relation to unreason in this play. The enunciation of madness is foregrounded at the expense of sanity. Belcredi is the recto of Enrico IV's verso: he expresses the banal reservations of reason before that which threatens it. He provides a rationalist critique of Enrico IV's dissolute lifestyle and tries to categorise him as a perverted womaniser. As the devil's advocate, he remarks on Enrico IV's dubious intentions concerning Frida and he tots up the costs incurred by such Genet-like cavortings of the petty-aristocracy. He has a reason for everything and he tries to prevent everyone from being duped by the alienist's medical jargon. With wonderful hyperbole, Pirandello satirises clinical discourse and makes the doctor describe the symptoms of insanity in terms which explode the scientific purport from within. The complacent metaphysical certitudes of the doctor's unified language are internally corroded: for example, the expressions like "elasticità analogica"; "incipiente apatia"; "morbido adagiamento"; "malinconia riflessiva"; "attività cerebrale" (MN I, 336-37). The humour arises out of the absurd lexical juxtapositions and onomatopoeiac mimicry.

The different reasonings of both Belcredi and the doctor recede before the material force of unreason represented by Enrico IV's utterances: in contrast to the scientific falterings, the insane Enrico IV proceeds with a rigorously organised discourse that is permeated by an irrefutable logic. His syntax shows up the virtual and relative sense of the hegemonic "fiori di logica" (MN I, 352) and of their apparent definition of Truth: "O con una loro logica che vola come una piuma. Volubili! Volubili! Oggi così e domani chi sa come! - Voi vi tenete forte, ed essi non si tengono più. Volubili!

Volubili! ..." (MN I, 352). His critique repeats the Futurist metaphors of flight. It is the faultless armature of these phrases which withstands the coercions of normality. The materiality of the word as a symptom of psychopathology is brought out by Matilde's bewilderment at insanity's elusive shape: "Niente, sa! Neanche la minima ferita! neanche una goccia di sangue!" (MN I, 314). Madness is inscribed by the listener who projects imaginary scars that guarantee identity.

The figure of Di Nolli should also not be undervalued: he is the banal and predictable object choice for Frida since he represents stability as the fiancé, and he has the resources to finance his family's extravagant whims. In this sumptuous set, he acts out the role of Enrico IV's nephew which is another echo of Matilde-Enrico IV's relation. His implicit blood tie with Frida confuses further the fraternal and maternal identities so that triangular readings multiply. In the search for certain signs, the doctor will lament the way words vanish. Di Nolli is here at the behest of his late mother, Enrico IV's sister. Despite his proximity to the patient, he cannot analyse the reported "discorso strano" but can only relate/narrate. He is without contradiction and in dramatic opposition to Enrico IV whose incestuous embrace of Frida makes him momentarily redundant to the play.

Di Nolli is Belcredi's foil. Similarly, the servants have the important role of establishing the diachronic and synchronic moments: they rehearse the passage from historical time to the hysterical present. Their opening rhythmic litany sets the scene in Shakespearean style, but the absurd concertinaing of space and time soon propels them into the dramatic age of Beckett. They collapse the margins of history, time and space with the wordplay which traces the unlocalised and imprecise scene of their retrospective antics. They trivialise

history as a variable domain with virtual movements: they could be in Goslar/ at the Castello dell'Hertz/ Worms/ Sassonia/ Lombardia/ Reno. The semiotic rhythm of binary oppositions fragments historical truth: "L'Impero contro il Papato! Oh!"; "Antipapi contro i Papi!"; "I re contro gli antiré!" (MN I 298) and so on. They are in a fictional relation to an imaginary which is being reconstructed retroactively: they are empty signifiers in search of a past. Only Bertoldo will cling to his "preparazione storica" (MN I, 299). He is flummoxed by the loss of his historical identity: "Chi debbo rappresentare io, non lo sapete?" (MN I, 299) he pleads. He is another character without a part.

Reason marks off insanity and reinforces power: with Gallic flair, Enrico IV shows insight, if not dexterity in his account of the way civilization installs madness: "Conviene a tutti, capisci? conviene a tutti far credere pazzi certuni, per avere la scusa di tenerli chiusi. Sai perché? Perché non si resiste a sentirli parlare" (MN I, 351). Surveillance contains disruptive discourses.¹⁰⁴ Control and co-option is an effect of power which restricts the set of logical constructions acceptable. Radical speech is neutralised in the asylum where the voluble sounds are incarcerated. The alienating doctor's look serves the panopticon of power and the victim Enrico IV is the spectacle who fascinates. The cure consists of immobilising him in his delirium.

If one reads this play in its fascist context, it can become a metaphor for the way any potentially revolutionary assaults on hegemonic discourses are diffused so that their relative unity is reaffirmed. "E il Socialismo è forse riducibile a un teorema? ... L'illusione è forse l'unica realtà della vita."¹⁰⁵ These Pirandellian tones belong to Mussolini! In the spirit of Dr. Fileno's "Filosofia del lontano" (NA I, 716), this relativist world view dilutes history

and the monumental present is deprived of contradictions. The distancing device of the "cannocchiale rivoltato" (NA I, 715) places all endeavour within a semiotically uniform perspective and freezes the dialectics of the past. Fascist discourse denies its own historicity and is naturalised to become the only version of Truth available. There is a motive in fascist disavowal since to recognise process means to speak its own destruction or transformation. The discourse produces a consensus which fixes the self to the discourse in power in the same way as Enrico IV persists in an unchangeable identity. There is a welding between signifier and signified which, in psychoanalytic terms, also marks a regression to an earlier state of being where the self imagines its consistent totality as inviolate.

The play *Enrico IV* is a commentary on the way gendered subjectivity is constructed through language: the hegemonic discourse limits the possible range of subject positions. The cultural and sexual horizons are fixed. Barthes has named this mechanism an "isology" which collapses the signifier into a certain signified: the range and indeterminacy of meanings is suppressed in favour of a meaning compatible with the discourse in power.¹⁰⁶ Dissociation and dissidence are incompatible with the rule of fundamental phallic difference. Enrico IV describes his resigned sense that biology is destiny: "Ecco: quando non ci rassegniamo, vengono fuori le velleità. Una donna che vuole essere uomo ... un vecchio che vuol esser giovane. - Nessuno di noi mente o finge! - C'è poco da dire: ci siamo fissati tutti in buona fede in un bel concetto di noi stessi" (MN I, 325). The ego-ideal to which these foolish selves attempt to conform is undermined by wish-fulfilment. In Enrico IV's case, his disguise is a symptom of his retreat from socialisation. His dyed hair is uneven and "quasi puerile", and his paleness is set off by "un trucco

rosso da bambola" (MN I, 321). In the next chapter, I intend to discuss further this demasculinising process expressed by the non-verbal signs. Like a woman, Enrico IV is veiling his lack of access to phallic signification. The disguise is "evidentissimo": it is not a mimetic illusion but a modernist veil which sets in motion a desire to know what is behind the mask. In the Epilogue, I intend to examine this problem in terms of Lacan's distinction between illusion and lure.¹⁰⁷

Pirandello's text is fraught with a critique of the way discourses construct obliging selves. The popular-democratic interpellations of fascism speak a hidden disdain for the supine malleable masses. Enrico IV expresses how they are moulded and oppressed by the "peso delle parole" (MN I, 350). The word coerces consent and mass obedience:

È il loro modo di pensare, il loro modo di vedere, di sentire: ciascuno ha il suo! Avete anche voi il vostro, eh? Certo! Ma che può essere il vostro? Quello della mandra! Misero, labile, incerto ... E quelli ne approfittano, vi fanno subire e accettare il loro, per modo che voi sentiate e vediate come loro! O almeno, si illudono! Perché poi, che riescono a imporre? Parole! Parole che ciascuno intende e ripete a suo modo. Eh, ma si formano pure così le così dette opinioni correnti! ...
 Su, via, pecore, alzatevi! - M'avete obbedito? Potevate mettermi la camicia di forza ... - Schiacciare uno col peso d'una parola? Ma è niente! Che è? Una mosca! -
 Tutta la vita è schiacciata così dal peso delle parole! Il peso dei morti! (MN I, 349-50).

Pirandello here communicates the deadweight and the inescapability of the discourse in power. This text displays the ideological mechanisms for gaining political support and for constructing acceptable gendered subjects. The "isology" of fascism is evident in the way the signifier "woman" is fixed to the signifieds "nature" and "unreason". Enrico IV's backhanded compliment to Matilde draws out this linkage: "Eh, nessuno di noi può valutare ciò che fa, quando fa per istinto ... Forse voi, Madonna, potete intendermi meglio degli altri, perché

siete donna" (MN I, 327).

Matilde however refuses to be reduced to nature. She speaks an uneasy relation to the phallic discursive economy: she transgresses the paternal boundaries and defies Belcredi's admonitions against re-enacting the originating trauma. Pirandello writes her feminist resistance with a show of strength: Belcredi tries to dissuade her: "V'interessa tanto veramente? Tanto da prestarvi a questo? È enorme per una donna!" and she replies, "Per una donna qualunque!" (MN I, 341). Her experience of fear and containment is summed up in her self-analysis where she describes her youthful diffidence and timidity, another self: "Ma ero allora troppo giovane, capite? e donna: dovevo rodere il freno" (MN I, 312). Despite Pirandello's pejorative characterisation of her as an aggressive and unfeminine forty-five year old "walkiria" (MN I, 305), the text inscribes the constraints on her means of expression. Yet as the mother of a daughter whose father is absent, she has to exercise the Name-of-the-Father and so oppress Frida on behalf of power. The maternal law succeeds in rubbing "Frida" out. Matilde is too conspicuous and articulate to meet with social expectations for retiring womanhood. Frida bears a much more submissive relation to patriarchal discourse and she flinches before her Mother's tirades. Yet one senses that she is repelled by the always "reasonable" Belcredi: "Dio mio, sempre così ... Per ogni nonnulla una discussione" (MN I, 307) she complains. She chooses silence as a sign of her asymmetrical relation to the reins of power.

In this play, the discourse of sexuality is also encouraged by the confessional mode. The extravagant talking about sex is an inextricable effect of power. It is a way of administering the administrative syntax. Enrico IV speaks the lack he experiences in his imperial identity - this empty and fraudulent construction is not a

refuge from reality, it simply reproduces the founding pattern of alienation that marks the subject's entry into language. Pirandello has him speak a longing for release from identity in the momentary *jouissance* of orgasm. This desire for plenitude is spoken, "come in confidenza": "Capite? - a letto - io senza quest'abito - lei anche ... sí, Dio mio, senz'abiti ... un uomo e una donna ... è naturale ... Non si pensa piú a ciò che siamo. L'abito, appeso, resta come un fantasma! (MN I, 384). The elliptical speech traces a path through the defiles of the unspeakable. The hesitancy of the confidential tone is a sign of the way sexuality is proliferated: there is a masquerade of taboo and a pretence at censorship so that the "secret" is made a value.

Enrico IV vainly attempts to arrest the fluidity and fragmenting of the self into multiple selves. He fails in his attempt to latch onto a "forma", an imperial identity which will rescue him from history. The stage directions reveal how the self is always already constructed within a continuum of discourse which precedes it. The regression to origins fails because he is installed in a discourse without beginnings. Pirandello describes him entering in Act Two *"seguitando il discorso che si suppone cominciato nella sala del trono"* (MN I, 345). The inconsistency of the self ("vita") is a result of there never being a degree zero in a discourse always already begun. Instability fissures this text which oscillates between "vita" and "forma". Enrico IV's "spoken" identity is neurotically menaced by the return of past traces in the shape of Matilde and Belcredi. The more recent element Frida takes on meaning only because she fits in with the dream and so emphasises the fictiveness of Enrico IV's reality. Pirandello conveys the conflict of order and chaos in this imaginary babylon of the self. The plans for the cavalcade romp unleash the semiotic: "Proposi questa cavalcata storica: storica per

modo di dire: babelica" (MN I, 311). The intertextuality of the retrospective fiction of history is evident in the wide combinative freedom of the characters who assume polymorphous historical roles: "Recitava ognuno per burla la sua parte! Era una vera babele!" (MN I, 314). Post-cavalcade order is re-imposed through the divine retribution of Enrico IV's fall: he is the social scapegoat whose ritualistic sacrifice restores the transcendental signified.

The lesson of excess is that it produces the boundary. Enrico IV's fictional death is salutary as it allows the resumption of orderly communication. But the rupture is to be repeated in the carnivalesque encounter with Frida. The stage directions show that Pirandello requires the dramatic medium to convey the paradigmatic simultaneities of chaotic signification. The syntactical sequence of ordered and juxtaposed utterances, akin to the reasonableness of Belcredi and the doctor, will simply no longer do. There is an "irruzione inattesa" (MN I, 362) and all the characters rush towards Frida "che trema ancora e geme e smania tra le braccia del fidanzato. Parlano tutti confusamente" (MN I, 362). For a second Pirandello's textual design is ruptured before Frida is inevitably restored to the phallic embrace. Enrico IV's subversion is punished despite his apparent retreat from the law. It pursues him in his madness where his heterogeneity is stilled in a changeless essence. This resolution is consistent with the way fascist discourse transmogrifies social contradiction into its unyielding and timeless anatomy of human nature. Difference is substituted by eternal reminiscences: "Ora sí ... per forza ... qua insieme ... qua insieme ... e per sempre!" (MN I, 371). History will now repeat itself hysterically.

Triple Triangles: *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, *Enrico IV* and *Come tu mi vuoi*.

The structures of these three plays all bear an uncanny resemblance to one another: there follows a graph of the way the plays are statements of the Oedipal interdict against speaking sexuality. Whilst the incestuous moment in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* has received critical attention, this pattern has not been systematically related to the other plays. A discussion of the variants of triangulation can assist in explaining the different levels of dramatic success. A triangular reading of the two later plays, *Enrico IV* and *Come tu mi vuoi*, forces a return to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. There are four chronological moments in the successive narrative in each play. These moments ABCD do not correspond to the tripartite divisions into three acts (see discussion below). The narrative sequences ABCD are reproduced below on page 195.

Set A compose the pretexts - the genesis but not the *moment* of the trauma: these are the archaeological courtships of the Father-Mother; Enrico IV-Matilde; Bruno-Cia and Salter-Mop's mother X. Between A and B there is the implied relation of Matilde-Frida's father.

Set B indicate the family units at the beginning of the successive narratives of the plays: in *Sei personaggi* and *Enrico IV* they are "legitimate", but the first scene of *Come tu mi vuoi* is a premature ejaculation of the [XX] incest taboo [marked by XX] which is double-sided in this case: Mop-L'Ignota and Mop-Salter. In this set the [Step-]daughter is the only "real" daughter of both parents, whereas Frida and Mop are already stepdaughters to one parent.

Set C mark the climaxes of *Sei personaggi* and *Enrico IV* with their Oedipal transgressions spoken through the ambiguity of the step-daughters' structural position. This set point to the hole at the centre of *Come tu mi vuoi* where Mop is bracketed out of the play of desire in favour of Bruno's bourgeois rights. It is symptomatic that L'Ignota is *named* "Cia" through her subject position in this symbolic relation. In the next chapter, I intend to elaborate on the way both Matilde and Cia retreat via portraits to positions A: the regression is made more complex in the case of Matilde who is substituted by Frida.

Set D are post-texts on the later margins of the plays. In *Sei personaggi*, the Stepdaughter will bracket herself out of the scene D which repeats C; in *Enrico IV*, the legitimacies of B are restored; and in *Come tu mi vuoi*, there is a return to an earlier state of incest things in an echo of B. Another virtual position in set D is Enrico IV's: his onanistic stance fails to restore an imaginary mirror-stage A without any subjective differentiation between his total self and the other (Matilde).

These patterns of triangulation are sometimes duplicated within the same moment they occur: for instance, in set C, there is another virtual triangle of the [absent] Father-the Mother-the Son. Simultaneous to the Father's breach, there is another scene in the Son's room between the Mother-Son. The dramatic power of *Sei personaggi* arises from the way moment D perpetuates the infringement of C, "per sempre", since the Stepdaughter's future physical absence does not alter the structural positioning. In *Enrico IV*, the law of the

ae/ u/

symbolic position B is re-installed and he does penance in *eternam*. In *Come tu mi vuoi*, the initial decadence of B is repeated in the finale. The absent Secretary means that the tension is condensed in *Sei personaggi* whereas in the other two plays, the presences of Belcredi and Salter trivialise the way in which the phallic signifier insists in the unconscious. They clutter the scene in contrast with the economy of *Sei personaggi*.

All the stepdaughters - Mop, Frida and the Stepdaughter - are *agents provocateurs* in that they trigger off a return to the primal scene. Frida and Mop intrude in set C where they (like the Stepdaughter) do not belong: they bear the traces of the earlier positionalities of B. [In the Appendix, there is an outline of another return of the "repressed" which serves to link the Berlin and Veneto locales.] *Come tu mi vuoi* is overdetermined by triangulation: Pirandello has worked a multiplicity of revisions on the *Sei personaggi* model, but, in this play, he overloads the signifying circuits so that the taut dramatic effects of *Sei personaggi* are lost here. The intense suffocation of *Sei personaggi* and *Enrico IV* arises out of the specificity of the fictional topos: it all takes place on the primal stage of the brothel/castle. This accumulated tension is dispersed in the two homes of *Come tu mi vuoi*.

There are four chronological moments in the successive narrative in each play. These moments appear on the chart as ABCD where D is a repetition of B/C. These three=four moments do not coincide with the standard pirandellian division of each play into three acts. The tripartite structures reflect the inner designs of triangulation, but the moments in the successive narrative do not correspond to the division into acts. For instance, in *Sei personaggi*, ruptural position C flows through all three acts, whereas in *Enrico IV*, ruptural position C opens act three but is anticipated whenever he appears on stage in the preceding acts, and in the scenarios of the family's improvisation. In *Come tu mi vuoi*, BCD do correspond to act divisions, but here the languor of legitimate position C spills over into D, whereas C is also under menace from preceding position B. Thus the ruptured triangulations are both present and absent throughout the plays, and they enhance the dramatic sense of simultaneities - ABCD cannot thus be equated with the divisions into acts. The constant visible presence of position C throughout *Sei personaggi* is what distinguishes it dramatically from the other plays where the element who both represents and abolishes the law, namely the father (*Enrico IV*/Salter) is not almost always on stage. The overlapping triangulations in *Sei personaggi* increase its theatricality whereas the ambiguities are not quite so evident in the other plays.

The resolutions of set D show how *Come tu mi vuoi* inverts the law and questions familial legitimacy while *Enrico IV* reinstalls it. *Sei personaggi* is powerful in that it endlessly repeats the dialectic of transgression and identity. The Hollywood ending to *Enrico IV* manufactures a deodorised romance similar, but not equivalent to state A: the virgin Matilde reappears without conceding the ruptural presence of Frida. Pirandello's regressive version does not reproduce the mirror-stage but writes *Enrico IV*'s split being made manifest in Frida. The text declares the loss of pretextual plenitude by promoting the symbolic presence of Belcredi. By contrast, Hollywood hankers after celluloid transparency between desire and its object, without the interference of legal and sane speech. In Pirandello's version, the garrulous strip of signification prevents the mask from matching the original face in this way.

	<i>Sei personaggi</i>	<i>Enrico IV</i>	<i>Come tu mi vuoi</i>	
A	Father Mother	Enrico IV Matilde	Bruno Cia	Salter [X] Mop
B	Secretary X Mother [Step]daughter	Belcredi Matilde Frida	Salter XX XXXXXXXXXXXX L'Ignota Mop	
C	Father Mother Stepdaughter	Enrico IV Matilde Frida	Bruno Cia [Mop]	
D	Father =C XX Mother Stepdaughter	Belcredi =B Matilde Frida	Salter =B XX XXXXXXXXXXXX L'Ignota Mop	

III.3.b.vi. silence

Pirandello's verbal litigants are continually professing non-communication. The word, like sexuality, is not repressed but proliferates in a discourse about silence. The "silenced" and tearful Mother complains about her condition in the most eloquent terms: "Per me, signore, io sono qua! Magari mi desse lei il modo di potergli parlare un momento, di potergli dire tutto quello che mi sta nel cuore" (MN I, 113). Silence is not so much a result of coercion but of tactics. Comparisons can be drawn with the Marchesina in Capuana's "Parola di donna", where her "mutismo" is a form of resistance.¹⁰⁸

The women speak but what they say is not heard. "Lasciamo, lasciamo questo discorso" (MN II, 1181) shouts Diego Spina at the beautiful Sara in *Lazzaro*. His litany repeats the sentence of the court whom she has been for two years petitioning in vain to grant her the custody of her children (MN II, 1198). Armed with words, the women are solely the guardians of the law of castration. Their entry into language requires an acknowledgement of Oedipus: the men disavow the female acceptance of the fundamental phallic signifier. They are blind to the letters of female speech which they veil in the wishful phantasy that the phallic woman lies concealed there. As a consequence, assertive, rather than silent women are fetichised in Pirandello's texts; but what they say falls on deaf ears: their natural bodies become a substitute for the maternal phallus whose absence is disavowed. So that the masquerade can continue, their speeches hardly count beneath the male gaze - their body rather than their utterances is the signifier of desire. The silent women are phallicised through the imaginary pornography of the male look.

This scopophilia can be traced in Sirio's sculpture of La Tuda. Yet she outstrips him as his image of her can never comprehend her multidimensionality: "Non è piú quello che lui voleva fare!" (MN I, 437). She subverts the certainty of his look with further acts of semiotic terrorism:

Eh, posso anche far finta d'essere senza pensieri - per malizia. Combatto con gli artisti! Fingo di parlare come a caso; volto il capo un pochino, senza che me ne faccia accorgere; lo piego; lo alzo; sporgo appena appena una mano; guai a far vedere che sia io, la modella, a suggerire: no: io ho detto anzi una sciocchezza; ho fatto un atto, così: il pensiero è nato in loro (MN I, 394).

Her silent movements are in contrast to Ersilia's passive voice.

Ludovico Nota is told, "vorrei essere come tu mi hai immaginata" (MN I, 850). In the Appendix, there is a discussion of how Cia is always in excess of Boffi's photograph.

The silenced meanings reappear in another place. The non-verbal signifying systems speak louder than words. In chapter IV, I shall develop this aspect of female neolalia. In *I giganti della montagna*, Cotrone explains how Ilse's death is a result of her disobeying the rule of silence: she vainly attempted to communicate the poet's words beyond the safety of his paternal realm: "Io l'ho voluto dare un saggio, Contessa, che la sua Favola può vivere soltanto qua; ma lei vuol seguitare a portarla in mezzo agli uomini, e sia!" (MN II, 1366). In contrast, Donata finds herself in a battle of words with Elj. He does not know her name and is hesitant about her marital status. She challenges him: "Non abbia paura che su me la parola possa arrossire: lo può dir forte, senza esitare: signorina!" (MN II, 921). He patronises her when she demands a ride in his boat. When he says that she may be missed, she answers: "Io sono padrona di me!" (MN I, 922). There is a remarkable interchange where he twists her words in an effort not to hear her boldness. She asks him "Ha paura?" and he has the cheek to answer, "Io posso aver coraggio per me; ma paura per lei ..." (MN I, 922).

Donata demolishes his paternalism and puts his words to the test: "La dispenso d'aver paura per me: sono io a volerlo. Metto alla prova le sue parole: che per lei il bello è l'improvviso, ciò che non par vero: ebbene: eccomi, andiamo! (MN I, 922). When she is faced with Elj and his silent female companion who is a substitute for her, she lets go: "Siamo qua due donne. Che potete voi dare a quest'uomo? Parlate! Muovetevi! Mostrate! Badate che io vi strappo l'abito addosso! (MN II, 967). L'Ignota will feel a similar frustration when confronted by La Demente. Both Donata and L'Ignota refuse silence. Their mottos are echoes of one another. Donata's last words are: "E questo è vero ... E non è vero niente ... Vero è soltanto che bisogna crearsi, creare! E allora soltanto, ci si trova" (MN II, 968). L'Ignota has taken Donata's advice, as Pirandello's stage directions reveal. "*(impedendo l'abbraccio, [di Bruno], com'ebbra anche lei, ma dell'orgoglio d'aver saputo crearsi così)* ... Essere? essere è niente! essere è farsi!" (MN I, 972).

The play *Trovarsi* can be read in several ways: Donata is most often seen as an actor without an essence, someone who has no personal form of expression. She is written by her parts, and when it comes to situations in her own life, she has to use these borrowed words. Her handicapped speech is symptomatic of Pirandello's low opinion of actors in general. As I outlined in the Prologue, he regards any performance text as a betrayal of his original meaning. This more problematic idea of the relation between the design and the event underlies the "azione parlata" of this play. In addition, Donata's gender puts into relief the special difficulties women have in relation to language. Her speeches can also be read as expressing the inescapability of the phallic word:

Ecco, vedi? dico: trovarmi. È orribile! Se parlo... Dovrei non parlare ... Mi sento parlare ... Non vorrei più riconoscere la mia voce: me non sono tanto servita! Vorrei parlare con una voce nuova; ma non è possibile, perché non mi son mai fatta una voce, mai; e prima non ci ho mai badato; ho parlato sempre con questa mia voce. Ora non posso averne un'altra, è vero? è vero? è la mia! (MN II, 931-32).

Earlier in the play she shows how even the actions of her body are inscribed by language. Her non-verbal responses form another system of signification: "Perché finzione?" she answers the Marchesa Bovenò who is puzzled by Donata's multiplicity of selves. "No. È tutta vita in noi. Vita che si rivela a noi stessi. Vita che ha trovato la sua espressione. Non si finge più; quando ci siamo appropriata questa espressione fino a farla diventare febbre dei nostri polsi ... lagrima dei nostri occhi, o riso della nostra bocca ..." (MN II, 912). She is eloquent in a language that always already preconceives her.

Ilse is another of Pirandello's figures who reveals how his women are devoid of their own meanings unless they assume the phallus as text, or are assumed as text by the phallus. Ilse displays how she is trapped in the dead poet's writing: "non dovevo più liberarmene. La vita negata a lui, ho dovuto darla alla sua opera. E lui stesso lo comprese e consentì che ritornassi a recitare per adempiere a questo debito sacro. Per quest'opera sola!" (MN II, 1327). Cromo applauds this self-sacrifice to the male letter and explains: "Consacrazione e martirio!" (MN I, 1327) In contrast with Ilse, Cotrone is a neologician, for whom all is possible: he can enhance or coin word-power creatively: "E tu non sai che non bisogna aver paura delle parole?" (MN I, 1337) he asks a bewildered La Sgricia. Cotrone does not unveil truth, he invents it semiotically without any regard for its referent: "E io ho sempre inventate le verità, caro signore! e alla gente è parso sempre che dicessi le bugie. Non si dà mai il caso di dirla, la verità, come quando la s'inventa!" (MN I, 1342).

The women's silence is spoken in their pliable speech which is haunted by the far-off voice of the Father: they defer to the phallic law, the acceptance of which is the only access to language. Their speech is a form of fettering: they are gagged by the master-text.

Yet Pirandello's own words are not always "original" either as his argument with Adelaide Bernardini - Capuana's lover - reveals. In *Ciascuno a suo modo*, Pirandello shows how scandalous speech tends "a calpestare i morti e a calunniare i vivi" (MN I, 162). Bernardini refused to be silent about Pirandello's anxious plagiarism of the late Capuana. She wrote an open letter:

Quando lei si "divertì" a scrivere *Suo marito* - il romanzo aborto che dispiacque molto all'illustre romanziere isolano - lo autore di *Giacinta* giudicò quel libro antipatico, indegno di lei. Oggi che è venuta fuori la commedia *Vestire gli ignudi*, Capuana non è qui per dire qualcosa di simile; ma il suo spirito ... mi suggerisce di pregarla a confessare che qualche volta fa comodo plagiare i morti e passare sul cuore dei vivi ...

Ora lei facendo commediografo come è, dovrebbe buttare giù due altre commedie: "Spogliare i morti ..." e "Calunniare i vivi".¹⁰⁹

It seems that Bernardini recognised herself in Ersilia's family romance. In section II.3.a, I suggested that Pirandello's stance is revisionary of his naturalist precursor. The contrary occurred in Pirandello's novel *Giustino Roncella nato Boggìolo* where Silvia Roncella "invents" her own text.¹¹⁰ However, as the title exhibits, she laments this act of linguistic larceny and regrets Giustino's (*Suo marito*) feminisation.

Silvia's self-consciousness is in contrast with Ilse's mission of cultural colonisation. Ilse will be physically silenced whilst the other women figures choke on the male word. Silence in this context comes to mean unheard speech rather than "aphasia": the women's meanings are rejected and re-worked by the male figures. The topic of non-communication in Pirandello can now be seen to be intrinsically linked to problems of gender. The women in the plays are asymmetrically positioned in language: they speak with borrowed tongues their disadvantaged entry into the symbolic. They speak against the hegemonic "*econhommie*" of verbiage.

III.3.b.vii. laughter

"The doctor, who had been asked to look after the Baroness at her confinement, pronounced that the moment had not come, and suggested to the Baron that in the meantime they should have a game of cards in the next room. After a while a cry of pain from the Baroness struck the ears of the two men: 'Ah, mon Dieu, que je souffre!' Her husband sprang up, but the doctor signed to him to sit down: 'It's nothing. Let's go on with the game!' A little later there were again sounds from the pregnant woman: 'Mein Gott, mein Gott, what terrible pains!' - 'Aren't you going in, Professor?' asked the Baron. - 'No, no. It's not time yet.' - At last there came from next door an unmistakable cry of 'Aa-ee, aa-ee, aa-ee!' The doctor threw down his cards and exclaimed: '*Now its time.*'" ¹¹¹

Freud quotes this "joke" in order to show how there is a tendency to economy in joke-work: a serious thought is displaced onto something very small. The utterances of the Baroness, like Pirandello's women, go unheard. She resorts to the semiotic after exhausting her range of foreign expressions which speak the identity of childbirth and sexual intercourse. Freud gives a different analysis: he emphasises the class elements and the process of displacement. He explains: "This successful joke demonstrates two things from the example of the way in which the cries of pain uttered by an aristocratic lady in child-birth changed their character little by little. It shows how pain causes primitive nature to break through all the layers of education, and how an important decision can be properly made to depend on an apparently trivial phenomenon." ¹¹²

What Freud does not realise is the way the hegemonic discourse reads a woman's pain. His essentialist view of her body is no joke if one considers the homage still paid to his ideas on sexuality. This example seems to make a nonsense of Kristeva's hope that the semiotic can rupture the phallic discursive economy. Even non-verbal signifying systems are subject to the filtering perceptions of the listener who chooses what to hear. The pragmatic dimension of dialogue needs

to be considered if one is to explain why female speech is misheard. Freud's joke shows how the male listeners treat the signs as arbitrary until such point as they deem fit to link them to a signified. The joke displays some of the properties of Pirandello's theory of "umorismo" as outlined in the Prologue: there is a disparate relation between the signs and their referents. For the female reader, the woman's pleas signify as loudly as the appearance of the old woman who is mutton dressed up as lamb. In this section, I intend to explore further the ambiguous laughter that is produced in Pirandello's texts, and to analyse his "joke-work".¹¹³

Freud underlines how unspontaneous jokes are: they are careful constructions employing codensation and displacement to excite pleasure; they protect the teller from criticism; they express simultaneously sense and nonsense; and their techniques are not far removed from those of obsessional neurosis. Jokes share the strategies of irony of which the essence "lies in saying the opposite of what one intends to convey to the other person, but in sparing him contradiction by making him understand - by one's tone of voice, by some accompanying gesture, or (where writing is concerned) by some stylistic indications - that one means the opposite of what one says".¹¹⁴ A plurality of signifying systems contextualise the meanings and neutralise the contradiction by fixing it to a signified. For Freud, the joke occurs when the comic contrast which unmask the object is submitted to playful judgement. In Pirandello's account of the prototypical humouristic situation, the comic contrast of the primary perception, "l'avvertimento del contrario", is neutralised by sentiment, "il sentimento del contrario", which then protects the narrator from being shown as cruel:

Vedo una vecchia signora, coi capelli ritinti, tutti unti non si sa di quale orribile manteca, e poi tutta goffamente imbellettata e parata d'abiti giovanili. Mi metto a ridere. *Avverto* che quella vecchia signora è *il contrario* di ciò che una vecchia rispettabile signora dovrebbe essere. Posso così, a prima giunta e superficialmente, arrestarmi a questa impressione comica. Il comico è appunto un *avvertimento del contrario*. Ma se ora interviene in me la riflessione, e mi suggerisce che quella vecchia signora non prova forse nessun piacere a pararsi così come un pappagallo, ma che forse ne soffre e lo fa soltanto perché pietosamente s'inganna che, parata così, nascondendo così le rughe e la canizie, riesca a trattenere a sé l'amore del marito molto più giovane di lei, ecco che io non posso più riderne come prima, perché appunto la riflessione, lavorando in me, mi ha fatto andar oltre a quel primo avvertimento, o piuttosto, più addentro: da quel primo *avvertimento del contrario* mi ha fatto passare a questo *sentimento del contrario*. Ed è tutta qui la differenza tra il comico e l'umoristico (SPSV, 127).

This paradigmatic description trusts in the reader. As Freud points out: "Irony can only be employed when the other person is prepared to hear the opposite, so that he cannot feel an inclination to contradict."¹¹⁵ Perhaps it is because women are the objects of this mechanism, one feels an urge to interrupt the narrative. Pirandello draws a very similar distinction to Freud when he separates the comic from the humouristic. A feminist reading finds an obstacle in the comic moment, where according to Freud, the psychical process is accomplished "between the self and the person who is the object"; whereas "the psychical process in jokes is accomplished between the first person (the self) and the third (the outside person)"¹¹⁶. This tripartite structure of the joke, I submit, is what propels Pirandello into the dramatic genre. In successive narrative there is always the risk of a humouristic moment slipping back into the comic. In the plays, the outside person allows the women to be the butt of the narrator's humour without the author trivialising his message. In some of the plays the implied theatre audience takes a more active role as the third element which legitimises the play of ambiguous meanings on the stage, yet also guarantees by their laughter that the signifier is eventually fixed. Pirandello can then explore the domain of ambivalence

by making his female figures signify contradiction until arrested by the male laugh. The dramatic effects accumulate "par ricochet". Freud also explains how the presence of a third party allows for repetition, since the pleasure of the other's laughter makes up "for the loss of pleasure owing to the joke's lack of novelty".¹¹⁷

This theory can help explain the function of the delivery event in Pirandello's plays where the delivery design is repeated obsessively without losing effect because of the changing composition of the audience.¹¹⁸ The presence of the actors in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* now takes on a symbolic dimension in the tripartite play of words. Sometimes they are the comic object of the Father's wit since he sees them as actors not characters. These moments form the comic rather than the humouristic dimension of the play. As Freud explains: "[The comic] can be content with two persons: a first who finds what is comic and a second in whom it is found. The third person to whom the comic thing is told intensifies the comic process but adds nothing new to it. In a joke the third person is indispensable for the completion of the pleasure-producing process."¹¹⁹ The Stepdaughter's laugh converts the comic into the humouristic joke which arises out of the ambiguity and seeming absurdity of the family's identity as characters inscribed in the script rather than as actors external to it:

IL CAPOCOMICO. E dov'è il copione?
IL PADRE. E in noi, signore.

Gli Attori rideranno.

Il dramma è in noi; siamo noi; e siamo impazienti di rappresentarlo, così come dentro ci urge la passione!
LA FIGLIASTRA (*schernevole, con perfida grazia di caricata impudenza*). La passione mia, se lei sapesse, signore! La passione mia ... per lui!

Indicherà il Padre e farà quasi per abbracciarlo; ma scoppierà poi in una stridula risata.

IL PADRE (*con scatto iroso*). Tu statti a posto, per ora! E ti prego di non ridere così! (MN I, 59).

When the Mother is the comic object, then the actors have a secondary

comic function. The presences of the characters, the Producer and the theatre audience constitute the third element of "the outside person" which underlines the pathos of this laughter produced at the Mother's expense. Pirandello's joke-work exploits the contradictory appearance of the veiled Mother who is also a widow, despite the Father's presence. As a sign who simultaneously communicates his life and death, she puts his identity under question until her own history is established:

IL PADRE. L'asciati vedere!

Le solleverà il velo.

LA MADRE (*alzandosi e recandosi le mani al volto, disperatamente*). Oh, signore, la supplico d'impedire a quest'uomo di ridurre a effetto il suo proposito, che per me è orribile!

IL CAPOCOMICO (*soprappreso, stordito*). Ma io non capisco più dove siamo, né di che si tratti!

Al Padre:

Questa è la sua signora?

IL PADRE (*subito*). Sissignore, mia moglie!

IL CAPOCOMICO. E com'è dunque vedova, se lei è vivo?

Gli Attori scaricheranno tutto il loro sbalordimento in una fragorosa risata.

IL PADRE (*ferito, con aspro risentimento*). Non ridano! Non ridano così, per carità! E appunto questo il suo dramma, signore. Ella ebbe un altro uomo. Un altro uomo che dovrebbe esser qui! (MN I, 62).

The Father polices the Stepdaughter's laugh to prevent it from being at his, rather than at the actors' expense. She is one of the few figures who discovers a subversive weapon in this way: most of the women seldom laugh and when they do it is rarely threatening. While Beatrice is furiously resisting her confinement with "Bèèè! bèèè! bèèè" (MN II, 404), Ciampa will be protected by the high sentiments which determine his laughter. Against the quiet background murmur of the family and other curious bystanders who are actually speaking Beatrice's madness, and so condemning her, Pirandello allows Ciampa the luxury of laughter: "E mentre tutti quei curiosi, spinti dolcemente ora dal Delegato, ora dal fratello, si ritirano commentando sotto sotto la

disgrazia, si butta a sedere su una seggiola in mezzo alla scena, scoppiando in un'orribile risata, di rabbia, di selvaggio piacere e di disperazione a un tempo" (MN II, 405).

The co-existence of antithetical states is the central feature of "umorismo".¹²⁰ The simultaneity of contradictory meanings is, as explained in chapter II, a fundamental feature of the dream. Freud emphasises the similarity between joke-work and dream-work: they both share the techniques of "displacement, faulty reasoning, absurdity, indirect representation, representation by the opposite".¹²¹ The main difference between a joke and a dream is that the former is a public narrative which requires a listener whereas the dream is private and only re-constructed in the secondary revision of its narrative. One could argue that for Pirandello, the theory of "umorismo" is the private made public. The dream text is now given a social intelligibility. Freud stresses the uncommunicating aspects of the dream: "Not only does it not need to set any store by intelligibility, it must actually avoid being understood, for otherwise it would be destroyed; it can only exist in masquerade."¹²² Enrico IV's idiolect is made a sociolect through the process of acting out his phantasies. His dream world becomes the locus of "umorismo". If jokes and dreams employ the same rhetorical strategies, only the place of their enactment differentiates them; and furthermore, it seems that jokes allow the release of inhibitions which is what produces laughter while dreams are silent spaces. Dreams are also structured on a scandalising moment and are acted out on the stage of that other catastrophic scene.

The humouristic aspect of Enrico IV's presence is that his private scandal is made public. The play parades his dreams which now assume the triadic structures of a grand Oedipal joke. The enigma of the Sphinx is given shape and form: the masquerade is not an illusion, it simply produces the desire to know the truth. Enrico IV's veil of

words keeps slipping. His obvious disguise, he explains, is significantly different from Matilde's illusory lures.¹²³ He does it for laughs while she is deadly serious: once again we see that Matilde is the comic butt while Enrico IV becomes the humouristic figure combining ridicule, pathos and philosophy: "Che importa che questa mia tintura non possa essere, per voi il color vero dei miei capelli?" he asks. "-Voi, Madonna, certo non ve li tingete per ingannare gli altri, né voi; ma solo un poco - poco poco - la vostra immagine davanti allo specchio. Io lo faccio per ridere. Voi lo fate sul serio. Ma vi assicuro che per quanto sul serio, siete mascherata anche voi, Madonna" (MN I, 325-26). The wit of Enrico IV's insight rests in his seeing what Matilde does not want him (and others) to see. Her body is a *trompe l'oeil*, a hidden sign which the male gaze cannot know for what it is. Only the mirror-stage permits the self not to give itself for something other than it is. Enrico IV is "ridens" - he knows that¹²⁴ laughter, like lying, is the proprium of human signification. The joke, the lie and the dream all indicate that things are not what they seem: the referential fallacy is a verbal lure. Enrico IV decodes the sign of Matilde with his joke-work. The play dramatises the secret scandal of Matilde's humourless presence; and the simultaneous body of Frida provokes the contradictions in identity.

Matilde's laughter, when she does laugh, is laced with fear. It is always a laughter referred to retrospectively and at one remove:

BELCREDI. Io non mi sono mai fatto prendere sul serio!
DONNA MATILDE. Ah lo so bene! Ma con lui, però, non c'era da scherzare.

Con altro tono, rivolgendosi al Dottore:

Càpita, tra le tante disgrazie a noi donne, caro dottore, di vederci davanti, ogni tanto, due occhi che ci guardano con una contenuta, intensa promessa di sentimento duraturo!

Scoppia a ridere stridulamente.

Niente di piú buffo! Se gli uomini si vedessero con quel "duraturo" nello sguardo ... - Ne ho riso sempre cosí! E allora, piú che mai. - Ma debbo fare una confessione: posso farla, adesso dopo venti e piú anni. - Quando risi cosí di

lui, fu anche per paura. Perché forse a una promessa di quegli occhi si poteva credere. Ma sarebbe stato pericolosissimo (MN I, 312).

This discussion of laughter reveals how difficult it is to separate speech from action when analysing the plays: the domains of silence and laughter, while dependent on speech, lead on to the preoccupations of chapter IV. Any division between the verbal and non-verbal signifying systems is for the sake of analysis: since the discourses of "azione parlata" are inseparable, these areas of overlap in chapters III and IV underline the capacity of the dramatic medium to speak polymorphously.

The telescopic dimension of Matilde's laughter rests in the way her memories, rather than the present situation, provoke her outbursts. The return of the past gives these sounds a bitter tinge. The ironic aspects of these moments are based in Pirandello's theory of "umorismo" which bears an uncanny resemblance to Soffici's theory of irony.¹²⁵ Both the Futurist and Pirandello distinguish two types of irony and each tends to favour the philosophical over the rhetorical. For Soffici, rhetorical irony is based on a seemingly fictitious contradiction between what one says and what one means; whilst a philosophic contradiction regards itself as essential, not fictitious. The merely verbal contradiction of irony's rhetorical form becomes substantial and effective in its philosophical form. [It may be possible to translate these terms into Freud's distinction between the comic and the joke.] For Soffici, as for Pirandello, "ironia" is a sense of the absurd, of the non-sequitur, of the non-sense and disproportion in human activities which fail to create sense:

Per ironia s'intende qui quello stato dello spirito cui si arriva quando, dopo aver meditato e studiato, cercato e vissuto, si viene a scoprire la formula capitale della nostra metafisica, lo scopo primo della ricerca speculativa, il gran Problema della nostra più profonda anima: il Senso dei Sensi, non era altro che un -Nonsenso; una semplice

operazione male impostata, e perciò stesso insolubile. La sproporzione, subitamente rivelantesi, fra l'immensità dell'attesa e la meschineria della scoperta, produce nel corso dello spirito, un urto dal qual erompe secondo un antico principio caricaturale, il flusso irresistibile della comicità.¹²⁶

This description of the co-existence of antithetical meanings is similar to the telescoping effect Pirandello mentions in "L'umorismo" and develops in the novella "Mondo di carta" (NA I, 878-86). He writes: "e il telescopio allora diventa un terribile strumento, che subissa la terra e l'uomo e tutte le nostre glorie e grandezze" (SPSV, 156). The important becomes trivial and vice versa in this "filosofia del lontano" (NA I, 716). Irony can be seen to be another form of repetition, where the meaningful is reviewed and so becomes meaningless. Soffici's rendition of the impact of his ironic device is rather more iconoclastic than Pirandello's. The anarchic Futurist does not include Christian compassion in his consideration of the way the certainties of human achievement evanesce. This telescope resembles another diabolical machine, the "pompa a filtro" of Logic (SPSV, 154), also a metaphoric device which, in terms of my analysis above [see III.3.b.i], would be reserved for the male figures: "Attraverso il filtro, il sentimento lascia quanto ha in sé di caldo, di torbido: si refrigera, si purifica, si i-de-a-liz-za" (SPSV, 154). The second moment of "umorismo" is to be the privilege of the male figures who locate the women in its first comic phase.

The ironic device of "umorismo" deconstructs the sign which signifies contradictory signifieds simultaneously. The semiotic multidimensionality of laughter in Pirandello is what distinguishes "umorismo" from the comic. The humourist relishes incongruencies: "egli scompone il carattere nei suoi elementi; e mentre quegli [i poeti epici o drammatici] cura di coglierlo coerente in ogni atto, questi si diverte a rappresentarlo nelle sue incongruenze" (SPSV, 158). Pirandello makes

women the comic objects of the first phase of "umorismo" and so constructs them metonymically: one element of their "character" is syntagmatically juxtaposed to an opposite element in a chain of humouristic signification which turns a smile to bitterness. The faculty of humouristic distanciation belongs to the men who can sustain two contradictory images of the female body simultaneously. Women are forbidden to see the breakdown of the paternal metaphor as the Father exhibits: "La donna - ecco - la donna, infatti com'è? Ci guarda, aizzosa, invitante. La afferrì! Appena stretta, chiude subito gli occhi. È il segno della sua dedizione. Il segno con cui dice all'uomo: "Accèccati, io son cieca!" (MN I, 71). The male gaze can accommodate contradiction whereas the women seem to narrow down the range of possible signifieds. This constriction is physically represented by Frida who is trying on her mother's fancy-dress: "Non mi fate ridere, che scoppio! Dico, ma che vitino avevi, mamma? Mi son dovuta succhiare tutta, per entrarci!" (MN I, 339). As outlined in the Prologue, humourist signs refer to simultaneous signs rather than to an essential referent in this extended joke of unlimited semiosis.

The humourist's discourse says more with less, since "brevity is the soul of wit"¹²⁷ and the metaphoric devices of irony permit him to imply the opposite without stating it. The women are dispossessed of the economical techniques of joking. It is only the Stepdaughter who manages to accomplish in her own speech the paradigmatic qualities of the humourist sign, since she is conscious of her dual identity. She fractures and transcends the symbolic order by laughing wo-manically. Her stage presence is enantiosemic in that she comes to stand for the opposite of acceptable womanhood:

Verrà fuori, ultima, da sinistra, la Figliastra che correrà verso una delle scalette; sul primo scalino si fermerà un momento a guardare gli altri tre e scoppierà in una stridula risata, precipitandosi poi giù per la scaletta; correrà attraverso il corridojo tra le poltrone; si fermerà ancora una volta e di nuovo riderà, guardando i tre rimasti lassù; scomparirà dalla sala, e ancora, dal ridotto, se ne udrà la risata. Poco dopo calerà la

TELA

(MN I, 116).

The threefold rhythms of her laughter reverberate through the Oedipal sign. She cancels the symbolic in her conduct which is out of character for a Stepdaughter. Her action is telescopic in that it casts a different view on received ideas about the family. In the deconstructive spirit of Enrico IV, her timing goes against the paternal grain: she laughs as she indulges in a pleasurable "carnevalata fuori di tempo" (MN I, 364).

IV. Spectacles: The Visual Illustration

IV.1. Futurist Scenography

Brum brumbrúm brumbrúm brumbrú
Brà brabrà brabrà brabrà
Brúmmiti brúmmiti brúmmiti brú
Bràbbiti bràbbiti bràbbiti brà

(MN II, 484)

This sonorous drumrolling passage comes from the same pen which is accused of producing too much cerebral verbiage. Pirandello writes these rhythmic non-verbal signs to beat out his new graphic language - the wordless melodic of futurist "suoni-rumori" as set out by the painter Russolo in the manifesto "L'arte dei rumori" of 11th March, 1913, where he quotes Marinetti's "*zang-tumb-zang-tumb-tuumb l'orchestra dei rumori di guerra*".¹ The atonal game of explosive phonemes is not marginalised to the stage directions but takes the place of spoken words in the script of *Sagra del Signore della Nave*. This play is the first Pirandello ever produced with his newly formed company, "Teatro d'arte", at the Teatro Odescalchi, in Rome, on 4th April, 1925. It signals a shift on the part of the playwright/director who is now to experiment liberally with futurist and cinematic visual effects. The play also marks the entry of the anonymous group, instead of the individual hero, as a component of the dramatic event: this historical development which relates to the mass politics of fascism will be examined in the following section, "The Role of the Audience".

One of the unexpected points of contact between the Sicilian Pirandello and the Northern Futurists is the image of Mount Etna: the formal playwright, educated in the classics, shares this symbol with those urbane iconoclasts. The volcano leads to an explosive stage

alliance between Pirandello and the Futurists. Their pyrotechnics overlap when Pirandello produces Marinetti's play *Vulcano* on 31st March, 1926 with the same "Teatro d'arte" company at the Teatro Valle in Rome. Marta Abba played the "leading lady". He also shares in an evening ("serata") of Futurist pantomime and contributes his own defiant piece, *La Salamandra*. Pirandello wrote this "scenario" for which Bontempelli composed the ballet music, and it was performed for the first time by Prampolini's "Teatro della Pantomima Futurista" company, at the Teatro di Torino, on 7th March, 1928.² These collaborations further indicate the intertextual links between Pirandello and the Futurists, as outlined in chapter II.2 above.

Mount Etna is a sign of the "terremoto" which caused the epistemological havoc in *Così è (se vi pare)* of 1918. The overturning of the denuded earth, and Etna billowing its guts, are metaphors for exposure and devastation that underlie the obsessional search for privacy in that play. The earthquake reverberates off-stage and the shaky speech-patterns and terrorised eyes of the Ponza family echo the natural event. The dialogue speaks the tremor of meaning and the destruction of syntax produced by a disaster which eradicates subjective identity. I refer again to the presentiment of rupture and of forces breaking beyond their limits that occurs in "L'umorismo" (1908):

In certi momenti tempestosi, investite dal flusso, tutte quelle nostre forme fittizie crollano miseramente; e anche quello che non scorre sotto gli argini e oltre i limiti, ma che si scopre a noi distinto e che noi abbiamo con cura incanalato nei nostri affetti, nei doveri che ci siamo imposti, nelle abitudini che ci siamo tracciate, in certi momenti di piena straripa e sconvolge tutto (SPSV, 151-52).

The images of chaos will be materialised in the fire and brimstone stage effects of the later plays. In *Così è (se vi pare)* the smoke-screen thrown up by the earthquake is overdetermined by the provincial atmosphere which stifles "objectivity".

This sense of suffocation could be a result of the proximity of sulphur mines which, in Pirandello's writing, seem to further pollute the air.³ In the preface to *'U Ciclope* (1918) - his bowdlerised translation of Euripides's play - Pirandello draws attention to the visual similarity between sulphur miners with their headlamps and the one-eyed giant who is given a local identity: "L'occhio che brilla in fronte al Ciclope è la lumierina che stenebra ancora gli antri profondi delle sue zolfare. Ancora i zolfatori delle Sicilia hanno veramente quell'unico occhio in fronte" (SPSV, 1214). (It is almost as if the Cyclops, Polyphemus, the guardian "numes" of Pirandello's ancestral hearth, might have had a hand in making him choose to translate this text.) Many years later, these folklore elements will be repeated in the play *I giganti della montagna* (1938). In IV.3, "Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse", I intend to explain how fascist discourse prescribes that Pirandello recapture the mythological meanings that are invested in his ancient Sicily. Both *I giganti della montagna*, and *La nuova colonia* (1928) present apocalyptic eruptions in a concrete way. This contrasts with *Vulcano*, where futurist passion is unleashed metaphorically. However, Marinetti's poet, Serena, is to be killed by peasants in a ritualistic scene which anticipates Ilse's "murder". He is punished for unleashing the dormant forces of the volcano. Marinetti, the "vulcanologo",⁴ may also have inspired the bloodletting scene in *Sagra del Signore della Nave*: yet here the sacrifice does seem rather to be consistent with the return to folklore in fascist discourse. In section IV.3, "Dreamscapes : From Adventure to Apocalypse", I shall argue that the overtly physical aspects of Pirandello's later stage techniques have more to do with competition from the realist cinema and with the demands of fascist culture than with his borrowings from futurist scenography.

If hellfire symbolises the religious vision of terrestrial damnation, then the mime *La Salamandra* is Pirandello's futurist rejection of this myth. With its single spoken word of "Pan" (SPSV, 1187) the voiceless scenario also attempts to overturn the semiotics of eternity, since Pirandello disassociates the Salamander from its classical connotations of survival. In the same "serata" programme, Fillia presented his *Sensualità meccanica* which provides an alternative poetics of permanence: here a spiral is placed above a cube as the sign of the eternal male (spiral) and female (cube) dynamic.⁵ This typical opposition of male movement against female stasis is reflected in Pirandello's mime where a languid futurist heroine - "Lei" - is manoeuvred by an active man in a "frak":⁶ their clash supposedly represents the ephemeral passions which contrast with the endurance of the Salamander. Pirandello will then have his characters episodically scurry after the evasive Salamander which continues to avoid being destroyed by fire. The accompaniment on a saxophone by the frivolous musician, Pan, places the scene in the Jazz Age. The whole of classical heritage will then be eliminated when the Salamander receives a cosh on the head from the motile Pan! This futurist levity is not a side of Pirandello one often encounters. The pantomime is intellectually unconvincing since there is a syllogistic flaw in Pirandello's reasoning which does not undo the metaphor of the Salamander's resistance to fire. The action of the play sustains this mythical tenet while Pirandello attempts to give a visual rendition of his own crushed credo. The metaphor of the Salamander persists despite Pirandello's metonymic substitute of a saxophone for fire. Apparently this confusing evening had been opened with chants of the fascist "inno", "Giovinezza":⁷

The only value of citing the insubstantial script of *La Salamandra* is to bring out Pirandello's concern with the non-verbal signifying

systems in the theatre. This extreme example shows him open to innovations even at this late stage in his career. The experiment underlines how well-balanced the insights of "L'azione parlata" are, where no single signifying system takes precedence over any other. The interdependence of the verbal and the visual elements in his plays discloses his sense of theatre. In this section, I hope to communicate how the multiplicity of signifying elements of the performance text (PT) of his plays requires a reading which does not concentrate on the written words of the dramatic script and on its "didascalie". Gestural, sonorous and visual elements co-exist with the spoken word, and any reading which neglects this overlap necessarily diminishes the theatricality of Pirandello's writing. At the end of this chapter, in the section IV.3, "Towards a new theatrical grammar", I hope to explore the possibilities provided by the dialectic between variable and invariable elements of a performance text. Each different performance, or delivery event, is constrained by its design, yet is also subject to surprise eruptions.⁸ As I outlined in the Prologue, the "pipistrello principle" allows one to speak the unrepeatability of the delivery event which, to some extent, permits theatre to retain its specificity in relation to film. In the essay "Illustratori, attori e traduttori" (1908), Pirandello argues forcefully in support of the interrelations between the technical and the verbal, the graphic and the linguistic. I quote again this seminal passage discussed more fully in II.2:

In questo senso devono essere intesi nell'arte l'attività pratica, la tecnica, i mezzi comunicativi della rappresentazione, il fatto fisico in rapporto al fatto estetico, la cui unità non si salva ma si compromette, vedendo due fatti dove invece non è che un fatto solo. (SPSV, 211).

Pirandello realises how the verbal and non-verbal elements are inseparable in a performance text. He is developing his ideas concerning the fusion of different signifying systems already discussed in his earlier

article "L'azione parlata" (1899). His dramatic sense can be detected in these theoretical writings in praise of the interpenetration of visual and verbal effects.

In his essays, Pirandello betrays his later tendencies towards drama: his shift will not simply be a matter of substituting dialogue for narrative, but is bound up with much deeper concerns about the problems of representation. As I discussed in chapter II, he will require the dramatic genre in order to overcome the limitations of successive narrative which is inadequate to the contemporary crisis in signification. The theatre will allow him to exhibit the symptoms of an age of uncertainty where multiple and contradictory views of the same event or object dismantle traditional notions of absolute meaning. In the essay "Illustratori, attori e traduttori", Pirandello discloses his sense of the synchronic signifying elements in a text. The dramatic genre will provide him with conditions where he can display his breakdown of faith in narrative's chronological and metonymic sequences. His experience of the "subjective" aspects of reality can now be communicated by an interplay of words and contradictory gestures. He will exploit a chorus of simultaneous elements to dramatise his loss of the object. The play *Così è (se vi pare)* illustrates how the stage accommodates a multiplicity of conflicting views in a way which the *novella* cannot. His experiments in the figurative possibilities of the dramatic medium will be promoted by his exposure to futurist scenographic daredevilry.

Between 1911 and 1921, a plethora of futurist manifestos against conventional stage practices appeared. It is unlikely that Pirandello was not influenced by the general mood of a theatre in revolt⁹, and many of his own innovations are consonant with futurist rhetoric. In my brief survey of these manifestos, I shall focus only on aspects relevant

to a study of the evolution in Pirandello's stage techniques. In the "Manifesto dei Drammaturghi futuristi" of 11th January, 1911 the playwrights [as I discussed in chapter II] inveigh against the idea that drama should reproduce reality photographically: "L'arte drammatica non deve fare della fotografia psicologica, ma tendere invece ad una *sintesi della vita nelle sue linee più tipiche e più significative*" [their italics].¹⁰ A synthetic intuitionism ("fisicofollia")¹¹ is favoured over psychological realism and the individual gives way to the type. In this manifesto, they also express "la voluttà di essere fischiati",¹² as this makes a welcome change from applause which endorses mediocrity.

The accounts of the way *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* was received at its first performance in Rome, on 10th May, 1921, leave one in little doubt as to the scandal caused by Pirandello's text which broke away from the banal themes of adultery commonly portrayed in the *boulevard dramæ*.¹³ The Stepdaughter decodes the fashionable taste for sentimental romance through her attack on the Father's bestiality: "Ah, che schifo, allora, che schifo di tutte codeste complicazioni intellettuali, di tutta codesta filosofia che scopre la bestia e poi la vuol salvare, scusare ..." (MN I, 71). Her futurist stance here is an echo of a point made in Marinetti's manifesto "Il teatro di varietà" of 29th September, 1913.

Il Teatro di Varietà è una scuola di sincerità istruttiva pel maschio, poichè esalta il suo istinto rapace e poichè strappa alla donna tutti i veli, tutte le frasi, tutti i sospiri, tutti i singhiozzi romantici che la deformano e la mascherano. Esso fa risaltare, invece, tutte le mirabili qualità animali della donna, le sue forze di presa, di seduzione, di perfidia e di resistenza

Il Teatro di Varietà deprezza sistematicamente l'amore ideale e la sua ossessione romantica, ripetendo a sazietà, colla monotonia e l'automaticità di un mestiere quotidiano, i languori nostalgici della passione.¹⁴

Here, the physical signifiers of lust are given precedence over verbal phraseology. The comments on the female sign duplicate the celebration

of primitive instincts in Valentine de Saint-Point's "Manifesto della donna futurista" of 25th March, 1912, where she chants: "Ma si lascia da canto il Femminismo. Il Femminismo è un errore politico. Il Femminismo è un errore cerebrale della donna, un errore che il suo istinto riconscerà."¹⁵ In his review ("misurazione") [1927?] of Pirandello's *L'amica delle mogli* Marinetti wrote:

Potenza tipicamente futurista di sintetizzare tutti i problemi spirituali i più foschi e i meno seducenti per piantarli spavalamente sul palcoscenico dove il pubblico passatista vorrebbe si eternasse il cretinissimo triangolo dell'adulterio elegante.¹⁶

However, the Stepdaughter's critique of romantic pulp goes beyond that of Marinetti. Pirandello, in this case, does not simply substitute *instinct for mystique* with *instinct*, but has the Stepdaughter demystify the poses of both sexes in courtship. In contrast, the veiled Signora Ponza baffles her interrogators by her silent iconic presence where her identityless body becomes the phallus, so that she could say, as Lacan does: "Jamais tu ne me regardes là où je te vois."¹⁷ Silia's stage presence is contradicted by her elliptical and unformed speech which attempts to interrupt the male look which imprisons her:

GUIDO. Come se fossi in una carcere!

SILIA. Ma sono, in una carcere!

GUIDO. E chi ti ci tiene?

SILIA. Tu ... tutti ... io stessa ... questo mio corpo, quando mi dimentico che è di donna, e nossignori, non me ne debbo mai dimenticare, dal modo come tutti mi guardano ... come sono fatta ... Me ne scordo ... chi ci pensa? ... guardo ... Ed ecco, tutt'a un tratto, certi occhi ...

Oh Dio! scoppio a ridere, tante volte ... Ma già, dico tra me. Davvero, io sono donna, sono donna ...

GUIDO. E mi pare, scusa, che non avresti ragione di lagnartene.

SILIA. Già, perché ... piaccio (MN I, 521).

The "Teatro di Varietà" is so eclectic as to reproduce ambiguities worthy of "umorismo":

Il Teatro di Varietà è oggi il crogiuolo in cui ribollono gli elementi di una sensibilità nuova che si prepara. Vi si trova la scomposizione ironica di tutti i prototipi sciupati del Bello, del Grande, del Solenne, del Religioso, del Feroce, del Seducente e dello Spaventevole, ed anche l'elaborazione astratta dei nuovi prototipi che a questi succederanno.

Il Teatro di Varietà è dunque la sintesi di tutto ciò che l'umanità ha raffinato finora nei propri nervi per distrarsi ridendo del dolore materiale e morale; è inoltre la fusione ribollente di tutte le risate, di tutti i sorrisi, di tutti gli sghignazzamenti, di tutte le contorsioni, di tutte le smorfie dell'umanità futura. Vi si gustano l'allegria che scuoterà gli uomini fra cento anni, la loro poesia, la loro ¹⁸ pittura, la loro filosofia e i balzi della loro architettura.

This manifesto also spells out the breakdown in perspective and the collapse of logic that haunts Pirandello's plays: "Il Teatro di Varietà distrugge tutte le nostre concezioni di prospettiva, di proporzione, di tempo e di spazio."¹⁹ The structures of repetition in Pirandello's plays reflect this tenet, as I indicated in II.3.b.iv. With an irreverent tone which anticipates the confusions of genres in *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, the Futurists recommend arbitrary mixtures of style: "Vivificare le opere di Beethoven, di Wagner, di Bach, di Bellini, di Chopin, introducendovi delle canzonette napoletane."²⁰ The musical pastiche of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, together with its unbalanced combinations of "improvisation" and melodrama are in the spirit of Variety theatre.

The compressed action of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* grants it an important place in the futurist repertoire of "synthetic" theatre: "Sintetico cioè brevissimo. Stringere in pochi minuti, in poche parole e in pochi gesti innumerevoli situazioni, sensibilità, idee, sensazioni, fatti e simboli".²¹ Both this play and *Enrico IV* are overdetermined so that each dramatic moment contains a plurality of meanings. As I have indicated in earlier chapters, the condensation of these plays gives them the connotative qualities of a dream text. "Brief, meagre and laconic" writes Freud when accounting for the synthetic quality of dreams.²² The manifesto, "Il Teatro futurista sintetico" (1915), repeats the attack on

verisimilitude: "È stupido curarsi della verosimiglianza (assurdità, questa, poichè valore e genialità non coincidono affatto con essa)."²³

The fragmentary quality of any reproduction of a primal scene was emphasised in chapter III. In this manifesto, the Futurists celebrate narrative disorder and require the theatre to be the locus for unedited traces. The chaotic "scomponimento" should emulate the cinematic cut:

È stupido voler spiegare con una logica minuziosa tutto ciò che si rappresenta, quando anche nella vita non ci accade mai di afferrare un avvenimento interamente, con tutte le sue cause e conseguenze, perchè la realtà ci vibra attorno assalendoci con *raffiche di frammenti di fatti combinati tra loro, incastrati gli uni negli altri, confusi, aggrovigliati, caotizzatti*. Per es.: è stupido rappresentare sulla scena una contesa tra due persone *sempre* con ordine, con logica e con chiarezza, mentre nella nostra esperienza di vita troviamo quasi solo dei *pezzi di disputa* a cui la nostra attività di uomini moderni ci ha fatto assistere *per un momento* in tram, in un caffè, in una stazione, e che sono rimasti cinematografati nel nostro spirito come dinamiche sinfonie frammentarie di gesti, parole, rumori e luci.²⁴

The Futurists show a capacity to think the process of "double exposure" and "alternation". Their synthetic theatre spatialises the temporal and temporalises the spatial in accordance with film techniques of flash-back and montage. Temporally distinct events are shown simultaneously and concurrent, simultaneous events are shown successively.²⁵ They reinvest these cinematic perceptions in the domain of the theatre and hence produce startling effects of simultaneity and overlap. The stasis of the traditional stage set is given a dynamic dimension when separate spaces are juxtaposed in a continuity of "compenetration":

"Noi otteniamo un *dinamisp* assoluto mediante la *compenetrazione di ambienti e di tempi diversi*" [their italics].²⁶ The thesis of the manifesto "Il teatro futurista sintentico" is demonstrated in Marinetti's synthesis, *Simultaneità* (1915) where "vi sono due ambienti che si compenetrano e molti tempi diversi messi in azione simultaneamente".²⁷

In chapter II.2, I emphasised how important this piece is for an understanding of the period's crisis in signification. I isolated a "frame" in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* where Pirandello is confronted with

the problem of representing two concurrent events which are taking place in two different locations, namely the Son's bedroom and the garden. The dilemma is resolved by the Producer who re-imposes linear narration and "cuts" the scene in the bedroom. In this chapter, I intend to explore further the influence of "synthetic" scenography on Pirandello's stage practices.

Whereas the Variety theatre manifesto announces the dissolution of classical Aristotelian unities, and abandons the stereotypical plots of the bourgeois salon *dramas*, the Synthetic theatre manifesto is a much weightier document in terms of the visual revolution it entails. Marinetti's play, *Simultaneità*, performs a cubist dissolution of time and of objective, one-sided reality. It is a bilateral exercise which presents two seemingly disconnected and isolated realities contemporaneously. Yet even in the so-called compenetration, two distinct social levels maintain their relative coherence despite the "overlap", until the end when the collapse is spoken only in the stage directions. The characters, whose anonymity prefigures Pirandello's family, never notice the similarity of their space. For Marinetti, the role of the spectator will be to become aware of the connotations of each "separate" locale which assumes the presence of the other: "La cocotte, che non è qui un simbolo, ma una sintesi di sensazioni di lusso, di disordine, d'avventura e di sperpero, vive con angoscia, desiderio o rimpianto, nei nervi di tutte le persone sedute intorno alla pacifica tavola familiare."²⁸ The signifiers mask their signifieds, in that the plane of expression here is already a sign which consists of the conventional *denotative* meanings of family and "cocotte". The dramatic strength of the juxtaposition lies in the way the paradigmatic meanings which are conventionally unrepresented, or *in absentia*, are here realised. The unspoken other of the sign "family" is given concretion in the shape of the "cocotte" and vice versa: the Father evokes the obverse connotation of lover, and

the "cocotte", wife.

Pirandello will refine Marinetti's design when he constructs the scene in the brothel. He presents us with an internal anatomy of Marinetti's exposed juxtapositions: the theatricality of Pirandello's scene is that the connotations accrue around the presence of the character rather than their being represented in another place. Marinetti embodies the conflict between the social self and unconscious desire in two separate figures whereas Pirandello's figures are overdetermined by the simultaneity of meanings condensed within them. Marinetti's portrayal seems mechanical when contrasted with Pirandello's graph of internal schizophrenia where two identities vie concurrently within a single body. Marinetti counterposes his Father with the "cocotte" so that, despite his innovation, the effect is to restore metonymic representation. Because his figures never recognise one another on stage, the different selves are taking up double positions within the same space. Pirandello's compression leads to a more profound sense of overlap since the Father is simultaneously lover and the Stepdaughter, wife and "cocotte", while they are rooted together in one single space. The triple and incestuous presence of the Stepdaughter as *daughter*, wife and "cocotte" makes the overlap even more compelling, as I have discussed in III.3.b.v. Instead of Marinetti's two compenetrating apartments, Pirandello synthesises the family's space and time with that of the brothel. The presences of Madama Pace and the Mother explode the contradiction which Marinetti never unleashes. Pirandello's compression of time and place is made even more riveting by the presences of the remaining characters and actors on the stage during this synthesis. The Stepdaughter's multiple selves are revealed through the voices of Madama Pace, the Mother and the Father who all position her differently. The rehearsal situation renders the compenetration more effective than the Futurist manifesto could ever have anticipated.

Pirandello is teaching the Futurists their own lesson and he goes far beyond the literal aspects of their text. The overlap of the brothel and the rehearsal spaces are given a further resonance through the conflict of actors and characters. Pirandello's separation of the unity of actor/character into two bodies is a corollary to the theory of synthesis in that he is de-synthesising what is normally regarded as synthetic.

The "coup de théâtre" resides in Pirandello's splendid didacticism: the "close-up shots" of the melodramatic encounter are distanced by his insistence on the presences of observers, be they characters, actors or the audience. This juxtaposition makes itself felt through the repetition of episodes, the successive spatialisation of time, which is a trick of the camera. Pirandello re-runs the shots of the brothel scene in order to synthesise the past and present in the "acting out". These stage techniques alienate the audience whose moral selves now co-exist with their theoretical selves learning a lesson about the workings of theatre. Pirandello uses the device of juxtaposition to protect his text from the scandalous eruption that audience identification would involve. Instead of allowing the accumulation of cathartic effects, in the way Artaud might have done, Pirandello screens the audience from his theatre of cruelty by reminding them of his compenetration of the "real" event with its repetition. The synthetic moments in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* thus go beyond the limits of futurist experimentation but also assist Pirandello to play it safe. It is the startling combination of both revolutionary and contained elements which make this play so endlessly fascinating. In *Enrico IV*, he takes bolder steps and allows the compenetration to collapse into a "real" event: Enrico IV's mauling of Frida is totally unrehearsed. The overlap of past and present occurs without preparation. The co-existence of multiple selves in Enrico IV makes him misread Frida's fixed identity. This scene is

not as condensed as the brothel scene despite its shock element since here Pirandello reproduces Frida's other in the shape of Matilde as an observer. This juxtaposition of two figures to represent one conflict retreats to Marinetti's example. What is gained by the surprise tactics is lost by the mechanical doubling.

Pirandello's surprises are in keeping with the Futurist manifesto, "Il teatro della sorpresa" of 11th October, 1921. In the following section, I intend to outline how this shock element creates a role for the audience. I shall also discuss the later manifestos, "L'atmosfera scenica futurista" (1932),³⁰ and "Il teatro totale per masse" (1933).³¹ Reference will also be made to the manifesto, "Il teatro aereo futurista" of 11th April, 1919,³² which addresses itself to mass entertainment and which also re-inforces the virile metaphors discussed in chapter III.2.

Prampolini theorises the problem of lighting in his Manifesto of the Futurist stage (1915).³³ He announces a ban on backdrops and seems to anticipate Pirandello's use of luminous radiation in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. Stage illumination should create forlorn voids and exultant blocks of light through the interpenetration and intersection of light and shade. He argues that lighting creates a dynamic stage and that it should express emotional intensity through colours appropriate to the action on stage. [This is reminiscent of Bragaglia's "Luce Psicologica" discussed in I.2.] In *Lazzaro*, there is an almost Shakespearean resonance to the way the heavens will portend Diego's accident: here futurist lighting contrasts to spell out his impending "crucifixion". Pirandello instructs: "*Il cielo, d'improvviso, da rosso che era, s'è fatto violaceo, e la scena appare come fredda d'un tratto da quella livida luce sinistra*" (MN II, 1183). Earlier in the play, Sara's arrival from a different rural existence is given extra dimension through the lighting: "*Sullo sfondo del cielo infiammato, Sara, tutta rossa e col manto nero, sembra un'irreale apparizione di ineffabile bellezza: nuova, sana, potente*" (MN II, 1179).

Similarly, in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, the projected shadows of the Characters at the finale evoke an insubstantial dream world of flickering images, as if lit up by Anselmo Paleari's "lanternino" (TR, 396-407). Pirandello's intriguing relation to photography and the cinematic image will be outlined in IV.2, "*Enrico IV: Moving Pictures*", below. The expressionistic lighting of the magnified shadows of the four most important Characters is in the spirit of futurist experimentation:

Subito, dietro il fondalino, come per uno sbaglio d'attacco, s'accenderà un riflettore verde, che proietterà, grandi e spiccate, le ombre dei Personaggi, meno il Giovinetto e la Bambina. Il Capocomico, vedendole, schizzerà via dal palcoscenico, atterrito. Contemporaneamente, si spegnerà il riflettore dietro il fondalino, e si rifarà sul palcoscenico il notturno azzurro di prima (MN I, 116).

The final immateriality of the Characters is a fleeting reproduction which is severed by the Stepdaughter's laughter. Throughout the play, these imaginary fictions have been larger than life in that right at the beginning Pirandello insists that "*i Personaggi non dovranno infatti apparire come fantasmi, ma come realtà create, costruzioni della fantasia immutabili: e dunque più reali e consistenti della volubile naturalità degli Attori*" (MN I, 54) [his emphases]. He uses "special" masks to fix their expressions in a way which is reminiscent of the blatant stereotypes of the *commedia dell'arte*. Yet these traces of obviousness will be offset by subtle lighting which distinguishes them from the actors. The result of the illumination is to make the actors spectre-like and pale against the definition of the characters, Pirandello here inverts "natural" laws since one expects the bodies of the actors to impinge much more than ethereal creatures of fantasy. The dramatic reversal of cause and effect, and the sabotage of logic, duplicate the stance of the Variety theatre manifesto which also anticipates Madama Pace's bizarre appearance:

Il Futurismo vuole trasformare il Teatro di Varietà in Teatro dello stupore, del record e della fisicofollia.

Bisogna assolutamente distruggere ogni logica negli spettacoli del Teatro di Varietà, esagerarvi singolarmente il lusso, moltiplicare i contrasti e far regnare sovrani sulla scena l'inverosimile e l'assurdo. (Esempio: Obbligare le chanteuses a tingersi il décolleté, le braccia, e specialmente i capelli, in tutti i colori finora trascurati come mezzi di seduzione. Capelli verdi, braccia violette, décolleté azzurro, chignon arancione, ecc. Interrompere una canzonetta facendola continuare da un discorso rivoluzionario. Cospargere una romanza d'insulti e di parolacce, ecc.).³⁴

The futurist overtones in Madama Pace's entry are self-evident. It is interesting to note that only in the final version of the play (1925) does Pirandello substitute a fan and a cigarette for the more threatening pair of scissors which hung from a long silver chain around her waist in the 1921, 1923 and 1924 texts ("*e con una lunga catena d'argento attorno alla vita, da cui pende* [1923 and 1924: *penderà*] *un pajo di forbici*").³⁵ Instead of merely being a "grassa megera", she is exaggerated to become a "megera d'enorme grassezza" in the 1925 version, when the carrot-coloured wig and red rose are also added. In the earlier texts, she is described as being "*dai boffi capelli ossigenati, tutta ritinta*" and is dressed with clumsy elegance in black silk ("*seta nera*"). This sombre colour is replaced by "*seta rossa sgargiante*" which is more in keeping with the Spanish flamboyance of the final version. Each revision shows Pirandello transforming the brassy *madame* into a colourful futurist parody intended to shock:

5/ L'uscio in fondo s'aprirà e verrà avanti di pochi passi Madama Pace, megera d'enorme grassezza, con una pomposa parrucca di lana color carota e una rosa fiammante da un lato, alla spagnola; tutti ritinta, vestita con goffa eleganza di seta rossa sgargiante, un ventaglio di piume in una mano e l'altra mano levata a sorreggere tra due dita la sigaretta accesa. Subito, all'apparizione, gli Attori e il Capocomico schizzeranno via dal palcoscenico con un urlo di spavento, precipitandosi dalla scaletta e accenneranno di fuggire per il corridojo. La Figliastro, invece, accorrerà a Madame Pace, umile, come davanti a una padrona (MN I, 85).

The surprise entries of both the characters and Madame Pace owe a great deal to the futurist demolition of reason and to their imbuing material objects with animate qualities. Madame Pace's space evokes her presence, rather than the other way round. Her appearance is unmotivated and sudden, after the Father's suggestion: "Ecco, signore: forse, preparandole meglio la scena, attratta dagli oggetti stessi del suo commercio, chi sa che non venga tra noi ..." (MN I, 85). The objects of her trade conjure her up through metaphoric association. This inversion of the laws of causality is consistent with the prestige the Futurists granted objects. In the manifesto "Il tattilismo" (1921),³⁶ Marinetti outlines his programme to develop the audience's sense of touch. He also composed the "sintesi" *Vengono* (1915)³⁷ where furniture appears to have a life of its own: no human actors appear on the stage and the pieces are silently manipulated by stagehands, concealed in the wings where they draw the furniture in different directions by means of the strings attached. The puppet-theatre of objects can be detected in Pirandello's novella "Nel/ albergo è morto un tale" (NA II, 721-27) with its ominous presence of "scarpe" lined up outside the bedroom doors. (The "pipistrello" is another example of the stunning intervention of a non-human element.) In 1931, Marinetti retrospectively affiliates himself with Pirandello's Madame Pace. He wrote in his article "Teoria delle parole in liberta":

Il mio dramma simultaneo di oggetti *Vengono* suggerì a Pirandello l'entrata o apparizione della modista Signor~~e~~ Pace nel secondo atto di *Sei personaggi*, entrata imposta dalla presenza stessa degli attaccapanni carichi di capelli. Così l'intuizione popolare dice che i fatti si chiamano e s'inseguono nello sforzo di unificazione simultanea fuori tempo o spazio che fa l'universo.³⁸

Futurist "modernolatry" provides a context for this fetishisation of objects: technology justifies impressions of autonomous objects no longer dependent on human control.³⁹ Free association can disconnect science and defy temporality as in the appearance of Madame Pace. The

subversion of physics is evident in the presences of the Six Characters. Whereas Madame Pace contradicts gravity, the Six Characters affront the ballast of reason by their "inexplicable" division from the actors. Pitoëff's production in Paris in 1923 captured this confusion of logic and science by making them manifest themselves in the descending frame of a mechanical elevator. Their insubstantial textual essence is materialised when placed amid this feat of scientific gadgetry. This bold stage tactic is less compelling in our post-modernist age, but Pitoëff's insight matches the Futurists' incantatory sense of drama. Futurist scenography, with its "magical" qualities sets the theatre free from logic and motive: the enchantment of their duplicitous tricks is that of the conjuror whose exhaustive knowledge of the laws of materiality allows him the freedom to feign a convincing defiance. Pirandello's Cotrone will carry on the new surrealist tradition and he will show off his command of light and shadow with futurist flamboyance. He naturalises the fantastic:

COTRONE. Mi chiamano il mago Cotrone. Vivo modestamente di questi incantesimi. Li creo. E ora, stiano a vedere.

Si rimette le mani attorno alla bocca e grida

Nero!

Si rifà il tenue barlume lunare di prima, spenta la luce della facciata

Questo nero la notte pare lo faccia per le lucciole, che volando - non s'indovina dove - ora qua ora là vi aprono un momento quel loro languido sprazzo verde. Ebbene, guardino: ... là ... là ... là ...

Appena dice e indica col dito in tre punti diversi, dove indica, s'aprono per un momento, fin laggiù in fondo alle falde della montagna, tre apparizioni verdi, come di larve evanescenti.

ILSE. Oh. Dio, com'è?

IL CONTE. Che sono?

COTRONE. Lucciole! Le mie. Di mago. Siamo qua come agli orli della vita, Contessa. Gli orli, a un comando, si distaccano; entra l'invisibile: vaporano i fantasmi. E cosa naturale (MN II, 1336-37).

In the section IV.3, "Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse", I intend to discuss this retreat into the imaginary in relation to fascist discourse.

Pirandello emulates futurist stage techniques, but improves on them. A survey of his own scenographic practices can reveal his increasing confidence with the dramatic medium and his realisation of the importance of non-verbal effects. He graduates from the clichéd settings of the *boulevard dram* of his early years and ceases to give privilege to voices and philosophy as he did in the "cerebral" *Così è (se vi pare)* and *Il giuoco delle parti*. His concerns become less logocentric when he shifts from the portrayal of integrated actor-characters who voice their presences, to an exploration of the graphemes of absence: non-verbal signifiers now communicate a plurality of meanings but simultaneously undermine their own coherences.⁴⁰ This "écriture"⁴¹ is inscribed in the textualised body of the actor without a character, and of the character without an actor. Instead of the search for a final interpretation according to the detective tropes of the earlier plays, Pirandello, in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* disseminates inexhaustible repetitions. His scenography writes his sense of the absurd across the stage.

Pirandello charts his own dramatic transformation when, at the beginning of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, he has the actors poke fun at his earlier amateurish sense of theatre. The leading man, who is to play Leone, is amazed at the naïveté of Pirandello's metaphysical lesson: "Ma scusi, mi devo mettere proprio il berretto da cuoco in capo?" (MN I, 53). The explanations of the didactic Producer lead to hilarity and ironic comments among the actors. The intertextuality of this scene is a result of Pirandello's self-criticism which involves a dialectical notion of cancellation and preservation of former traces in the new synthesis (*Aufheben*). Pirandello's decentred writing now erases the transcendental signifieds of his earlier relativist philosophy: because it *is* relativist he no longer needs an egg-beating scene to display life as a void and fragile shell. In *Il giuoco delle parti* the stage effects seem ham-handed because Pirandello is employing simple metonymic juxtapositions

to illustrate his ideas in a linear way - a manner which he condemned in his attack on "illustratori".⁴² The different semic elements will be condensed in *Enrico IV* to much greater dramatic effect: Enrico IV's figure on stage simultaneously signifies his absence. He is a visual husk that no amount of hyperbolic make-up and lighting can fill. Their excess writes his lack: the tinted hair, rouged cheeks and stark sackcloth trace a life slipping away. Pirandello does not employ a physical snake to illustrate the conceit, but renders the effect through an accumulation of non-verbal signifying elements. Instead of the clumsy distribution of stage properties found in *Il giuoco delle parti*, Pirandello exploits traditional machinery in unexpected ways. His bizarre juxtapositions betray a futurist bravura and he achieves a formidable sign in Enrico IV, in contrast to the dilettante dressed up as a cook. Enrico's speechless presence communicates his hollowed-out being - "a creature void of form"⁴³ whereas the moment Leone stops speaking his reason, he looks absurd, as the leading man complains: "Ma è ridicolo, scusi!" (MN I, 53). Leone is a mere rambling mouthpiece in comparison with Enrico IV's silent stature. In section IV.2, "Identity and Disguise", I intend to examine further how Pirandello builds on his experience of futurist scenography.

In many ways, *Enrico IV* is a more skilful essay on dramatic techniques than *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. *Enrico IV* materialises what *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* theorises. The latter could be described as Pirandello's own Futurist Manifesto play where he prospects the golden innovations publicised by the Variety, Synthetic and Surprise theatre manifestos. In *Enrico IV* the theoretical high jinks are converted so as to mark Pirandello as the initiator of *post-futurist* stage praxis.

The Role of the Audience

Il pubblico che applaude ora il nuovo dramma di Pirandello, applaude anche la sua trovata futurista che consiste nel far partecipare il pubblico all'azione del dramma. Il pubblico si ricordi che questa trovata è dovuta ai futuristi.⁴⁴

Once again, Marinetti is laying claim to Pirandello's theatrical sense. In this manifesto, "Teatro antipsicologico astratto di puri elementi e il teatro tattile"⁴⁵ [undated] which appears after *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, Marinetti reiterates the futurist concern with the audience. His later interventions will go beyond the schoolboy pranks of the Variety Theatre manifesto (1913) where he proposed the use of itching powder and glue on the seats to evoke general hilarity. Overbooking was another suggestion, together with his recommendation to offer "posti gratuiti a signori o signore notoriamente pazzoidi, irritabili o eccentrici, che abbiano a provocare chiassate con gesti osceni, pizzicotti alle donne o altre bizzarrie".⁴⁶ More seriously, he stated:

Il Teatro di Varietà è il solo che utilizzi la collaborazione del pubblico. Questo non vi rimane statico come uno stupido voyeur, ma partecipa rumorosamente all'azione, cantando anch'esso, accompagnando l'orchestra, comunicando con motti impreveduti e dialoghi bizzarri cogli attori. Questi polemizzano buffonescamente coi musicanti.⁴⁷

Pirandello certainly adopted some of these strategies for chaos in the least successful of the plays in the trilogy, *Ciascuno a suo modo* (1924). The prelude outside the theatre is supposed to have an unsettling effect on the audience: "Questa scena a soggetto, ma proprio come vera, dovrebbe cominciare qualche minuto prima dell'ora fissata per l'inizio dello spettacolo e durare, tra la sorpresa, la curiosità e fors'anche una certa apprensione degli spettatori vari che si dispongono a entrare, fino allo squillo dei campanelli nell'interno del teatro" (MN I, 122). In the subsequent *Intermezzi corali*, more confusion will abound. In the theatrical free-for-all, even the critics

will have their malicious say (MN I, 156). The intrusions of this scripted and largely fictional "audience" are such as to prevent the performance of the third act. The play is an admirable argument against closure, but its systems for participation become overloaded with a plethora of actors and stages.

One could argue that perhaps Pirandello was equally influenced by the more sensible considerations of the Russian playwright, Nikolai Evreinov, in this respect.⁴⁸ If not directly influenced, then Pirandello at least anticipates and shares the more stimulating preoccupations of Evreinov concerning the special relation between the stage and the audience. Whilst Marinetti draws on popular culture in order to explain the traditionally easy-going rapport between an actor and audience in the Italian theatre, Evreinov is more interested in the philosophical, if not "pirandellian", dimension of this relation. In a passage which outlines the need for a degree of complicity between the audience and the actors, Evreinov substantially resembles Pirandello:

Everything in the theatre is, and *must be*, conventional. There exists at the moment of theatrical perception a sort of silent agreement, a sort of *tacitus consensus*, between the spectator and the player whereby the former undertakes to assume a certain attitude, and no other, towards the "make-believe" acting, while the latter undertakes to live up to this assumed attitude as best he can. The spectator, as it were, says to himself: "This is a piece of canvas, but I willingly take it for the sky." If he cannot do so, it is either the fault of the artist who painted the decorations, or the fault of the player who betrays by his apathetic gaze his sceptical attitude towards this "sky", or else of the spectator himself, who is so dull-minded as to be utterly unable to mistake a makeshift for a real sky.⁴⁹

Pirandello's own examination, in *Il fu Mattia Pascal* (1904), of the process of tacit consent precedes Evreinov's by approximately eight years, and it is likely that Evreinov was writing in ignorance of Pirandello, whereas Guidice claims that Pirandello came under Russian influence after the appearance of Evreinov's *The Theatre in Life* in Italy in 1913.⁵⁰ My task is not so much to establish precedence, as

much as to show that Pirandello's canny intuitions concerning theatricality and the role of the audience are evident in his narrative writing many years before he could have been influenced by either the Futurists or Evreinov. In the novel, *Il fu Mattia Pascal*, he showed how the modernist "gestus"⁵¹ will consist precisely in rejecting the complicity between the actor and audience: he sceptically overturns both their acceptance of representational conventions. Orestes will be disconcerted by "uno strappo nel cielo di carta del teatrino" (TR, 383). Anselmo Paleari explains:

— Mi lasci dire. Oreste sentirebbe ancora gl'impulsi della vendetta, vorrebbe seguirli con smaniosa passione, ma gli occhi, sul punto, gli andrebbero lí, a quello strappo, donde ora ogni sorta di mali influssi penetrerebbero nella scena, e si sentirebbe cader le braccia. Oreste, insomma, diventerebbe Amleto. Tutta la differenza, signor Meis, fra la tragedia antica e la moderna consiste in ciò, creda pure: in un buco nel cielo di carta (TR, 383-84).

Pirandello's hesitant gesture will be emulated in the Futurist Synthetic Theatre manifesto (1915) with its disregard for "verosimiglianza".⁵²

Marinetti immodestly claims his rights to Russian inventiveness as well!

He writes: "Gli scenografi russi derivano quasi tutti dai nostri futuristi, ch  in Russia il verbo Marinetti   sempre in grande onore;

..."⁵³ To argue that Pirandello is a precursor of Evreinov clarifies Giudice's thesis, since he simply states that Pirandello came under Russian influence through Evreinov whose theories of "pantheatricality" fascinated him, so closely do they correspond to his own views. Giudice then quotes Pirandello's article for *Il Corriere della Sera*, 16th June, 1929, where he underlines their common idea that the whole world (including nature) is a theatre where everybody acts a part or has a part assigned them.⁵⁴

Apart from the coincidence of their models, the comparison with Evreinov can only serve to emphasise the radical aspects of Pirandello's early comments on the role of the audience (or reader) whom he makes

re-examine, if not refuse, the customary theatrical complicity. In another passage, Evreinov describes the way a bargain is struck to make the audience accept the illusions and trappings of kingship:

I don't know you, sir! Get out of my way. When I see you on the beach with nothing but a bathing suit on I won't believe that you are a king, however haughty is the tone in which you address me. "A fool", "a drunkard", "a stupid imposter", I shall say. But if you receive me with a well-cut paper crown on your head, if you are surrounded by "noble", silently respectful courtiers, if I see at a distance a cardboard throne and if you wear on your shoulders a royal mantle (the fact that it is made of a bath-towel instead of ermine won't shock me at all), I shall have in mind a clear and convincing conception of proud royalty, or royal power. Perhaps I shall even tremble for a minute in awe and fear (just for the sake of my own enjoyment, of course). The same applies to decorations, for decorations are the costume of the place of action.⁵⁵

For a representation to be culturally "convincing", there has to be relative agreement among the audience community as to meaning of the not always literal signifiers of kingship. Yet Pirandello will foreground these connotative signs in *Enrico IV* in order to defamiliarise them from their conventional context. The alienation effect is a measure of Pirandello's respect for the audience's scepticism, since he shows that he knows that we know that the iconic signs are "illusory" and not denotative, and that we look without ever suspending disbelief so as to learn more about Enrico IV's artificial "reality". It is Pirandello's bizarre combination of dramatic signifiers which educates the audience to see differently. The standard theatrical lexis becomes opaque when Pirandello gives relief to the evident materiality of the signs themselves. He offers two contradictory views simultaneously to evoke an ambiguous response:

Entrano prima i due Valletti che vanno a postarsi ai piedi del trono. Poi entra tra Ordulfo e Arialdo, che si tengono rispettosamente un po' indietro, Enrico IV. È presso alla cinquantina, pallidissimo, e già grigio sul dietro del capo; invece, sulle tempie e sulla fronte, appare biondo, per via di una tintura quasi puerile, evidentissima; e sui pomelli, in mezzo al tragico pallore, ha un trucco rosso da bambola, anch'esso evidentissimo. Veste sopra l'abito regale un sajo da penitente, come a Canossa. Ha negli occhi una fissità spasimosa,

che fa spavento; in contrasto con l'atteggiamento della persona che vuol essere d'umiltà pentita, tanto più ostentata quanto più sente che immeritato è quell'avvilimento. — Ordulfo regge a due mani la corona imperiale. Arialdo lo scettro con l'Aquila e il globo con la Croce (MN I, 321-22).

In the next section IV.2, "Disguise and Identity", I shall discuss in more detail the visual strengths of the play, *Enrico IV*.

The futurist manifestos, "Il tattilismo" (11th January, 1921)⁵⁶ and "Il teatro della sorpresa" (11th October, 1921)⁵⁷ are almost contemporary with Pirandello's "futurist" *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* which was first performed in Rome on 10th May, 1921. Whether Madama Pace was a futurist invention or not, their influence should be seen in perspective, especially in relation to the portrayal of the role of the spectator in the writing of Pirandello, *novelliere*. Earlier in this study, in II.3, I drew attention to Pirandello's precocious narrative dramaturgy: the *novelle*, "Il lume dell'altra casa" (1928)(NA II), and "Il pipistrello" (1920)(NA I), underscore his scopophilia. A mere bat subverts the conventional tacit accord between actor, writer and audience, and Pirandello's playfulness teases his putative dramatic audience: Faustino Perres withdraws from the illusionism which undermines his status as author since the audience does not realise the cause of Gastina's "realistic" performance. The play can dispense with its author but not with its audience. The *teatro nel teatro* trilogy requires the presence of the audience in the same way as the telling of a joke depends for its success on a listening party. [In III.3.b.vii, I referred to Freud's analysis of this tripartite relationship.] The plays of the trilogy become pointless without the physical presence of the audience who are a measure of the theatricality of each unit. In the remaining plays, the role of the audience is not as crucial to the process of signification in the texts. Pirandello is so anxious about guaranteeing an audience in the *Intermezzo* of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, that he drafts an alternative script in case no member of the audience remains in the auditorium to witness Dr. Hinkfuss's

aerial experiments! He plans for this eventuality in the stage directions:

Si può lasciar prendere questo piacere al Dottor Hinkfuss, anche se nella sala non resterà nemmeno uno spettatore. In questo caso (che è pur da prevedere) non si avrebbe più la rappresentazione simultanea di questo intermezzo, là nel ridotto del teatro e qua sul palcoscenico. Ma il male sarebbe facilmente rimediabile. Il Dottor Hinkfuss, anche facendo riaprire il sipario, vedendo che il suo fervorino non sortì l'effetto di trattenere in sala nemmeno una piccola parte del pubblico, si ritirerà fra le quinte, un po' contrariato; e si sfogherà a dare il saggio della sua bravura quando la rappresentazione nel ridotto sarà finita e gli spettatori, richiamati dallo squillo dei campanelli, saranno rientrati nella sala a riprendere i loro posti (MN I, 245).

In this play however, Pirandello is not so much involved in challenging basic presumptions about theatricality as in giving a display of scenographic bravura to delight the audience. They are not being pushed directly to question the representational values of what is being shown and beheld; rather, they are learning about the possibilities, instead of the limitations, of theatrical gadgetry.

Such a scene cannot evoke the opprobrium Pirandello experienced after the first performance of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*; he could hardly have wished then to exact so graphically the lessons of Marinetti's manifesto, "La volontà d'esser fischiati".⁵⁸ It is only when Pirandello no longer occupies this prime *avant-garde* position that he has to rely more evidently on futurist strategies for audience response. In chapter I.2, I discussed how the growth of a mass audience was to result in Pirandello's attempts to satisfy the aesthetic requirements of the new ideological regime. In particular, I argued that Pirandello was aware of the theatre's potential function for producing a homogeneous popular-democratic group of spectators: the composition of his audience loses individuality in response to mass consumerism. In section IV.3, "Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse", I plan to examine further the effects of political change on his dramatic texts. In this present section, I shall show how futurist ideas about aerial theatre, scenic

atmosphere and total theatre serve to endorse the technocratic drift of Pirandello's scenography after 1922.

(a) The boyish jests of Madama Pace's surprise appearance and the gunshot in *Sei Personaggi in cerca d'autore*: and the moving picture in *Enrico IV*, are to be followed by a far more disturbing interest in visual effects, and by a rewriting of the role of the audience. In the Variety Theatre manifesto, Marinetti explains how cigar and cigarette smoke can help erase the barriers between the audience and the stage: "Il Teatro di Varietà utilizza il fumo dei sigari e delle sigarette per fondere l'atmosfera del pubblico con quella dal palcoscenico. E poichè il pubblico collabora così colla fantasia degli attori, l'azione si svolge a un tempo sul palcoscenico, nei palchi e nella platea."⁵⁹ We have already seen Pirandello take this "polydimensional"⁶⁰ lesson to heart in the trilogy. The *topographia* of an airfield for the *Intermezzo* in *Questa sera si recita a soggetto* can be motivated by reference to the futurist manifesto, "Il teatro aerea futurista" (1919), where the author, Azari, "pilota aviatore futurista", provides the subtitle: "Il volo come espressione artistica di stati d'animo".⁶¹ This fascination with flight is less innocent than it first appears: apart from its celebration of virile and heroic gestures, this aerial theatre is programmatically elitist and "spectacular". Azari states: "Il Teatro aerea sarà un teatro veramente popolare poichè (salvo le tribune a pagamento riservate a coloro che vorranno ammirare da vicino gli aviatori e le colorazioni futuriste degli aeroplani) sarà offerto gratuitamente a milioni di spettatori. Così anche il poverissimo avrà il suo teatro."⁶² Not only the class but the gender connotations of flight are once again made explicit here:

Nei nostri voli dialogati, nelle nostre parole in libertà aeree, anche il sesso dei personaggi sarà messo in evidenza dal tipo dell'apparecchio, dalla voce del motore e dalla diversa linea di volo. Per esempio uno Sva, motore fisso 200

HP, che sale con continue maestose impennate è evidentemente maschile, mentre un Henriot, motore rotativo 110 HP, che voli con un dondolio ritmico da destra a sinistra, ha tutti i caratteri della femminilità.⁶³

In his manifesto, "Il teatro aeroradiotelevisivo" (1931), Marinetti repeats these hierarchical ideas under the euphemistic heading, "Teatro popolare". He begins by describing how "nei nostri voli dialogati, nelle nostre parole in libertà aeree, anche il sesso dei personaggi sarà reso evidente dal tipo dell'apparecchio, dalla voce del motore e dalla linea del volo".⁶⁴ He then adds:

e/ Il Teatro aereo futurista avendo per essenza l'eroismo sarà una scuola di coraggio. Sarà un teatro popolare poiché (salvo le tribune a pagamento) sarà offerto a milioni di spettatori. Anche il poverissimo avrà il suo teatro, coll'ampiezza dei suoi spettacoli, il concorso delle folle e l'emulazione dei suoi attori stimolerà anche l'aviazione commerciale e l'industria aviatoria.⁶⁵

If one re-examines Pirandello's "campo d'aviazione" (MN I, 245), his own shifts in perspective emerge: he is no longer so intimately concerned with the members of the audience as he was in *Ciascuno a suo modo*, for instance. His increasing remoteness from individual response is evident in the fact that he can even contemplate scripting a set which might not be seen! He disowns responsibility for this indulgence with the same panache I described in II.3: the secret pleasure in the prodigious effects is supposed to be Dr. Hinkfuss's alone:

p/ Tali prodigi potrebbero essere lasciati alla bizzarria del Dottor Hinkfuss. Ma poiché lui stesso, e non l'autore della novella, ha voluto che Rico Verri e gli altri giovani ufficiali fossero aviatori, è probabile che abbia voluto così per prendersi il piacere di preparare, davanti al pubblico rimasto nella sala, una bella scena che rappresenti un campo d'aviazione, messo con mirabile effetto in prospettiva. Di notte, sotto un magnifico cielo stellato, pochi elementi sintetici: tutto piccolo in terra, per dare la sensazione dello spazio sterminato con quel cielo seminato di stelle: piccola, in fondo, la casina bianca degli ufficiali, con le finestre illuminate, piccoli gli apparecchi, due o tre, sparsi sul campo qua e là: una grande suggestione di luci cupe: e il ronzio di un aeroplano invisibile, che voli nella notte serena. Si può lasciar prendere questo piacere al Dottor Hinkfuss, anche se nella sala non resterà nemmeno uno spettatore (MN I, 245).

In a remarkable self-justification, Pirandello displaces his desires for superfluity onto Dr. Hinkfuss. When he presents us with Cotrone in *I giganti della montagna* (1931 - 1938), he will have lost these scruples since his narrative presence is not so obvious here. Cotrone is an unmanacled Hinkfuss who luxuriates in unmotivated excess: "Manca forse il necessario, ma di tutto il superfluo abbiamo una tale abbondanza ..." (MN II, 1336). By comparison, Hinkfuss is uncomfortable, or rather, Pirandello is uncomfortable with Dr. Hinkfuss's sensationism:

Ciò che importa soprattutto è che il pubblico abbia sopportazione di queste cose che, se non proprio superflue, certo son di contorno. Ma dato che per tanti segni si può vedere che ci piglia gusto, e che anzi questo contorno va cercando con ingorda golosità più che le sane pietanze, buon pro gli faccia; il Dottor Hinkfuss ha ragione lui, e dunque gli scodelli, dopo questa scena del campo di aviazione, un'altra scena, dicendo pur chiaramente e con la sprezzatura del gran signore che può permettersi certi lussi, che in verità della prima si può anche fare a meno, perché non strettamente necessaria. Si sarà perduto un po' di tempo per ottenere un bell'effetto; si darà a intendere il contrario, che anzi non se ne vuol perdere, tant'è vero che s'è saltata una scena che, senza danno, poteva essere omessa. Ometteremo anche noi i comandi che il Dottor Hinkfuss potrà concertare da sé facilmente con gli apparatori e gli elettricisti e i servi di scena per l'allestimento di quel campo d'aviazione. Appena allestito, scenderà dal palcoscenico nella sala, si metterà nel mezzo del corridojo a regolare bene con altri opportuni comandi gli effetti di luce, e quando li avrà ottenuti perfetti, rimonterà sul palcoscenico (MN I, 245-46).

In section IV.3, I intend to further discuss how social massification paradoxically means that the spectators will no longer have a role: the dreamscapes of the last plays show the actors in flight and the audience in search of a stage.

In the *Intermezzo* scene in *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, Pirandello also exercises the simultaneous effects and polydimensionality summed up in Prampolini's technical manifesto, "L'atmosfera scenica futurista" (1932).⁶⁶ The pantheatricality has overt mystical tendencies and leads to the interpenetration of actor and ambience. Whereas

in II.1 and II.2, I argued that this decomposition process is important for its sabotage of the realist sign, here it emerges that the newly added spiritual dimension leads in irrational rather than in materialist directions. The emphasis on synthetic unity, rather than on fragmentation is consistent with fascist discourse:

La tecnica del teatro tradizionale, al contrario, trascurando e lasciando insoluti questi principi essenziali per la vitalità della azione teatrale ha creato questo dualismo tra uomo (elemento dinamico) e ambiente (elemento statico) tra sintesi ed analisi.

Noi futuristi abbiamo raggiunto e proclamato questa unità scenica, compenetrando l'elemento uomo con l'elemento ambiente in una sintesi scenica vivente dell'azione teatrale.

*Il teatro e l'arte futurista sono, quindi la proiezione conseguente del mondo dello spirito, ritmato dal movimento nello spazio scenico.*⁶⁷

"Scenosintesi" replaces "scenografia", and "scenodinamica", "scenoplastica": this results in the "abolizione del palcoscenico" and in the "spazioscenico polidimensionale" as a substitute for the "arcoscenico tradizionale".⁶⁸

Prampolini adds: "*Lo spazio scenico polidimensionale, nuova creazione futurista per il teatro dell'avvenire dischiude nuovi mondi alla tecnica ed alla magia teatrale*".⁶⁹ In section IV.3, I shall argue that this synthetic approach to "magical" staging restores the transcendental symbols which were deconstructed by Pirandello's earlier anti-naturalist stance. Prampolini's theories have important consequences for the role of the actor, since spatial relations are given priority over the conventional audience-actor relationship. The increasing obliteration of the actor's body dematerialises the staging to the disadvantage of the audience (on the verge of Cotrone's oblivion):

Il teatro, inteso nella sua più pura espressione, è infatti un centro di rivelazione del mistero, tragico, drammatico, comico, al di là della apparenza umana.

Ne abbiamo abbastanza di vedere tutt'ora a questo pezzo di umanità grottesca agitarsi sotto la volta del palcoscenico in attesa di commuovere se stessa. L'apparizione dell'elemento umano su la scena rompe il mistero dell'al di là che deve regnare nel teatro, tempio di astrazione spirituale.

*Lo spazio è l'aureola metafisica dell'ambiente.
L'ambiente la proiezione spirituale delle azioni umane.*⁷⁰

In section IV.3, I shall argue that this futurist scenic atmosphere is transmitted by the performance text of *I giganti della montagna* which negates, rather than transcends, Pirandello's previous radical innovations. Prampolini's ideas are even more reactionary than those expressed in Marinetti's manifesto "Il teatro totale per masse" (1933), where the spectators still have the "creative" role of interrupting the imminent synthesis of simultaneous stages:

*La unità che domina le azioni simultanee dei diversi palcoscenici degli schermi e delle orbite celesti è rotta dall'intervento creativo improvvisato degli spettatori e tal volta dall'interruzione del sistema di comunicazione fra palcoscenici ottenendo così nuovi effetti tragici o umoristici nel dramma generale aeropittorico e nel dramma terrestre marino fluviale lacustre.*⁷¹

In contrast, Prampolini shows that the time has come to abandon all experimentation:

Il teatro dovrà abbandonare quel carattere di eccezione sperimentale, di estemporaneità episodica per la vita del singolo, per assumere la funzione di un organismo trascendente di educazione spirituale nella vita collettiva. Da palestra per la ginnastica visiva il teatro deve divenire anche palestra per la ginnastica del pensiero.

Il teatro poliespressivo futurista sarà una centrale ultrapotente di forze astratte in giuoco. Ogni spettacolo sarà un rito meccanico dell'eterna trascendenza della materia, una rivelazione magica di un mistero spirituale e scientifico.

Una sintesi panoramica dell'azione, intesa come rito mistico del dinamismo spirituale.

*Un centro di astrazione spirituale per la nuova religione dell'avvenire.*⁷²

While it is certainly regrettable that Pirandello's last writing will tend to follow this ritualistic trajectory, there is no reason to abandon a politics for reading a performance text. In section IV.3, I shall also outline how both producers and audiences can resist the ideological sediment from the years in which Pirandello's plays were actually written. The mystical and spiritual gymnastics of futurist scenography can be replaced by the audience having a constitutive role in producing a popular politics of reception.

IV.2. Disguise and Identity

Twins or doubles in disguise are fundamental to the classical theatre. Plautine and Shakespearean comedy exploits this device in a myriad of ways before the *dénouement* when the "real" identities are established. Pirandello adopts the trope of doubling but defers all disclosure - the audience never will know for certain who is who in the infinite pirandellian game of as you like it.

In conventional theatre, the plot is fuelled by the eventual recognition among the characters: disguises are removed, gender identity is re-installed and a marriage often guarantees the festive comic ending.⁷³ The drama hinges on the visual unfolding, and the audience's sleuthlike task is to match actions with words, and appearance with reality. Pirandello's stagecraft will necessarily defeat this quest for unambiguous stability. His dramatic technique confounds the spectator's gaze so that seeing is never believing. The modernist Pirandello parodies the classic structures of "tying" (*desis*), "untying" (*lysis*) and recognition (*anagnorisis*)⁷⁴ by disseminating contradictory explanations at the moment of revelation: the interrupted climax troubles the spectators' acknowledgements since they are unable to locate a sign-vehicle which could provide them with certain meaning.

Aristotle's codification of the process of *anagnorisis* is useful for an examination of how Pirandello transforms classic strategies by sabotaging our vision. Complex plots achieve a reversal through recognition, or peripety (*peripeteia*), or both.⁷⁵ Aristotle writes: "And 'recognition' is, as indeed the name indicates, a shift from ignorance to awareness, pointing in the direction either of close blood ties or of hostility, of people who have previously been in a clearly marked state of happiness or unhappiness. The finest recognition is one that happens at the same time as a peripety, as is the case with the one in

the *Oedipus*."⁷⁶

The disclosure which was supposed to reassure Oedipus and relieve him of his fear with respect to his mother, actually has the opposite effect. In other terms, the phantasy of the phallic mother is replaced by the incest taboo. I shall argue here that Pirandello's modernist *angst* arises from the way his texts inscribe a disavowal of castration. The fact that there are no *dénouements* speaks of his failure to assimilate the absence of the maternal phallus. The open-ended plays defer the acceptance of symbolic identity. Recognition is doomed to be *misrecognition* and the plague of desire impels the dramatic action beyond the margins of the text. The play, *La vita che ti diedi*, rehearses mourning for the look of the other. Pirandello formulated his loss of the maternal object in a conversation with his "dead" mother whose absence shatters his identity. He represents the crisis in language. In the novella, *Colloqui coi personaggi* (1915), he writes:

/o
Io piango perché tu, Mamma, tu non puoi più dare a me una realtà. È caduto a me, alla mia realtà, un sostegno, un conforto. Quando tu stavi seduta laggiù in quel tuo cantuccio, io dicevo: - "Se Ella da lontano mi pensa, io sono vivo per lei". - E questo mi sosteneva, mi confortava. Ora che tu sei morta, io non dico che non sei più viva per me; tu sei viva, viva com'eri, con la stessa realtà che per tanti anni t'ho data da lontano, pensandoti, senza vedere il tuo corpo, e viva sempre sarai finché io sarò vivo; ma vedi? È questo, è questo, che io, ora, non sono più vivo, e non sarò più vivo per te mai più! Perché tu non puoi più pensarmi com'io ti penso, tu non puoi più sentirmi com'io ti sento! E ben per questo, Mamma, ben per questo quelli che ci credono vivi credono anche di piangere i loro morti e piangono invece una loro morte, una loro realtà che non è più nel sentimento di quelli che se ne sono andati. Tu l'avrai sempre, sempre, nel sentimento mio: io, Mamma, invece, non l'avrò più in te. Tu sei qui; tu m'hai parlato: sei proprio viva qui, ti vedo, vedo la tua fronte, i tuoi occhi, la tua bocca, le tue mani; vedo il corrugarsi della tua fronte, il battere dei tuoi occhi, il sorriso della tua bocca, il gesto delle tue povere piccole mani offese, e ti sento parlare, parlare veramente parole tue, perché sei qui davanti a me una realtà vera, viva e spirante; ma che sono io, che sono più io, ora, per te? Nulla. Tu sei e sarai per sempre la Mamma mia, ma io? io figlio, fui e non sono più, non sarò più ... (NA II, 1208-9).

In a more restrained vein, Pirandello will give an unusually terse portrayal of Beatrice in the opening scene of *Il berretto a sonagli*: "*Al levarsi della tela, la signora Beatrice, seduta sul divano, piange. La Saracena, seduta di fronte, la guarda contrariata*" (MN II, 361).

The loss of the other's regard produces the identity crisis which is the substance of Pirandello's theatre.⁷⁷ The indecision of Hamlet replaces the promptness of Orestes so that the potentially recognisable role is always undergoing abolition. In contrast, the Six Characters are in the opposite position, and hence they battle against their fixed social identities. They cannot overlook symbolic law and so seek out a phantasy phallic mother who would decriminalise the incestuous embrace. Their pathetic remembrance is the obverse of foreclosure: there is no access to a hereditary amnesic trait which could cancel out their problem, "*le problème intact: quel est le lien du meurtre du père au pacte de la loi primordiale, s'il y est inclus*"⁷⁸ que la castration soit la punition de l'inceste?". The tragic dimension of the Characters' riddle is apparent in Aristotle's comment that it is better to perform an act "in ignorance and recognize what one has done afterward; for the repulsive quality does not attach to the act,⁷⁹ and the recognition has a shattering emotional effect". The Stepdaughter makes a compromise with the Producer: she will forego getting undressed and so remain "disguised" provided that she can recognise the throbbing blood knot in her naked arm once the Mother has uttered her restorative cry. The revised décor may be unfamiliar but her identity as Stepdaughter is mapped on her body:

L'ho ancora qui negli orecchi! M'ha reso folle quel grido!
— Lei può rappresentarmi come vuole, signore: non importa!
Anche vestita; purché abbia almeno le braccia — solo le
braccia — nude, perché, guardi, stando così,

si accosterà al Padre e gli appoggerà la testa sul petto
con la testa appoggiata così, e le braccia così al suo collo,
mi vedevo pulsare qui, nel braccio qui, una vena; e allora,
come se soltanto quella vena viva mi facesse ribrezzo, strizzai
gli occhi, così, così, ed affondai la testa nel suo petto!

Voltandosi verso la Madre:

Grida, grida, mamma!

Affonderà la testa nel petto del Padre, e con le spalle alzate come per non sentire il grido, soggiungerà con voce di strazio soffocato:

Grida, come hai gridato allora! (MN I, 99-100).

/s The plays refuse to recognise the "natural" face beneath the "artificial" mask because the mirror-images semioticise "reality", so that it only becomes significantly distinguishable from the imaginary in the discourse of power, which fixes the "transparent" and "real" relation between signifier and signified. In this section, I hope to show how Pirandello fetichistically displays the *process* of semiotisation rather than the social signifieds, by means of ambiguous and simultaneous visual signs. Freud explains that the fetichist perpetuates an infantile attitude by holding two incompatible positions at the same time: he/she simultaneously disavows and acknowledges the fact of feminine castration.⁸⁰ One can then argue that instead of disavowing the perception, the fetichist, as if in a dream, is symptomatic of a compromise formation where the *finality* of castration, rather than its "reality", is repudiated. Like the plays, the tale of Oedipus never ends.

The semioticisation of the unknowable concrete real occurs through ostensive devices which de-realise the costumery, not simply to foreground its fictitious nature as disguise, but to show that there is nothing but disguise, that *everything* (and everybody) is a sign. Thus Enrico IV is fixated in his unending fiction:

ENRICO IV (*rimasto sulla scena tra Landolfo, Arialdo e Ordulfo, con gli occhi sbarrati, esterrefatto dalla vita della sua stessa finzione che in un momento lo ha forzato al delitto*). Ora sì ... per forza ...

li chiama attorno a sé, come a ripararsi,
qua insieme, qua insieme ... e per sempre!

TELA

(MN I, 371)

Earlier in the play, he provides a deceptive substitute for his madness in the discourse of reason. Yet despite his claims, he cannot defrock any of the others, he can only denaturalise himself as sign by ambivalently naming his own madness: "Non capisci? Non vedi come li paro, come li concio, come me li faccio comparire davanti, buffoni spaventati! E si spaventano solo di questo, oh: che stracci loro addosso la maschera buffa e li scopra travestiti; come se non li avessi costretti io stesso a mascherarsi, per questo mio gusto qua, di fare il pazzo!" (MN I, 348-39). The multiple guises beg overinterpretation: there is a density of theatrical signs and informational polyphony.⁸¹

(s) The signs on stage are fetichised so that nothing signifies unambiguously: this is the visual mechanism whereby Pirandello is able to perpetuate the reality/illusion dilemma. Everything stands for something else, and everybody stands for someone else: all is open to possible interpretation in this semiotic chaos where the symbolic interpretant which conventionally guarantees the validity of the sign is under psychotic erasure: the normal links granted in the tacit accord between stage and audience are shown to be utterly delusional.

This intricate network of conflicting readings makes any dramatic reversal quite ridiculous: Belcredi's death; Ersilia's suicide; Mommina's "death"; the Son's gun-shot, and Cia's diary and mole are *peripeteiai* which do not bear any *dénouements*. The show of meanings must go on. Aristotle states that in any event these would be poor ways of employing recognition. The reliance on visible tokens, like for example Odysseus's scar, is in his view as unartistic as events that are based on the author's contrivance, recollection or reasoning. For Aristotle the recognitions that dispense with artificial inventions and visible tokens, but which rise unexpectedly from the events themselves are the most successful: they exploit the emotional shock of surprise.⁸²

Pirandello utilises his futurist shock tactics in his recognition

scenes only to supplement them with doubt: instead of experiencing catharsis, the audience is trapped in the inadequate interpretations of the *raisonneurs* and of the uncertain actors. The women figures, in particular, tantalise the spectators and evade identification. As shown in III.3.b.iii, L'Ignota flaunts the metaphorical veils which conceal the hole that is her self: "non vedi più la ragione di spogliarti di quei veli colorati della pazzia ... puoi anche scendere in piazza, andare per le strade con quei veli ... nei caffè notturni, dopo le tre tra i buffoni in marsina ..." (MN I, 1002). The fleeting quality of the women's presences is symptomatic of their asymmetrical access to the symbolic. The play of absence and presence, as I pointed out in the previous chapter III.3.b.iii, is illuminated by Lacan's theory of phallic signification which explains how the masquerade transforms the whole female body into a phallus in order to hide the unrepresentability of lack.⁸³ Another "signora velata" (MN I, 1077), married to Signor Ponza, draws a desiring gaze. Her speech does not resolve the ambiguity of her body as sign. The Prefect insists: "Ah, no, per sé, lei signora: sarà l'una o l'altra!" and she replies "Nossignori. Per me, io sono colei che mi si crede" (MN I, 1077). Pirandello then directs: "*Guarderà attraverso il velo, tutti, per un istante; e si ritirerà. Silenzio*" (MN I, 1078). Laudisi derisively watches the audience learn that the mother has no phallus, and he laughs at their experience: "Ed ecco, o signori, come parla la verità! Siete contenti? Ah! ah! ah! ah!" (MN I, 1078). As Lacan puts it: "Ici se signe la conjonction du désir en tant que le signifiant phallique en est la marque, avec la menace ou nostalgie du manque à avoir."⁸⁴

Pirandello here accomplishes a visual analogy for the verbal debate in *Vestire gli ignudi*. No amount of female being can compensate for male having, and so Ersilia's garrulity is a vain attempt to disguise her lack with words. Her language is the language of desire which

betrays her longing for honest, naked plenitude and transparency whereas she is clothed in the banality of scandal: her decent little governess' outfit is contradicted by her pallor, by the rings under her bewildered eyes and by her dishevelled hair. Pirandello describes her as *"molto pallida e ha gli occhi come smarriti nel livido delle occhiaie"* (MN I, 845), and later she will enter *"coi capelli cascani, disfatta, pallidissima"* (MN I, 882), a mien which is at odds with her *"abitino celeste, decente, sciupato un po' dall'uso, da maestrina o da istitutrice"* (MN I, 845). Pirandello uses the female body to transmit several meanings simultaneously. There is another splendid example in the Stepdaughter who, because she is dressed in mourning, resists the Father's foreplay over a new hat, and then gives a forced smile and adds: *"Bisogna proprio ch'io non pensi, che sono vestita così"* (MN I, 91). Pirandello exploits to the full the enantiosemic qualities of the visual sign. It is more difficult to have the same immediate impact with words since they are more quickly contextualised and more likely to be interpreted syntagmatically. It is the paradigmatic strengths of Pirandello's hidden female bodies which make the plays so theatrical. L'Ignota's change of clothing, or the Stepdaughter's refusal to undress, serve only to frustrate the male look. No one will succeed in unmasking them.

Where one finds female identity no one knows. Lacan suggests that it is always elsewhere: *"Mais son désir à elle, elle en trouve le signifiant dans le corps de celui à qui s'adresse sa demande d'amour."*⁸⁵

L'Ignota will seek hers in the uterine drawer of Cia's chest. She returns to the place of her inscription in the maternal body;

T'ho detto che Cia tu l'hai cercata male! Guarda, caro, che su nel riposto, tu avevi lasciato buttare, senza nemmeno accorgertene, uno stipetto di sandalo, tutto fracassato, con ancora, negli sportelli, attaccato qualche insetto d'argento. Lena m'ha ricordato che quello stipetto Cia lo aveva conservato perché della mamma. Sai che ho trovato in un cassetto di quello stipetto? un piccolo taccuino d'appunti di Cia dov'erano le parole dette da Ines il giorno delle nozze: *"Dicono, sai? che egli ora ti deve vedere"*. — Questo taccuino è mio, e me lo porto con me! Tanto più che, strano!, anche la scrittura pare di mia mano! (MN I, 1003).

Freud explains that "cupboards, boxes, carriages or ovens may represent the uterus"⁸⁶. L'Ignota may even be displaying her wish for a child. In the analysis of the dream of a woman patient, Freud writes:

In the course of the analysis she recalled that at a party the evening before there had been some talk about the English word 'box' and the various ways in which it could be translated into German - such as 'Schachtel' ['case'], 'Loge' ['box at the theatre'], 'Kasten' ['chest'], 'Ohrfeige' ['box on the ear'], and so on. Other portions of the same dream enabled us to discover further that she had guessed that the English 'box' was related to the German 'Büchse' ['receptacle'], and that she had then been plagued by a recollection that 'Büchse' is used as a vulgar term for the female genitals. If some allowance was made for the limits of her knowledge of topographical anatomy, it might be presumed, therefore, that the child lying in the case meant an embryo in the womb.⁸⁷

The dead Cia will be resurrected in the infantile babblings of La Demente who is a simulacrum of death. I quote again the passage: "*La Demente è grassa, flaccida, con un viso di cera, i capelli scomposti, gli occhi svaniti, immobili, e la bocca atteggiata d'un perpetuo sorriso scemo, largo, vano, che non cessa neppur quando emette qualche suono o balbetta qualche parola, evidentemente senza intendere quel che dice*" (MN I, 985).

with / The irony is that Pirandello's audiences also do not understand what is said. His elaborate *thèse à tiroirs* proliferates / double meanings. In the following section, I shall continue this discussion of the role of the other in the constitution of identity. I intend to describe how the self is captured by a specular counterpart. The plays, *Diana e la Tuda*, *Trovarsi*, and *Enrico IV* in particular, provide examples of the way the self is mirrored. In the Appendix, there is an analysis of the processes of duplication in *Come tu mi vuoi*: Boffi, the photographer, does not succeed in authenticating L'Ignota's being. In this next section, "*Enrico IV: Moving Pictures*", I plan to further explore the way Pirandello uses portraiture as a visual analogy for his views on the bankruptcy of naturalist images. The garb of the beggar will be examined in order to show how this figure is the visual illustration of the mendicant language of desire.

Pirandello's veils, wigs and clothing are the ritual vestments of desire. His bricolage of stage props cannot restore the presence of certain identity. There are no resolutions, only misrecognitions.

Enrico IV: Moving Pictures

s/ L'assomption jubilatoire de son image spéculaire par l'être encore plongé dans l'impuissance motrice et la dépendance du nourrisage qu'est le petit homme à ce stade *infans*, nous paraîtra dès lors manifester en une situation exemplaire la matrice symbolique où le *je* se précipite en une forme primordiale, avant qu'il ne s'objective dans la dialectique de l'identification à l'autre et que le langage ne lui restitue dans l'universel sa fonction de sujet.⁸⁸

Lacan's metaphor of the mirror stage depicts the site of primary narcissism.⁸⁹ It is the reflection of wholeness which produces a retro-active phantasy of the body-in-pieces. The anxiety of bodily fragmentation arises out of the loss of narcissistic identification with the entry into the symbolic. This passage produces *imagos* of the fragmented body - images of castration, mutilation, dismemberment, dislocation, evisceration, devouring and bursting open of the body.

Disfigurement is the organising principle of the way the self apprehends loss. In chapter III.3.b.i, I quoted the passage where L'Ignota, who has no identity, aggressively displays her body in pieces. There are no limits in her knowledge of topographical anatomy; she simply cannot picture her complete self. It is only when she adopts Cia's demeanour and poses before the portrait of that self, that she can temporarily overcome her anonymous being. The painting, based on Boffi's photograph of her, is a reflection of a reflection. [In the Appendix, I discuss further the problems of resemblance and duplication in this play.]

The search for the other who constitutes the self, or for a replica of the self who will offer the self a pure mirror of an unruffled surface,⁹⁰

is the dominant *visual* trope in Pirandello's economy of signs. In the previous section IV.1, I examined the topic of misrecognition and identity in terms of the audience's epistemological anxieties. I hope in this section to explain how the intersubjective relations of the figures on the stage are made graphic through the paraphernalia of portraiture, instead of through the double physical presences of actors, as in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. The play *Enrico IV* will be singled out for special analysis since it provides Pirandello's most vivid example of the interpenetration of the body and the image.

I submit that Pirandello uses the artificial simulacra of the self in order to compensate for the breakdown in narrative. I shall draw on his moving pictures to support the argument in chapter II where I claimed that he was compelled to resort to the theatre in order to transmit the paradigmaticity of his vision. It is the suspension of successive dialogue that makes Pirandello's stage juxtapositions and overlaps so dramatically forceful. The audience sees the pictures, and, as Germaine Dulac asks provocatively, how can one *tell* a painting or a sculpture?⁹¹ Deformations multiply in his *montage alterné* which confronts one image with a simultaneous other. In this chapter [and see Appendix], I shall also refer to the ideas of a group of French avant-garde impressionist filmmakers, who include Dulac, and whose work Pirandello had encountered. Their abandon of narrative for visual impressions is consistent with Pirandello's own bias in later years. Among this group of *cinéastes* was Marcel L'Herbier who made a film of Pirandello's *Il fu Mattia Pascal* in 1925. I shall argue in the next section that the anti-naturalistic stance of this group may well have been a subliminal influence on Pirandello in his debate about the cinema in *I giganti della montagna*.⁹² The distorted imagery and latent mysticism of the group's sense of "photogénie" - the spatio-temporal variables of an object -⁹³ have a bearing on the oneiric terrain of Pirandello's last plays.

/s As in the cinema, the theatrical gaze is caught in a fetishistic structure of looking. When La Tuda in *Diana e La Tuda* surveys Sirio's statue of herself, she battles to find her own imprint:

Odio c'è, odio, per il supplizio che m'hanno dato loro due!
— Non li aveva lei

indica la statua

prima, questi occhi — erano altri, i suoi occhi! — Lui me li ha presi e glieli ha dati: guardala: — E quella mano là che tocca il fianco — la vedi? — era aperta, prima, quella mano! Vedi, ora? chiusa, serrata, a pugno. Me l'hanno fatta chiudere, serrare loro così, per resistere al supplizio — e la statua, vedi, anche lei — l'aveva aperta: ha dovuto chiuderla! — gliel'ho veduta chiudere! — non ha potuto farne a meno! Non è più quella che lui voleva fare! — Sono io ora là, capisci? io — non puoi essere tu, Jonè, né altre! — Vattene! — (MN I, 437).

When Sirio's death annihilates her, she admits that she could not recognise herself in his phantasised projection, "perché non seppi essere quella per cui lui mi aveva voluto!" (MN I, 443). All Giuncano can repeatedly say after murdering Sirio is one word, "Cecità ..."

(MN I, 443). The Oedipal tragedy of loss is acted out in this ritual death and Pygmalion's castrated look can now no longer see his ideal ego.⁹⁴

For Pirandello, a condition of humanity is self-reflection and projection. In "L'umorismo" he wrote:

L'albero vive e non si sente: per lui la terra, il sole, l'aria, la luce, il vento, la pioggia, non sono cose che esso non sia. All'uomo, invece, nascendo è toccato questo triste privilegio di sentirsi vivere, con la bella illusione che ne risulta: di prendere cioè come una realtà fuori di sé questo suo interno sentimento della vita, mutabile e vario (SPSV, 155).

Earlier in the essay, Pirandello emphasised the *specular* dimension of self-reflection: "In certi momenti di silenzio interiore, in cui l'anima nostra si spoglia di tutte le finzioni abituali, e gli occhi nostri diventando più acuti e più penetranti, noi vediamo noi stessi nella vita, e in se stessa la vita, quasi in una nudità arida, inquietante;" (SPSV, 152). This process of "vedersi vivere"⁹⁵ is the visual analogy of meta-language. As I showed in chapter II, Pirandello uses the metaphor of a pair of spectacles to describe the crisis in representational

signification. These visual tropes were already present in *Il fu Mattia Pascal* where Mattia undergoes an eye operation to change his appearance, and where Pirandello has Paleari explain his "lanterninosofia". In the next section, I intend to continue this discussion of the illuminating role of the lamp in relation to the surreal projections in *I giganti della montagna*. I am arguing here that Pirandello's theoretical concern with identity, and with the doubling of the self in another, defies syntagmatic language. His retreat from the symbolic is made manifest in the multiplicity of shadowy likenesses in the plays. His theory of identity spells out the captation by the mirror-image. The dramatisation of this longing for the double will always deliver the disappointment of the alienated other. The authentic characters cannot recognise themselves in the actors in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. As the Son comments:

Grazie! Ma non ha ancora compreso che questa commedia lei non la può fare? Noi non siamo mica dentro di lei, e i suoi attori stanno a guardarci da fuori. Le par possibile che si viva davanti a uno specchio che, per di piú, non contento d'agghiacciarci con l'immagine della nostra stessa espressione, ce la ridà come una smorfia irriconoscibile di noi stessi? (MN II, 113).

But then who is more authentic? The trap of the simulacrum is verbalised by Mattia Pascal who asks about Adriano Meis: "Chi era piú ombra di noi due? io o lei?" (TR, 428).

In the novel *Giustino Roncella nato Boggiòlo*, Pirandello describes Silvia in her domestic alienation, looking for a self who is not a mother and housewife, enmeshed in the parergons of Dora Barmis and the feminised Giustino:

Ma Silvia soffriva piú di lei a vedere, a sentir parlare il marito cosí; per sé e per lui soffriva: e s'immaginava in quel momento quanto spasso doveva essersene preso quella donna, se non il Raceni, nell'arredar quella casa a suo modo coi denari di lui; e non provava sdegno dispetto onta, per cui a mano a mano, procedendo, s'irrigidiva vieppiú; e pur tuttavia non troncava quel supplizio, rattenuta dalla curiosità, che si forzava a non mostrare, di veder quella casa, che non le pareva sua, ma estranea, fatta non piú per

viverci come finora ella aveva vissuto, ma per rappresentarvi d'ora in poi, sempre e per forza, una commedia; anche davanti a se stessa; obbligata a trattar coi dovuti riguardi tutti quegli oggetti di squisita eleganza, che la avrebbero tenuta in continua suggezione; obbligata a ricordarsi sempre della parte che doveva recitar tra loro. E pensava che ormai, come non aveva più il bambino, così neanche la casa - ecco - aveva più, qual'essa la aveva finora intesa e amata. Ma doveva esser così, purtroppo. E dunque presto, via, da brava attrice, si sarebbe impadronita di quelle stanze, di quei mobili là, da palcoscenico, donde ogni intimità familiare doveva esser bandita (TR, 1006).

/u Silvia emphasises the way the stage props overdetermine her role in an ironic put-down of Giustino who wants her to write another marketable play: "Ah, il dramma voleva? Ebbene: dopo tanta commedia avrebbe avuto il dramma" (TR, 1041). These quotations from the novel should bear out my thesis of the spectacularisation inherent in Pirandello's narrative writing.

The futurist interpenetration of the self with surrounding objects is also a feature of impressionist film where subjective distortion overrides narrative concerns. The part or transitional objects which are perpetually rearranged stand in for the irretrievably lost object of desire: the pictures are cathected.⁹⁶ The movement of displacement is to be seen in the somnabulist experiences of the last plays with their false connections and magical disassociations. Pirandello's narrative incapacity is shown in the text's failure to tell the tale, *La favola del figlio cambiato* under Cotrone's misrule. By contrast, in *Enrico IV*, the hysterical interplays of counterparts will be disrupted in an attempt to restore the coherent chronicles of history. The decathecting of the portrait so as to re-establish the relation between the memory of the traumatic fall and its affect is the "cure" planned for Enrico IV. The shock of the picture come to life is supposed to abreact the emotions attached to the traumatic event: Enrico IV ought to recollect his history and to recognise the source of his repetitive phantasies.⁹⁷

In *Enrico IV*, these recognitions necessitate the most absorbing stage business. The play pivots on visual impressions. The servants will be immediately struck by the anachrony of the modern portraits which break the consistency of Enrico IV's fictional frame:

ARIALDO. Guarda! (*Lo fa voltare e gli mostra nella parete di fondo il ritratto della Marchesa Matilde*) - Chi è per esempio quella lì?

BERTOLDO (*guardando*). Quella lì? Eh, mi sembra, scusate, prima di tutto una bella stonatura: due quadri moderni qua in mezzo a tutta questa rispettabile antichità.

ARIALDO. Hai ragione. E difatti prima non c'erano. Ci sono due nicchie, là dietro quei quadri. Ci si dovevano collocare due statue, scolpite secondo lo stile del tempo. Rimaste vuote, sono state coperte da quelle due tele là.

LANDOLFO (*interrompendolo e seguitando*). Che sarebbero certo una stonatura, se veramente fossero quadri.

BERTOLDO. E che sono? non sono quadri?

LANDOLFO. Sì, se vai a toccarli: quadri. Ma per lui (*accenna misteriosamente a destra, alludendo a Enrico IV*) - che non li tocca ...

BERTOLDO. No? E che sono allora per lui?

LANDOLFO. Oh, interpreto, bada! Ma credo che in fondo sia giusto. Immagini, sono. Immagini, come ... ecco, come le potrebbe ridare uno specchio, mi spiego? Là, quella (*indica il ritratto di Enrico IV*) rappresenta lui, vivo com'è, in questa sala del trono, che è anch'essa come dev'essere, secondo lo stile dell'epoca. Di che ti meravigli, scusa? Se ti mettono davanti uno specchio, non ti ci vedi forse vivo, d'oggi, vestito così di spoglie antiche? Ebbene, lì, è come se ci fossero due specchi, che ridanno immagini vive, qua in mezzo a un mondo che - non te ne curare - vedrai, vedrai, vivendo con noi, come si ravviverà tutto anch'esso!

BERTOLDO. Oh! Badate che io non voglio impazzire qua!

ARIALDO. Ma che impazzire! Ti divertirai! (MN I, 301-2).

(22 Enrico IV's cure can apparently only be operated through the look: when he sees the *images as pictures*, he will regain his "sanity". Mere analysis of his verbal discourse would be insufficient to treat his madness. The alienist is relying on gestures and facial movements to restore Enrico IV's memory. He explains: "Perché un ritratto è lì sempre fisso in un attimo; lontano e senza ricordi per la marchesina; mentre tutto ciò che esso può ricordare alla signora Marchesa: mosse, gesti, sguardi, sorrisi, tante cose che lì non ci sono ..." (MN I, 308). Landolfo had instructed Bertoldo on how the visual sense can be duped if there is no touching to verify what is seen, no breaking of the frame. Enrico's

specular capture is to be shattered by Frida's body which moves: the overlap of Matilde and Frida, of the past and the present, occurs almost imperceptibly when Frida calls his name (MN I, 361). The maternal and filial identities co-exist in a single body, and the unique locus of the action makes this event one of the most stunning of Pirandello's simultaneous duplications. He exploits the uncanniness of the resemblance,⁹⁸ for, as the Doctor explains "con un tono professorale", "La rassomiglianza, caro barone, nasce spesso da cose imponderabili! E così difatti si spiega che ... " (MN I, 308). The sceptical Belcredi interrupts his lecture: "Che qualcuno può trovare anche qualche rassomiglianza tra me e lei, caro professore!" (MN I, 308).

There is no blood affiliation between Belcredi and the Doctor. I submit that it is the familial link between Matilde and Frida which makes this scene so powerful. When L'Ignota is dressed as Cia, Cia is not witnessing the event. Here, Frida is in Matilde's dress in front of her very eyes: the mother will fuss over the creases. This fastidiousness is the means by which she expresses her anxiety over her own aging body. She displaces herself onto the dress where, like wrinkles, the lines run deep: Frida rationalises: "Ho visto, mamma. Ma, pieghe vecchie ... Sarà difficile farle andar via" (MN I, 339). The Matilde-Frida duo has Oedipal resonances which outweigh those of even the Mother-Stepdaughter where the identification is not so visually prominent. Initially, even Matilde is disturbed by the resemblance discovered through the picture. She attacks Belcredi:

DONNA MATILDE (*ancora più adirata*). Sciocco! Sciocco! Appunto perché è così naturale! Perché non c'è mica mia figlia, là.

Indica la tela.

Quello è il mio ritratto! E trovarci mia figlia, invece che me, m'ha stupito; e il mio stupore, vi prego di credere, è stato sincero, e vi proibisco di metterlo in dubbio!

Dopo questa violenta sfuriata, un momento di silenzio impacciato in tutti (MN I, 307).

In *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, the twin wardrobe is not an issue, since the women are both in mourning.

le It is interesting to note that in the murky setting, with its "luce strana, di lampadine nascoste nel soffitto" (MN I, 361), no one takes much notice of the bearer of symbolic law, Di Nolli, that is, not until he goes to restore Frida to her right place. He comforts Frida who, "trema ancora e geme e smania tra le braccia del fidanzato" (MN I, 362). It is only later, when Enrico IV actually touches Frida, that his image of the other is finally shattered. His violent embrace of the "semblable" can never restore his maternal loss. He will then re-adopt his "false" self. The policemen of desire and his longings for narcissistic stability put an end to the *tableau vivant/parlant*. He re-assumes the pose of the previous act where he was able to see himself as wholly other: "Ma guardate, guardate che magnifico quadro notturno: l'Imperatore tra i suoi fidi consiglieri ... Non ci provate gusto?" (MN I, 354).

Needless to say, the shock therapy has not done the trick. Perhaps it is due to all the familiar resistances. Gramsci, in a quite different context, offers the following insight in a letter to Giulia, dated 31st August, 1931:

Ciò che mi scrivi della tua salute mi interessa molto, ma non so se continui ancora la cura psicanalitica. Poiché Freud osserva che i familiari sono uno degli ostacoli più gravi alla cura col trattamento della psicanalisi, io non ho mai voluto insistere sull'argomento e non ci insisterò neanche ora. Del resto tu stessa hai ricordato come spesso io mi riferissi ad alcuni principi della psicanalisi nell'insistere perché tu ti sforzassi di "sgomitare" la tua vera personalità.⁹⁹

He recalls having witnessed her two co-existing selves in 1922: "Te ne parlai in seguito, osservando che la caratteristica del tuo carattere come 'mite e dolce' avrebbe dovuto essere corretta alquanto perché talvolta diventavi un po' 'galletto'." [!] ¹⁰⁰ Pirandello's analyst certainly fails to untie the text of Enrico's multiple selves.

Enrico IV's solution is a fiction in that he can only mimic the mirror-stage, he can never return there. He will always be caught in the signifying web of desire. Pirandello uses the figure of beggary to illustrate his alienated condition where the image of the other always turns out to be a portrait under erasure: his longings cannot be satisfied by deceptive substitutes. He wears sackcloth and ashes at the same time as his imperial robe and is supine before the invincible Matilde. Matilde's disguise is the visual equivalent of his deflected desire: it is now Frida whom he wants. Lacan explains the depreciation (*Erniedrigung*) of love and the centrifugal tendency of desire in men:

Si l'homme trouve en effet à satisfaire sa demande d'amour dans la relation à la femme pour autant que le signifiant du phallus la constitue bien comme donnant dans l'amour ce qu'elle n'a pas, - inversement son propre désir du phallus fera surgir son signifiant dans sa divergence rémanente vers "une autre femme" qui peut signifier ce phallus à divers titres, soit comme vierge, soit comme prostituée.¹⁰¹

Enrico IV's suppliant postures are underscored by his partially dyed hair. The grey is a signal of his inappropriate hunger:

ENRICO IV. E guardami qua i capelli!

Gli mostra i capelli sulla nuca.

BELCREDI. Ma li ho grigi anch'io!

ENRICO IV. Sì, con questa differenza: che li ho fatti grigi qua, io, da Enrico IV, capisci? E non me n'ero mica accorto! Me n'accorsi in un giorno solo, tutt'a un tratto, riaprendo gli occhi, e fu uno spavento, perché capii subito che non solo i capelli, ma doveva esser diventato grigio tutto così, e tutto crollato, tutto finito; e che sarei arrivato con una fame da lupo a un banchetto già bell'e sparecchiato (MN I, 366)

In the play *All'Uscita* (1916), Pirandello provided a more pedantic example of the differences between needs and desires in the figure of L'Uomo grasso. The huge body contradicts his impoverished spirit:

Di tanta vita che, intanto, entrava in me per i sensi aperti non facevo conto. E poi mi lagnavo. Di che? di quella miseria di pensiero, d'un desiderio insoddisfatto, d'un caso contrario già passato. E intanto tutto il bene della vita mi sfuggiva. Ma no: ora me n'accorgo: non è vero: non mi sfuggiva. Sfuggiva alla mia coscienza; ma non a questo mio corpo che assaporava il gusto della vita, senza dirselo; per cui sto ancora qua come un mendico davanti a una porta, dove non gli è più concesso d'entrare: il gusto

della vita che mi faceva accettare tutte le contrarietà, tutte le condizioni che il pensiero intanto scioccamente stimava misere e intollerabili. Certe domeniche, quando mia moglie fingeva di andare a messa e se n'andava invece dal suo amante (MN II, 1053).

Lacan remarks: "C'est ainsi que le désir n'est ni l'appétit de la satisfaction, ni la demande d'amour, mais la différence qui résulte de la soustraction du premier à la seconde, le phénomène même de leur refente (*Spaltung*)."¹⁰² The paradoxical, deviant, erratic, eccentric, even scandalous figure of Enrico IV is an analogy for desire. Pirandello repeats

the formula for selfhood in the supreme mendicant, Cotrone. Beggary overruns the trope economy of the play, *I giganti della montagna*.

The men are in rivalry for Ilse, the *desirée*, while she laments the irremediable loss of her poet. The ascetic Cotrone indulges in the secular phantasies of the alien other. Dressed in black, and wearing a fez, Cotrone is a Christian apostate: he despises the community for its lost sense of poetry. He explains to the Count:

COTRONE. Ma io l'ho in odio, questa gente, signor Conte!
Vivo qua per questo. E in prova, vedono?

*mostra il fez che dall'arrivo degli ospiti tiene in mano e
se lo caccia in testa*

era cristiano, mi son fatto turco!

LA SGRICIA. Non tocchiamo, o oh! non tocchiamo la religione!

COTRONE. Ma no, cara, niente da veder con Maometto! Turco, per il fallimento della poesia della cristianità. Ma è stata dunque tanta, Dio mio, l'inimicizia? (MN II, 1329).

He has abandoned earthly needs to pursue his imaginary desires. The magus explains the magic of self-sufficiency:

Ecco come parlano i mendicanti, gente sopraffina, Contessa, e di gusti rari, che han potuto ridursi alla condizione di squisito privilegio, che è la mendicità. Non c'è mendicanti mediocri. I mediocri son tutti sennati e risparmiatori. Doccia è il nostro banchiere. Accumulò per trent'anni quel soldo di più con cui gli uomini importunati si pagano il lusso della carità, ed è venuto qua ad offrirlo alla libertà dei sogni. Paga tutto lui. (MN II, 1344-45).

To divest oneself of part or transitional objects is to refuse the metonymic structure of desire and to attempt to return to the narcissistic plenitude of the mirror stage fiction - to treat the props as real. Cotrone understands the jubilant game of *fort/da*:¹⁰³ "E solo quando non hai più casa, tutto il mondo diventa tuo. Vai e vai, poi t'abbandoni tra l'erba al silenzio dei cieli; e sei tutto e sei niente ... e sei niente e sei tutto" (MN II, 1344).

Pirandello does not employ the same semic efficiency when he places Donata in *Trovarsi* (1932), in front of an actual mirror on stage. The trope of desire is more predictable here and drawn from his conventional lexis. He shows her rehearsing her lines alone. She assumes the text of her self and repeats the symbolic words which always already precede her inscription in language:

I tre si ritirano, perplessi, afflitti. Donata resta in mezzo alla stanza col capo reclinato indietro e gli occhi chiusi; sta un pezzo così; poi risollewa il capo, contrae tutta la fronte, sempre con gli occhi chiusi, come per suggellare in sé, con la volontà, l'accettazione del suo destino. Si reca presso l'uscio a premere il bottone elettrico che accende sulla tavola la lampada dal paralume violaceo, e spegne il lampadario del soffitto; poi va verso la grande specchiera alla sua sinistra e accende le due lampadine ai lati, e si siede per struccarsi; ma prima si guarda un po' allo specchio. Nell'atto di sollevare una mano per staccarsi da un occhio il lungo ciglio finto, si sovviene della battuta della commedia che segnò poc'anzi nel teatro l'inizio della sua liberazione (MN II, 964).

In her privacy, Donata has to improvise the stage prop of a fan.

Pirandello transmits the *provisional* aspect of her performance with the remarkable substitute of a picture which she uses as a fan. He clinches the defamiliarisation (*ostranenie*)¹⁰⁴ when she realises discreetly that it is a photograph of that object of desire, Elj! The series of metonymic displacements are made vivid in this theatre of the self. She rediscovers the laws of that other scene and prefers to address her desire to herself:

Tutto questo ripassato a memoria e non recitato. Ora, riprendendo a recitare a pigliando inavvertitamente dalla specchiera un ritratto, perché ha bisogno per la parte di farsi vento con un ventaglio che non ha:

"Non volete insomma andar via?"

Ma d'un colpo arresta il movimento di sventagliarsi, perché s'accorge che è quello il ritratto di Elj; lo guarda un po' turbata, e poi lo sbatte capovolto sul fianco della specchiera; si butta indietro sulla spalliera bassa della seggiola e col capo così rovesciato, ridendo d'un riso di sfida, grida al suo fantasma d'arte:

E allora, prendimi! prendimi! (MN II, 965)

Like Enrico IV, the hysterical Donata makes a futile attempt to escape the instability that is language and the doom of deviated desires. Yet Pirandello recognises specular identity is only a fiction of stasis. The timeless images portray the inevitability of fragmenting movement and history. He quotes Pascal to show that the paradoxical picture is always changing: "Non c'è uomo, osservò il Pascal, che differisca più da un altro che da se stesso nella successione del tempo" (SPSV, 150).

IV.3. Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse

COTRONE. Lucciole! Le mie. Di mago. Siamo qua come agli orli della vita, Contessa. Gli orli, a un comando, si distaccano; entra l'invisibile: vaporano i fantasmi. È cosa naturale. Avviene, ciò che di solito nel sogno. Io lo faccio avvenire anche nella veglia. Ecco tutto. I sogni, la musica, la preghiera, l'amore ... tutto l'infinito ch'è negli uomini, lei lo troverà dentro e intorno a questa villa (MN II, 1337).

We have walked through Donata's looking-glass into the timeless wonderland of *I giganti della montagna*. The futurist adventures into the domain of anti-symbolic nonsense have led to this *jouissance* in the apocalyptic zone of the pre-conscious. The text writes the hallucinatory venture to the interior of the self: we are inside the somnambulant "machine désirante"¹⁰⁵. It is less likely to be an "inner emigration"¹⁰⁶ from fascism. Its incredible population are like stalkers in pursuit of obliterating selves. The erasure of history is spoken by the "Prospero

scespiriano"¹⁰⁷, Cotronè, for whom senselessness is now ineluctable: "Caro giovanotto, ognuno di noi parla, e dopo aver parlato, riconosciamo quasi sempre che è stato invano, e ci riconduciamo disillusi in noi stessi, come un cane di notte alla sua cuccia, dopo aver abbajato a un'ombra" (MN II, 1360).

If the mirror stage is a turning point, the moment of primary narcissism in the roughcast of the self, then in this play, Pirandello steps behind the mirror into the site of primary identification, of the unconstituted and fractured body, where the subject is not yet. Kristeva attempts to map this place as follows:

Je tenterai, par la suite, à partir de quelques exemples cliniques livrés à la fin, d'indiquer la position incertaine dévolue à la mère dite archaïque en tant que corrélat imaginaire du Moi, et ceci dans une modalité paranarcissique où le Moi n'est pas encore séparé de l'objet. Ce sera une tentative de développer la notion d'*identification primaire* pour laquelle je soutiendrai que, ni sujet ni objet, les deux termes en présence sont des "abjects" gérés par l'instance du Père Imaginaire donateur de l'Idéal du Moi.¹⁰⁸

The trajectory of specular desire carries the text further back into the pre-conscious, pre-subjective realm which can only ever be represented as "dream", where sonority takes precedence over semantics, and where the mendicant language of desire is silenced in an undifferentiated state of abjection - "I sogni, la musica, la preghiera, l'amore ... " (MN II, 1337).

Kristeva also writes: "Quant à l'image qui constitue cet'imaginaire', elle ne devrait pas être pensée comme simplement visuelle mais comme une représentation qui mobilise divers frayages renvoyant à toute la gamme des perceptions et surtout aux *sonores*, en raison de leur éveil précoce dans l'ordre de la maturation neuropsychologique mais aussi en raison de leur fonction dominante dans la parole."¹⁰⁹ This is a scenario where later on, the musical instruments, described below, will take on a life of their own. In Act III, the stage is set with an "*arsenale delle apparizioni*", and "*la parte di fondo, liscia e sgombra, diventerà ai*

momenti indicati trasparente, e si vedrà allora di là, come in sogno, prima un cielo d'aurora, corso da nuvole bianche; poi la falda della montagna in dolce pendio, d'un tenerissimo verde, con alberi attorno a una vasca ovale" (MN II, 1348). There are strange, broken and dusty toys in this reflective space, lifeless puppets "posati goffamente sulle sedie", and "si vedranno inoltre strumenti musicali, un pianoforte, un trombone, un tamburo e cinque colossali birilli con facce umane per capocchi" (MN II, 1348).

Kristeva's recent theoretical explorations into this incoherent area (which she formerly called - idiosyncratically - the "semiotic") can assist in explaining how Pirandello manages to substitute the dialectic of an identity in crisis with the panacea of phantasmic incorporeity - the last myth plays depict visually the anxiety about bodily fragmentation that issues with the breakdown in identity. For Kristeva, this is the difference between Old Testament (or judeo-gre~~ck~~) *Éros*, with its co-existence of antithetical emotional states (love/hate), in regard to the other, and New Testament *Agapè* where the abject posture of religious transcendence disinvests the self of conflict: "où s'enracine cette *Agapè*? Je pose qu'elle relève de l'identification primaire que j'ai traitée plus haut, et qui structure le vide et l'abjet ce qui nous apparaît comme un écran narcissique."¹¹⁰ Pauline concord revises Freudian eroticism. Cotrone spoke his polymorphous desires when he said: "Ma io l'ho in odio, questa gente, signor Conte! Vivo qua per questo. E in prova vedono? *mostra il fez che dall'arrivo degli ospiti tiene in mano e se lo caccia in testa* ero cristiano, mi son fatto turco!" (MN II, 1329). His aggressive pose is in contradiction with his necromancy which tends towards a compromise formation, as do all dreams.

I am arguing here that the apocalyptic scenarios of Pirandello's last "myth" plays provide voiceless revelations, and miracles and resurrections that displace the intersubjective transference and conflicts

- the dialogue - of the middle plays. The passage from dreamscape to apocalypse is the pilgrimage from scandalous desires to transcendent concord, from *Eros* to *Agapè*. Pirandello will here attempt to resolve the conflicts in the self at risk by removing all corporality from the body images on stage in this non-verbal sphere of intuitive selflessness. La Spera's self-sacrifice displaces the lusts of the marauding men. These retrogressive textual moves promote the visual and sonic dimensions of the drama: they mark a retreat from alienating dialogic language into a self-referential faith in a transcendent Other. The restoration of faith in the logocentric signifieds of hypersymbolisation can only occur after the adventurous, anti-symbolic delight in scandal. The subjective tortures of these plays are to be resolved in an abject staging of the "pouvoirs de l'horreur": this ¹¹¹ *mise en scène* replaces the protests against the law witnessed in the earlier plays. We are party to the miraculous - there is Ilse's martyrdom, La Spera's apotheosis and Lazzaro's resurrection which are a refutation of the materiality of the body and are a display of doctrinaire religious penance for erotic transgressions. But what a galaxy of technicolour effects will entertain us between the moment the self is relinquished to dream and the final moral lesson! "Tutti i prodigi d'una messinscena spettacolosa!" exclaims Cromo (MN II, 1328).

Cotrone purveys the theoretical discourse for this re-enacting of primary *jouissances* - he holds all the promise of the psychoanalyst. When Ilse asks, "Lei, inventa la verità?" he replies:

Non ho mai fatto altro in vita mia! Senza volerlo, Contessa. Tutto quelle verità che la coscienza rifiuta. Le faccio venir fuori dal segreto dei sensi, o a seconda, le più spaventose, dalle caverne dell'istinto. Ne inventai tante al paese, che me ne dovetti scappare, perseguitato dagli scandali. Mi provo ora qua a dissolverle in fantasmi, in evanescenze. Ombre che passano. Con questi miei amici m'ingegno di sfumare sotto diffusi chiarori anche la realtà di fuori, versando, come in fiocchi di nubi colorate, l'anima, dentro la notte che sogna (MN II, 1343-44).

Cromo can only envisage the dazzling experience of his loss of self in pyrotechnical terms, and he hazards: "come un fuoco d'artificio?" (MN II, 1344); Cotrone then qualifies this image in order to reveal the abjection of pre-subjective silence, "le vide béant"¹¹²: "Ma senza spari. Incanti silenziosi. La gente sciocca n'ha paura e si tiene lontana; e così noi restiamo qua padroni. Padroni di niente e di tutto" (MN II, 1344). The vacillation between there being no mastery over the motor organisation of the body, and the assumption of the ideal ego of narcissistic omnipotence is expressed by the Count who complains: "Mi sento veramente smarrito. Non so piú dove siamo né dove si va" (MN II, 1351). Fascist phantasies of Imperial Rome can be glimpsed through this discourse without limits, where whole populations are duped to live, in a sense, in pre-history.

The timeless landscape of the dream has photogenic qualities where the evanescent object can be depicted in its variability through space and time. The insistence on the quasi-mystical experience of the gaze, an experience beyond rational discourse, is consistent with the theory of *photogénie* advanced by the impressionist filmmaker, Jean Epstein [see Appendix]. An elite of viewers is said to be sensitive to the affective and emotional intensity, and to the esoteric relation between the image and the spectator. The invisible *suture* between self and other is constituted and supported by the spectatorial look, when *photogénie*¹¹³ emerges and rekindles the phantasy of the phallic mother. The gap between the spectator and the alienated image is filled by the disavowal of lack, the effacement of the body-in-pieces. The imaginary *suture* assures a continuity of discourse. I submit that the influences and techniques of impressionist filmmaking, discussed in the Appendix, are carried through in Pirandello's utopic visions in the last plays. "In psychoanalysis, '*suture*' names the relation of the individual as subject to the chain of its discourse where it figures missing in the guise of

a stand-in (its place is taken and it takes that place); the subject is an effect of the signifier in which it is represented, stood in for."¹¹⁴ The uninterrupted process of metonymic displacements of the body image occur in Cotrone's conflict-free discourse. Hypotactically, the self is put in its transcendental place. Cotrone peddles dreams for Utopia limited where meaning will ultimately be fixed.

Pirandello also gives us the utopian spectacle of *La nuova colonia* (1928) with its neolalia, its beginning from zero-degree only to repeat apocalyptic myths. Gramsci remarked on the disorder resulting from Freud's revision of Rousseau. He writes on 30th December, 1929: "È strano ed interessante che la psico-analisi di Freud stia creando, specialmente in Germania (a quanto mi appare dalle riviste che leggo) tendenze simili a quelle esistenti in Francia nel Settecento; e vada formando un nuovo tipo di 'buon selvaggio' corrotto dalla società, cioè dalla storia. Ne nasce una nuova forma di disordine intellettuale molto interessante."¹¹⁵ Pirandello's attempts to erase history will fail. In a discourse consonant with fascist *menefreghismo*, Tobba puts his faith in action:

Ma non pensate a nulla! Cercate di fare! Date ascolto a me, che non ho pensato mai. — C'è la terra da zappare? zappate; da seminare? seminate; gettare, tirare la rete? gettate, tirate! Fare, fare. Fare per fare, senza vedere neppure quello che fate, perché lo fate (MN II, 1107).

But even these uncontradictory noble savages will have to admit that "fuori della legge e fuori di quelle particolarità, liete o tristi che sieno, per cui noi siamo noi ... non è possibile vivere" (TR, 472). Currao will comment with disillusion to Padron Nocio: "Venendo qua, vi siete messo fuori della legge vostra, e avete intanto distrutta la nostra" (MN II, 1131). The insistence of the symbolic letter in the chain of social signification restores order. In a last desperate gesture, La Spera will refute the laws of history for an apocalyptic merger with her son which refuses the alienation that is social meaning. She reasserts the symbiosis:

Niente; se non stai così per questo... A me basta per consolarmi di tutto, guardare gli occhi del mio bambino, quando li apre per guardare e non sanno nulla! Li guardo, e in questa loro innocenza mi scordo di tutto. E tutto quello che so io della vita mi pare allora lontano lontano, un sogno cattivo che la luce di questi occhi fa subito sparire (MN II, 1125).

Kristeva can explain La Spera's redemption of the lack that is her self through the phallic presence of her son; this is the discursive unity of woman/mother in a patriarchal economy of language: "Le Père Imaginaire serait ainsi la marque que la Mère n'est pas Toute mais qu'elle veut ... qui? quoi? La question est sans réponse autre que celle qui découvre le vide narcissique: 'En tout cas, pas moi.' Le fameux 'que veut une femme?' de Freud n'est peut-être que l'écho d'une interrogation plus fondamentale: 'Que veut une mère?' Elle se heurte au même impossible que bordent, d'un côté, le Père Imaginaire, de l'autre, un 'pas moi'. Et c'est de ce 'pas moi' (cf. la pièce de Beckett du même nom) qu'un Moi essaie péniblement d'advenir "¹¹⁶ Pirandello's resolution to *La nuova colonia* attempts to restore La Spera's lack: "Ah Dio, io qua, sola, con te figlio, sulle acque!" (MN II, 1158)

The narrative elision of the image-flow, and the screening of a transcendental point of view as the ground of the image of La Spera are some of the procedures which operate the ideological *suture* in this play. The totalizing of the last earthquake image is "a stitching or tying as in the surgical joining of the lips of the wound".¹¹⁷ The apotheosis of the Mother furnishes the plenitudes of fascist discourse which positions women in this "feminine" way. In the scene of misrecognition, the female spectator blurs her loss and is captured in the male image of her self. La Spera has resisted the fable of history which necessarily would force her to confront this fetishistic way of seeing herself as phallic mother. She does not let her son change into an alienated other. The text forestalls the telling of "La favola del figlio cambiato" and refuses symbolic separation. La Spera is the silent icon of the

unconstituted female self.

Ilse tries in a different way to reconcile herself to loss by repeating, in *fort/da* style, "La favola del figlio cambiato" in order to manage separation. Her declared mission is to semiotise the incoherence of the dreamscape by speaking the always already spoken words of the dead poet. Cotrone theorises the symbolic functions of myth-making: "Stia tranquilla, Contessa. È la villa. Si mette tutta così ogni notte da sé in musica e in sogno. E i sogni, a nostra insaputa, vivono fuori di noi, per come ci riesce di farli, incoerenti. Ci vogliono i poeti per dar coerenza ai sogni! (MN II, 1359). Ilse is burdened by the scandal of her unrealised text; her proposed death is somehow a redundant completion, a totemic killing to install the law. I would argue that Pirandello's projected fourth act finale to this "incomplete" play is unnecessary: it is out of rhythm with the paradigmatic three act structure of all his other plays; and it merely writes his own projected longings for resolution and semantic plenitude. Diamante's last words in the three act version, "Io ho paura! ho paura!" (MN II, 1376) are resonant of the prototypical state of subjective dissolution in Pirandello's writing.

The failure to poeticise the chaos of dream signification is consistent with Pirandello's recognition that "umorismo" is an ironic device which attempts to decipher grotesque reality as a transcendental farce.¹¹⁸ The tragic gesture of Diamante's fear is caricatured in the determinate absence of the philistine giants. The play as it is, is pirandellian. The play with its putative appendix becomes a vain attempt to replace the anxiety about self-fragmentation with the symbolic logic of Ilse's body as complete in death. I prefer the three act version where martyrdom does not occur. The fact that the poetry will fail is borne out by Cotrone's command against interpretation: "(gridando alla Contessa). Prosegua! Prosegua! Di che si stupisce? Le ha attratte lei! Non rompa

l'incanto e non chieda spiegazioni!" (MN II, 1364). My preference is not in order to continue the seamless flow of flickering images, it is simply to argue against religious resolutions. The apparitions which bewilder Ilse, then interrupt her performance and vanish suddenly. Her last words are "Dove sono andate?" (MN II, 1365). The departure of the phantasmagoric "Due Vicine popolane" arrests the shot/reverse shot sequence of her dialogue with "L'Una" and "L'Altra" as they are named in the text. The poetry till then has been exercising her symbolic separation from the "figlio cambiato". She is given a stand-in self inside the dialogue. The withdrawal of the apparitions restores her state of preconscious abjection. Cotrone insists on the significance of this infantile *trompe l'oeil*: "Impari dai bambini, le ho detto, che fanno il gioco e poi credono e lo vivono come vero!" (MN II, 1366).¹¹⁹

The dreamscape permits Pirandello to defer positioning Ilse as split by loss. Her failure to poeticize the incoherence and to give it any sense, means that *Eros* is hegemonic in the unresolved version of this play. The text folds back on the image of her entry, naked, on the back of the cart. The sexual abandon is conveyed by her halting repetition of an unrecognisable text. In this dreamscape, gender positionalities slide, and Mara-Mara carries a phallic umbrella, while Battaglia "generico-donna" undoes symbol and parades bisexuality: "*Il Battaglia, benché uomo, ha la faccia cavallina d'una vecchia zitella viziosa, tutta lezii da scimmia patita. Fa parti da uomo e da donna; in parrucca s'intende, e anche da suggeritore. Ma pur tra i segni del vizio, ha due occhi supplichevoli e miti*" (MN II, 1315). Although she/he knows the symbolic script well enough to act as prompt, Pirandello is indulging the semiotic ambiguity of this transvestite. He is only slightly less repulsed by this figure's vice than he was by Mop and Cia's lesbianism. He will still name the sin and betray his horror at a state of abjection where gender has not been adopted, yet the text delights in a fascination

with the suspension of subject positionalities.¹²⁰

It is interesting to compare this description with Freud's case history of a patient who had a "lovely dream": "*He was driving with a large party to X Street, in which there was an unpretentious inn. (This was not the case.) There was a play being acted inside it. At one moment he was audience, at another actor. When it was over, they had to change their clothes so as to get back to town*"¹²¹ Freud does not interpret the stage metaphors here but he does indicate that a "large party" means "a secret": the appearance of a lot of strangers always stands as the wishful contrary of secrecy.¹²² In Pirandello's case, the strangers are absent and there are no secrets (MN II, 1344). Cotrone claims this as the realm of linguistic transparency, without displacements and condensations. Nothing is *represented*, it simply *is*, and actors are interchangeable with characters or spectators:

Quei fantocci là, per esempio. Se lo spirito dei personaggi ch'essi rappresentano s'incorpora in loro, lei vedrà quei fantocci muoversi e parlare. E il miracolo vero non sarà mai la rappresentazione, creda, sarà sempre la fantasia del poeta in cui quei personaggi son nati, vivi, così vivi che lei può vederli anche senza che ci siano corporalmente. Tradurli in realtà fittizia sulla scena è ciò che si fa comunemente nei teatri. Il vostro ufficio (MN II, 1362).

My statement in the first section of this chapter that there is no role for the audience in these last plays should now be clarified. In this space of authentic presences, theatre, in the traditional sense, becomes redundant. The text stages the masturbatory play of the self as actor/spectator. Quaquero speaks this auto-eroticism: "Toh, guarda! L'hanno preso per teatro! Noi facciamo i fantasmi ... " (MN II, 1315). He then adds a line to efface the audience: "Ma sí, le apparizioni, per spaventare la gente e tenerla lontana!" (MN II, 1315).

The coexistence of antithetical states and the suspension of the ego mark the compromise formation of the dream text, where the other, in the shape of the audience, is erased so that the unconstituted self is both actor and audience. The former dialectic of Pirandello's plays with

their constitutive role for an audience is now stilled in the timeless zone of derepressed auto-symbolizations, where there is no need for the other to decipher the farce. There is no anacletic relation with another, no interpretation to lean on, no erosion of narcissistic plenitude by meaning.¹²³ As Cotrone warns: "Se lei, Contessa, vede ancora la vita dentro i limiti del naturale e del possibile, l'avverto che lei qua non comprenderà mai nulla" (MN II, 1362). The bizarre lexis of this derepressed space is enantiosemic since opposite genders and roles are possible, and the body is its ghost: "Voi attori date corpo ai fantasmi perché vivano - e vivono! Noi facciamo al contrario: dei nostri corpi fantasmi: e li facciamo ugualmente vivere" (MN II, 1341).

le Cotrone's capacity to conjure up a vision of the dead poet in addition to the Due Vicini¹ popolane is consistent with his refusal of theatre *per se*. This cinematic device of substanceless "apparizioni" is an extension of the unobtrusive jump cut of Madama Pace's sudden appearance. Pirandello speaks the ascendancy of cinematography through Cotrone's denials:

IL CONTE. Ma non c'è un teatro nel paese?
 COTRONE. C'è, sì, ma per i topi, signor Conte, è sempre chiuso. Anche se fosse aperto non ci andrebbe nessuno.
 QUAQUÈO. ... pensano d'abbatterlo ...
 COTRONE. ... Sì, per farci un piccolo stadio ...
 QUAQUÈO. ... Per le corse e le lotte ...
 MARA-MARA. No, no, ho sentito, che ci vogliono fare il cinematografo!
 COTRONE. Non ci pensi neppure! (MN II, 1330).

tr In *Trovarsi*, Pirandello experimented with a filmic match cut to link the shots of Donata's private and public stages. The metaphorical parallelism produces a dreamlike transition which is achieved on stage with futurist lighting effects. In this remarkable sequence, Pirandello foregrounds the stage of Donata's theatre as the stage of the auditorium itself and the remaining cast are paradigmatically evoked like Madama Pace. In the phantasmagoric passage, the narrative flow recedes before the suggestive interplay of counterparts.

Perché durante tutta questa azione di Donata dacché s'è seduta davanti alla specchiera, e le battute che ha recitate o s'è ripassate, la scena, dietro di lei, si sarà a poco a poco come dilatata: l'arco dell'alcova si sarà schiuso in mezzo e allargato da una parte e dall'altra, lasciando in mezzo un vano in penombra come d'una sala di teatro, di cui quell'arco così allargato venga a figurare come il boccascena d'un palcoscenico illusorio, che del resto è il palcoscenico stesso dove si sta recitando; ma illuminato ora da una luce innaturale di visione che Donata ne ha, tanto che vi saranno già sorti quando ella rovescerà a indietro il capo e tenderà le braccia gridando: "E allora, prendimi! prendimi!", gli altri personaggi della scena evocata; .. (MN II, 965-66).

In *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, the Prima Attrice evokes Mommina's prison walls by means of a quick cinematic dissolve, where a fade out is superimposed over a fade in: "Al tocco della fronte, la parete si farà per un attimo visibile per un tagliente colpo di luce dall'alto, come un freddo ^{gl}uizzo di lampo, e tornerà a scomparire nel bujo" (MN I, 275). This wall punctuates the script in a cinematic rather than theatrical way. As early as 1916, the Futurists had been extolling the way cinema could create polyexpressive effects. In an extension of their renovation of the drama, they wrote in the manifesto, "La cinematografia futurista": "*Simultaneità e compenetrazioni di tempi e di luoghi diversi cinematografate. Daremo nello stesso istante-quadro 2 o 3 visioni differenti l'una accanto all'altra.*"¹²⁴ They laud the "*ricostruzioni*"¹²⁵ *irreali del corpo umano cinematografate*" and the disproportionate juxtapositions. Parataxis becomes possible in filmic discourse: "Coloriremo il dialogo dando velocemente e simultaneamente ogni immagine che attraversi i cervelli dei personaggi. Esempio: rappresentando un uomo che dirà alla sua donna: Sei bella come una gazzella, daremo la gazzella."¹²⁶ In the Appendix, I outline the way Pirandello's texts, with their ambiguous images, are suited to cinematic adaptation which revels in paradigmaticity. I submit that Pirandello's knowledge of Marcel L'Herbier's work, and the influence of the group of impressionist filmmakers to which he belonged led to his adoption of filmic techniques for the stage.

The theories of futurist cinema also help to decipher Marinetti's claim that Madama Pace was their invention.

To argue that Pirandello was subject to these influences can result in a better understanding of his neglect of successive narration for the sake of dazzling visual techniques in the last plays. It is not only because of the growth of a mass audience that he relinquishes the bourgeois salons of his early plays. It has to do substantially with the texture of the writing which has become more visually oriented.¹²⁷ That Pirandello was an enthusiast of silent movies is evident in his speech, "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro" (1929). Here he applauds the privilege of images over speech and laments the advent of the talkie: "Quel silenzio è stato rotto" (SPSV, 1035). With his developed visual sense, he is not simply defending the specificity of the theatre, but is also pointing to the strengths of the cinematic medium itself. In an echo of Germaine Dulac's theory of the visual idea [see Appendix], he writes: "Bisogna che la cinematografia si liberi dalla letteratura per trovare la sua vera espressione e allora compirà la sua vera rivoluzione. Lasci la narrazione al romanzo, e lasci il dramma al teatro" (SPSV, 1035). Rather than being short-sightedly parochial, Pirandello is, in a sense, saying what the avant-garde filmmakers were saying themselves.

His concerns indicate that he was aware of current debates both in Italy and in France. It indeed would have been odd if he had not been, for, as Colette puts it, quoting the advertising formula that had for a long time covered the walls of Paris, "Ils y viennent tous, au cinéma".¹²⁸ Before being succeeded by Delluc as a reviewer for *Le Film*, she published a last signed article in the issue of 21st July, 1917, with this phrase as her ready-made title: she refers in this piece to the ideas of Émile Vuillermoz who later developed his thesis of a parallelism between musical rhythm and the rhythm of projected images, in his book of 1927, *La musique des images*.¹²⁹ The assertion that a cinegraphist must

know how to write on the screen melodies meant for the eye, will be echoed in Pirandello's essay, "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro". The title of this essay is itself an intertextual reference to the discussion in *La fiera letteraria*, 31st October, 1926, entitled, "Il cinematografo ucciderà il teatro?"¹³⁰ In answer to the questionnaire circulated among eleven intellectuals and theatre practitioners, Marinetti replied (paratactically): "Il teatro morirà se non diventerà sintetico dinamico simultaneo alogico autonomo irrealistico a sorpresa plastico musicale astratto tattile meccanico."¹³¹ He adds: "con questa libertà futurista il teatro può sostenere la concorrenza del cinematografo. Sono quindici anni che lo ripeto."¹³² The debate was continued in *Solaria*, 11th March, 1927, with interventions from Bacchelli, Baldini, Betti, Bragaglia, Gadda, Luciani, Montale and Pancrazi, among others.¹³³ [Luciani then published in 1928 his *L'Antiteatro - Il cinematografo come arte*.]¹³⁴ Gramsci had commented many years previously on the cinematographic features of what he considered to be the psychologically impoverished theatre of the period. He wrote in *Avanti!*, 26th August, 1916: "Il cinematografo offre le stesse, stessissime sensazioni che il teatro volgare, a migliori condizioni, senza apparati coreografici di falsa intellettualità, senza promettere troppo mantenendo poco. Gli spettacoli teatrali non sono che cinematografie; ..." ¹³⁵ His attitude is largely negative and economic: "La ragione della fortuna del cinematografo e dell'assorbimento che esso fa del pubblico, che prima frequentava i teatri, è puramente economica."¹³⁶

Pirandello, in his essay, will plunge *in medias res* when he sets out the terms of the debate and then argues forcibly that cinema is the visual simulacrum of music and that it should summons up from the unconscious "immagini impensate, che possono essere terribili come negli incubi, misteriose e mutevoli come nei sogni, in vertiginosa successione o blande e riposanti, col movimento stesso del ritmo musicale" (SPSV, 1036). He names this technique: "Cinemelografia, ecco il nome della vera rivoluzione: linguaggio visibile della musica" (SPSV, 1036).

It is my claim that Pirandello achieves these quasi-mystical photogenic effects in his cinemelographic play, *I giganti della montagna*. In this "film," *"gli strumenti musicali si rimettono a suonare da sé, uno scordato accompagnamento al girotondo dei fantocci con Cromo: intanto rientrano stralunati il Battaglia e Diamante. Il Battaglia, con l'aria di non saperlo, è vestito da 'Sgualdrinella' anche lui con un cencio di cappellino in capo"* (MN II, 1357). Earlier, the enchanting anthropomorphic signals were clear:

Il trombone fa da sé con tre brevi borbottii un commento ironico; il tamburo, da sé, senza bacchette, agitandosi come uno staccio, crepita in segno d'approvazione e, durante il crepitio, balzano ritti coi loro testoncini sguajati i cinque birilli. Allora i fantocci si ributtano indietro con un'altra sghignazzata sull'"e", se la prima è stata sull'"o". Cessano d'un tratto, ricomponendosi negli atteggiamenti di prima, appena l'uscio in fondo a destra s'apre ed entra esultante la Sgricia ... (MN II, 1352).

The cinematic gaze permits Pirandello to effect a suture whereby the puppets stand in for the absent other. The role of the audience is restored to one of passivity and the seductive images conceal Pirandello *cinéaste*. It may seem that the cinema has become an aesthetic refuge from the spectacles of Fascism where ordinary life is theatricalised. If life is theatre, when symbolic politics are aestheticised,¹³⁷ then the cinema could be the screen for the projection of imaginary phantasies. Pirandello announced the *death* of the theatre in a speech of October, 1934:

Il Teatro non può morire. Forma della vita stessa, tutti ne siamo attori; e aboliti o abbandonati i teatri, il teatro seguirebbe nella vita, insopprimibile; e sarebbe sempre spettacolo la natura stessa delle cose. Parlare di morte del teatro in un tempo come il nostro così pieno di contrasti e dunque così ricco di materia drammatica, tra tanto fermento di passioni e succedersi di casi che sommuovono l'intera vita dei popoli, urto d'eventi e instabilità di situazioni e il bisogno sempre più da tutti avvertito d'affermare alla fine qualche certezza nuova in mezzo a un così angoscioso ondeggiare di dubbii, è veramente un non senso (SPSV, 1037).

His "defence" is in fact an epitaph which reiterates Evreinov's theories of pantheatricality discussed earlier in this chapter. In "Se il film

parlante abolirà il teatro", he had written:

Il mio amico Jevrejnoff, autore di una commedia che anche gli Americani hanno molto applaudito, arriva fino a dire e a dimostrare in un suo libro che tutto il mondo è teatro e che non solo tutti gli uomini recitano nella parte che essi stessi si sono assegnata nella vita o che gli altri hanno loro assegnata, ma che anche tutti gli animali recitano, e anche le piante e, insomma, tutta la natura (SPSV, 1031).

Pirandello can thus be seen to be coming to terms with the cinematic medium, rather than to be defending the theatre against it. It is erroneous, however, to view this stance as a retreat from the total theatre of Fascism: the procedures of *suture* in the cinema support ideological representation where the self is stopped in coherence. The magical illusionism of *I giganti della montagna* inscribes the specular captures of fascist discourse where there ought to be no trouble in the image of a total self. It is for this reason that I am arguing that Pirandello's metatheatrical plays are more radical than those of his last period, despite and because of his increasing command of spectacular visual effects. The spectators' safe pleasures are disrupted in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, in particular, where, as I demonstrated earlier, there is a role for the audience. Their *spectating* arises because the actors, characters and audience *do not suture*.¹³⁸ There is no closure and conformity in their relationships and they are unable to recognise themselves and be set in their place. The resistance to hypotaxis results in an insubordination among the images. The characters or the audience (in *Ciascuno a suo modo*), cannot recognise themselves in the actors. The idyllic sequence of shot/reverse shot is subverted, since normally, "the absent-one's glance is that of a nobody which becomes (with the reverse shot) the glance of a somebody (a character present on the screen ...)". The reverse shot has 'sutured' the hole opened in the spectator's imaginary relationship with the filmic field by his perception of the absent-one".¹³⁹ In *I giganti della montagna*, Cotrone supplies the presences of the absent ones; in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, Pirandello evokes

Madama Pace by means of an unobtrusive jump cut, but he will soon destroy the cinematic magic with the Mother's cry which rips apart the Father's imaginary identification with the Stepdaughter. There are moments like these in *I giganti della montagna* which need to be rescued from the magical process of *suture* and from the flimsy putative finale of that play. The Count will ask: "E non sei ancora, sempre, la mia Ilse?" to which she answers: "Non riconosco più nemmeno la mia voce. Parlo, e la mia voce, non so, quella degli altri, tutti i rumori, li sento come se nell'aria, non so, non so, si/fatta una sordità per cui tutte le parole mi diventano creduli. Risparmiamela, per carità" (MN II, 1351). The passivity of the audience grown accustomed to transparent meanings is here subverted to become the practice of spectating. In reply to his assertion that he is alone and that she no longer loves him, she says: "Ma come non ti amo più, sciocco, che dici? se non mi so più vedere senza di te" (MN II, 1351). The authentic religious vision is undermined when the mirror fractures. If the "theatrical machine" of the law cannot be ignored, these are the defiles where it can be evaded or violated.¹⁴⁰

Towards a new theatrical grammar

To establish a less fantastic set of rules for theatrical practices is not necessarily to domesticate Cotrone's utopian dreams ["From Bauhaus to our house"].¹⁴¹ Rather it is to be aware of Gramsci's caution against the "tendenza di fantasticare a vuoto, di costruire dei grattacieli su una testa di spillo ecc."¹⁴² Gramsci supplies two possible routes for rupturing the ideological capture of the "monkey people", ("il popolo delle scimmie"), his term for the petty bourgeoisie who aped the role of a mass class during the fascist period.¹⁴³

The first emerges from his attitude concerning the authenticity of Pirandello's dialect theatre: the second, and more productive in my view,

is his sense of the role of difference in the building of national popular hegemony. If one bases oneself on Gramsci's insights, it becomes possible to propose a model for a politics of reading which is not class reductionist, and which provides for the re-articulation of texts that have been hegemonised by fascism. By means of a process of discursive interruptions, one can then begin to struggle for a different hegemony of theatrical meanings. Semiotics can assist in accounting for the variabilities in the textual tokens or readings which are overdetermined by the constraints of the textual types.¹⁴⁴

The fascist *dopolavoro* movement ignored the ideological specificities within its mass audience while claiming that it catered for them. The "carri di Tespi" and the "società filodrammatici" serve to re-install a religious attitude to high art at the expense of popular participation by different social groups.¹⁴⁵ In chapter I, I discussed the way Pirandello consciously lent himself to the enterprise of producing homogeneous audiences. The fear that the cinema was too democratic in its effects, resulted in theatre architecture of this period re-inscribing social hierarchies.¹⁴⁶ The "common sense" attitude to high art in the theatre was retained, as the comments of Sacchi show: he describes cinema as "spettacolo di masse" and theatre as "spettacolo di classe".¹⁴⁷ It was naïve of Dullac and others to think that cinema was "bourgeois-proof" and that it too would not become high art, and Epstein's theories of esoteric sensitivity to "photogénie" soon reversed the proletarian trends. The fascist tendency to totalise the theatrical event has the effect of fictionalising history as it prevents any breaks in the illusionistic frame. Pantheatricalism as endorsed by Pirandello results in the surrealism of his last plays - surrealism having been defined by Breton himself as a stilling of the dialectic of history, and a freedom from the "colossal abortion" of the Hegelian system.¹⁴⁹ The surrender to *Agapè* is written through Cotrone, that Merlin of ideology who, with his

Mussolini-like fez dispenses ahistorical "oniricità".

In the early thirties, fascism was to incorporate folkloristic elements into its discourse in order to bolster its hegemony: it now denounces the perils of urbanism and defends sound rural values in order to expand agricultural production.¹⁵⁰ In this way the plays *Liola* and *Lazzaro* serve the discourse in power. Gramsci celebrated the popular elements in *Liola* without anticipating the way rural capitalism was to develop under fascism. Fascist discourse revises *Liola* so that the discursive element "peasantry" becomes significant in the popular-democratic interpellations of "nation". The plurality of social logics and different subject positionalities are combined so as to limit the disruptive effects they might have on each other. Sara, as a symbol of the new purified womanhood in *Lazzaro*, finds her freedom through embracing the soil, and does not particularly challenge her subordinate gender position. She celebrates the expanding hegemony of cultivation: "Non c'è più un palmo di terra che non sia coltivato" (MN II, 1180); and disregards social hierarchies: - "quest' uomo puro - puro, Lucio, come una creatura uscita ora dalle mani di Dio - quest'uomo che non ha saputo mai tollerare che mi facesse uguale a lui, e che impedì che mi dargassi, insegnandomi le cose della campagna, la vita, la vera vita che ha qui, fuori della città maledetta, la terra" (MN II, 1199). The peasant Arcadipane is sanctified, and her desire is satisfied in this secular paradise without social conflicts: "Mi sono veramente liberata; non desidero perché ho; non spero perché, ciò che ho, mi basta; ho la salute, il cuore in pace e la mente serena" (MN II, 1199). There is no sense of lack in this fascist state of things where *being* is naturalised as *having*.

LUCIO. — lo devi ai tuoi figli quanto verrà dal tuo lavoro.
No. E del resto, forse è meglio ch'io abbandoni i miei
studii e mi provi anch'io, mamma, a liberarmi come te —

SARA. — no! no! —

LUCIO. — sì, a trovare anch'io la mia naturalezza—

SARA. — no! —

LUCIO. — perché diventi semplice e facile anche la mia vita
nell'umiltà d'un lavoro manuale — (MN II, 1204).

It is unlikely that Gramsci would have been quite so comfortable with this portrayal of rural virtues. In *Lazzaro*, Pirandello rewrites *Liola* in conformity with fascist discourse: the country comes to signify essence and authenticity of being, and there is a resurrection of mystical meanings after the disorderly adventures of early fascism. I submit that Pirandello's pessimism expressed in *La nuova colonia* as to the perfectibility of man actually *reproduces* rather than challenges the fascist essentialist view of human nature.

/s The way in which fascist discourse articulates rural elements makes Gramsci's fetichistic attitudes to folklore problematic: it becomes difficult to base a theory of theatrical value on these criteria. Whilst in the fascist conjuncture, Gramsci's assertion of the integrity and authenticity of dialect was politically appropriate in order to preserve local differences, his over-romanticisation of dialect leads him to misjudge the heterogeneities and repressive tolerance available to fascist hegemony. As a result, Gramsci underrates Pirandello's remaining works. It is his preoccupation with subaltern cultural hegemony, and his opposition to forms of the national State which suppress local differences that lead him to neglect the other "cosmopolitan" plays.¹⁵¹ As a result, Gramsci is unable to account for the sites of ideological reproduction, and of ideological resistance even, in Pirandello's standard writing. While he may have been too preoccupied with party and political matters to map Pirandello's theatrical fortunes, there are some symptomatic gaps in his appreciation. An element missing from his analysis is that both the dialect plays and those in standard Italian are produced under the conditions of expansive monopoly capitalism. While the homogenising effects of this social formation are evident, the flexibility of the dominant ideology should also be acknowledged: the dialect plays co-exist with the subversive and contradictory aspects of the other works.

Gramsci has privileged a single subaltern discourse, dialect, above the destabilising critiques which prevent nearly all of Pirandello's writing from assuming the coherence implied by this division between dialect and standard Italian. Gramsci is reacting against the lack of specificity in socialist internationalism during the period with the result that he does not perceive additional forms of cultural struggle in this case. Below, I shall discuss his more useful observations on the potential of the stage performance after the demise of the director, as it is here that there is a sketch for a new theatrical grammar.

In his proleptic display of a national-popular cultural alternative grounded in dialect literature, Gramsci avoids confronting the present terrain of cultural struggle. His speculations on the value of the dialect plays are detached from the conditions of textual production within bourgeois society itself. He has assumed that Pirandello's apparent Europeanisation and cultural cosmopolitanism is consistently sealed against the possibilities of political disarticulation from the hegemonic discourse. To value dialect over the "industrialised" varieties of language leads into a primitive utopian strategy for the building of a counter-hegemony. His analysis does not account for the uneven and dialectical relations among the multiplicity of linguistic forms that endure in bourgeois societies and even construct the repressive tolerance of their hegemonies. His totalising vision reproduces a kind of folkloristic reductionism. I have shown in chapter I how folklore revivalism is endemic to fascist discourse.

For Gramsci, the lack of national coherence in individual "esperanto" utterances betokens a "poverty" of expression:

Quando si dice che la lingua letteraria ha una grande ricchezza di mezzi espressivi si afferma una cosa equivoca ed ambigua, si confonde la ricchezza espressiva "possibile" registrata nel vocabolario, o contenuta inerte negli "autori", con la ricchezza individuale, che si può spendere individualmente, ma è quest'ultima la sola ricchezza reale e concreta ed è su di essa che si può misurare il grado di unità linguistica nazionale che è dato dalla vivente parlata del popolo, dal grado di nazionalizzazione del patrimonio linguistico.¹⁵²

Gramsci does not regard this lack of linguistic unity as a sign of the potential for political transformations in an unstable system where the articulating or hegemonic principles are in rivalry without any one being firmly established. His stance on Pirandello's dialect plays is to a great extent class reductionist when compared with his elaborations elsewhere where he proposes struggle in a *war of position* - whereby the ruling class tries to appropriate non-class ideological elements - rather than a confrontation between two already elaborated worldviews or units, namely dialect against standard Italian. Power can be detected as much in a dialect cultural object as in a language one: resistance takes place in the reader's activity of discerning the fissures and the non-class belonging elements which make for textual, if not political instability.

To Gramsci's credit, he does point out Pirandello's effective corruption of traditional theatrical taste.¹⁵³ Pirandello's destruction of bourgeois philistinism exceeds that of the Futurists, and outweighs any artistic merit his work might have for Gramsci.¹⁵⁴ In almost direct contradiction of his views on dialect, Gramsci here honours Pirandello's attempts at deprovincialisation and modernisation. Because of the way he instills dialect with authenticity, Gramsci concludes that Pirandello's contribution is purely one of providing a negative critique rather than of outlining a new theatrical grammar. He had hoped that Pirandello would father a new tradition. Yet he does not account satisfactorily for the way Pirandello's texts promote a radical practice of reading, even if they are not "revolutionary" in themselves.

Perhaps more profitable is Gramsci's hesitant recognition of the value of what one would now call the "performance text" which can substantially renew the conventions of the "dramatic text". It is by continuing to theorise hegemony after Gramsci that the case against recuperation can be heard, for as Barthes stresses, "l'avant garde, c'est

ce langage rétif qui va être récupéré".¹⁵⁵ Pirandello's historical development shows him abandoning his earlier subversive tactics which opposed illusion and reality in the minds of his audience: the dialectical oppositions are replaced with a fixing of the signified and a cessation of the ambiguity and interplay of meanings. Yet there are cases where the producer can resist the recuperation established by the dramatic text. Earlier in this section I indicated how a politics of reading prevents affirmation of the hegemonic ideological signs. Only a revolutionary theatrical practice will avoid the apologetics of critics like Bentley who writes that the last plays "illustrate at most the plight of a playwright in a fascist state. They show that, in some degree, Pirandello lived in an 'inner emigration' like many German writers under Hitler. *The Giants of the Mountain* can be interpreted as showing Pirandello's growing realization that the fascist giants were hostile to culture. A definitely fascist mentality is present in the anti-liberal animus of *The New Colony* and the miracle mongering of *Lazarus*."¹⁵⁶ This genre of criticism is surely inadequate when one is confronted with the easy acceptability of the whole of Pirandello's *oeuvre* to the cultural pundits of the regime. Pirandello's contemporaries restricted and re-codified all his work in a unified and certified fascist meaning with an ease that leaves one wondering what space there may be for appropriation of his texts by more progressive readers. I refer once more to the accolade cited in I.2:

13 Pirandello è - per noi - fra quei grandi scrittori di teatro che hanno visto e compreso la realtà politica del loro tempo e quindi - spontaneamente - anche se attraverso una forma d'arte che appare dominata dal pensiero - la hanno riflessa nei loro drammi. Il problema centrale che anima l'arte di Pirandello, cioè lo sdoppiamento di ogni uomo fra un bisogno irriducibile di essere se stesso, uscendo, da ogni costruzione e da ogni schema convenzionale, e la necessità sociale ineluttabile di consistere in questi schemi per poter viver ('fuori della legge non è possibile vivere') è stato da noi confrontato colla crisi rivoluzionaria morale e politica che si impose all'Europa dopo la guerra e che l'Italia risolse nel '22 col sorgere del Fascismo.¹⁵⁷

This example of an instrumentalised theatre shows how the dominant discourse is effective not only by words but on words, informing the relations among the personages and investing the dialogue with its own meaning. The adventures against order are recentred in apocalypse. The radical aspects of Pirandello's writing have been contained and absorbed by power: the unexpected has become customary and the disfigurement of the theatrical genre has now become recognisable as a figure. What was formerly deconsecrated by the *avant-garde* is now legalised and the damage is restored.

However, recuperation of this kind is by no means inevitable. In 1966, Strehler was able to give a radical representation of *I giganti della montagna* which succeeded in defying Pirandello's firm directives in his copious "didascalie" as well as those of his posthumous text, the death-bed epilogue.¹⁶⁰ While Stefano Pirandello recorded his father's oral resolution to this play, Strehler insists on the incompleteness of this text, "questi personaggi dei *Giganti*, i comici, con Ilse, il conte, tutti insomma, che non possono concludere la loro storia con una parola, perché Pirandello non è riuscito a sciverla".¹⁶¹ He will capitalise on the open aspects of the textual structure in order to compose-in-performance and to supply the afterwords. His particular postscript establishes the stage representation as supreme over the written script. It is possible to argue that it is only with the political events of the 1960s, and with the challenges to traditional theatrical forms by genuine audience involvement in the "happening", that the historical conditions for such a production could emerge. In the 1980s it becomes possible to assert that there is no need for the fourth act at all, as when earlier I argued against closure. There is, therefore, no necessary semantic equivalence between the dramatic text and the performance text.

Unlike film, the theatrical event is distinguished by its irretrievability, the continual actuality of the referent of each specific

performance despite the historically determined referents governing the signs of context, costume or periodisation. Strehler built on these *hic et nunc* aspects inherent in performance. The present performance in any reading of the dramatic text is the absent object of that reading: there is, however, no immediate translation of the dramatic text into a performance text, no linguistic redundancy in terms of a mere doubling of sense between the playscript and the performance. While Artaud chose to abandon the written script for the antique institutions of ceremony (a device employed by Pirandello in *Sagra del Signore della Nave*), the return to the ritual origins of art in sacrifice is yet another glorified regression into the irrational. To acknowledge the explosive prospect of the "fourth dimension", the chronotopos of the partly unrepeatable token stage event is to interrupt the petrified dramatic text.

It is in the stage performance that new approaches can unfold since it is the continual and inconclusive aspects of each different performance that promise other meanings. Yet one should take care not to ignore the textuality of the performance itself which is also *written*, in Derrida's sense of "écriture", a "sort of 'writing' which is basic for language itself, and has nothing to do with the presence of ordinary writing".¹⁶² Because of this textual nature of the performance, there emerges a distinction between the performance-text-type and -token. This is most clearly demonstrated by the "pipistrello principle" where the actors and producer have already "misread" the writer's dramatic-text-type in each regular evening performance which stands then for the performance-text-type. The sudden intervention of the bat is the token event which shatters the performance type. Thus there is a series of *mises en abîme*: dramatic-text-type(s)/dramatic-text-token(s); performance-text-type(s)/performance text-token(s).¹⁶³ This model based on theatre semiotics as outlined in the Prologue and which draws on Peirce's

distinction between type and token, provides supplementary opportunities to "liberate" a text from its ideological fixings. In the case of the stage performance, each action, speech and non-verbal effect is linked with those anterior and posterior to the present utterance on the stage, thus constituting the textuality of the performance. Not only does it become possible to distinguish the dramatic text from the performance text, but improvisation can be viewed as a special performance text which is only partially constrained by others of its type but also has some of the freedom of the unrepeatable token. In Pirandello's case there is a paradox attached to his notion of improvisation which is more bound by the performance-text-type than available to the possibilities of the performance-text-token. This textual *trompe l'oeil* is inscribed in the so-called "improvisatory" script of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*.

Jakobson's categories of "delivery design" and "delivery instance" may be of further assistance in trying to elaborate a new theatrical grammar.¹⁶⁴ In broad terms, it may be seen that at every stage performance, there may occur an equisignificant repetition of the delivery design - for instance, repeat events of Strehler's production - but there is always also a chance for a fresh or different delivery instance to renew the reproducible type. What is typified in the first set of representations can always, although not necessarily, be altered, without denying the constraints of the delivery design or type ¹⁶⁵ *in the last instance*. It also remains to be explained which elements constitute the "delivery design" and which elements the "delivery instance", and whether there is any overlapping between the two which would condition the nature of the alterations, if not make them almost imperceptible. To some extent, this exchange of tokens of meaning in the process of the stage performance may not be as completely or as easily available to subsequent readings of a dramatic text, i.e. dramatic-text-tokens. The delivery design or type of

the performance text escapes formal enshrinement in ordinary writing in a way which the prohibitive dramatic text, or actual playscript, simply by definition cannot.

While in linguistic analyses, the primacy of speech over written language is self-evident, this has not always pertained in the case of Pirandello's critics who have privileged analysis of the playscript over that of the performance text. In the Prologue, I explained how Pirandello subscribes to this western logocentrism which instills the written word with a special authority in excess of the evanescent spoken one. In chapter II, I also described how his modernist adventures always restore the writer to an authoritative place. Pirandello consciously upholds the cultural prejudice which views all representations as inferior and as translated copies of an originary playscript, a betrayal by all concerned of the author's "true" meaning. He wrote in the essay, "Teatro e letteratura" (1918):

L'opera letteraria è il dramma e la commedia concepita e scritta dal poeta: quella che si vedrà in teatro non è e non potrà essere altro che una traduzione scenica. Tanti attori e tante traduzioni, più o meno fedeli, più o meno felici; ma, come ogni traduzione, sempre e per forza inferiori all'originale. (SPSV, 1023).

Throughout this study, I have attempted to show that despite Pirandello's authoritative postures, there is nothing to prevent a politics of reading from arising out of the radical aspects of his texts so that discursive interruptions can destabilise static representations.

The problems of variability and replication are crucial in assessing the restrictive aspects of literary texts and in measuring realistically the aspirations of the *avant-garde*. In chapter III.2, "Parole in libertà", I discussed how the constraints of syntactical discourse prevent revolution in the sign. Barthes is more aware than most of the restraints on anarchical signification. He writes: "Aussi ne faut-il pas s'étonner si, à l'horizon impossible de l'anarchie langagière - là où la langue tente

d'échapper à son propre pouvoir, à sa propre servilité,- on trouve
quelque chose qui a rapport au théâtre." ¹⁶⁶ He then adds:

Ce ne sont pas seulement les phonèmes, les mots et les articulations syntaxiques qui sont soumis à un régime de liberté surveillée, puisqu'on ne peut les combiner n'importe comment; c'est toute la nappe du discours qui est fixée par un réseau de règles, de contraintes, d'oppressions, de répressions, massives et floues au niveau ¹⁶⁷ rhétorique, subtiles et aiguës au niveau grammatical:...

If the rules of "competence" govern the produced "performance" (in Chomsky's sense), ¹⁶⁸ then the relationship between the formulae of dramatic convention and the possible improvisation at any moment is also a complex and restrained one. In other words, it is the interplay between repetition and difference which provides the condition for novelty. There is a demonstration of this problem of novelty in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* where Pirandello makes the drama take place in the gap between the dramatic text (the Characters' script/story) and the performance text (the Actors' rendition). What makes this play so intricately fascinating is that these two divisions are sometimes reversed and blurred, for, in some sense, the Characters supply the performance-text-type which then becomes the dramatic-text-type of the Prompter's script. These puzzling exercises are a metatheatrical comment on the relation between Pirandello's dramatic-text-type and the subsequent performance-text-type of any rendition of the play, *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*. Even if the Characters are in possession of the delivery design, they know that the conditions of repetition can never again be the same, that the décor has changed for instance: a "saletta a fiorami" is substituted by one "a strisce" (MN I, 83), an alteration which in its turn was determined by Pitoëff's rendition in 1923 which then led Pirandello to amend his earlier dramatic text for the 1925 edition. ¹⁶⁹ We thus see the Characters evolving a new delivery instance and any attempts by the Prompter to capture the token in a dramatic-text-type seem doomed to failure. One could say that the

Actors' dramatic-text-token is unmatched to the Characters' performance-text-type. The Characters perceive the differences in their own re-enactment and are nostalgic for the originating delivery design. The confusion that arises from the pistol-shot at the end of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* is because the audience is not sure whether this is a delivery instance or not. Similarly, Mommina's death at the end of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto* plays on the ambiguity of type and token: this game is rehearsed in Sampognetta's "death" (MN I, 260-64) which is soon distanced and revealed as part of Pirandello's dramatic-text-type, although it has the appearance of being first a performance-text-token and then perhaps a performance-text-type.

Through these chaotic oscillations between dramatic and performance designs and instances, Pirandello interrupts the blind rhythms of repetition and shows how any duplication is subject to the risks of variation. Endless repetitions are fissured by the vagaries of difference and it is because of this mobility in the circle of signs that the audience does not *suture*. Nevertheless, the delivery design still exerts its forms of control over the delivery instances. Theatre semiotics in general has failed to account for the range of delivery instances and the complexity of the *performance text*: it has tended to concentrate on the dichotomy between the dramatic text and the performance text, as if the latter were the scene of textual revolution. There is no simple way the performance text can liberate itself from its determinants: not only is it restrained by the dramatic-text-design, but each new performance produces a delivery design which then becomes yet another constraining factor. One can thus avoid a naïve enthusiasm for the "freedom" of performance and can resist thinking that a plurality of unlimited readings or infinite representations will overcome the built-in constraints.¹⁷¹ Readings may revolutionise the reductionism of a single interpretation, but they cannot dispense with the chains of

textuality itself. At first glance, it seems that the dramatic-text-design restrains the dramatic-text-instance in a more evident way than the performance-text-design constrains the performance-text-instance. A cultural prejudice which gives priority to ordinary writing might see the dramatic-text-type as a more enduring object than the performance-text-type, but this has to do with our historically and socially¹⁷² determined devices for recording or copying original utterances. A study of the performance-text-type challenges the cultural primacy of alphabetical writing and raises questions regarding drama, since drama is a special textual case where the "fragmentary, broken, hesitating, grammatically deviant aspect of authentic spoken utterances", which are distinguishable from ordinary writing, are reproduced in writing for the appearance of phonological speech. Dramatic discourse is alluring because it is the example *par excellence* where speech is reproduced in writing without the usual degree of normalising devices indicative of linguistic competence in narrative: there is a suppression of these conventions which usually differentiate speech from writing. The freedom of speech is only apparent.

This kind of analysis poses problems for the general distinction¹⁷³ between speech and writing and for "oral literature". Derrida writes: "Comme le signifiant alphabétique, comme la lettre, le comédien lui-même n'est inspiré, animé par aucune langue particulière. Il ne signifie rien. Il vit à peine, il prête sa voix. C'est un porte-parole."¹⁷⁴ This exposure of the *textual* and therefore circumscribed aspects of the stage representation gives ultimately small hope for the grandiose schemes of the Futurists to abolish the conventional means of expression, or for stage practitioners to renew their languages. The generally destructive¹⁷⁵ desire of the *avant-garde* to create "*utopies de langage*" beyond historical determinations, is itself utopian. At the very least, it is only in the stage event of the delivery instance that the promise of the

playscript instance, or of the individual director's reading, can be concretely achieved - and even surpassed - by the participants in the representation, including the audience. Yet even collective possibilities of the stage event are constrained: the mediation occurs in the delivery design of the director's (or of the collective's) own stage language, conditioned by a whole series of dramatic conventions, and historical and cultural overdeterminants. Perhaps it is now clearer to understand why both a reactionary and a progressive stage representation of the same playscript can co-exist yet be conditioned by vastly different parameters: there will always remain the threat of recuperation as instanced by Pirandello's fascist contemporaries who submitted his work to a form of theatrical reductionism and suppressed a multiplicity of alternative political tokens for the enduring fascist type. One would then need to examine the variability of this type in different representations of the period to ascertain how the dominant discourse reproduces itself and whether there is any margin of freeplay permissible at the level of the token. It then remains to assess the value and consequent political implications of these forms of variability, if they exist, and to establish how the fascist type suppresses the productivity of the dramatic text. In general, what constitutes the design, and what the instance, requires being discussed and made explicit and verifiable through semiotic analysis, rather than through the subjective and impressionistic judgements of the kind made of Pirandello by most of his critics. While there are enormous empirical difficulties for pursuing this kind of analysis of Pirandello's plays, testimonies to productions like the ones offered by Strehler, Bragaglia, Puppa and by Gramsci himself, can set the stage, as it were, for further research.¹⁷⁶

An archaeology of the plays which takes into account the stage representations can place in perspective, if not defuse, the wilder claims of the *avant-garde* and "fringe" theatre. In order to counteract

recuperation in the case of Pirandello, it seems that the material and historical limitations of the type tend to favour a grammar of differential transformations rather than one of rupture. In the section below, I shall outline this grammar of disarticulations and re-articulations as a politics of "interruption". A "revolutionary" stage practice can then proceed according to a principle of disarticulation and re-articulation of dramatic elements so that the textual re-organisation guarantees the hegemony of a progressive theatrical discourse. It is in this sense that the "avanguardista" Pirandello might serve history.

Gramsci anticipates but cannot express the possibilities of his theory of hegemony and of his critique of stage practices. He could not fully realise the radical implications present in his largely logocentric critique which continued to give too much relief to Pirandello's god-like function as author-producer of his own plays on the stage:

1/2 Il dramma del Pirandello acquista tutta la sua espressività solo in quanto la "recitazione" sarà diretta dal Pirandello capocomico, cioè in quanto Pirandello avrà suscitato negli attori dati una determinata espressione teatrale e in quanto Pirandello regista avrà creato un determinato rapporto estetico tra il complesso umano che reciterà e l'apparato materiale della scena (luce, colori, messinscena in senso largo). Cioè, il teatro pirandelliano è strettamente legato alla personalità fisica dello scrittore e non solo ai valori artistico-letterari "scritti". Morto Pirandello (cioè se Pirandello oltre che come scrittore, non opera come capocomico e come regista), cosa rimarrà del teatro di Pirandello? 197

His cultural bias prevents him giving primacy to the performance text over the dramatic text: in his consideration, Pirandello's plays will no longer have any currency after the death of the author, since for him, they needed a theatre. Gramsci inevitably sees Pirandello's participation in his own productions as a drawback which is not compensated for by the language, in contrast to Shakespeare where the poetic play-script endures beyond its diverse representations. In answer to his own question, posed above, as to what would remain of Pirandello's theatre, he writes:

/e
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 "Un canovaccio" generico, che in un certo senso può avvicinarsi agli scenari del teatro pregoldoniano, dei "pretesti" teatrali, non della "poesia" eterna. Si dirà che ciò avviene per tutte le opere di teatro, e in un certo senso ciò è vero. Ma solo in un certo senso. È vero che una tragedia di Shakespeare può avere diverse interpretazioni teatrali a seconda dei capocomici e dei registi, cioè è vero che ogni tragedia di Shakespeare può diventare "pretesto" per spettacoli teatrali diversamente originali: ma rimane che la tragedia "stampata" in libro e letta individualmente ha una sua vita artistica indipendente, che può astrarre dalla recitazione teatrale: è poesia e arte anche fuori del teatro e dello spettacolo. Ciò non avviene per Pirandello: il suo teatro vive esteticamente in maggior parte solo se "rappresentato" teatralmente, e se rappresentato teatralmente avendo il Pirandello come capocomico e regista. (Tutto ciò sia inteso con molto sale).¹⁷⁸

It is evident from his problematic and ambiguous appraisal of Pirandello that he was hesitantly reaching towards a recognition of the value of the representation or performance text, over the playscript or dramatic text.

In another more perspicacious passage, which I drew on earlier in the discussion of dialect, and from which I now quote more extensively, Gramsci evaluates the importance of the individual speech act or utterance: his comments are illuminating, not only for problems of dialect, but also for an examination of how *theatrical* dialogue is conditioned by a pre-existent dominant discourse, as are individual acts of linguistic appropriation. He writes:

Quando si dice che la lingua letteraria ha una grande ricchezza di mezzi espressivi si afferma una cosa equivoca ed ambigua, si confonde la ricchezza espressiva "possibile" registrata nel vocabolario, o contenuta inerte negli "autori", con la ricchezza individuale, che si può spendere individualmente, ma è quest'ultima la sola ricchezza reale e concreta ed è su di essa che si può misurare il grado di unità linguistica nazionale che è dato dalla vivente parlata del popolo, dal grado di nazionalizzazione del patrimonio linguistico. Nel dialogo teatrale è evidente l'importanza di tale elemento; dal palcoscenico il dialogo deve suscitare immagini viventi, con tutta la loro concretezza storica di espressione, invece suggerisce, troppo spesso, immagini libresche, sentimenti mutilati dall'incomprensione della lingua e delle sue sfumature. Le parole della parlata familiare si riproducono nell'ascoltatore come ricordo di parole lette nei libri o nei giornali o

ricercate nel vocabolario, come sarebbe il sentire in teatro parlar francese da chi il francese ha imparato nei libri senza maestro; la parola è ossificata, senza articolazione di sfumature, senza la comprensione del suo significato esatto che è dato da tutto il periodo, ecc. Si ha l'impressione di essere goffi, o che goffi siano gli altri.

Si osservi nell'italiano parlato quanti errori di pronunzia fa l'uomo del popolo: profúgo, roséo, ecc., ciò che significa che tali parole sono state lette e non sentite ripetutamente, cioè collocate in prospettive diverse (periodi diversi), ognuna delle quali abbia fatto brillare un lato di quel poliedro che è ogni parola (errori di sintassi ancor piú significativi).¹⁷⁹

A language that is rich, and not a product of academies, is, for Gramsci, indicated in popular usage. Thus the presence of individual subjects on the stage holds the greatest potential for expression, rather than the homogenised mass choruses that appear in univocal uniformity in Pirandello's last plays. In a theory not subscribing to parthenogenesis, cultural and linguistic innovation, for Gramsci, occur on a molecular level in the struggle for hegemony.

As I discussed earlier in this section, Gramsci is here insisting that the individual speech act has value in that it is constitutive of lived popular speech itself, which is the only material index to the degree of national linguistic unity: popular discourse alone possesses real historical concretion while academic and artificial language is devoid of nuance and ultimately, is comprehensible solely to an elite. By observing the importance of the lived experience, and of the processes of education, Gramsci demonstrates how a national-popular language can develop its hegemony through the dialects only - an approach to language quite different from his fascist contemporaries, as I showed in chapter I and which I have criticised earlier in this section. By articulating both sound and sight, the spoken and the written, the popular and the national, Gramsci is *theatricalising* the processes involved in language acquisition. His metaphor of the verbal polyhedron can equally be applied to all the aspects of Pirandello's textual production: it is in the realm of the delivery instance

especially that the different sides of the playscripts can be explored and that innovations can be effected; it is in the margins of unexpected errors even that the examples of the literary *avant-garde* can be developed far beyond their own extravagant political dreams. A self-conscious and progressive theatrical practice might then assist to bring socialist meanings out from the wings of history instead of the *avant-garde* misrecognising themselves for the Revolutionary Rupture itself.

To substitute a politics of interruptive readings in the place of adventurous ruptures is to redirect the Kristevan essentialism I criticised in earlier chapters. Barthes suggests a rather more subtle way for sabotaging a dominant discourse. He outlines his surprise strategy in parentheses:

(J'entends à l'inverse par *subversion subtile* celle qui ne s'intéresse pas directement à la destruction, esquivé le paradigme et cherche un *autre* terme: un troisième terme, qui ne soit pas, cependant, un terme de synthèse, mais un terme excentrique, inouï. Un exemple? Bataille, peut-être, qui déjoue le terme idéaliste par un matérialisme *inattendu*, où prennent place le vice, la dévotion, le jeu, l'érotisme impossible, etc.; ainsi, Bataille n'oppose pas à la pudeur la liberté sexuelle, mais ... *le rire*.)¹⁸⁰

Instead of a discursive confrontation between pre-constituted and antagonistic alternatives, Barthes here proposes the re-articulation of a discourse through the inclusion of unexpected elements. In the terms of my analysis, his recipe for subtle subversion is consistent with the "pipistrello principle" of surprise.

In this section, I argued that Strehler was innovative in that he found it necessary to supplement *I giganti della montagna* with a finale that would involve the audience - yet he is rather old-fashioned in that he remains a producer in search of an ending. Rather, it seems more sensible to propose a politics of reception which leads the spectator to abandon the passive unitary stance of consumption for the practice of *spectating* - *not to suture* means to deconstruct the artefact without

the need to supplement it. The textual interruption of Pirandello's "pipistrello", as I have argued throughout this study, is Brechtian in its alienation effects: the "pipistrello principle" outlines a new way of reading which need not be limited to Pirandello's metatheatrical plays alone. Why *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* succeeds is that it does not let the spectator make a *suture*; the flickering images do not lead to a seamless unfolding unity where absences are filled. Because the misrecognitions are revealed as such, the dialectics of *Éros* ward off the passivity of *Agapè*. The spectating self sees that it is in disarray.

This model supplied by Pirandello himself can be extended to all his plays in that hypotactic readings where every element is always already in its syntagmatic place can be overturned by unfixing the naturalised signifieds. The parataxis which evolves will disarticulate elements like Sara's rural identifications and place them in a discourse which challenges the essentialist subject positionalities of these eternal "characters". All the participants in the dramatic event can then aim to undermine the absolute successive *enchâssements* of discursive elements.¹⁸² Subordination and hierarchies of meaning are given over to the concatenations of simultaneities and ambiguities that continually threaten to erase Pirandello's theatrical signs. Univocity and linearity of the interpretative stance are replaced by the association of a multiplicity of paradigmatic equivalences. This struggle for an alternative theatrical hegemony promotes *co-ordination* among the actors, author, director and audience. A new theatrical grammar of interruptions does not ignore the constraints of the type, nor does it repress differences in the autocratic name of a unified alternative discourse. It does not presume to *rupture* as this would imply that it was already constituted coherently elsewhere: subordinate discourse, as Barthes rightly points out, is always alienated in that it borrows its terms from the

dominant ideology: "La lutte sociale ne peut se réduire à la lutte de deux idéologies rivales: c'est la subversion de toute idéologie qui est en cause."¹⁸³ The common reservoir of re-articulated ideological elements makes possible a politics of interruption, whereas antagonistic discourses cannot become hegemonic, they can only impose themselves by coercion. The elimination of ideologically unacceptable textual elements connotative of fascism cannot occur without there being inter-textual residues which should always keep the reader on her/his guard against collapsing Pirandello's texts back into fascist meanings. A new theatrical grammar would then consist of speaking symptomatic absences rather than supporting fascist presences, of exploring the paratactic simultaneities rather than sticking to the letter of hypotactic order.

While the analyst can learn not to *suture*, she/he should take Freud's advice and not assume that an interruption means the analysis is at an end; it simply is a reminder of the compulsion to keep struggling for more meanings:

At a first glance it certainly does not look as if the patient's falling in love in the transference could result in any advantage to the treatment. No matter how amenable she has been up till then, she suddenly loses all understanding of the treatment and all interest in it, and will not speak or hear about anything but her love, which she demands to have returned. She gives up her symptoms or pays no attention to them; indeed, she declares that she is well. There is a complete change of scene; it is as though some piece of make-believe had been stopped by the sudden irruption of reality - as when, for instance, a cry of fire is raised during a theatrical performance. No doctor who experiences this for the first time will find it easy to retain his grasp on the analytic situation and to keep clear of the illusion that the treatment is really at an end.¹⁸⁴

In recognising the transference between text and reader, analysand and analyst, both Freud and Pirandello, with his "pipistrello principle", make it clear that a politics of interruption is not a facile formula for apocalyptic resolution. To adopt a new theatrical grammar means to struggle without end for a new hegemony of progressive meanings.

Epilogue: The Naked Prompt

"Le donne: basta che dicano una menzogna con tono di pianto; e che menzogna piú? un pianto vero, che piú vero di cosí non potrebbe essere" (SPSV, 1247). If semiotics is the science of everything subject to the lie,¹ then Pirandello's baffling women offer the greatest resistance to decipherment. They, like words, are always veiled and the search for authentic meaning ends in "illusion" being the only "reality".

Pirandello's quest to authenticate his meanings is *modernist* for its belief that the lost transcendental signified finds its secular substitute in the work of art which stands for truth. Pirandello's point of arrival is *post-modernist* in that his texts inscribe the processes of signification and declare their superficiality - their sheer surfaces conceal no deeper meanings.² This reflexivity prevents closure and the mask or lie remains intact. It is Lacan who draws on a helpful parable:

Dans l'apologue antique concernant Zeuxis et Parrhasios, le mérite de Zeuxis est d'avoir fait des raisins qui ont attiré des oiseaux. L'accent n'est point mis sur le fait que ces raisins fussent d'aucune façon des raisins parfaits, l'accent est mis sur le fait que même l'oeil des oiseaux y a été trompé. La preuve, c'est que son confrère Parrhasios triomphe de lui, d'avoir su peindre sur la muraille un voile, un voile si ressemblant que Zeuxis, se tournant vers lui, lui a dit — *Alors, et maintenant montre-nous, toi, ce que tu as fait derrière ça*. Par quoi il est montré que ce dont il s'agit, c'est bien de tromper l'oeil. Triomphe, sur l'oeil, du regard.³

Reality eludes the gaze in an infinite series of misrecognitions where the mask *is* the face. The realist lure is nothing but a verisimilitude that is decoded by the post-modernist's *trompe l'oeil*. This "tromperie", a poetics of deceit, is the meaning of Pirandello's oxymoron, "Maschere nude".

One Pirandello critic, Pasini, has attempted to define this name

for the collected plays. I am partially in agreement with his definition of the mask, but he does not seem very sympathetic towards the brilliant economy of Pirandello's title. He argues:

Maschere nude scrisse il Pirandello in testa al suo teatro. Il titolo non s'attaglia a tutta la sua produzione teatrale e non è, linguisticamente, molto felice. Con *Maschere nude* il Pirandello avrebbe voluto dire che gli uomini sono tutti, in fondo, null'altro che maschere, cioè non sono una realtà oggettiva: sono una realtà soggettiva, quella che viene loro data dalle illusioni. Sennonché, la maschera presuppone il volto: Luigi Chiarelli col titolo posto alla sua fortunata commedia *La maschera e il volto* è riuscito molto più perspicuo. Ma il Pirandello tende a superare il dualismo di una realtà oggettiva e di una realtà soggettiva. Per lui non esiste il volto, esiste unicamente la maschera. L'unica realtà vera è l'illusione: l'unica realtà vera, quella, talvolta, creata *anche* fuori di noi dalla illusione.⁴

When he goes on to parse "nude", his explanation is even less satisfactory and his tone positively querulous. He is, however, one of the few critics to have devoted so much space to a discussion of the title.⁵ He adds:

Per questo egli aggiunge al sostantivo *Maschere* l'aggettivo *nude*. Quell'aggettivo serve a significare che gli uomini, generalmente, non hanno coscienza, non s'accorgono d'essere maschere e null'altro: epperò il Pirandello, con ardimento linguistico che pecca, nella sua eccessiva sottigliezza, di contraddizione in termini, dice di avere smascherate perfino le maschere, ossia di averle *denudate* di fronte a sè stesse.⁶

-/- I submit that Pirandello's post-modernist perceptions prevent any revelation or unmasking. The title is enantiosemic in that it associates antithetical words in a paratactic way, since the constraints of writing and speech condemn the paradigmaticity to successive utterances. For me, this title is a sign of the simultaneities that constitute Pirandello's theatre.

The trope of the naked mask plagues Pirandello's earliest writing. Don Quixote comes to embody his humouristic sense of life's ambivalences:

Allorché Orlando urta anche lui contro la realtà e smarrisce del tutto il senno, getta via le armi, si smaschera, si spoglia d'ogni apparato leggendario, e precipita, uomo nudo, nella realtà. Scoppia la tragedia. Nessuno può ridere del suo aspetto e de' suoi atti; quanto vi può esser di comico in essi è superato dal tragico del suo furore.

Don Quijote è matto anche lui; ma è un matto che non si spoglia; è un matto anzi che si veste, si maschera di quell'apparato leggendario e, così mascherato, muove con la massima serietà verso le sue ridicole avventure.

Quella nudità e questa mascheratura sono i segni più manifesti della loro follia. Quella, nella sua tragicità, ha del comico; questa ha del tragico nella sua comicità. Noi però non ridiamo dei furori di quel nudo; ridiamo delle prodezze di questo mascherato, ma pur sentiamo che quanto vi è di tragico in lui non è del tutto annientato dal comico della sua mascheratura, così come il comico di quella nudità è annientato dal tragico della furibonda passione. Sentiamo in somma che qui il comico è anche superato, non però dal tragico, ma attraverso il comico stesso. Noi commiseriamo ridendo, o ridiamo commiserando (SPSV, 98).⁷

In a subsequent passage, Pirandello will speak the disorder of meanings which interrupt any unified conception of a fully clothed self:

"L'uomo è un animale vestito, — dice il Carlyle nel suo *Sartor Resartus*, — la società ha per base il vestiario. E il vestiario *compone* anch'esso, compone e *nasconde*: due cose che l'umorismo non può soffrire.

La vita nuda, la natura senz'ordine almeno apparente, irta di contraddizioni, pare all'umorista lontanissima dal congegno ideale delle comuni concezioni artistiche, in cui tutti gli elementi, visibilmente, si tengono a vicenda e a vicenda cooperano (SPSV, 158-159).

Pirandello's title to his plays can be read as a proclamation of his compulsion to theatricalise: his double vision forces him to abandon the univocity of successive narration.

I have punned on Marinetti's play, or "simultaneità futurista in undici sintesi", *Il suggeritore nudo*, to coin my title for this study.⁸ The oxymoron, the "naked prompt" let me forward the idea that in effect the texts declare superficial words are all, and "free speech" but an illusion. In Marinetti's play, the prompter is supposed to provide the lines of the dramatic text. Il Venero dei manoscritti, at the request of the audience, strips himself of all intonation in order to play the part of prompter, and when he is arrested for "streaking" and told by the policeman to put on some bathing trunks, he says he hasn't any and sobs: "Sono nudo come una lagrima".⁹ He laments the limits of his body and flaunts his polysemy: "Lei ha arrestato il mio corpo

limitato. Sta bene. Ma chi arresterà il mio infinito? Ingenua!

Ingenua! Vieni tu ad arrestare il mio infinito? Sì, coi tuoi baci!

Ti amo! Ti amo! Non amo che te."¹⁰ This surrender was encouraged by

Il vento del palcoscenico who is attempting to evade the always already written script and to put paratactic risk in the place of hypotactic history:

Sì, sì, lo arresti. Non vogliamo più suggeritori. Vivremo meglio senza consigli, senza prudenze, senza il già fatto e senza il già scritto. Meglio en errore proprio che cento belle cose suggerite da altri.¹¹

He imagines he can grasp the purified word liberated from its philological constraints. The Photographer is also in search of this kind of transparency in authentic vision: "Mi lasci passare. Necessità di servizio! Sono trentotto secoli che tento di cogliere quell'inafferrabile basso parlante. Oggi non mi sfugge. Ho un obiettivo speciale: Sentimentalite [sic] integrale... Fermo! Sorrida!"¹²

But Pirandello has taught us that there is no picture which does not betray ^{a caption -} a legend. As Barthes explains, the pleasure arises from the reading, from the euphoric relation between the text and the image: "J'adore légènder les images". The embroidery of the tale is consistent with Pirandello's repeated stance that neither words, nor images, can be stripped of irrelevant clothing, or be made bare and transparent to "truth".

A semiotic analysis reveals that behind the plenitude of the social mask, there is nothing but a mirroring void. Pirandello's plays are poised at the signal edge of this catastrophic abyss, and nowhere is this abyss more menacing than in the blank that is woman.¹⁴ His images cannot safeguard his meanings against the trouble that is woman.¹⁵ He does not know what they want to say.¹⁶ *Eros* overcomes *Agapè* since the women tease but will not strip:¹⁷

La donna che amate vi sta davanti, tace - pare che guardi - forse non vede nulla. Non v'arrischiate a domandarle: "A che pensi?" Vi risponderà: "A nulla". E forse davvero non pensava a nulla; ma sarà bastata la vostra domanda a farle subito pensare qualcosa che non vi potrà dire (SPSV, 1252).

There is no naked prompt.

Appendix: Beyond Desire - A Critique of Susan Sontag's Production of *Come tu mi vuoi* (Teatro Stabile di Torino, Stagione 1980/81)

Susan Sontag was born in New York in 1933. She has directed three films, including *Duet for Cannibals* (Stockholm, 1969) and *Brother Carl* (Stockholm, 1971) for which she wrote the filmscripts. She is also the author of fiction, *The Benefactor* (1963), *Death Kit* (1967), *I Etcetera* (1978) and of several collections of essays, *Against Interpretation* (1966), *Styles of Radical Will* (1969), *On Photography* (1977), *Illness as Metaphor* (1978), and *Under the Sign of Saturn* (1979). This is perhaps her first attempt at theatre direction as well as her first serious work on Pirandello. That she is a controversial figure is made evident in the programme notes where the leading lady, Adriana Asti shows herself to be at odds with her.¹ This staging is probably the first ever "feminist" production of Pirandello, and the houses have been full with the curious public, but there has not been a good reception from the critics who are actually quoted in the programme notes.²

A Pirandellian preoccupation has always been the relationships between the director, actors and critics. In working with Adriana Asti, it seems that Sontag might have encountered some resistance. Asti's programme note indicates that she desired to exceed the script and that she felt the need to reinvent herself after playing other characters in Pirandello. She also hazards that perhaps it is her portrayal of Cia and not Sontag's.³ This revealing programme note hints that there might have been some typically Pirandellian problems in the collaboration.

The play, *Come tu mi vuoi*, was written in 1930 when fascist hegemony was lent cultural acceptability by writers such as Pirandello. Sontag's production overlooks the political urgencies of this period: there is a perverted air of Weimar decadence in the first act but the real social relations of Italian fascism are eclipsed. In her programme note, Sontag mentions that Pirandello doubtlessly knew Wedekind's *Lulu*.⁴ Wedekind adapted *Lulu* (1913) from his plays *Earthspirit* (1895) and *Pandora's Box* (1904).⁵ Sontag's first act is not oriented towards the period in which Pirandello was writing, although the style of apparel worn by Asti in particular, emphasises the *Cabaret* ambience (à la Bob Fosse and Liza Minelli). It seems that several differences exist from Pirandello's stage directions. For instance, there is the omission of Mop's silk pyjamas. Instead, we have a short, purple, frilly dress, white bobby socks and long curly hair. The infantilisation of this figure is rather strange when one would have imagined that Pirandello's desire for silk pyjamas to be worn struck a far more sensual note. Similarly, Boffi seems to have been cured of his nervous tic, a minimalist gesture which an accomplished actor should have jumped at. In Pirandello's text, Boffi's tic is indispensable - it is Boffi's somatic defence against drowning in the desperate knowledge that life is a joke. The subtleties of almost imperceptible movement on the stage seem to escape this director who gives us exaggerated and hyperbolic stage effects. All Asti's gestures tend to be grandiose and rather too emphatic. Mop's sandwich never appears, although mentioned on several occasions in the dialogue. The only props that do appear, with somewhat overt phallic reference, are the gun and the camera. These symbols betray a vulgar feminist overstatement of the matter.

A remarkable aspect of this production is the use made of music

according to Anecchino's score. The music punctuates the script and gives it an oratorio like quality, a kind of contrapuntal soundtrack, which one critic mentions as being much like the suspense device of a thriller movie.⁶ This leads one to wonder whether Sontag might have indeed preferred to have made a film of this play rather than to produce Pirandello's play. The music overdramatises both the locales and the actors' presences and tends to get a little too climactic at moments when one would prefer to hear the words spoken. There is to be no relief of a harmonious rush of violins, but simply atonal monotony, if not oppressive "playing for time". It is a novel idea which soon wears off. The visual and aural effects seem therefore to counterbalance the operatic "logorrhea" of this play. The music tends to undermine the monarchy of language rather than establish it.

Pirandello's lurid set of the first act - he actually describes it as a lurid, bizarre, colourful set (MN I, 922) - is transposed by Sontag into a monochromatic staging throughout, which is only broken by L'Ignota's gold dress (act one); red gladioli (act two); and her red dress (act three). Another change which has implications for Sontag's sexual politics, is the way she gives the *prima donna* an unlikely shaven pate beneath her wig (recalling Garbo's blonde wig in the film *As You Desire Me*),⁷ whereas Mop has long, curly hair when Pirandello specified that Mop "ha i capelli tagliati maschilmente e la faccia ... segnata d'un che d'ambiguo che fa ribrezzo ..." (MN I, 923). One cannot quite imagine what exactly this reversal is achieving politically, seeing that they are both practising lesbians, filling Pirandello with distaste. In the Hollywood production, the figure of Mop was entirely omitted which must place in relief Pirandello's relatively progressive depiction. In Pirandello's script, Lena was given "un testone quasi da maschio" (MN I, 949) and one of the drunks in the

first act was "più donna che uomo" (MN I, 924) - an ambivalence in Pirandello's own text which this director fails to perceive as revolutionary.

These quotations from Pirandello indicate that this particular production prompts a return to the text. In describing the event, one realises that one of the main values of Sontag's direction is that it produces a new reading of the play in the eyes of the "intelligent" spectator. This is not to make a virtue of intelligence, but simply to point out that the production has more intellectual strength than dramatic strength. It is her figure of Boffi which realises a new dimension for the spectator who has a knowledge of traditional readings of Boffi. The spectator wants to be *au fait* not only with Sontag's book *On Photography* but with the epistemological concerns of selective French theories of representation. This reviewer, fortunately or not, is in this "captured" position whereas most of the elite references pass the general spectator or critic by. Therefore, the pleasure of this performance text is cerebral, a repetitive Pirandellian stance it seems. Sadly, this intellectualism does not make Pirandello accessible to most of the audience; nor to most of the women's movement, which indicates in some way the extent of the failure of Sontag's dramatic project.

The main value, one could say, the only value, of this blurred production, is the focus Sontag gives to the photographer, Boffi. Her reading of the play will shift the functionalist analyses which tend to see Boffi as a very minor character. Traditionally, he simply acts as a medium between the Berlin and Veneto locales, serving as a link between the past, the present and the future. The privilege given Boffi in this production is obviously tied to the director's own interest in photography. In terms of desire, and in contrast to Mop and Salter, whom L'Ignota continually rebuffs, there is a very eloquent duet between L'Ignota and Boffi (José Quaglio). They

pretend, somehow, to be a pair of post-erotics. The use of music seems to emphasise their special socially marginal position as artists. They appear accomplices in their attempts to evade the imprisonment of bourgeois society. In Pirandello's text, they are both nomadic and epicoene. Sontag's version implies that they are neutered. Her production reveals a doubling of their looks, movements and voices.

None of the reviewers takes into account sufficiently the photographic dimension of this production. The emphasis Sontag places on Boffi's function as photographer provides a crucial over-determining shape to the play and will transform all future readings of this role. At the very start, she gives Boffi - whom Pirandello describes as having discovered the "ritratto stereoscopico" (MN I, 935) - a stereoscopic diabolical mask⁸ made from two camera lenses. It is here that the importance of her stage set begins to emerge, because, for instance, she excises the naturalist painted portrait of Cia, copied from Boffi's original photograph, and replaces it with a mirror (the frame of which is anticipated in the empty metal square in the same centre front position in the first act) which also echoes the mirroring of the plexiglass set [cf. photograph]. The set consists of an inner plexiglass box and an outer mirror substance shell: the inner box is built of "bricks" of tinted glass which give the effect of a series of frames. By placing Cia in a white dress before the mirror at the beginning of act two, Sontag brings out the way she is framed by apparent resemblances. This contrasts with the vacant frame of the first act which is the entrance to the *mise en abîme* of reflections. The production exposes the problem of resemblances in this play and the question of the artistic and photographic images of Cia. What is also very effective is that by placing Cia with her back to the audience, and in front of the

mirror, Sontag breaks down the levels between "upstairs" and "downstairs" - in Pirandello's script, Cia will descend later. The mirror is both transparent and opaque since it allows her to eavesdrop on the aunt and uncle. At the beginning of the first act, Sontag constructs a prologue where Elma, dressed in gold, is elevated on the platform inside the cruciform frame and the lighting magnifies her size, making her larger than life.

Sontag's production obviously relates to the work of Roland Barthes. In Barthes's last book, *La chambre claire: Note sur la photographie* (1980), where he reveals a sensitivity to what she has called, "the fascination exerted by that poignant notation, the photograph", ⁹ he states that there is no problem of the referent, as far as photography is concerned. It is as if there is truth in the image, whereas Pirandello confounds this view. Salesio exclaims on seeing Cia "Il ritratto spiccicato!" (MN I, 952) but later, Cia defiantly states, "che non è prova - nessuna prova - la mia somiglianza ...". (MN I, 994). In her book *On Photography*, Sontag also describes how the photo can provide a more dramatic duplicate of natural vision. Barthes underlines the notion of the "Unheimlichkeit", the uncanniness - in Freud's sense - of the photograph. In view of the fact that Boffi took the photograph which was blown up and copied for Cia's portrait, it could be argued that Barthes's analysis (as well as Sontag's own) has a bearing on her work on the images of this play.

It certainly seems that the problem of resemblance is crucial in her production, and the play is seldom read in this way: most critics tend to dwell on the more general thematic problem of "identity", rather than examine the relations between the "real" object (L'Ignota), the photograph and the portrait, i.e. the question of copies and original. We have the aunt, Lena, claiming

in the play that she was not satisfied with the adequation between the youthful Cia and the portrait, in the first place, when it was painted, and there follows a discussion of the difference in the colours of the eyes: the uncle, Salesio, claims they are "azzurri", whereas the aunt, Lena, insists they are "verdi", whilst for Bruno, they are "grigi" (MN I, 953). It appears that Pirandello, by having Salter send Boffi a picture of La Demente, positions Boffi as an authenticator of reality. Boffi and his images both scrutinise and authorise reality. It seems that in a reading of Sontag's own work in relation to Pirandello's play, the two mesh; this might have been the basis of her attraction to it. To quote Sontag again (in homage to Benjamin and his mania for quotation!), she writes: "Photographs do not simply render reality - realistically. It is reality which is scrutinized, and evaluated, for its fidelity to photographs",¹⁰ - an eminently Pirandellian perception. So the originality of Sontag's reading (rather than interpretation) lies in the attention she gives Boffi, since, until now, he has simply been seen in a functional role, as the pander between Bruno and Cia, whereas she reveals how he is in effect, intrinsic to the meaning of this play.

This interest in Boffi simultaneously gives the set an appearance of impenetrability, like the glass on a photograph. The lighting makes the whole set a reflective womb, with images multiplying horizontally and vertically: the floor is like an ice-rink and the ceiling is reflective, giving an aerial view. In Sontag's article, "Theatre and Film", in *Styles of Radical Will*, she discusses a Czech play, *The Insect Play*, by the Čapek brothers with its helicopter/camera trick of a mirror above the stage,¹¹ which might be what she had in mind here. Another influence perhaps was Marinetti with his totalising effects, his flattening of levels and the creation of

simultaneity, as is revealed by the bringing of Cia "downstairs". The reflective surfaces are at both the maximal and minimal levels. They multiply. At the minimal level, the light reflects off Cia's gold and red lamé dresses, as well as off the silk white dress, off Mop's black patent shoes and off Salter's leather coat. This glaze of the photofinish suddenly becomes diaphanous when the lights are dimmed and Cia's white silk dress is made transparent, so that one almost literally sees through her at the end of act two. The lighting points to the transition from the virgin back to the immodest "ballerina". Another result is that the surfaces of reflections also act as a distancing device - they keep out the look, and produce a longing for the trace behind the glass screen. This reaches a climax in act one, when Boffi and Cia address each other through the pane/pain of glass.

There is a triple reflection in the third act, where one sees Cia reflected in the pane, before seeing Boffi through the pane. Likewise, the family group view the arrival of La Demente through the retroscena - the inner pane. Also, in the finale, the audience see the aunt, Lena, touching La Demente for the first time, but it is behind the pane, in the back passage. There arises a contradiction, since their first moment of intimacy is distanced from the spectator by the intervening glass. Similarly, Sontag's use of door gaps in the plexiglass box produces the ambiguities of copy and original, the play of presence and absence. At one moment, Boffi and Cia are in direct contact; they are as if looking at a framed photograph, deceptive, without glass. The audience is also caught up in this way of looking, much the same as one reaches out and touches a photograph in order to confirm one's self. Sontag also makes L'Ignota rupture the frame with a *commedia dell'arte* gesture [cf. photograph]. Other alienation effects

include the shock of the pistol shot (which is, of course, in Pirandello's script) but then Sontag adds an epilogue which is the final loud flash from Boffi's camera - that is the cue for the lights to go out at the end.

By not raising the lights in the auditorium between acts two and three, she opposes them to act one. In the only interval, after act one, the furniture is moved: the couches from the first act are placed in the side passages for the second, as if they stand for the flow of memory (in the transparent wings). Also, in the third act, she removes the table from the second: only the chairs remain. The two diagonal rows of chairs, now at the back of the stage instead of round the table, mirror each other. In fact, her production, rather than displaying the structural clumsiness of Pirandello's play referred to by the critics, reveals the structural elegance of his script. For instance, similar dualisms can be seen by comparing act one and act three of his text. In act one, Boffi serves as the return of a repressed past; in act three, Salter arrives in the Veneto as a trace from the past, together with the doctor, the nurse and La Demente - and they fill the space anticipated by the empty chairs in Sontag's version. Also, in act three, at one crucial point, Sontag has Cia exchange places with La Demente. There is always this doubling, both in Pirandello's text and in the production. Pirandello's play resists attempts to compartmentalise the acts, or to force the separation implied by Sontag's lighting. The characteristic Pirandellian trope of the return of repressed figures from the past marks most of his narratives and serves to link the separate acts of this play.

The uncle, Salesio, (Alessandro Esposito) and the aunt, Lena, (Maria Fabbri) were expertly cast. What is curious is that Sontag does not let the family register any response when they are first

confronted with their nemesis in the shape of La Demente. In other productions, and indeed, in Pirandello's script, there is this grotesque sentimentality on her entrance, this rush of emotion, whereas Sontag's Italian family is unduly stiff-backed and frigid. They are confined in their emotions. Although this portrayal breaks with the stereotypes, it remains arbitrary and unmotivated, and, might one say, even unlikely in an Italian context. To continue talking against (rather than about) characterisation in this play, apart from Boffi, the male characters are rather stereotyped too. This does serve to reproduce the banality of their patriarchal expectations and their gross monetary preoccupations. It also becomes apparent on looking at the cast list, that Sontag has recently substituted the female nurse by a male nurse.¹² It seems rather pointless, if not gender reductive to place responsibility for the great confinement in male hands. A female nurse "oppressing" a female patient, as in Pirandello's text, is more subtle since it makes apparent the way ideology works in patriarchal society where the mental asylum is bound up in the network of institutions and powers that mark the rise of capitalism. Salter is an artist *manqué* in a sense - a writer, but a pretty bad one apparently, and hardly emblematic of male domination. In contrast with the Fitzmaurice film with its macho Von Stroheim, Sontag shows Salter in his weakness, despite the flaunting of his gun. At first sight, this might seem more in consonance with Pirandello's text, but in fact, she debilitates him to the point of incredibility. This castrating glance evident in the effete Salter should not obscure the fact that there are men associated with the women's movement who remain sexually acceptable, and who are not eunuchs like Boffi either. Salter's powerless threats with his gun and Boffi's voyeuristic camera could have held more menace in this production. Both figures

are too innocuous in this version because men do not give up their power so easily. Salter cannot simply be "caponized"¹³ in this way, since Cia does, after all, return to Berlin with him. In the Fitzmaurice film, the ending was changed and Cia stays with Bruno. The censorship indicates how Hollywood wanted to sustain the family, whereas Pirandello's Salter is in fact an element which subverts the bourgeois family. The film also abandons the "feminist" dimension of Pirandello's play and eliminates Cia's radical choice of a partner with some sexual attractions.

Sontag's production seems to present the viewer with a pessimism of desire ("sadness overcome or denied"¹⁴ are the words she uses in relation to Barthes). This impression arises more forcefully from the programme note than from the dramatic effect of Cia's final departure with Salter. Sontag points out that L'Ignota is living desperately, but posthumously, "non vuole nulla, come dice ripetutamente - e questo significa che è disperatamente postuma".¹⁵ Here there seems to be a parallel with Sontag's comments on Bergman's *Persona* where she states too that the women are "beyond eroticism",¹⁶ in a way. In the opening scene, there is a display of erotic exchanges - yet this is foreclosed with Elma/Cia evading any development of a sexual caress. She seems purposely to transcend the contact, and to be, as it were, "au delà du désir", beyond desire. Here once more it can be seen how an appraisal of Sontag's production is intimately bound up with a knowledge of her attitudes expressed elsewhere. I am not sure that these impressions are communicated dramatically, without the intertextual references. Her version appears to be refusing the possibility of freedom, even in a homosexual attachment. It is the programme note, rather than the performance event which endorses the view that Cia's form of posthumous celibacy is an evasion from being possessed, the only

way a woman can escape from male/patriarchal constructions of her identity "come tu mi vuoi". Sontag writes in the programme note:

Essere creati dal desiderio degli altri è una caratteristica della situazione umana, ma è particolarmente tipica della situazione delle donne. L'edificio culturale dell'oppressione delle donne può essere riassunto dai modi in cui è sottinteso che le donne, a differenza degli uomini sono create dal fatto che sono desiderate.¹⁷

This distinction is theoretically untenable, as Lacan would be the first to point out. Both genders are constructed through desire and submit to the mark of the symbolic phallus.¹⁸ Women both actively desire and are desired. It is utopian to imagine that any subject can be beyond desire, as desire is a condition of language itself. Also, in Pirandello's other writing, there are many examples of women who constitute other men and themselves by desiring: for instance, the Stepdaughter in *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, Lina/Giulia in *Così è (se vi pare)* and Silia in *Il giuoco delle parti*. It cannot be true that Cia is beyond desire, despite what she, or even Sontag says. Sontag argues: "La commedia di Pirandello dice con che occhi sospettosi egli guardasse al desiderio, e sembra suggerire che un atteggiamento superiore verso la vita sarebbe uno superiore al fenomeno del desiderio".¹⁹ Surely, Pirandello's whole *oeuvre* forwards exactly the opposite position - that there is no space where freedom is, since both males and females are always already and inescapably inscribed in desire through language. His play, *Come tu mi vuoi*, with its logorrhea, indicates that being beyond desire would necessitate silence, a deathly affliction from which Cia certainly does not suffer. Sontag is projecting an image of impossibility in her rendering of Cia. Even Lady Macbeth can only speculate on the possibility of being "unsexed". [Cf. "Lady Macbeth: Come you Spirits/ That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,/ And fill me, from the crown to

the toe, top-fill/ Of direst cruelty! " (I,v,40-43).] It seems that this performance effectively goes beyond Sontag's intention, and that Asti's stage presence continues to transmit the play of desire.

Recuperation is inevitable: Boffi's look, his flashlight at the end, both demolishes and apparently frees Cia, only for her to return with Salter, as Elma. The male look inevitably consumes the female body to produce a pornographic image. In this regard, even Boffi is not detached, cannot be a eunuch, for the reasons outlined above. There are some strategies for evasion however, and the women in Pirandello can be illuminated by the work of Godard. Recently, Colin MacCabe, in his book, *Godard: Images, Sounds, Politics* (1980), described how in Godard's films there is a dislocation of the continuity of looks between spectator and screen. In *Une Femme mariée* (1964), he claims that Godard's construction of the images of women reveals how the spectator's look is no longer offered support by the male characters: the husband and lover see different images of her, and her own look does not offer a unifying vision of herself. According to MacCabe, this lack of a coherent view enables the film to break down a unified image of the woman's body, held in a man's look - it provides a series of disconnected images which resist unification. In a sense, this is actually what Pirandello does by relativising the fragmentary range of looks of the others, "*come tu mi vuoi*", or "*così è (se vi pare)*". To see political struggle against women becoming visual merchandise (i.e. against reification) within this arena of multiple identities seems much more satisfactory than to place the fight outside discourse itself, as Sontag does.

This latter form of idealism leads one to speculate what Sontag might think lies behind the surface of Pirandello's masks. Pirandello, in this play, has placed all levels of reality, conscious

and unconscious, and all the different views of Cia, on the same surface, just as he does in the plays already mentioned. In the essay on *Persona*, Sontag writes: "If the maintenance of personality requires safeguarding the integrity of masks, and the truth about a person always means his unmasking, cracking the mask, then the truth about life as a whole is the shattering of the whole façade - behind which lies an absolute cruelty."²⁰ In the case of Pirandello, it would be more accurate to posit that behind the mask, there is nothing but an empty space - a wilderness of undifferentiated meaninglessness. To propose that there is "cruelty" behind any social mask is a form of essentialism inconsistent with the radical theory of subjectivity present in Pirandello's text. Sontag's written statements fail to reveal how sexuality and cruelty are both constituted in discourses and social practices - they are neither able to be repressed nor transcended.

In this play, the themes of subjectivity are not secondary to the feminist and political dimensions. They overlap, since all social and sexual relations are necessarily caught up in the web of sado-masochism. Pirandello's play is not about the extinction of the self, but is an anatomy of power and powerlessness, which is not always gender specific. This leads one to wonder why Sontag should have chosen Pirandello to illustrate her particular radical feminist position. In the programme note, she states: "Mi è stato domandato se ho tentato dare un'interpretazione femminista a questa commedia. Rispondo che, come femminista, ho soltanto tenuto presente la commedia che Pirandello ha scritto. La commedia è già oggettivamente - ferocemente - femminista, qualunque siano state le intenzioni di Pirandello."²¹ In making the rather obvious point (once made by Marx) that a text goes beyond its author's explicit intentions, Sontag seems to be offering in her production a model for an

alternative feminist or "radical style" of appropriation of dominant male cultural forms. But her cultural politics of dissent seem quite dubious in her forced feminist misreading of this play. Pirandello, like Freud, may anatomise patriarchal oppression and opine on male superiority,²² but both resist appropriation in so-called "feminist" discourse. Pirandello played straight will display more about the way women are seduced by fascist performers²³ than any vulgar feminist overemphasis can. This play, like most of his writing on women, reveals the middle class fear of the marxist discourse of massification as represented in free love²⁴ - all Pirandello's texts, even *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* only transgress sexual taboos in order to install the social limits. *Come tu mi vuoi* is no exception to the rules of this particular sexual and political game.

Therefore, the apparent post-erotic duo of Boffi and Cia as revealed by Sontag's production, is just another form of eroticism, fixed firmly within desire. Only by focussing on Boffi's cerebral rather than sexual status as photographer does the value of this production, despite its misplaced feminism, emerge. In any critical reading of Pirandello's text, Boffi will from now on take up his place in the gallery of "raisonneurs", along with Laudisi and Leone. It is here that the worth of Sontag's production lies - an intellectual point, bound to her own work, rather than a dramatic point - in spite of the lavish but basically sterile set and the concentration camp quartet which serve to make her version of the play wear its heart on its sleeve. Parallels with the schmaltzy/oversentimentalised *Jazz Singer* (dir. R. Fleischer) currently on the film circuits, come to mind.²⁵ Except for the interest in Boffi, who is, in effect, a transcendental signifier, Sontag has directed a logocentric, modernist production; in ordinary language, this means that even with

a constructivist set, her interpretation is essentially quite old-fashioned and not at all progressive from a socialist feminist (or a post-post-structuralist) point of view. Ferocious but not feminist.

L'Herbier, Cinéaste - An Introduction to his film, *Feu Mathias Pascal* (1925).

Marcel L'Herbier was a member of an *avant-garde* and anti-commercial group of cinema devotees who saw as one of their main tasks the founding of film societies. The group's leading theoretician and founder of many film journals, Louis Delluc (not to be confused with the only woman member, the militant feminist Germaine Dulac) actually coined the word - a neologism - "cinéaste", in his enthusiastic manifesto of 1917 concerning the promotion of ciné-clubs. Germaine Dulac portrays the group as filmmakers "preaching their Faith, both aloud and in writing".²⁶ Spreading the word (before he died prematurely of TB at the age of 32), Louis Delluc wrote a series of aphorisms about the mass appeal of the revolutionary film medium:

The masters of the screen are those who speak to the masses;
The mass of the cinema is the entire universe;
The great power of this stumbling art is that it is popular.
The cinema is everywhere. Theaters have been built in every
country, films have been made throughout the world. It is
the best means for people to communicate.²⁷

There are to be residues of these sentiments in the title L'Herbier invents for Mattia Pascal's book, *The History of Liberty*, and when he takes his job in the library, the words, "Work, that is the only freedom!" flash on the screen. Neither of these statements appear in Pirandello's novel.

L'Herbier, who had studied law and was an essayist, poet and dramatist, joined the proselytizing group which also included Abel Gance (recently resurrected through [Brownlow's] *Napoléon*, made in 1927) and Jean Epstein. He had been introduced to film in World War I when he was assigned to the Cinematographic Service of the French Army. Perhaps this led to the spirit of conciliation evident in his definition of the "revolutionary art" of the cinema which he described as "the most miraculous means of portraying man by other men"; and he hoped the cinema

would promote the urgent task of reconciling man with other men.²⁸

In 1943, L'Herbier founded the influential French film school, Institut des Hautes Études Cinématographiques (IDHEC), and when he died at the age of 89 in 1979, he was regarded as having been one of the most prominent impressionist filmmakers of the *avant-garde* of the 20s: he influenced the young directors of the period (Alberto Cavalcanti and Autant-Lara, in particular), and is said to have contributed significantly to the development of cinematic expression through his notable visual experiments.

By the time L'Herbier came to shoot the silent film (166 mins.), *Feu Mathias Pascal* in 1925, he had already made 2 shorts and 7 full-length feature films of which *Eldorado* (1921) and *L'Inhumaine/The New Enchantment* (1924) are considered the most important. In *Feu Mathias Pascal*, the narrative intertitles punctuate the images, as recommended by Epstein, so as to allow one to reflect on the shot formation and the sequences.²⁹ Epstein's own silent film adaptation of two Poe stories, "The Fall of the House of Usher", and "Ligeia", *La Chute de la Maison Usher* (1928) uses the visual representation of sound in a way which brings to mind Pirandello's essay of 1929 on "cinemelografia", "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro" (*SPSV*, 1030-36). Epstein's film was described by Henri Langlois - a founder of Cinémathèque française - as the "cinematic equivalent of a Debussy creation".³⁰ [For a discussion of "cinemelografia", see IV.3.]

That Pirandello knew L'Herbier's work is made evident in a letter quoted by L'Herbier's biographer, Catelain. Apparently, Pirandello first refused to give L'Herbier the film rights to his novel, but after seeing his "cubist" film, *Don Juan et Faust* (1923), he was convinced that L'Herbier would respect his dignity as a writer and not sacrifice his ideas to the new medium. Pirandello's reversal is notable since at this time he was still a relatively shy *cinéaste* himself, as shown

by the largely negative views he expressed in the novel, *Quaderni di Serafino Gubbio operatore* (1915). Here he emphasised the way the film industry alienates its producers in the product, and he regularly states that they are condemned, like Serafino Gubbio, "a non esser altro che una mano che gira una manovella" (TR, 1112, 1123 and 1137 for example). In an age of mechanical reproduction, the cinema offers novelty and low prices so that dramatic actors are "costretti a picchiare alle porte delle Case di cinematografia" (TR, 1161).³¹ In a passage which is resonant of "Colloqui coi personaggi" (also published in 1915) and of the later *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, he describes how the body of the actor dissolves into a phantasmagoric image on the screen, and he gives a devastating critique of the new medium:

s/ Qua si sentono come in esilio. In esilio, non soltanto dal palcoscenico, ma quasi anche da se stessi. Perché la loro azione, l'azione *viva* dal loro corpo *vivo*, là, su la tela dei cinematografi, non c'è più: c'è la loro *immagine* soltanto, colta in un momento, in un gesto, in una espressione, che guizza e scompare. Avvertono confusamente, con un senso smanioso, indefinibile di vuoto, anzi di vôtamento, che il loro corpo è quasi sottratto, soppresso, privato della sua realtà, del suo respiro, della sua voce, del rumore ch'esso produce movendosi, per diventare soltanto un'immagine muta, che tremola per un momento su lo schermo e scompare in silenzio, d'un tratto, come un'ombra inconsistente, giuoco d'illusione su uno squallido pezzo di tela.

Si sentono schiavi anch'essi di questa macchinetta stridula, che pare sul treppiedi a gambe rientranti un grosso ragno in agguato, un ragno che succhia e assorbe la loro realtà viva per renderla parvenza evanescente, momentanea, giuoco d'illusione meccanica davanti al pubblico. E colui che li spoglia della loro realtà e la dà a mangiare alla macchinetta; che riduce ombra il loro corpo, chi è? Sono io, Gubbio (TR, 1161-62).

His consent to L'Herbier for a film of *Il fu Mattia Pascal* should be seen against the background of these antipathetic views: it does seem to mark a turning-point as in the later essay, "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro" (1929), Pirandello is more open to the values of film, and one could argue that filmic techniques influenced his *I giganti della montagna* (1931-36). In the essay, he argues in favour of film's impressionistic strengths, but against "talkies" (the first ever being *The*

Jazz Singer, directed by Alan Crosland, in 1927). In the letter quoted by Catelain, it is clear that Pirandello shows great enthusiasm for L'Herbier's brand of silent film and that he gave his full approval to the enterprise. Pirandello's biographer, Giudice, does not tell us what Pirandello thought of the film once made, but he does say that it had considerable success and led to the Berlin film of *Enrico IV*, directed by Amleto Palermi. Giudice then adds that in a letter written from Berlin in May 1930, shortly after the failure of *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*, Pirandello said that in August he would set sail from Hamburg for the United States where he was to sign a contract with Paramount.³² In Hollywood, Pirandello assisted at the filming of *As You Desire Me*, "a talkie", with Greta Garbo and Erich von Stroheim, directed by George Fitzmaurice in 1932, but M.G.M.'s plans for a film of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* came to nought, as had the plans for another version of *Enrico IV* where Pirandello had fallen out with the producers who had wanted to change the *dénouement* and have a happy ending with Enrico IV's marriage to Matilde Spina!³³

In view of this record, Pirandello's permission to L'Herbier is interesting, not least for the almost *carte-blanche* he granted him in his letter:

Aujourd'hui je donne *Feu Mathias Pascal* avec enthousiasme à Marcel L'Herbier dont je goûte infiniment le caractère et le talent. Le cinéaste de *Don Juan et Faust* saura mettre dans l'exécution du film ce qui n'est pas dans le roman, tout en conservant un sujet originel au maximum.³⁴ Pour la première fois, j'ai confiance dans l'art muet.

Germaine Dulac is at one with Pirandello when she writes that a director is inspired by a novel yet creates a new work alongside; and that what she/he takes most often from a novel "is the suggestion that is *not* realised in the words or the events".³⁵ At this point one may well wonder why L'Herbier chose to work on this specific text: before 1924 cinema was trapped in what Dulac has called "the cerebral domain of narrative

movement", so he was not averse to literary topics and he had come to England in 1920 to film *L'Homme du large* which is derived from Balzac.

I intend to outline briefly the underlying tenets of this group of impressionist filmmakers so as to bring out some possible similarities with Pirandello's preoccupations; to make evident the suitability of the novel, *Il fu Mattia Pascal* (1904) from their point of view; and to examine the difficulties of finding a "photogenic" equivalent for what has been called Pirandello's "metaphysical realism".³⁷ Conversely, the impressionist reading of Pirandello's text as displayed in L'Herbier's film might well increase our understanding of the novel. Dulac explains that for this group, literature, and novels in particular, were interesting to adapt, not so much in terms of characters, story-line or external facts, but because the novel is *movement*: the relationship of images and the revelation of ideas which succeed one another, emerge and interact playing against one another.³⁸

The stripping away of plot, character and dramatic action are referred to by Epstein as "amputations".³⁹ "Photogenic" effects were used to counter the domination of chronology in narrative film. Louis Delluc has been called "the missionary of *photogénie*"⁴⁰ by Epstein who expanded and illuminated the concept, endowing it with almost mystical qualities so that only some viewers were supposed to be sensitive to its emotional intensities: an esoteric and morally uplifting rapport was to develop between the privileged spectators and the image on the screen, a relation which has since been "demystified" through use of the psychoanalytic concept of *suture* [see IV.3 above].⁴¹ Epstein argued that *photogénie* is to cinema what colour is to painting and volume to sculpture; the specific element of that art".⁴² For Epstein, technique was incidental to the essentially cinematic interrelationships among space, time and material objects which he defined in 1923 as follows:

The photogenic aspect is a construct of spatio-temporal variables. That is an important formula. If you prefer a more concrete translation, here it is: *an aspect is photogenic if it changes positions and varies simultaneously in space and time.*⁴³

The French film historian, Sadoul, describes L'Herbier's agreement with Pitoëff concerning the photogenic interest of Pirandello's tale:

L'Herbier (comme Pitoëff) insista fortement sur le fantastique de ce conte et sur la multiplicité des êtres, l'imprécision des personnalités, les transformations des héros selon qu'ils se trouvaient dans tel milieu ou qu'ils étaient vus par d'autres.⁴⁴

In an interview in 1924 concerning the plans for L'Herbier's film, Pirandello showed that he realised the special capacities of cinema to render those indeterminate areas which are not so accessible to the theatre, namely, "il sogno, il ricordo, l'allucinazione, la follia, lo sdoppiamento della personalità".⁴⁵

When L'Herbier's earlier film, *Eldorado*, had appeared in 1921, Delluc acclaimed it with a now famous catch-phrase, "Ça, c'est du cinéma!" (which has been transcribed by another critic, not as "That's real cinema!" but as "The cinema grows up!").⁴⁶ For the critics, this film marked an abandon of naturalist representation, or photographic techniques of film based on a mimetic reproduction of reality, in favour of the subjective and abstract, that is, impressionistic, rendition of experience. Delluc, in his manifesto, had stressed how the practice of art (i.e. painting) had adapted to the invention and rivalry of the photograph by becoming more subjective and abstract: "Ainsi devant l'épanouissement de l'art du photographe, déjà l'art du peintre s'est habilement réfugié dans les expressions subjectives et l'abstraction."⁴⁷ In a lecture first delivered in 1923, Epstein adds:

For every art builds its forbidden city, its own exclusive domain, autonomous, specific, and hostile to anything that does not belong. Astonishing to relate, literature must first and foremost be literary; the theatre, theatrical; painting, pictorial; and the cinema, cinematic. Painting today is freeing itself from many of its representational

and narrative concerns. Historical and anecdotal canvases, pictures which narrate rather than paint, are rarely seen nowadays outside the furnishing departments of the big stores - where, I must confess, they sell very well. But what one might call the high art of painting seeks to be no more than painting, in other words colour taking on life.⁴⁸

The impressionist metaphors of subjective disfiguration are established through L'Herbier's use of editing devices and through the use of the camera itself: slow motion and split images create optical distortions. Sadoul writes that L'Herbier's expressionism "s'exprime par des images subjectives, flous et déformations photographiques, innovations très remarquées et ⁴⁹limitées". By using a lens only partly polished (^{partiellement} "verre/dépoli"), ⁵⁰ L'Herbier is able to give dreamlike effects and deformed images. Anamorphoses and somnambulist forms are created through trick photography and curved mirrors. Epstein wrote: "The cinema must henceforth be called: the photography of illusions of the heart."⁵¹ *Eldorado* has been described as a "melodrama",⁵² where the protagonist, Sibilla (played by Eve Francis, Delluc's wife) is a dancer in a cabaret in Granada so that she may feed her child. She meets a Scandinavian painter and after being raped by a strange clown, she kills herself. A contemporary critic, Lionel Landry, wrote of this film in *Cinéa* (one of Delluc's journals), 22nd July, 1921:

L'Herbier knows how to see, and to make us see, all the aspects of nature appropriate to his theme. In order to show that Hedwick is a painter, he shows us the Alhambra changing as he looks at it; when the habitués of the dance hall are drunk, they appear disfigured; the burning hot countryside seems to dance around Sibilla as she staggers towards her revenge. In all these, the meaning of each image is direct and immediately understandable.⁵³

L'Herbier, who distinguishes himself from the "objective" automaton, Serafino Gubbio, has been called a "champion du subjectivisme" by Sadoul.⁵⁴ He had previously been praised for his use of the hand-projector and because of his musical sense of rhythm and movement, he was dubbed a "Paderewski de la projection".⁵⁵ L'Herbier was to repeat these innovative paces in the filming of *Feu Mathias Pascal*. The anti-

representational aspects of the impressionist movement and their protest ("urlo") against conventional values have since been discussed by Verdone who underlines their nightmarish portrayal of feeling, gesture, figures, light and space for the sake of emotional intensity: "La sua visione è nella distorsione. La sua realtà/nell'incubo La sua forma è nella deformazione."⁵⁶ The subjective stance of the group is directly relevant to Pirandello's dispute about "objectivity" - his Vita/Forma dichotomy: impressionist filmmaking explores the areas of ambiguity between life and art, and fact and fiction, in a way familiar to Pirandello scholars.

Indeed, many of Delluc's aphorisms have a pirandellian ring and evoke the note Pirandello added to the novel in 1921, "Avvertenza sugli scrupoli della fantasia", concerning the way life can sometimes, paradoxically *copy* art, rather than the other way round (SPSV, 480). Delluc, a disciple of Oscar Wilde, was, in Dorian Gray fashion, fascinated by the tricks played by time and identity; the past and the present; and truth and reality. He wrote: "All the time life is creating cinema, it is time the camera created life"⁵⁷ [in French: "À chaque instant la vie fait du cinéma. Il est urgent que le cinéma fasse de la vie."]⁵⁸; and "Taken from life: this doesn't necessarily mean it is true".⁵⁹ He defined art as a lie, a "bienfaisant mensonge", and emphasised that cinema was not the art of reality, but that film "est tout à l'opposé de transcrire aussi fidèlement, aussi véacement que possible".⁶⁰ Compare the passage in *Quaderni di Serafino Gubbio operatore* where Pirandello considers the odd spatio-temporal (photogenic?) effects a photograph has on the viewer. He describes how the photo also grows old and that there is only one thing sadder, the photograph of someone who died young, "un'immagine invecchiata giovane a vuoto" (TR, 1273). He writes:

— È facile intenderlo, se ci pensa un poco. Guardi: il tempo, da lì, da quel ritratto, non procede più innanzi, non s'allontana sempre più d'ora in ora con noi verso l'avvenire; pare che resti lì fissato, ma s'allontana anch'esso, in senso inverso; si profonda sempre più nel passato, il tempo. Per conseguenza l'immagine, lì, è una cosa morta che col tempo s'allontana man mano anch'essa sempre più nel passato: e più è giovane e più diviene vecchia e lontana (TR, 1273).

Delluc also wrote: "Cette confrontation du présent et du passé de la réalité et du souvenir par l'image, est un des arguments plus séduisants de l'art photogénique"; and "je ne sais rien de plus tentant que de transcrire en *moving pictures* la hantise des souvenirs et les retours profonds du passé: une femme, sortie d'une vie facile ...".⁶¹

Barthes evokes similar nostalgic sentiments when he refers to "le *Spectrum* de la Photographie", a word whose root retains a relation to "spectacle", to which it adds "cette chose un peu terrible qu'il y a dans toute photographie: le retour du mort".⁶² He writes that photography is a kind of primitive theatre, or *tableau vivant*, a figuration of the motionless and made-up face beneath which "nous voyons les morts";⁶³ and that "si la photographie devient alors horrible, c'est parce qu'elle certifie, si l'on peut dire, que le cadavre est vivant, en tant que cadavre: c'est l'image vivante d'une chose morte".⁶⁴ Only slightly less poignantly, Pirandello writes: "Triste, sí. Ma in ogni famiglia, nei vecchi album di fotografie, sui tavolinetti davanti al canapè dei salotti provinciali pensi quante immagini ingiallite di gente che non dice più nulla, che non si sa più chi sia stata, che abbia fatto, come sia morta" (TR 1274). This discussion concerning the uncanniness of still photography takes place between Aldo Nuti and Serafino Gubbio and follows on their viewing of a "film mostruoso", *Reperto del Positivo* (TR, 1272). Aldo is commenting on the hyper-realistic experience of photographic reproduction in general, since he had earlier been watching himself in the rushes of their film: "Si possono contare i peli delle ciglia", he observes (TR, 1273 and cf. 1275).

As regards the practice of filmmaking, Delluc recognised how film could also exploit the simultaneity of scenes through a technique of "montage alterné", which he described in his preface to *Drames de Cinéma*:

Par la possibilité d'alterner rapidement des images diverses, le cinéma permet l'évocation de scènes simultanées, il nous fait assister à des scènes d'intérieur parallèles aux scènes de plein air. L'antithèse y trouve une pâture extraordinaire: opposition du salon et du bouge, de la cellule et de la mer, de la guerre et du coin du feu etc.⁶⁵

Delluc had employed this technique for a superimposition of a quick succession of dissolving images in his film about a woman's quest for identity - a film which certainly influenced L'Herbier - *La Femme de nulle part* (1922), with its confrontation of past and present. The film is itself a quotation of an American Western *Rio Jim* (1916), which was distributed in France as *L'Homme de nulle part*. When Pierre Chenal (né Cohen) directed his version of *Il Fu Mattia Pascal* in 1937, he gave it the title of *L'Homme de nulle part*! The theme of Delluc's film is similar to that of L'Herbier/Pirandello: a 50 year old woman (Eve Francis), returning after 30 years to a home she had left to go off with another man, finds a young woman about to leave her husband for a younger man. She convinces the young woman that she should not do it and then leaves, alone. It has been described as a film about memories and love, and memories of love, rather than love of memories. It has an important scene where the older woman negotiates a dizzy climb up stairs that she had descended in frantic flight 30 years previously in the impulsiveness of passion. These steps are reiterated to grand effect in L'Herbier's film.

When viewing L'Herbier's film, one should look out for the impressionist aspects which make it influential in the history of cinema. In particular, there is a skilful use of superimposition and *montage alterné*: Romilda's face is overlaid with her mother's so that their

identities merge; and during Mattia Pascal's train journey, the past and present interpenetrate by means of double exposures which are superimposed on the railway tracks. Net curtains become synonymous with shrouds/swaddling clothes/wedding-dress and there is a stunning split screen effect to represent Mattia Pascal's double schizophrenic self, only distinguishable by his tie. The tie, in general, when undone, becomes a signifier for grief. Most compelling, is the combination of overlap with circular movement: the rotating rhythm of the images serves as a match cut between the moment when Mattia Pascal first sees Romilda at the fair with its merry-go-round; their circular dancing in a rotund belvedere which alternates with a close-up of the ring on her hand; and the semi-circular swinging of the wedding-bell which then dissolves to their circular and slower dancing in less romantic surroundings, Romilda in a drab dress and Mattia Pascal as glum as any married man could be. The rhythm of the wedding bell will be echoed in the sway of the baby's crib which Mattia Pascal moves by a rope attached to his suggestively gyrating hips, and circularity returns with the revolving doors of the Excelsior Hotel. Pendulumlike moves were prefigured at the beginning of the film where Mattia and Mino play a kind of musical chairs, shifting closer to indicate their intimacy and pulling apart to indicate their differences. The soft-focus is complemented by an original use of the lens to fade scenes and to diminish them within the frame, so distancing them. The image is, as it were, mounted in the centre of the frame, and this will re-occur in the unpirandellian resolution where the photograph album fixes the images of Mattia/Adriano married to Adriana - a wish-fulfilment almost as commercial as the projected marriage of Enrico IV and Matilde! There is a remarkable slow-motion dream sequence where Adriano enacts the murder of his rival to Adriana, a man whose devious brother is depicted as an overwrought neurotic!

One should also notice a special innovation which L'Herbier, the son of an architect, has since become renowned for: it is the first time in cinema that the designers have built rooms with actual *ceilings*. Whereas in the set designs of his contemporaries, the actors seemed to orate in front of painted backdrops, L'Herbier was exploring the use of settings more in keeping with the machine age and littered with stylish objects such as TVs and sports cars. When Jacques Catelain visited L'Herbier in his apartment in 1914, he describes the *mise en scène*, to the sound of Debussy, as follows: "Je me heurte à des meubles bizarres, à des poufs multicolores En levant les yeux vers le plafond lumineux je découvre une effrayante araignée de verre qui se meut lentement, soutenue^{par}/des fils invisibles."⁶⁶ In the film L'Herbier made a year before *Feu Mathias Pascal*, *L'Inhumaine* (1924), he had commissioned cubist scenery from Fernand Léger and Mallet Stevens in order to screen the tragic adventures of a supervamp in an ultramodern mansion. Courted by a retinue of admirers who include a Hindu prince, a political agitator and a young industrialist, the *femme fatale*/singer Claire was called the "Sarah Bernhardt du chant".⁶⁷ This flirtation with other races is repeated in the gaming halls in *Feu Mathias Pascal* where Indian princes and princesses rub shoulders with a team of Japanese gamblers who sit regimented before the roulette tables! The Art Deco extremes of *L'Inhumaine* recall Delluc's advice to avoid "les accessoires de tous les jours": "Sache~~x~~ que ces détails (robe, coiffure, parure) ne doivent pas donner sa valeur au film. C'est le film qui doit lui donner sa valeur".⁶⁸ Colette had written a review, "Film and Fashion" for *Le Film*, 25th June, 1917, where she discussed the outfits of contemporary "divas" and expressed surprise that the cinema had "not yet found, or created its own fashions".⁶⁹ L'Herbier seems to have followed Delluc's rules in *Feu Mathias Pascal* where, as I discussed earlier, articles of clothing are lent symbolic value by the images.

Feu Mathias Pascal has outdoor locations and crowd scenes filmed in Italy at San Geminiano and in Rome (for instance, the Excelsior Hotel and the Spanish Steps): these settings are documentary-like and in alternating contrast to the intimate, almost claustrophobic, ceilinged interiors. L'Herbier's film makes use of the moving camera, rapid cutting and sophisticated sets: yet as in Epstein's *Coeur fidèle* (1923), he manages at the same time to transmit a quality of "populisme" which was to be a major legacy of impressionist cinema.⁷⁰ In the shot sequences at the beginning and at the end especially, L'Herbier reveals a fascination with the crowd and with ordinary outdoor settings such as the fairground and the village square. The sets were designed by Cavalcanti, a Latin American, and Lazare Meerson, a Pole. This international crew was a result of the film being a co-production with Albatros, a film company founded in Paris by a group of Russian *émigrés* whose own *dépaysement* could be said to be registered in Mattia Pascal's statelessness. Mattia Pascal is played by a Russian, Ivan Mosjoukine, and the librarian by Michel Simon, who briefly makes his film *début* here, having played the Son in the Russian Pitoëff's production of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* in Paris in 1923. Adriana, the woman Mattia meets in Rome, is played by Lois Morin who is said to have been the model for Scott Fitzgerald's Rosemary Hoyt, the "mad" actress heroine of the multiple versions of *Tender is the Night* (1934 etc.)

In order to shift attention away from the story-line and onto the subliminal effects of the film, I reproduce some curious *résumés* of the plot: "A young man goes abroad to find consolation from grief. A false report of his own death allows him to enjoy a longed-for freedom but he finds that a lack of identity can create its own problems";⁷¹ another critic adds that the film is about a "man presumed dead who realises that his posthumous experience is less liberating than expected".⁷² In other words, the custodians of the law are everywhere: "fuori della

legge ... non è possibile vivere" (TR, 472). The verbal silence allows one to see how the tale's meaning is communicated "psychographically", or *visually*, and to understand how impressionist cinema does not strive to "rappresentare le cose, ma esprimerle attraverso il mezzo stesso, valendosi del chiaroscuro, della geometria, vibrazione, intensità e deformazione".⁷³ This way of seeing would reflect Delluc's dictum that cinema is "l'art du mouvement considéré en lui-même":⁷⁴ he teaches one to be more concerned with the rhythm of the images, with their sonority and juxtapositions so that the anti-visual "surface" tale becomes arbitrary ("affabulation arbitraire").⁷⁵ Alain Resnais more recently has commented on how "sophisticates like L'Herbier use pulp novel [sic] subjects as a means of entering the public unconscious".⁷⁶ It is the objects and the length of the shots, their composition, opposition, framing and photogenic harmony which count, not the telling of the tale. Pirandello himself gives us a splendid impressionist take of photogenic objects that are altering or varying in space and time, in a sequence near the beginning of the novel where Mattia Pascal is rediscovering the objects in the rooms that had been "blindly" sealed off in the house after his father's death:

Spirava, in quelle stanze, da tutti i mobili d'antica foggia, dalle tende scolorite, quel tanfo speciale delle cose antiche, quasi il respiro d'un altro tempo: e ricordo che più d'una volta io mi guardai attorno con una strana costernazione che mi veniva dalla immobilità silenziosa di quei vecchi oggetti da tanti anni lì senz'uso, senza vita (TR, 271).

Dulac repeatedly insists in her essays on this suggestive play of emotional and perceptual elements, and she places realistic events and even objects in parentheses: "For cinema which is moving, changing, interrelated light, nothing but light, genuine and restless light can be its true setting."⁷⁷ She also asks provocatively: "Can you tell a painting? Can you tell a sculpture?"⁷⁸

Rather than attempt to *tell* you L'Herbier's film, I quote Delluc,

who in another of his pirandellian aphorisms, wrote: "Quand un cinéaste meurt, il devient photographe."⁷⁹ I have given my subjective, if static picture of the dead man L'Herbier who will, I hope, come alive in the moving impressions of his film.

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¹ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale* (Milan, 1975), pp. 88-97.

² Cf. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, edited by T. de Mauro (Paris, 1980), pp.170-84; see also R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie* (Paris, 1964), III; G. C. Lepschy, "Sintagmatica e linearità", *Intorno a Saussure* (Turin, 1979), pp.39-56; K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama* (London, 1980), pp.46-48.

³ C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers* (Cambridge, Mass., 1931-58), 1931, 2.228; see also T. A. Goudge, *The Thought of C. S. Peirce* (New York, 1969), p.139.

⁴ C. Morris, *Foundations of the Theory of Signs*, in *International Encyclopaedia of Unified Science* (Chicago, 1938), 1-2.

⁵ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.27.

⁶ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.28 and pp.101-2.

⁷ U. Eco, "Paramètres de la sémiologie théâtrale", in *Sémiologie de la représentation*, edited by A. Helbo (Brussels, 1975), p.34.

⁸ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.101-7.

⁹ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.101.

¹⁰ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.90 and pp.101-2; see also T. A. Goudge, *The Thought of C. S. Peirce*, p.139 and pp.154-55.

¹¹ C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1931, 2.300; see also T. A. Goudge, *The Thought of C. S. Peirce*, p.139.

¹² C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1931, 1.404; see also T. A. Goudge, *The Thought of C. S. Peirce*, p.39 and p.26.

¹³ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.82-85; see also R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie*, IV.1-4; R. Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris, 1970), pp.13-16.

¹⁴ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.104-6.

¹⁵ J. Honzl sums up the view of O. Zich thus, in his article "Dynamics of the Sign in the Theatre", *Aesthetics of Dramatic Art* [*Estetika dramatického umění*] (Prague, 1931), as quoted by S. Bassnett-McGuire, "An Introduction to Theatre Semiotics", *Theatre Quarterly*, vol.x, no.38, 1980, p.49.

¹⁶ H. Bloom, "Freud's Concepts of Defense and the Poetic Will", in *The Literary Freud: Mechanisms of Defense and the Poetic Will*, vol.4 of

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Psychiatry and the Humanities, edited by J. H. Smith (New Haven and London, 1980), p.5.

¹⁷ Cf. L. Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language* (Madison, 1961); see also U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.71-81; R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie*, II.1.

¹⁸ R. Barthes, *S/Z*, p.16.

¹⁹ Cf. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, pp.23-55 and pp.97-103; see also G. C. Lepschy, *Mutamenti di prospettiva nella linguistica* (Bologna, 1981), pp.7-17 and pp.135-41.

²⁰ F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, p.33; see also R. Barthes, "Introduction", *Éléments de sémiologie*: U. Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics* (London and Basingstoke, 1977), p.30, where in a note which differs from the one in the Italian edition, he writes: "There is some discussion as to whether the discipline should be called *Semiotics* or *Semiology* [his italics]. 'Semiology' with reference to Saussure's definition; 'Semiotics' or 'semiotic' with reference to those of Peirce's and Morris'. Furthermore one could presumably speak of semiology with reference to a general discipline which studies signs, and regards linguistic signs as no more than a special area; but Barthes (1964a) ["Éléments de sémiologie", *Communications* 4] has turned Saussure's definition upside down by viewing semiology as a *translinguistics* [his italics] which examines all sign systems with reference to linguistic laws. So it would seem that anyone inclining toward a study of sign systems that has no necessary dependence on linguistics must speak of semiotics." Eco adds that his adoption of the formula 'semiotics', without his paying attention to arguments about the philosophical and methodological implications of the two terms, complies with the decision taken in January 1969 in Paris by an international committee which brought into existence the International Association for Semiotic Studies.

²¹ F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, p.157.

²² Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.79 and pp. 140-42.

²³ Cf. MN I, 325: "Monsignore, però, mentre voi vi tenete fermo, aggrappato con tutte e due le mani alla vostra tonaca santa, di qua, dalle maniche, vi scivola, vi scivola, vi sguiscia come un serpe qualche cosa, di cui non v'accorgete."

²⁴ Cf. J. Lacan, "L'instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud", *Écrits* I (Paris, 1966), p.26; see also U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.104; R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style and Language*, edited by T. Sebeok (Cambridge, Mass., 1971), pp.364-67; R. Barthes, *Leçon* (Paris, 1978), pp.30-31.

²⁵ Cf. G. C. Lepschy, *Mutamenti di prospettiva nella linguistica*, p.29: "J. Lacan ha compiuto una rilettura di Freud alla luce di Saussure, scoprendo, o meglio, a suo dire, sottolineando, che per

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Freud l'inconscio è strutturato come un linguaggio, e insistendo sul carattere fondamentale linguistico della psicoanalisi. Il fatto che Lacan si serva di Saussure distorcendolo violentemente non diminuisce l'originalità e l'interesse delle sue teorie, che sono stimolanti anche per molti linguisti."

26 Cf. R. Coward and J. Ellis, *Language and Materialism* (London, 1977); see also D. Silverman and B. Torode, *The Material Word* (London, 1980); S. Heath, *Questions of Cinema* (London, 1981).

27 Cf. J. Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence* (Paris, 1967); see also H. Bloom et al., *Deconstruction and Criticism* (London, 1979); P. Meisel, "Introduction: Freud as Literature", in *Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by P. Meisel (Englewood Cliffs, 1981), pp.1-35; M. A. Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process* (New Haven and London, 1981).

28 Cf. M. A. Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process*, pp.8-9.

29 Cf. M. A. Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process*, p.8, n.11: "E.g., Freud's letters to Fliess on May 2, May 16, and May 25, 1897, the last including his 'Draft M'; the famous letter to Fliess on September 21, 1897, in which he admitted doubts about the reality of the seduction scenes his patients had described; 'Screen Memories' (1899), *SE* 3: 301-22"; see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Après-coup" [Deferred Action; Deferred], *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse* (Paris, 1981), p.34: "Or, d'emblée, Freud a marqué que le sujet remanie après-coup [nachträglich] les événements passés et que c'est ce remaniement qui leur confère un sens et même une efficacité ou pouvoir pathogène. Le 6-12-1896, il écrit à W. Fliess: '... je travaille sur l'hypothèse que notre mécanisme psychique s'est établi par stratification: les matériaux présents sous forme de traces mnésiques subissent de temps en temps, en fonction de nouvelles conditions, une réorganisation, une réinscription'"[his italics]; "Scène originaire" [Primal scene], p.432: "... dans la première rédaction de *L'homme aux loups* (1914) [The Wolf Man] où Freud tient à prouver la réalité de la scène originaire, il met déjà l'accent sur le fait que ce n'est qu'après-coup [nachträglich] qu'elle est comprise et interprétée par l'enfant"; P. Meisel, "Introduction: Freud as Literature", in *Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays*, pp.25-26.

30 Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, pp.350-77; and his article "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", *Selected Writings* (The Hague, 1971), vol.II, p.258: "A competition between both devices, metonymic and metaphoric, is manifest in any symbolic process, be it intrapersonal or social. Thus in an inquiry into the structure of dreams, the decisive question is whether the symbols and the temporal sequences are based on contiguity (Freud's metonymic 'displacement' and synecdochic 'condensation') or on similarity (Freud's 'identification and symbolism')"; see also J. Lacan, "Preface" to *Jacques Lacan*, by A. Lemaire (Brussels, 1977), p.15, where in defending himself against the charge of plagiarising Jakobson, he unwittingly reveals how he has misread Jakobson's formula which, as

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shown above, does not make "Freudian displacement depend on metaphor": "Mais avec moi, elle est bien drôle. Quand à partir de la structure du langage, je formule la métaphore de façon à rendre compte de ce qu'il [Freud] appelle condensation dans l'inconscient, la métonymie pour de même en motiver le déplacement, l'on s'y indigne que je ne cite pas Jakobson (dont d'ailleurs dans ma bande on ne soupçonnerait pas ... le nom si je ne l'avais prononcé). Mais quand on s'aperçoit, à le lire enfin, que la formule dont j'articule la métonymie diffère assez de celle de Jakobson, pour que le déplacement freudien, lui le fasse dépendre de la métaphore, alors on me le reproche comme si je la lui avais attribuée. Bref, on s'amuse." [To prolong the game, it should be pointed out that perhaps Lacan meant to say that Jakobson's formula makes Freudian condensation depend on 'metonymy' (in Lacan's scheme of contiguity), or, more precisely, on synecdoche [!], whereas Lacan formulates metaphor in such a way as to account for what Freud calls condensation. Lacan is disavowing his similarity to Jakobson since they both make displacement depend on metonymy.]

31 Cf. M. A. Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process*, p.176; see also K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.158.

32 Cf. U. Eco, "La fallacia referenziale", *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.89: "Pertanto ogni volta che si manifesta una possibilità di mentire siamo in presenza di una funzione segnica. Funzione segnica significa possibilità di significare (e dunque di comunicare) qualcosa a cui non corrisponde alcuno stato reale di fatti."

33 Cf. M. A. Skura, *The Literary Use of the Psychoanalytic Process*, p.10: "He [Freud] saw the narrated events as acts which did something to or had some effect on the listening analyst, rather than as representations of any external reality"; see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Transfert" [Transference], *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.492-99.

34 Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Mise en acte" [Acting out], *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, p.240; and "Acting out", pp.6-8; see also S. Freud on the "compulsion to repeat" in his *The 'Uncanny'* (1919), SE 17, 233-38; and his *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), SE 18, 7-64.

35 Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'intertextualité", *Le Texte du roman* (The Hague, 1970), pp.139-76; see also L. S. Roudiez, "Introduction" to *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, by J. Kristeva and edited by L. S. Roudiez (New York, 1980), p.15: "Intertextuality: ... It has nothing to do with matters of influence by one writer upon another, or with the sources of a literary work; it does, on the other hand, involve the components of a textual system such as a novel, for instance. It is defined in *La Révolution du langage poétique* as the transposition of one or more systems of signs into another, accompanied by a new articulation of the enunciative and denotative position. Any signifying practice is a field (in the sense of space traversed by lines of force) in which various signifying practices undergo such a transposition."

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³⁶ Cf. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, p.157.

³⁷ Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.157: "The speech event is, in its own right, the chief form of interaction in the drama. The dialogic exchange, that is, does not merely, in Honzl's terms, refer deictically to the dramatic action, but directly constitutes it. The proairetic (or 'action') dynamic of the play is carried, above all, by the intersubjective force of discourse."

³⁸ Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.119.

³⁹ U. Eco, "Pirandello Ridens", *Altro Polo*, edited by N. Newbigin and S. Trambaiolo (Sydney, 1978), p.82.

⁴⁰ Cf. U. Eco, "Pirandello Ridens", *Altro Polo*, p.83.

⁴¹ Cf. S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), SE 4, 318; *The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words* [A Review of a pamphlet, "Ueber den Gegensinn der Urworte" (1884), by Karl Abel] (1910), SE 11, 155-61; "Taboo and Emotional Ambivalence", *Totem and Taboo* (1913), SE 13, 67; "The Dream-Work", and "Uncertainties and Criticisms", *Dreams* (1916), Part II of *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis* (1916-17), SE 15, 179 and 229-30; and "Dream-Interpretation as an Illustration", *An Outline of Psycho-Analysis* (1940), SE 23, 169; see also G. C. Lepschy, "Freud, Abel e gli opposti", *Mutamenti di prospettiva nella linguistica*, pp.173-98; and his article, "Enantiosemy and Irony in Italian Lexis", *The Italianist*, edited by B. Jones and Z. Barański (Reading, 1981), no.1, pp.82-88.

⁴² Cf. J. Lacan, "L'aggressivité en psychanalyse", *Revue française de psychanalyse*, no.3, July-September, 1948, pp.367-88.

⁴³ G. H. Hartman, "Criticism, Indeterminacy, Irony", *Criticism in the Wilderness: The Study of Literature Today* (New Haven and London, 1980), p.278.

⁴⁴ S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), SE 8, 115; see also C. E. Schorske, "Politics and Patricide in Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*", *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York, 1981), p.181: "The unriddler of riddles who found the key to the human condition in the story of Oedipus was also a lover of jokes." Schorske then quotes a joke of Freud's which demonstrates how the rules for understanding dreams also hold true for understanding jokes. Jokes conceal a problem, and like dreams, jokes are a fulfilment of a wish; they bring the solution of the problem to light as well. For example, when Freud was finally given an associate professorship he wrote to Fliess [March 11, 1902] as follows: "The public enthusiasm is immense. Congratulations and bouquets keep pouring in, as if the role of sexuality had suddenly been recognized by His Majesty, the interpretation of dreams confirmed by the Council of Ministers, and the necessity of the psychoanalytic therapy of hysteria carried by a two-thirds majority in Parliament": S. Freud, *The Origins of Psycho-Analysis: Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts and Notes, 1887-1902*, edited by M. Bonaparte, A. Freud and E. Kris, and translated by E. Mosbacher and J. Strachey (New York, 1954), p.344.

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⁴⁵ S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 115.

⁴⁶ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.95.

⁴⁷ Cf. U. Eco, "Pirandello Ridens", *Altro Polo*, p.89.

⁴⁸ U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.95.

⁴⁹ Cf. S. Freud, "The Motives of Jokes - Jokes as a Social Process", *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 143-44; see also S. Weber, "The Divaricator: Remarks on Freud's *Witz*", *Glyph*, 1, 1977, pp.1-27; and his article, "The Critics' Choice", in *1789: Reading Writing Revolution*, edited by F. Barker et al. (Colchester, 1982), pp.147-59.

⁵⁰ Cf. G. C. Lepschy, "Sintagmatica e linearità", *Intorno a Saussure*, pp.39-56; see also J. Stone, "Il Belfagor di Pirandello: Machiavelli rivisitato", in *Pirandello Poeta*, edited by P. D. Giovanelli (Florence, 1981), pp.180-96.

⁵¹ Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.3; for criticism of Pirandello which draws on semiotics, see also G. Bettetini, "La messa in scena del teatro e del cinema: un unico principio di linguaggio e di forma", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Lauretta (Agrigento, 1978), pp.193-208; M. Altieri Biagi, "La lingua in scena: dalle novelle agli atti unici", in *Gli atti unici di Pirandello: tra narrativa e teatro*, edited by S. Milioto (Agrigento, 1978), pp.259-315. This article also appears, slightly modified and with a different title, "Pirandello: dalla scrittura narrativa alla scrittura scenica", in her *La lingua in scena* (Bologna, 1980), pp.162-221; N. Borsellino, *Immagini di Pirandello* (Cosenza, 1979); U. Eco, "Pirandello Ridens", *Altro Polo*, edited by N. Newbiggin and S. Trambaiolo (Sydney, 1978), pp.79-90; G. Genot, "Caractères du lieu théâtral chez Pirandello", *Revue des études italiennes*, xiv, 1968, pp.9-25; S. Jansen, "Struttura narrativa e struttura drammatica in *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*", *Rivista italiana di drammaturgia*, II, 6, 1977, pp.55-70; and his article, "L'unità della trilogia come unità di una ricerca continua", in *Il teatro nel teatro di Pirandello*, edited by E. Lauretta (Agrigento, 1977), pp.222-36; A. L. Lepschy, "Notes on the Figure of the Actor in Pirandello", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society* (Bristol, 1981), no.1, pp.1-18 [this article in English is an abbreviated version of the Italian, "La figura dell'attore nelle opere di Pirandello", *Inventario*, N.s. no.3, September-December, 1981, pp.30-43]; S. Bassnett McGuire, "Art and life in Luigi Pirandello's *Questa sera si recita a soggetto*", in *Themes in Drama*, edited by J. Redmond (Cambridge, 1980), 2, pp.81-102; R. Rutelli, "Esperimenti preliminari di segmentazione su brani di Arden, Seneca, Pirandello", in *Come comunica il teatro: dal testo alla scena*, by A. Canziani et al. (Milan, 1978), pp.55-69; J. Stone, "Beyond Desire: A Critique of Susan Sontag's Production of Pirandello's *Come tu mi vuoi*", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society* (Bristol, 1981), no.1, pp.35-47; my review of *Immagini di Pirandello*, by N. Borsellino (Cosenza, 1979), *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society* (Bristol, 1982), no.2, pp.83-87; and my article, "La firma di Pirandello: i saggi e la semiotica", in *Pirandello Saggista*, edited by P. D. Giovanelli (Florence, 1982 - forthcoming).

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52 M. de Marinis, "Le spectacle comme texte", *Organon* 80: *Sémiologie et théâtre* (Lyon, 1980), p.196.

53 Cf. M. de Marinis, "Le spectacle comme texte", *Organon* 80: *Sémiologie et théâtre*, p.202.

54 Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, pp.69-93; see also P. Pavis, "Problems of a Semiology of Theatrical Gesture", *Poetics Today: Drama, Theater, Performance - A Semiotic Perspective*, vol.2, no.3, 1981, pp.65-93.

55 Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, pp.126-31; see also A. J. Greimas, *Sémantique structurale* (Paris, 1966); and his *Du sens* (Paris, 1970); E. Souriau, *Les Deux Cent Mille Situations dramatiques* (Paris, 1950).

56 K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, pp.135-210; see also A. Serpieri, "Ipotesi teorica di segmentazione del testo teatrale", in *Come comunica il teatro: dal testo alla scena*, pp.11-54.

57 S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 34.

58 S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 34.

59 Cf. J. Stone, "Mirror-image/Collage: Reality, Representation and Revolution in Pirandello", in *The Politics of Modernism*, vol.1 of 1936: *The Sociology of Literature*, edited by F. Barker et al. (Colchester, 1979), pp.37-71.

60 K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.90.

61 Cf. J. Stone, "Pirandello's Picassos", *The Italianist*, no.2, 1982 - forthcoming.

62 Cf. A. L. Lepschy, "La figura dell'attore nelle opere di Pirandello", *Inventario*, N.s. no.3, September-December, 1981, pp.30-43; see also P. Pavis, "Problems of a Semiology of Theatrical Gesture", *Poetics Today*, vol.2, no.3, 1981, pp.71-72. Pavis points out that "the gestures are the artificial product of a 'staged' body ... Indeed gesture, unlike verbal discourse, has no 'blanks' between the words, no silences, no absence of signifiers which would act as natural borders and limits to gestural message, since the actor's body is constantly offered up to the spectator's gaze so that every movement (and every non-movement) is meaningful. After all, the body is always there, even immobilized and even if, in the most extreme case, it is hidden by some object".

63 U. Eco, "Paramètres de la sémiologie théâtrale", in *Sémiologie de la représentation*, pp.34-35.

64 Cf. L. Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination", *For Marx*, translated by Ben Brewster (New York, 1970), pp.87-128. [This article first appeared in *La Pensée*, December, 1962.]

65 Cf. L. Baxandall, and S. Morawski, eds., *Marx and Engels on*

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Literature and Art: documents in Marxist aesthetics (New York, 1974). See also L. Goldmann, *Racine* (Paris, 1956); and *Pour une sociologie du roman* (Paris, 1964).

⁶⁶ Cf. P. Macherey, *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire* (Paris, 1974); and his article, "Problems of Reflection", in *Literature, Society and the Sociology of Literature*, edited by F. Barker et al. (Colchester, 1977), pp.41-54; see also R. Balibar, *Les Français fictifs: le rapport des styles littéraires au français national* (Paris, 1974); E. Balibar and P. Macherey, "On Literature as an Ideological Form: Some Marxist Propositions", *Oxford Literary Review*, vol.3, no.1, 1978, pp.4-12. This article is reprinted in *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader*, edited by R. Young (London, 1981), pp.79-99; F. Barker, "Althusser and Art", *Red Letters*, no.4, Spring, 1977, pp.7-12; "Ideology, production, text: Pierre Macherey's materialist criticism", *Praxis*, no.5, 1981, pp.99-108; C. Belsey, *Critical Practice* (London, 1980); T. Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London, 1976); "Aesthetics and Politics", *New Left Review*, no.107, January-February, 1978, pp.21-34; S. Hall et al., *Culture, Media, Language* (London, 1980); F. Jameson, *Marxism and Form* (Princeton, 1971); "Beyond the Cave: Demystifying the Ideology of Modernism", *Midwest PMLA*, 1974, pp.63-75; "The Ideology of the Text", *Salmagundi*, 31/2, Fall 1975/Winter 1976, pp.204-46; *Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1979); *The Political Unconscious* (London, 1981); T. Lovell, *Pictures of Reality: Aesthetics, Politics and Pleasure* (London, 1980); C. Mercer and J. Radford, "An Interview with Pierre Macherey", *Red Letters*, no.5, Summer, 1977, pp.3-9; R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, 1977); and J. Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London, 1981).

⁶⁷ Cf. S. Freud, SE 6, 61 n.1; SE 2, 212 (Breuer); SE 5, 569: "So that the symptom will have at least two determinants, one arising from each of the systems involved in the conflict. As in the case of dreams, there are no limits to the further determinants that may be present - the 'overdetermination' of the symptoms"; SE 13, 100; and SE 17, 56; see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Surdétermination (ou Détermination multiple)", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.467-69.

⁶⁸ Cf. S. Freud, SE 4, 279; SE 5, 524; see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Surinterprétation", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.469-70.

⁶⁹ Cf. B. Hindess and P. Hirst, *Pre-Capitalist Modes of Production* (London, 1975); *Mode of Production and Social Formation* (London, 1977); see also P. Hirst, "Althusser and the Theory of Ideology", *Economy and Society*, vol.5, no.4, November, 1976, pp.385-412; P. Hirst, *On Law and Ideology* (London, 1979); E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory* (London, 1977); "Populist Rupture and Discourse", *Screen Education*, no.34, Spring, 1980, pp.87-93; "La politique comme construction de l'impensable", *Matérialités discursives*, Colloque des 24, 25, 26 avril 1980, Université Paris X - Nanterre (Lille, 1980), pp.65-74; *Togliatti and Politics*, a review of P. Togliatti, *On Gramsci and Other Writings* (London, 1979), edited by D. Sassoon, *Politics and Power*, no.2, 1980, pp.251-58; "'Socialisme',

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'Peuple' et 'Démocratie'. La transformation des logiques hégémoniques", presented to the Poulantzas memorial conference, Paris, 1982, and to appear in *La gauche, le pouvoir, le socialisme*, edited by C. Buci-Glucksmann (Paris, 1982 - forthcoming).

⁷⁰ The work of J. Kristeva is of particular interest, since she addresses herself directly to the inadequacies of a standard marxist approach. See her "La sémiologie: science critique et/ou critique de la science", in *Théorie d'ensemble*, by J. Kristeva et al. (Paris, 1968), pp.80-93; "Problèmes de la structuration du texte", in *Théorie d'ensemble*, pp.297-316; *Sēmeiōtikē: Recherches pour une sēmanalyse* (Paris, 1969); *Le texte du roman: Approche sémiologique d'une structure discursive transformationnelle* (The Hague, 1970); "Introduction: le lieu sémiotique", in *Essais de sémiotique*, edited by J. Kristeva et al. (The Hague and Paris, 1971), pp.1-10; "L'Expansion de la sémiotique", in *Essais de sémiotique*, pp.31-45; "Sujet dans le langage et pratique politique", in *Psychanalyse et politique*, edited by A. Verdiglione (Paris, 1971), pp.61-75; *Des Chinoises* (Paris, 1974); *La révolution du langage poétique. L'avant garde à la fin du XIXe siècle: Lautréamont et Mallarmé* (Paris, 1974); "Pratique signifiante et mode de production", in *La traversée des signes*, by J. Kristeva et al. (Paris, 1975), pp.11-29; "Remarques sur le 'mode de production asiatique'", in *La traversée des signes*, pp.31-39; "À propos du 'discours biblique'", *La traversée des signes*, pp.223-26; "Pourquoi les États-Unis?", *Tel Quel*, 71/73, Autumn, 1977, pp.3-19; "Un nouveau type d'intellectuel", *Tel Quel*, 74, Winter, 1977, pp.1-8; "Hérétique de l'amour", *Tel Quel*, 74, Winter, 1977, pp.30-49; "Le sujet en procès: le langage poétique", in *L'Identité*, séminaire interdisciplinaire dirigé par Claude Lévi-Strauss, 1974-75, edited by J. M. Benoist (Paris, 1977), pp.223-46; *Polylogue* (Paris, 1977); "Le théâtre moderne n'a pas lieu", 34-44, *Cahiers de recherche de S.T.D., Université Paris 7, Spécial Théâtre*, no.3, Winter, 1977-78, pp.13-16; "La réfutation du discours de gauche", *Tel Quel*, 76, Summer, 1978, pp.40-45; *Folle vérité*, ouvrage collectif (Paris, 1979); *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, edited by L. S. Roudiez (New York, 1980); and *Pouvoirs de l'horreur: essai sur l'abjection* (Paris, 1980); see also T. Bennett, *Formalism and Marxism* (London, 1979); H. Bloom et al., *Deconstruction and Criticism* (London, 1979); J. Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris, 1967); *L'écriture et la différence* (Paris, 1967); "Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences", in *The Structuralist Controversy: The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man*, edited by R. Macksey and E. Donato ([Baltimore, 1970] London, 1975), pp.247-72; J. V. Harari, ed., *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism* (London, 1980); T. Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics* (London, 1977); F. Jameson, *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Russian Formalism* (Princeton, 1972); "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan: Marxism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, and the Problem of the Subject", *Yale French Studies*, 55/56, 1977, pp.338-95; C. Norris, *Deconstruction: Theory and Practice* (London, 1982); J. Sturrock, ed., *Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida* (New York, 1979); and R. Young, ed., *Untying the Text: A Post-Structuralist Reader* (London, 1981).

⁷¹ cf. M. Foucault, *Les mots et les choses* (Paris, 1966); *L'archéologie du savoir* (Paris, 1969); *L'ordre du discours* (Paris,

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1971); *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris [1961] 1972); *Naissance de la clinique* (Paris [1963] 1972); *Surveiller et Punir. Naissance de la prison* (Paris, 1975); *Histoire de la sexualité. La volonté de savoir* (Paris, 1976); *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, edited by D. F. Bouchard (Oxford, 1977); *Power and Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-77*, edited by C. Gordon (Brighton, 1980); see also R. Coward and J. Ellis, *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject* (London, 1977); V. Descombes, *La même et l'autre: quatre-vingt ans de philosophie française (1933-78)* (Paris, 1979); P. Dews, "The Nouvelle Philosophie and Foucault", *Economy and Society*, vol.8, no.2, May, 1979, pp.127-71; M. Pêcheux, *Les vérités de la Palice* (Paris, 1975); and with F. Gadet, *La langage introuvable* (Paris, 1981); D. Silverman and B. Torode, *The Material Word: Some theories of language and its limits* (London, 1980); C. Sumner, *Reading Ideologies: an investigation into the Marxist theory of ideology and law* (London, New York and San Francisco, 1979).

72 Cf. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses (Notes towards an Investigation)", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, translated by B. Brewster (London, 1977), pp.121-73. [This article first appeared in *La Pensée*, 1969.]

73 Cf. R. Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris, 1957).

74 Cf. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp.160-73; and "Freud and Lacan", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp.177-202. [This is a corrected version (1969) of the article first published in *La Nouvelle Critique*, 1964.]

75 Cf. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, pp.160-73.

76 Cf. R. Coward and J. Ellis, *Language and Materialism: Developments in Semiology and the Theory of the Subject* (London, 1977); see also the writing of E. Laclau, detailed in note 69.

77 Cf. F. Barker et al., eds., *The Politics of Theory* (Colchester, 1983 - forthcoming).

78 J. Donne, "The Dreame", *Poetical Works*, edited by H. Grierson (London, 1967), p.34, l.8.

Notes

I. The Playwright in a Mass Society

I.1. Fascism and Revolution

¹ Cf. J.-P. Faye, *Langages totalitaires: critique de la raison/ l'économie narrative* (Paris, 1972).

² Cf. E. Laclau, "Fascism and Ideology", *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, pp.81-142.

³ Cf. A. Gramsci, *Quaderni del carcere* (4 vols.), edited by V. Gerratana (Turin, 1975); *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, vol.5 of *Quaderni del carcere* (Turin, 1966); *Lettere dal carcere*, edited by S. Caprioglio and E. Fubini (Turin, 1965), but I shall quote from *Lettere dal carcere*, selected and introduced by P. Spriano (Turin, 1971); see also L. Althusser, "Marxism is not a Historicism", in *Reading Capital*, by L. Althusser and E. Balibar, and translated by B. Brewster ([Paris, 1968] London, 1977), pp.119-44; G. Davico Bonino, *Gramsci e il teatro* (Torino, 1972); C. Buci-Glucksmann, *Gramsci et l'État* (Paris, 1974); A. Cambria, *Amore come rivoluzione, la risposta alle Lettere dal carcere con il testo teatrale Nonostante Gramsci* (Milano, 1976); P. V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso: fascismo e mass media* (Bari, 1975); M. Clark, *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed* (London, 1977); A. Davidson, *Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography* (London, 1977); "The Literary Criticism of Antonio Gramsci: An Introduction", in *The Radical Reader*, edited by S. Knight and M. Wilding (Sydney, 1977), pp.55-72; "Italian Communism and the Experience of Fascism", *The Italianist*, no.1, 1981, pp.43-59; *The Theory and Practice of Italian Communism* (London, 1982); J. A. Davis, ed., *Gramsci and Italy's Passive Revolution* (London, 1979); A. L. de Castris, *Egemonia e fascismo: Il problema degli intellettuali negli anni Trenta* (Bologna, 1981); V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass organization of leisure in Fascist Italy* (New York, 1981); J. V. Femia, *Gramsci's Political Thought: Hegemony, Consciousness and the Revolutionary Process* (Oxford, 1981); G. Fiori, *Vita di Antonio Gramsci* (Bari, 1966); A. Hunt, ed., *Marxism and Democracy* (London, 1980); J. Joll, *Gramsci* (Glasgow, 1977); M. A. Macciocchi, *Lettere dall'interno del P.C.I. a Louis Althusser* (Milan, 1969); *Per Gramsci* (Bologna, 1974); G. Manacorda, ed., *Antonio Gramsci: Marxismo e Letteratura* (Rome, 1975); C. Mercer, "Culture and Ideology in Gramsci", *Red Letters*, no.8, 1978, pp.19-40; "Gramsci and Grammar", in *The Politics of Modernism*, vol.1 of 1936: *The Sociology of Literature*, pp.72-88; "After Gramsci", *Screen Education*, no.36, Autumn, 1980, pp.5-15; C. Mouffe and A. Showstack Sassoon, "Gramsci in France and Italy - a review of the literature", *Economy and Society*, vol.6, no.1, February, 1977, pp.31-68; C. Mouffe, ed., *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* (London, 1979); J. Risset, "Lecture de Gramsci", *Tel Quel*, 42, Summer, 1970, pp.46-73; E. Santarelli, ed., *Antonio Gramsci: Sul Fascismo* (Rome, 1973); Sassoon, A. Showstack, *Gramsci's Politics* (London, 1980); "The 'Gramsci Boom': a Reflection on the Present Crisis? Some recent books", *Politics and Power*, no.1, 1980, pp.203-12; P. Spriano, *Gramsci e "l'Ordine Nuovo"* (Rome, 1966); *Gramsci in carcere e il partito* (Rome,

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1977). [Antonio Gramsci and the Party (London, 1979)]; N. Stipčević, *Gramsci e i problemi letterari* (Milan, 1968); J. Thibaudau, "Preliminary Notes on the Prison Writings of Gramsci: The Place of Literature in Marxian Theory", translated by M. Malet, *Praxis*, no.3, 1976, pp.3-29. [This article was originally published in *Dialectiques*, nos.4-5, March, 1974, pp.55-82]; P. Togliatti, *On Gramsci and Other Writings*, edited by D. Sassoon (London, 1979); G. Turi, *Il fascismo e il consenso degli intellettuali* (Bologna, 1980); P. Valenza, ed., *Il compromesso storico* (Rome, 1975); G. A. Williams, *Proletarian Order: Antonio Gramsci, Factory Councils and the Origins of Communism in Italy 1911-1921* (London, 1975).

⁴ Cf. F. Guattari, "Everybody Wants To Be a Fascist", translated by S. Fletcher, *Semiotext(e): Anti-Oedipus*, vol.2, no.3, 1977, pp.86-98; "Micropolitique du désir", *Psychanalyse et Politique*, edited by A. Verdiglione (Paris, 1974), pp.43-60; see also G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, "1933: Micropolitique et segmentarité", *Mille Plateaux: Capitalisme et Schizophrénie* (Paris, 1980), p.261: "Mais le fascisme est inséparable de foyers moléculaires, qui pullulent et sautent d'un point à un autre, en interaction, avant de résonner tous ensemble dans l'État national-socialiste. Fascisme rural et fascisme de ville ou de quartier, jeune fascisme et fascisme ancien-combattant, fascisme de gauche et de droite, de couple, de famille, d'école ou de bureau: chaque fascisme se définit par un micro-trou noir, qui vaut par lui-même et communique avec les autres, avant de résonner dans un grand trou noir central généralisé"; and p.262: "Les organisations de gauche ne sont pas les dernières à sécréter leurs micro-fascismes. C'est trop facile d'être anti-fasciste au niveau molaire, sans voir le fasciste qu'on est soi-même, qu'on entretient et nourrit, qu'on chérit soi-même avec des molécules, personnelles et collectives"; P. Sollers, "À propos de la dialectique (thèses)", *Psychanalyse et Politique* (Paris, 1974), pp.25-42; "Fascisme", *Tel Quel*, 57, Spring, 1974, pp.127-29; "Le Marxisme sodomisé par la psychanalyse elle-même voilée par on ne sait quoi", *Tel Quel*, 75, 1978, pp.56-60.

⁵ Cf. A. Hamilton, *The Appeal of Fascism: A Study of Intellectuals and Fascism, 1919-45* (London, 1971); see also V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, p.145: "At major cultural soirées, during which intellectual luminaries like Pirandello and Marinetti provided entertainment, leading fascist dignitaries mingled with high civil servants on a *tu à tu* basis"; and p.192: "The national tradition was thus reduced to a roster of illustrious but essentially static and isolated cultural 'monuments': Dante, Goldoni, Manzoni, Verdi, Puccini, D'Annunzio - an eclectic mixture, united solely by their similar packaging and consistent presentation to the public." Whilst De Grazia's book contains a wealth of factual information on the *dopolavoro* movement, she pays insufficient attention to the literary production of the period, and makes only this one mention of Pirandello; for criticism which discusses the relations between Pirandello and fascism, see A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo: Pirandello e Bragaglia. Documenti inediti negli archivi italiani* (Rome, 1974); R. Alonge, *Pirandello: tra realismo e mistificazione* (Naples, 1972); E. Bentley, "Appendix II: Bibliographical and Historical", *Naked Masks: Five Plays by Luigi Pirandello*, edited by E. Bentley (New York, 1952), pp.377-81; R. Dombroski, "La concezione

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dell'uomo in Pirandello e la mitologia fascista: appunti per uno studio", *Paragone*, no.292, July, 1974, pp.35-56. This article is reprinted as an appendix to his *Le totalità dell'artificio: ideologia e forma nel romanzo di Pirandello* (Padua, 1978), pp.137-56; "Le fascisme et la création littéraire en Italie", *Revue des études italiennes*, N.s. vol.xxii, no.1-2, January-June, 1976, pp.32-59; G. Giudice, *Pirandello* (Turin, 1963); A. Illiano, "Postilla sul fascismo", *Introduzione alla critica pirandelliana* (Verona, 1976), pp.209-12 where he writes: "L'adesione di Pirandello al fascismo, faccenda scabrosa su cui i più preferiscono sorvolare con bonaria facilità, è ancora in attesa di un'adeguata sistemazione in sede biografica e critica" (p.209); F. Nicolosi, "Pirandello e il fascismo: da una breve riflessione su *I vecchi e i giovani*", in *Il Romanzo di Pirandello*, edited by E. Lauretta (Palermo, 1976), pp.267-69; O. Ragusa, "Pirandello's 'Teatro d'Arte' and a New Look at His Fascism", *Italica*, vol.55, no.2, Summer, 1978, pp.236-53. Ragusa gives a contentious, if not unacceptable account of the problem of Pirandello's fascism; G. Romanato, "Pirandello e il fascismo", *Pirandello e il suo teatro* (Rovigo, 1976), pp.57-59; J. Stone, "Mirror-image/Collage: Reality, Representation and Revolution in Pirandello", in *The Politics of Modernism*, vol.1 of 1936: *The Sociology of Literature*, pp.37-71; E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture 1922-1945* (London, 1973); G. F. Venè, *Capitale e letteratura: Dall'illuminismo a 'Pirandello fascista'* (Milan, 1974).

6 Cf. M. Foucault, *L'archéologie du savoir* (Paris, 1969), p.53.

7 Cf. M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, pp.113-38. [This essay originally appeared in the *Bulletin de la Société française de Philosophie*, 63, no.3, 1969, pp. 73-104.]

8 Cf. L. Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, p.164.

9 Cf. E. Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale* (Paris, 1966).

10 Cf. J. Kristeva, "Politique de la littérature", *Polylogue*, pp. 13-21.

11 Cf. T. Davies, "Education, Ideology and Literature", *Red Letters*, no.7, 1978, pp.4-15.

12 Cf. M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*; J. Donzelot, *La police des familles* (Paris, 1977).

13 Cf. T. Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology*; see also my "Prologue", notes 66 and 70.

14 Cf. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, pp.125-26: "D'abord un état du jeu correspond bien à un état de la langue. La valeur respective des pièces dépend de leur position sur l'échiquier, de même que dans la langue chaque terme a sa valeur par son opposition avec tous les autres termes"; see also E. Laclau, "Fascism and Ideology",

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Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory, pp.81-142.

15 Cf. R. Barthes, *Mythologies*.

16 Cf. C. Mercer, "Culture and Ideology in Gramsci", p.31.

17 Cf. C. Mercer, "After Gramsci", pp.12-13.

18 Cf. L. Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination", *For Marx*, p.99; J. Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique*.

19 Cf. E. Bentley, "Appendix: Biographical and Historical", *Naked Masks*, p.379, where he makes the following divisions: "Under fascism, Pirandello's playwriting entered a third and more problematic phase. The first phase had been that of the Sicilian folk-comedies like *Better Think Twice About It!*, *Liola*, and *Il berretto a sonagli* (*Cap and Bells*). The second was that of the philosophical comedies in which Pirandello is less Sicilian than European: the phase of *Six Characters* and *Henry IV*. In his third phase, Pirandello withdraws into a strange, subjective world of his own - or, as he would probably prefer to say, tries to create myths. Thus we have the social myth of *La nuova colonia* (*The New Colony*), the religious myth of *Lazzaro* (*Lazarus*), and the myth of art that is *I giganti della montagna* (*Giants of the Mountain*). It would be either a stupid or an over-ingenious critic who would stamp any of these works as fascist. They illustrate at most the plight of a playwright in a fascist state."

20 Cf. E. Laclau, "Fascism and Ideology", *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, pp. 81-142. In his more recent work, Laclau has developed his ideas concerning "popular-democratic" discourses in order to show that they are only a *relative* unity, since the logic of popular positionalities interacts with the logic of the democratic positionalities. A hegemonic discourse evinces a plurality of social logics limiting the effects of each other. See my "Prologue", note 69 for details of his further writings; see also A. Showstack Sassoon, "The 'Gramsci Boom'", p.205: "Hegemony is not simply legitimisation by the dominant class or the reproduction of ideas and institutions through an extension of State apparatuses through the whole of society or a description of the maintenance of the social system. It can only be understood as the product of a struggle between competing hegemonies, one at the moment dominant and providing for the reproduction of the present system, and the other containing the potential for organising society round a new project"; see also N. Poulantzas, *Fascism and Dictatorship: The Third International and the Problem of Fascism* ([Paris, 1970] London, 1974).

21 Cf. L. Goldman, *Racine; Pour une sociologie du roman*; see my "Prologue", notes 65 and 66.

22 Cf. J. P. Faye, *Langages totalitaires; La critique du langage et son économie* (Auvers-sur-Oise, 1973); "Langages totalitaires - Fascistes et nazis", *Cahiers Internationaux de Sociologie*, vol.36, January-June, 1964, pp.75-100; "The critique of language and its economy", translated by E. Kingdom, *Economy and Society*, vol.5, no.1, February, 1976, pp.52-73; see also P. Agosto, "The Language of

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Mussolini", *The Italianist*, no.1, 1981, pp.60-81; R. Brown and A. Gilman, "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. A. Sebeok (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp.253-76; M. Cortelazzo, "Lingua e retorica di Mussolini oratore socialista", *Lingua nostra*, vol.XXXVI, Fasc. 3, September, 1975, pp.73-77; "Mussolini socialista e gli antecedenti della retorica fascista", in *La lingua italiana e il fascismo*, edited by L. Rosiello (Bologna, 1977), pp.63-81; H. Eliwanger, "Sulla lingua di Mussolini", estratto da *Il Giornale di Politica e di Letteratura*, Fasc.1-4, Anno XV (Rome, 1939 - VIII) p.531-54; B. Giuliano, *Elementi di cultura fascista* (Bologna, 1933); G. Lazzari, *Le parole del fascismo* (Rome, 1975); G. C. Lepschy, "The Language of Mussolini", *The Journal of Italian History*, vol.1, no.3, Winter, 1978, pp.531-54; A. Simonini, *Il linguaggio di Mussolini* (Milan, 1978).

²³ Cf. E. Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche* (Munich, 1963). In Italian: *I tre volti del fascismo*, translated by F. Saba Sardi and G. Manzoni (Verona, 1971). In English: *Three Faces of Fascism*, translated by L. Vennewitz (New York, 1969). [All references will be to the English version, except when the Italian edition expands the English version, references will be to the Italian.] See *I tre volti del fascismo*, pp.310-12; for the term, "rivoluzione conservatrice", see A. Rocco, "La trasformazione dello Stato", *Scritti e discorsi politici* (Rome, 1927), pp.771-788; see also F. H. Adler, "Italian industrialists and radical fascism", *Telos*, no.30, Winter, 1976-77, pp.193-201; J. Baglieri, "Italian Fascism and the Crisis of Liberal Hegemony: 1901-22", in *Who Were the Fascists? Social Roots of European Fascism*, edited by B. Hagtvet et al. (Oslo, 1980), pp.319-36; G. Carocci, *Storia del fascismo* (Milan, 1975); F. Chabod, *L'Italia contemporanea (1918-1948)* (Turin, 1961); F. Cusin, *Antistoria d'Italia* (Milan, 1972); R. de Felice, *Le interpretazioni del fascismo* (Bari, 1976); *Intervista sul fascismo*, edited by M. A. Ledeen (Bari, 1976); R. P. Dutt, *Fascism and Social Revolution* (London, 1934); M. Gallo, *Mussolini's Italy: Twenty Years of the Fascist Era* (London, 1974); A. J. Gregor, *Fascist Persuasion in Radical Politics* (Princeton, 1974); E. Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels* (London, 1965); M. Kitchen, *Fascism* (London, 1976); W. Laqueur, ed., *Fascism: A Reader's Guide* (Harmondsworth, 1979); and G. Mosse, eds., *Left-Wing Intellectuals between the Wars 1919-39* (New York, 1966); E. Ludwig, *Colloqui con Mussolini* (Milan, 1932); *Three Portraits: Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin* (New York, 1940); A. Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power: Fascism in Italy 1919-1929* (London, 1973); A. Lyttelton, ed., *Italian Fascisms: From Pareto to Gentile*, translated by D. Parmée et al. (London, 1973); G. L. Mosse, "Introduction: The Genesis of Fascism", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.1, no.1, London, 1966, pp.14-25; "E. Nolte on *Three Faces of Fascism*", *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol.27, 1966, pp.621-25; "Rationalizing the Right", a review of W. Laqueur, *Fascism: A Reader's Guide*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 5th May, 1978, p.507; R. Paris, "La notion du fascisme: Notes sur quelques livres recents", *Partisans*, no.6, September-October, 1962, pp.150-68; *Les origines du fascisme: questions d'histoire* (Paris, 1968); G. Salvemini, *Italian Fascism* (London, 1938); *Under the Axe of Fascism* (London, 1936); and with G. La Diana, *What to do with Italy?* (London, 1943); D. Mack Smith, *Italy: A Modern History* (Ann Arbor, 1969); *Mussolini* (London, 1982); P. Togliatti, *Lectures on Fascism* (London, 1976); L. Trotsky, *Fascism*,

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What It Is and How to Fight It (New York, 1972); E. Weber, *Varieties of Fascism* (New York, 1964); E. Wiskemann, *Fascism in Italy: Its Development and Influence* (London, 1969); S. Woolf, "Mussolini as Revolutionary", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol.1, no.2, London, 1966, pp.187-96; S. Woolf, ed., *Fascism in Europe* (London and New York, 1981); R. Zangrandi, *Il lungo viaggio attraverso il fascismo* (Milan, 1976).

²⁴ Cf. G. Sorel, *Réflexions sur la violence*, Troisième édition (Paris, 1912); see also E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy*, pp.52-55. He writes: "Edmondo Rossoni, the relatively moderate head of the Fascist trade unions, said in a speech in Naples in December 1922: 'Between Italians and Italians there should be neither masters nor servants, but loyal collaborators for the common interest and for the overriding ends of the Fatherland.' He then added that 'against the "bosses" in the old sense of the word we shall fight ruthlessly'" (p. 52). [E. Rossoni, *Le idee della ricostruzione: Discorsi sul sindacalismo fascista* (Florence, 1923), p.31]; F. Pieroni Bortolotti, "A Survey of Recent Italian Research on the History of Feminism", *The Journal of Italian History*, vol.1, no.3, Winter, 1978, pp.511-30. She explains that Sorel's writings reasserted traditional ideas of a 'natural' division of social roles between both the sexes and classes (p.515); and that "the tendency of fascism to keep women in a subordinate position was not accidental but explicitly founded upon the fascist notion of corporativism, which demanded a distinction of roles between the sexes" (p.525).

²⁵ E. Nolte, *I tre volti del fascismo*, p.311. [The passage in the Italian version concerning "rivoluzione conservatrice" (pp.310-12), does not appear in the same section of the English version (pp.276-77).]

²⁶ E. Nolte, *Three Faces of Fascism*, p.178; *I tre volti del fascismo*, p.202: "Reazione radicale significa rivoluzione contro la rivoluzione"; for a further discussion of the "mistaken" conception of fascism as a progressive movement, see R. J. Israel, *Chile: un caso de fascismo dependiente* (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Essex University, 1979), where he points out that Fascism in Italy was not progressive since there was not any significant development in the productive forces, as was the case with primitive capitalism; it was not a revolution because it did not go beyond capitalism or mean a technological breaking point. He argues that Fascism is the offspring of a situation pregnant with crisis, but not necessarily with revolution; Fascism is not progressive in the sense that the demands of the middle classes did not strive for the transformation of their existing society (only of its superstructure), but to recapture their traditional place within it; see also H. Simson, "Fascism in South Africa", *The African Review*, 3, no.3, 1973, pp.423-51; "The Myth of the White Working Class in South Africa", *The African Review*, 4, no.2, 1974, pp.189-203; *The Social Origins of Afrikaner Fascism and its Apartheid Policy*, no.21 of *Uppsala Studies in Economic History*, edited by B. Gustafsson (Uppsala, 1980).

²⁷ Cf. J. Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique*.

²⁸ Cf. U. Eco, "The Code: Metaphor or Interdisciplinary Category",

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Yale Italian Studies, vol.1, no.1, Winter, 1977, pp.24-52.

²⁹ Cf. B. Pratella, "La distruzione della quadratura" (18th July, 1912), in *Sintesi del Futurismo: storia e documenti*, edited by L. Scrivo (Rome, 1968), p.61.

³⁰ Cf. M. A. Macciocchi, *La donna "nera": "consenso" femminile e fascismo* (Milan, 1976); *Éléments pour une analyse du fascisme* (2 vols.), séminaire de M. A. Macciocchi, Paris VIII-Vincennes 1974/1975, edited by M. A. Macciocchi (Paris, 1976); *Les femmes et leurs maîtres*, séminaire de M. A. Macciocchi, Paris VIII-Vincennes, edited by J. Aubenas-Bastie (Paris, 1978); "Female Sexuality in Fascist Ideology", translated by J. Stone, *Feminist Review*, no.1, 1979, pp.67-82. [This article originally appeared as "Sexualité féminine dans l'idéologie fasciste", *Tel Quel*, 66, Summer, 1976, pp.26-42.]; "Pasolini: assassinat d'un dissident", *Tel Quel*, 76, Summer, 1978, pp.27-39; see also S. Aleramo, *Una donna*, with a preface by M.-A. Macciocchi (Milan, 1979). In English: *A Woman*, translated and with an afterword by R. Delmar (London, 1979); *La donna e il femminismo*, edited by B. Conti (Rome, 1978). Cf. the essay, "Appunti sulla psicologia femminile italiana" (1910), pp.153-60: "La donna è ancora un'energia incognita, precisamente come la massa proletaria su cui conta il sindacalismo per rinnovare la spiritualità umana" (p.158); A. Caesar, "Sibilla Aleramo's *A Woman*", *Feminist Review*, no.5, 1980, pp.79-87; E. G. Belotti, *Dalla parte delle bambine: L'influenza dei condizionamenti sociali nella formazione del ruolo femminile nei primi anni di vita* (Milan, 1973); F. P. Bortolotti, *Socialismo e questione femminile in Italia 1899-1922* (Milan, 1974); "A Survey of Italian Research on the History of Feminism", *The Journal of Italian History*, vol.1, no.2, Winter, 1978, pp.511-30; R. Bridenthall, "Women Between the Two World Wars", in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, edited by R. Bridenthall and C. Koonz (Boston, 1977), pp.424-44; V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, p.43; T. de Lauretis, "Cavani's *Night Porter*: A Woman's Film?", *Film Quarterly*, 30, Winter, 1976-77, pp.35-38; "Woman, Cinema and Language", *Yale Italian Studies*, vol.1, no.2, Fall, 1980, pp.5-21; M. A. Frabotta et al., "Cinema", in *Lessico politico delle donne: cinema, letteratura, arti visive*, edited by M. Fraire (Milan, 1979), pp.7-68; A. J. Gregor, "Fascism and 'Antifeminism'", in "The Social Policies of Fascism", ch.8 of his *Italian Fascism and Developmental Dictatorship* (Princeton, 1979), pp.281-91. Gregor, in a disturbing polemic against feminist analyses which rely on "the dubious theoretical machinery of orthodox or unorthodox Freudianism" (p.281), argues that "Fascists were not antifeminists, *per se*" and that "antifeminism was not endemic or essential to the Fascist persuasion" (p.282). In a curious masculinist tenor, he then goes on to claim that within Italian culture, the Futurists and Fascists were offering a relatively progressive programme for "a Latin country with a long tradition of male dominance" (p.284). He does concede that 1927 marks a turning point which leads to a more explicit antifeminist programme, which, in his overall view, "was, at best, a subsidiary concern of Fascist social policy, and made its appearance largely as a consequence of concerns with a declining birthrate and rising unemployment" (p.291). In this and subsequent chapters I intend to demonstrate that despite some of the apparently "feminist" postures of early Futurist and Fascist rhetoric, their discourses contain many

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contradictions, the effects of which are still to place women in a position of subordination to the male gender, to masculine language and to patriarchal rationality. For socialist feminists, all their programmes simply offer a patriarchal state of "repressive tolerance" which is effectively and substantially antifeminist even before 1927. It is politically important to take issue with Gregor's masculinist prejudices which lead him to write unconvincingly: "The current preoccupation with sex, the appearance of an aggressive [sic!] women's movement, and the commonplace conviction that identifies Fascism with reaction all manifest themselves in an account that appeals to the most pervasive contemporary prejudice" (p.281). This kind of attitude is just as silly as what he calls "all the silliness of Wilhelm Reich's 'sexpol'" (p.281); A. E. Kaplan, ed., *Women in Film Noir* (London, 1978); C. Koonz, "Mothers in the Fatherland: Women in Nazi Germany", in *Becoming Visible*, pp.445-73; A. Kuhn, *Women's Pictures: Feminism and Cinema* (London, 1982); H. Marcuse, *Negations* (Harmondsworth, 1968); T. Mason, "Women in Germany, 1925-40: Family, Welfare and Work" (Part II), *History Workshop*, no.2, Autumn, 1976, pp. 5-27; P. Meldini, *Sposa e madre esemplare: Ideologia e politica della donna e delle famiglie durante il fascismo* (Florence, 1975); R. Mussolini, *The Real Mussolini - as told to Albert Larca*, translated by C. Hauch (London, 1974); V. Mussolini, *Mussolini: The Tragic Women in his Life*, translated by G. Snell (New York, 1973); A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale* (Bologna, [1906] 1933); E. Rasy, "Cortège de nuit: Notes du Mouvement des femmes en Italie", *Tel Quel*, 74, Winter, 1977, pp.99-103. This article is reprinted in Italian in her *La lingua della nutrice: Percorsi e tracce dell'espressione femminile*, introduced by J. Kristeva (Rome, 1978); C. Ravera, *Vita in carcere e al confino*, edited by A. Gobetti (Parma, 1969); W. Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (New York, 1970); *The Function of the Orgasm* (London, 1972); R. Rossanda, *Le altre: conversazioni a Radiotre sui rapporti tra donne e politica, libertà, fraternità, uguaglianza, democrazia, fascismo, resistenza, stato, partito, rivoluzione, femminismo* (Milan, 1979); M. Sparks, *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (London, 1961); S. Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism", in *Women and the Cinema: a Critical Anthology*, edited by K. Kay and G. Peary (New York, 1977), pp.352-76. This essay is reprinted in her *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York, 1980), pp.73-105; "Syberberg's Hitler", *Under the Sign of Saturn*, pp. 137-65; C. Teodori, *Il fascismo e la casa* (Parma, 1938); Women and Fascism Study Group at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham, "Patriarchy and Patriotism", *Red Rag*, March, 1978, pp.19-23; V. Woolf, *Three Guineas* (London, [1938] 1968). Cf. p.185: "The daughters of educated men who were called, to their resentment, 'feminists' were in fact the advance guard of your own movement. They were fighting the same enemy that you are fighting and for the same reasons. They were fighting the tyranny of the Fascist state. Thus we are merely carrying on the same fight that our mothers and grandmothers fought; their words prove it; your words prove it"; E. Willis, "Is Lina Wertmuller Just One of the Boys?", *Women in the Cinema*, pp.377-83.

31 E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.157.

32 M. A. Macciocchi, *La donna "nera": "consenso" femminile e fascismo*, p.46.

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³³ A. Oriani, "Femminismo", ch. II of *La rivolta ideale*, vol.13 of "*Opera omnia*" di Alfredo Oriani, edited by B. Mussolini (Bologna, 1933), pp.308-23: see also his *Matrimonio e divorzio* (Florence, 1886).

³⁴ L. Pirandello, "Femminismo", *La preparazione*, anno I, n.12, 27-28th February, 1909. This essay is reprinted in *SPSV*, 1068-72.

³⁵ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.315.

³⁶ Cf. B. Mussolini, "Prefazione" to "*Opera omnia*" di Alfredo Oriani, p.v: "I soliti pedanti che sono incapaci della sintesi e si perdono troppo spesso nelle analisi ...".

³⁷ B. Mussolini, "Prefazione", p.v.

³⁸ B. Dylan, "Is Your Love in Vain?", *At Budokan*, CBS 96004, 1978.

³⁹ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.309.

⁴⁰ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.311.

⁴¹ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.314.

⁴² A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.314.

⁴³ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.319.

⁴⁴ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.322.

⁴⁵ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.322.

⁴⁶ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.322.

⁴⁷ A. Oriani, *La rivolta ideale*, p.323.

⁴⁸ Cf. S. Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism", p.370; see also C. E. Gadda, *Eros e Priapo (Da furore a cenere)* (Milan, 1967).

⁴⁹ Cf. S. Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism", p.366 and p.374.

⁵⁰ S. Aleramo, "Appunti sulla psicologia femminile italiana", *La donna e il femminismo*, p.158.

⁵¹ Cf. R. Delmar, "Afterword" to *A Woman*, p.179; see also E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, pp.154-58.

⁵² A. L. Lepschy and G. Lepschy, *The Italian Language Today* (London, 1977), p.33.

⁵³ A. L. Lepschy and G. Lepschy, *The Italian Language Today*, p.33.

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⁵⁴ Cf. E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.148.

⁵⁵ Cf. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent: Mass organization of leisure in Fascist Italy* (New York, 1981); see also A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo: Pirandello e Bragaglia. Documenti inediti negli archivi italiani* (Rome, 1974); C. Boulay, "Irrationalisme et anti-intellectualisme en Italie à la frontière du XIXe et du XXe siècles", *Revue des études italiennes*, N.S.16, 1970, pp.184-200; H. P. Bleuel, *Strength Through Joy: Sex and Society in Nazi Germany*, translated by J. M. Brownjohn (London, 1976); P. V. Cannistraro, *La fabbrica del consenso: fascismo e mass media* (Bari, 1975); S. D'Amico, *Maschere: Note su l'interpretazione scenica* (Rome, 1921); *Le strade che portano a Roma: Diario spirituale 1916-1923* (Florence, 1924); *La crisi del teatro 1931*; "Teatro di masse" and "Il teatro e lo Stato", chs. IV and V of *Invito al teatro* (Brescia, 1935); and *Storia del teatro italiano*, edited by S. D'Amico (Milan, 1936); P. Gay, *Weimar Culture* (Harmondsworth, 1974); B. Giuliano, *Elementi di cultura fascista* (Bologna, 1933); H. Glaser, *The Cultural Roots of National Socialism* (London, 1978); J. R. Harrison, *The Reactionaries* (London, 1966); E. J. Hobsbawm, "The Dark Years of Italian Communism", ch. 5 of *Revolutionaries* (London, 1977); G. Lazzari, *I littoriali della cultura e dell'arte* (Naples, 1979); G. Lukács, *The Destruction of Reason*, translated by P. Palmer (London [1952] 1980); G. Luti, *La letteratura nel ventennio fascista: cronache letterarie tra le due guerre 1920-1940* (Florence, 1972); G. Manacorda, *Letteratura e cultura del periodo fascista* (Milan, 1974); G. Mosse, *Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich* (London, 1966); M. Praga, *Cronache teatrali del primo Novecento* (Florence, 1979); F. Saporì, *L'arte e il Duce* (Milan, 1932); C. E. Schorske, *Fin-de-siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York, 1981); U. Silva, *Ideologia e arte del fascismo* (Milan, 1975); E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture* (London, 1973); R. Tessari, *Il mito della macchina: letteratura e industria nel primo novecento italiano* (Milan, 1973); J. A. Thayer, *Italy and the Great War: Politics and Culture 1870-1915* (Wisconsin, 1974); G. Turi, *Il fascismo e il consenso degli intellettuali* (Bologna, 1980); A. Vinci, *Prefigurazioni del fascismo* (Milan, 1974); A. Zapponi, ed., *I littoriali della cultura e dell'arte dell'anno XIV* (Naples, 1936); L. Zurlo, *Memorie inutili: La censura teatrale nel ventennio* (Rome, 1952).

⁵⁶ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.308.

⁵⁷ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.XIII.

⁵⁸ A. Gramsci, "Marinetti rivoluzionario?" 2.000 pagine di Gramsci (Milano, 1964), vol.I, p.553; see also R. Tessari, *Il mito della macchina*, p.270; A. Asor Rosa, "Avanguardie", in *Enciclopedia Einaudi* (Turin, 1977), p.227: "Il fatto è che il lavoro artistico non riusciva da sé a superare le condizioni proprie della divisione capitalistica del lavoro, se non nel senso, appunto, di dare

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2/ testimonianza della irriducibilità potenziale della natura umana all'alienazione."

⁵⁹ Cf. W. Benjamin, *Illuminations*, translated by H. Zohn (London, 1973).

⁶⁰ A. C. Alberti, "Discorso di Mussolini all'inaugurazione della nuova sede della Società degli Autori ed Editori in Roma, 1° luglio, 1926", *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.201.

⁶¹ F. T. Marinetti, "L'amica delle mogli: commedia in tre atti di L. Pirandello. Misurazione", in vol.1 of *Teatro F. T. Marinetti* (3 vols.), edited by G. Calendoli (Rome, 1960), p.268.

⁶² F. T. Marinetti, "Fondazione e Manifesto del Futurismo", 20th February, 1909, in *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, edited by L. de Maria (Verona, 1968), pp.9-10.

⁶³ A. C. Alberti, "Dichiarazione di Marinetti concernente Bragaglia. Roma, 22 marzo, 1939", *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.219.

⁶⁴ Cf. L. Meneghello, *Libera nos a malo* (Milan, 1975), p.8.

⁶⁵ *Vecchia guardia*, directed by Alessandro Blasetti, 1934: see also E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, pp.270-73.

⁶⁶ P. Bargellini, *Il libro della terza classe elementare. Lettura* (Rome, 1938), p.25; see also E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.192.

⁶⁷ Cf. E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.138 and pp.155-56.

⁶⁸ A. Gramsci, "Il piacere dell'onestà di Pirandello al Carignano", 29th November, 1917, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.307.

⁶⁹ L. Meneghello, *Libera nos a malo*, p.297.

⁷⁰ A. Gramsci, "Liola di Pirandello all'Alfieri", 4th April, 1917, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.283.

⁷¹ L. Pirandello, *La parlata di Girgenti*, introduced by S. Milioto, (Florence, 1981). [Original German title: *Laute und Lautentwicklung der Mundart von Girgenti* (Bonn, 1891).]

⁷² A. Gramsci, "Luigi Capuana", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, pp. 137-38; see also SPSV, 1020-21: "Ora bisogna porsi bene in mente che l'arte, in qualunque sua forma (dico l'arte letteraria, di cui la drammatica è una delle tante forme) non è imitazione o riproduzione, ma creazione. La questione del linguaggio, dunque se e come debba esser parlato: la pretesa difficoltà di trovare in Italia una lingua veramente parlata in tutta la nazione, e l'altra questione d'una vita nazionale veramente italiana che manca per dar materia e carattere a un teatro che si possa dire italiano, come se appunto natura e ufficio dell'arte fosse la riproduzione necessaria di questa vita, che

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ciascuno possa riconoscere per dati e fatti esteriori: ..."

⁷³ Liolà (Rome, 1917).

⁷⁴ B. Giuliano, *Elementi di cultura fascista*, p.17.

⁷⁵ Cf. A. L. Lepschy and G. Lepschy, *The Italian Language Today*, p.29; see also R. Brown and A. Gilman, "The Pronouns of Power and Solidarity", p.264; E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, pp.281-82.

⁷⁶ Cf. E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, pp.155-56.

⁷⁷ B. Mussolini, "Macchina e donna", *Il Popolo d'Italia*, n.206, 31st August, 1934. This article is reprinted in M. A. Macciocchi, *La donna "nera": "consenso" femminile e fascismo*, pp.144-45.

⁷⁸ R. Tessari, *Il mito della macchina*, p.337.

⁷⁹ A. Gramsci, "I futuristi", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.173.

⁸⁰ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.XXI.

⁸¹ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.190.

⁸² A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.186.

⁸³ B. Corradini and E. Settimelli, "Pesi, misure e prezzi del genio artistico: manifesto futurista", in *Sintesi del Futurismo: storia e documenti*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.96.

⁸⁴ A. Asor Rosa, "Avanguardie", p.227.

⁸⁵ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.225.

⁸⁶ A. C. Alberti, *Il teatro nel fascismo*, p.226.

⁸⁷ Cf. V. de Grazia, "The democratization of access", *The Culture of Consent*, pp.159-64.

⁸⁸ Cf. Serafino Gubbio operatore, *IR*, 1273-74; see also my "L'Herbier, Cinéaste", in the "Appendix".

⁸⁹ Cf. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, p.162, where she describes how the "carri di Tespi" were designed to impress their provincial audiences with "a sense of the miraculous".

⁹⁰ Cf. E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.161; see also V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, pp.159-64.

⁹¹ Cf. E. Laclau, "Fascism and Ideology", *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, pp.81-142.

⁹² L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano" in *Storia del*

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teatro italiano, edited by S. d'Amico, pp.5-27.

⁹³ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.25.

⁹⁴ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.26.

⁹⁵ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.26.

⁹⁶ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.6.

⁹⁷ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.7.

⁹⁸ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", pp.7-8.

⁹⁹ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.9.

¹⁰⁰A. Zapponi, ed., *I littoriali della cultura e dell'arte dell'anno XIV*, pp.37-39.

¹⁰¹Cf. *Sagra del Signore della Nave* (1924); *La nuova colonia* (1928); *Lazzaro* (1929); *I giganti della montagna* (1931-38); and *La favola del figlio cambiato* (1933).

¹⁰²Cf. E. R. Tannenbaum, *Fascism in Italy: Society and Culture*, p.197.

¹⁰³L. Althusser, "The 'Piccolo Teatro': Bertolazzi and Brecht. Notes on a Materialist Theatre", *For Marx*, pp.129-51.

¹⁰⁴L. Althusser, "The 'Piccolo Teatro': Bertolazzi and Brecht", p.151.

Notes

II. Mirror-image/Collage

II.1. A Shattered Mirror

¹ Cf. M. Corti, *Principi della comunicazione letteraria* (Milan, 1976), p.15: "Non si tratta più di nessi letterari istituiti, come per le fonti, a monte del testo, bensì a valle, per cui, se appartiene alla collana dei preziosi paradossi di Borges, la dichiarazione che la causa viene dopo l'effetto, è assolutamente valida quella per cui ogni grande opera crea nessi inediti nel passato, e non solo nel futuro, della letteratura, trasformando il valore segnico dei testi"; see also J. L. Borges, "Kafka y sus precursores" (1951), *Otras inquisiciones* (Buenos Aires, 1966), p.148; T. S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1917), *Points of View* (London, 1941), pp.25-26; H. Bloom, "Clintamen or Poetic Misprision", *The Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford, [1973] 1978), p.19.

² Cf. M. Pleynet, "Picasso peintre d'histoire?" *Tel Quel*, 90, Winter, 1981, pp.21-37: "L'événement historique qui commande les *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (implicitement liées au racisme et au colonialisme européens) n'est pas ponctuel, il est diffus et participe au flou des aléas d'une culture en crise" (pp.30-31); see also G. Livio, *Il teatro in rivolta: Futurismo, grottesco, Pirandello e pirandellismo* (Milan, 1976); J. Stone, "Pirandello's Picassos", *The Italianist*, no.2, 1982 - forthcoming.

³ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, pp.305-8.

⁴ Cf. S. Gablik, *Progress in Art* (New York, 1977); see also H. Arnason, *A History of Modern Art* (London, [1969] 1974); A. Barr, *Cubism and Abstract Art* (New York, 1936); *Picasso: Fifty Years of His Art* (New York, [1955] 1980); A. Blunt, *Picasso's "Guernica"* (London, 1969); P. Daix, *Picasso* (London, 1965); "Picasso et la poétique de la mort", *Tel Quel*, 90, Winter, 1981, pp.38-44; and J. Rosselet, *Picasso, the Cubist Years, 1907-1916: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings and Related Works* (London, 1979); J. Golding, *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907-14* (Glasgow, 1959); N. Goodman, *Languages of Art* (London, 1969); C. Green, "The invention of Cubism", a review of *Picasso, the Cubist Years, 1907-1916*, by P. Daix and J. Rosselet, *Times Literary Supplement*, 21st March, 1980, p.331; C. Greenberg, *Art and Culture* (London, 1973); J.-L. Houdebine, "Jung et Picasso: le déni de l'exception", *Tel Quel*, 90, Winter, 1981, pp.45-55; D.-H. Kahnweiler, *Der Weg zum Kubismus* (Munich, 1920). In English: *The Rise of Cubism*, translated by H. Aronson (New York, 1949); M. McCully, ed., *A Picasso Anthology: Documents, Criticism, Reminiscences* (London, 1981); J. Nash, *Cubism, Futurism and Constructivism* (London, 1974). Nash gives a controversial account of the influence of Nietzsche on Cubism, in "The Nature of Cubism: A study of conflicting explanations", *Art History*, vol.3, no.4, December, 1980, pp.435-47; *Picasso's Picassos: An Exhibition from the Musée Picasso, Paris*, selected by R. Penrose, J. Golding and M. Dominique Bozo, at the Hayward Gallery, London, 17th July - 11th October, 1981 (London, 1981); M. Pleynet, "Matisse et

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Picasso", *Tel Quel*, 90, Winter, 1981, pp.21-37; P. W. Schwartz, *The Cubists* (London, 1971); P. Sollers, "De la virilité considérée comme un des beaux-arts", *Tel Quel*, 90, Winter, 1981, pp.16-19; R. Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant-Garde in France. 1885 to World War I* (New York, [1955] 1968); W. Sypher, *Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature* (New York, 1960); P. Vergo, *Abstraction: Towards a New Art. Painting 1910-20* (London, 1980); T. Wolfe, *The Painted Word* (New York, [1975] 1980); *From Bauhaus to Our House* (New York, 1981).

⁵ Cf. Plato, Book seven of *The Republic*, translated by G. M. A. Grube (London and Sydney, 1981), pp.192-220; see also E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, p.7.

⁶ Cf. L. Furst and P. Skrine, *Naturalism* (London, 1971), pp.8-9.

⁷ G. Verga, "L'amante di Gramigna", *Tutte le novelle*, edited by C. Riccardi (Milan, 1979), p.203.

⁸ G. Verga, "L'amante di Gramigna", p.202.

⁹ Cf. H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.15.

¹⁰ Cf. N. Goodman, *Languages of Art*, p.34; see also R. Jakobson, "Du réalisme en art" (1921), *Questions de poétique* (Paris, 1973), p.32.

¹¹ Cf. "Avvertenza sugli scrupoli della fantasia" (1921), TR, 474-80.

¹² Cf. E. Laclau, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, p.7.

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¹³ Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'intertextualité", *Le texte du roman*, pp. 139-76; see also H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*.

¹⁴ Cf. W. Sypher, "Cubist Drama", *Rococo to Cubism in Art and Literature* (New York, 1960), pp.289-94; see also D. Cooper, *Picasso. Theatre* (Paris, 1967). The Cubists participated actively in stage productions for which they designed the scenery, sets and costumes. See P. Schwartz, "Cubist Language, Cubist Theatre", *The Cubists*, p.146; L. C. Breunig, ed., *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews by G. Apollinaire 1902-18* (London and New York, 1972); S. D. Lawder, *The Cubist Cinema* (New York, 1975).

¹⁵ F. T. Marinetti, "L'amica delle mogli" [1927?], in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, pp.267-69.

¹⁶ Cf. P. Picasso, "Picasso on Picasso", in *Picasso*, edited by D. Porzio and M. Valsecchi (London, 1979), p.79.

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¹⁷ U. Boccioni *et al.*, "Manifesto dei pittori futuristi", Milan, 11th February, 1910, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.11.

¹⁸ Cf. P. Vergo, "Introduction", *Abstraction: Towards a New Art. Painting 1910-20*, p.10; see also C. Green, "The invention of Cubism".

¹⁹ J. Nash, *Cubism, Futurism and Constructivism*, p.3; for the relations between the Futurists and the Cubists, see also J. Golding, *Cubism: A History and an Analysis 1907-14*, p.40, and G. Stein, *Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (London, 1966), p.108: "The Futurists all of them led by Severini thronged around Picasso. He brought them all to the house. Marinetti came by himself later as I remember. In any case, everybody found the Futurists very dull."

²⁰ U. Boccioni, "Manifesto tecnico della scultura futurista", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.49.

²¹ F. T. Marinetti, "Il teatro di varietà", 21st November, 1912, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.82.

²² F. T. Marinetti, "Lo splendore geometrico e meccanico e la sensibilità numerica", 18th March, 1914, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.98-99.

²³ Cf. S. Gablik, *Progress in Art*, p.43.

²⁴ C. D. Carrà, "La pittura dei suoni, rumori e odori", 11th August, 1913, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.80.

²⁵ Cf. M. McCully, ed., *A Picasso Anthology*, p.74, where she quotes from G. Apollinaire, *Les Peintres Cubistes* (Paris, 1913): "Representing planes to denote volumes, Picasso gives an enumeration so complete and so decisive of the various elements which make up the object, that these do not take up the shape of the object, thanks to the effort of the spectator, who is forced to see all the elements simultaneously just because of the way they have been arranged."

²⁶ U. Boccioni *et al.*, "Prefazione al Catalogo delle Esposizioni di Parigi, Londra, Berlino, Bruxelles, Monaco, Amburgo, Vienna, ecc." (February, 1912), in *I manifesti del Futurismo*, by F. T. Marinetti *et al.* (Florence, 1914), p.64; see also U. Boccioni, "Prefazione al catalogo della prima esposizione di pittura futurista", Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris, February, 1912, in *Gli scritti editi e inediti*, edited by Z. Birolli and M. de Micheli (Milan, 1971), pp.13-21. See the notes on pp.431-435: it seems that the first edition was in French, - "Les exposants au public" - but that the French text was translated from an Italian original; Boccioni's autograph was actually found: it was apparently discussed with other members of the group on 11th October, 1911, before he went to Paris. The text used here is the "definitive" one printed in *Pittura e scultura futuriste* (1914); the variants are indicated in the notes. [In English: "The Exhibitors to the Public" (1912), from the catalogue of the "Exhibition of Works by Italian Futurist Painters", Sackville Gallery, London, 1912, in *Futurist Manifestos*, edited by U. Apollonio (London, 1973), pp.45-50.]

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²⁷ U. Boccioni *et al.*, "La pittura futurista: manifesto tecnico", Milan, 11th April, 1910, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.13.

²⁸ F. T. Marinetti, in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.268.

²⁹ U. Boccioni, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.46.

³⁰ U. Boccioni, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.14.

³¹ U. Boccioni, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.13.

³² U. Boccioni, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.48.

³³ Cf. M. Foucault, "Préface à la transgression", *Critique*, nos. 195-96, 1963, p.754. [This article is reprinted as "Preface to Transgression", in his *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, edited by D. Bouchard, pp.29-52.]

³⁴ F. T. Marinetti in *Almanacco letterario Bompiani* (Milan, 1938); see also G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p.328.

³⁵ C. D. Carrà, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.80-81.

³⁶ Cf. J. Metzinger, "Note sur la peinture", *Pan*, October-November, 1910; see also E. F. Fry, *Cubism* (London, 1966), p.60.

³⁷ Cf. U. Boccioni *et al.*, "Prefazione al Catalogo delle Esposizioni di Parigi, Londra ...", in *I manifesti del Futurismo*, by F. T. Marinetti *et al.*, p.63; see also H. Bergson, *Creative Evolution* (New York, 1911), p.302; "what is real is the continual change of form: form is only a snapshot view of a transition"; "the mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind".

³⁸ F. T. Marinetti *et al.*, *I manifesti del Futurismo*, p.63.

³⁹ C. D. Carrà, in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.50.

⁴⁰ Cf. J. Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique*.

⁴¹ Cf. L. Hjelmslev, *Essais linguistiques*, vol. XIII of *Travaux du cercle linguistique du Copenhague* (Copenhagen, 1959); see also U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.71-81; R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie*, II, 1.

⁴² Cf. P. Macherey, *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire*, for an account of the methodology of symptomatic reading; see also S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, SE 5, 550-621.

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⁴³ Cf. S. Freud, *SE* 4, 277-78.

⁴⁴ Cf. J. Kristeva, "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman", *Sēmeiōtikē: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, pp.90-91.

12 ⁴⁵ Cf. J. Derrida, "Freud et la scène de l'écriture", *L'écriture et la différence*, pp.313-14; see also S. Freud, *A Note upon the "Mystic Writing-Pad"*, *SE* 19, 227-34.

⁴⁶ Cf. J.-F. Lyotard, "The Unconscious as Mise-en-scène", in *Performance in postmodern culture*, vol.1 of *Theories of Contemporary Culture*, edited by M. Benamou and C. Caramello (Madison, 1977), pp. 89-90.

⁴⁷ Cf. S. Freud, *SE* 5, 523-24; see also U. Eco, *Lector in fabula: la cooperazione interpretativa nei testi narrativi* (Milan, 1979).

⁴⁸ Cf. P. Picasso, in *Picasso*, edited by D. Porzio and M. Valsecchi, p.79.

⁴⁹ Cf. S. Freud, "The Means of Representation in Dreams", *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *SE* 4, 312: "When the whole mass of these dream-thoughts is brought under the pressure of the dream-work and its elements are turned about, broken into fragments and jammed together - almost like pack-ice - the question arises of what happens to the logical connections which have hitherto formed its framework."

⁵⁰ Cf. J. Derrida, *L'écriture et la différence*, p.339.

⁵¹ Cf. H. Bloom, "The Breaking of Form", in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, by H. Bloom et al., p.27.

⁵² See W. Kandinsky, "Reminiscences" (1913), in *Modern Artists on Art*, edited by R. L. Herbert (Englewood Cliffs, 1964), p.32: "What is to replace the missing object?"; see also U. Boccioni, *Estetica e arte futurista*, edited by M. Carrà (Milan, 1946), p.152: "Per noi il quadro non è più una scena esteriore, un palcoscenico sul quale si svolge il fatto. Il quadro per noi è una costruzione architettonica irradiante, di cui l'artista, e non l'oggetto, forma il nocciolo centrale. È un ambiente architettonico emotivo che crea la sensazione e avvolge lo spettatore. Il quadro futurista è un *vastissimo minimo* che sostituisce nella sua profondità l'antico concetto di superficie."

⁵³ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.88-89.

⁵⁴ Cf. SPSV, 390. Pirandello gave two lectures on Verga, one in 1920 and the other in 1931. I have quoted from the 1931 version. The editor, M. Lo Vecchio-Musti, includes a short appendix which is the opening section of the 1920 version where the only variants occur. The passage quoted here is the same in both.

⁵⁵ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, pp.305-8.

⁵⁶ Cf. J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II (Paris, 1971), p.113.

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⁵⁷ Cf. G. C. Lepschy, "Sintagmatica e linearità" (1965), *Intorno a Saussure*, p.51: "Pare quindi che non si possa parlare dei rapporti paradigmatici senza distruggerli trasformandoli in sintagmatici"; see also J. Kristeva, "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman", *Sēmeiōtikē: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, p.87; R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie*, III.1; R. Jakobson and L. Waugh, *The Sound Shape of Language* (Brighton, 1979), p.236.

⁵⁸ For an earlier discussion of this idea, see J. Stone, "Mirror-image/Collage: Reality, Representation and Revolution in Pirandello", in *The Politics of Modernism*, pp.37-71.

⁵⁹ Cf. NA II, 577-84.

⁶⁰ Cf. F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità: compenetrazione*, in vol.II of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, pp.305-10.

⁶¹ F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, p.307.

⁶² F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, p.308.

⁶³ F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, p.308.

⁶⁴ F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, p.308.

⁶⁵ Cf. W. Sypher, "Craft as Bricolage", *Literature and Technology: The Alien Vision* (New York, 1971), p.48; see also C. Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage* (Paris, 1962).

⁶⁶ F. T. Marinetti et al., *I manifesti del Futurismo*, p.63.

⁶⁷ Cf. H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, pp.15-16.

⁶⁸ F. T. Marinetti, in vol.II of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.310.

⁶⁹ Cf. G. Bettetini, "La messa in scena del teatro e del cinema", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, pp.204-5.

⁷⁰ Numerous Pirandello critics put forward the view that the plays develop out of the dialogic content of the *novelle*. For instance, see M. K. Brügger, *Le didascalie nel teatro di Pirandello* (Lugano, 1952); N. de Bella, *Narrativa e teatro nell'arte di Luigi Pirandello* (Florence, 1962); D. della Terza, "Pirandello from Tale to Play: The Case of *Tutto per bene*", *MLN*, vol.92, no.1, January, 1977, pp.63-78; M. Jelland-Meynaud, "A propos des didascalies des *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*", *Revue des études italiennes*, N.s.xiv, 1968, pp.72-87; U. Leo, "Pirandello between fiction and drama", in *Pirandello: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by G. Cambon (Englewood Cliffs, 1967), pp.83-90; and E. A. McCormick, "Luigi Pirandello: Major Writer, Minor Novelist", in *From Verismo to Experimentalism: essays in the modern Italian novel*, edited by S. Pacifici (Bloomington, 1969), pp. 61-80. This tendency is also represented in *Gli atti unici di Pirandello: tra narrativa e teatro*, edited by S. Milioto (Agrigento, 1978), with the notable and interesting exception, M. L. Altieri

Notes: II.2. The Cubo-Futurist Palimpsest; II.3. From Narrative to Drama; II.3.a. Modernism and the Death of the Author

Biagi, "La lingua in scena: dalle novelle agli atti unici", pp.259-315.

⁷¹ Cf. J. Kristeva, "Le mot, le dialogue et le roman", *Sēmeiōtikē: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, p.87.

⁷² Cf. J. Kristeva, *Sēmeiōtikē: Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, pp.97-98 and p.100.

⁷³ Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'intertextualité", *Le texte du roman*, pp. 139-76; and her *Desire in Language*, edited by L. S. Roudiez, p.15.

⁷⁴ Cf. G. C. Lepschy, "Sintagmatica e linearità", *Intorno a Saussure*, p.52, note 7, and p.41; see also R. Jakobson and L. Waugh, *The Sound Shape of Language*, p.26.

II.3. From Narrative to Drama

⁷⁵ E. Lemoine-Luccioni, "La fable du sang", *Partage des femmes* (Paris, 1976), p.13. [This chapter is reprinted as "The Fable of the Blood", in *Returning to Freud: Clinical Psychoanalysis in the School of Lacan*, edited and translated by S. Schneiderman (New Haven and London, 1980), pp.61-74.]

⁷⁶ Cf. R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", in *Image-Music-Text*, essays selected and translated by S. Heath (Glasgow, 1977), pp.142-48. [This essay first appeared as "La mort de l'auteur", *Mantéïa* V, 1968.]

⁷⁷ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, pp.304-57 and pp.465-92.

⁷⁸ U. Eco, *Lector in fabula*, p.63.

⁷⁹ Cf. *Quando si è qualcuno*, MN II, 969-1044.

⁸⁰ R. Barthes, *Leçon*, p.14.

II.3.a. *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*: Modernism and the Death of the Author

⁸¹ A. Zanzotto, "L'elegia in petèl", in *Poeti italiani del Novecento*, edited by P. V. Mengaldo (Vicenza, 1978), p.891.

⁸² Cf. M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History" (1971), *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, edited by D. Bouchard, p.147. [This essay first appeared in *Hommage à Jean Hyppolite* (Paris, 1971), pp.14-72]; see also P. Meisel, "What Foucault Knows", a review of *Language, Counter-memory, Practice, Salmagundi*, no.44-45, Spring-Summer,

Notes: II.3.a. Modernism and the Death of the Author

1979, pp.23-41; "La tragedia di un personaggio", *NA* I, 713: "Orbene, i personaggi delle mie novelle vanno sbandando per il mondo, che io sono uno scrittore crudelissimo e spietato. Ci vorrebbe un critico di buona volontà, che facesse vedere quanto compatimento sia sotto a quel riso."

⁸³ Cf. R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", *Image-Music-Text*, p.146.

⁸⁴ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Névrose d'abandon", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.273-74.

⁸⁵ Cf. H. Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York, 1975).

⁸⁶ S. Freud, *Analysis Terminable and Interminable* (1937), *SE* 23, 228-29.

⁸⁷ Cf. H. Bloom, "Apophrades", *The Anxiety of Influence*, pp.15-16; see also L. Capuana, *Gli "ismi" contemporanei (verismo, simbolismo, idealismo, cosmopolitismo) ed altri saggi di critica letteraria ed artistica* (Catania, 1898).

⁸⁸ Cf. R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", *Image-Music-Text*, pp.142-48.

⁸⁹ Cf. H. Bloom, "Kenosis", *The Anxiety of Influence*, pp.3-4.

⁹⁰ Cf. H. Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence*, p.80.

⁹¹ Cf. S. Freud, *Analysis Terminable and Interminable*, *SE* 23, 237: "But one cannot flee from oneself; flight is no help against internal dangers"; see also "Illustratori, attori e traduttori", *SPSV*, 219: "Mutar di veste (*Travestie*), in italiano può essere 'travestimento' e 'travestire' ha in italiano mala voce. Dunque intendiamoci: dobbiamo dare allo scrittore antico una veste nuova, non dobbiamo travestirlo."

⁹² Cf. E. Benveniste, *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, pp.237-50; see also R. Barthes, "Introduction to the Structural Analysis of Narratives", *Image-Music-Text*, pp.79-124. [This essay first appeared as "Introduction à l'analyse structurale des récits", *Communications*, 8, 1966.]

⁹³ Cf. R. Jakobson, *Essais de linguistique générale* (Paris, 1966), p.252; *Selected Writings*, vol.II, pp.130-32; see also R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", *Image-Music-Text*, pp.144-45.

⁹⁴ Cf. W. C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago, 1961), pp. 67-77; see also M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" (1969), *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, p.129.

⁹⁵ Cf. R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte* (Paris, 1973).

⁹⁶ A. Artaud, "Le théâtre de la cruauté (second manifeste)" (1933),

Notes: II.3.a. Modernism and the Death of the Author

Le théâtre et son double (Paris, [1964] 1979), p.191.

⁹⁷ Cf. W. Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", address delivered at the Institute for the Study of Fascism, Paris, 27th April, 1934, *Understanding Brecht*, translated by A. Bostock (London, 1973), pp.99-100.

⁹⁸ Cf. P. Meisel, "What Foucault Knows", *Salmagundi*, no.44-45, 1979, pp.235-36.

⁹⁹ Cf. W. Krynski, "The Narrator as a Sayer of the Author", *Strumenti critici*, 32-33, June, 1977, p.84: "A narrator may be conscious of the unnarrability of the referent upon which is fixed the desire of the narration. Then he may turn himself into a negative or split narrator, a frequently found 'figure' in modern novelistic discourse."

¹⁰⁰ Cf. J. Kristeva, *Polylogue*; see also "Prologue", note 70, since all Kristeva's work forwards the notion of unlimited polysemy, rather than the need to take into consideration the constraints operating on meaning, as Barthes' ultimately does. For further examples of the trend towards polysemy, see *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, edited and introduced by J. V. Harari (London, 1979), and *Untying the Text*, edited by R. Young.

¹⁰¹ M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, p.136.

¹⁰² M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, p.129.

¹⁰³ Cf. M. Foucault, *L'ordre du discours*, inaugural lecture delivered at the Collège de France, 2nd December, 1970 (Paris, 1971), p.28 and p.30.

¹⁰⁴ M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, p.131.

¹⁰⁵ M. Foucault, "What is an Author?" *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, pp.124-31.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", *Image-Music-Text*, p.147: "Once the Author is removed, the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile. To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing."

¹⁰⁷ Cf. J. Derrida, "Le théâtre de la cruauté et la clôture de la représentation", *L'écriture et la différence*, pp.345-56; and R. Barthes, "The Death of the Author", *Image-Music-Text*, p.144 and p.146; see also S. Beckett, *Texts for Nothing* (London, 1974), p.16: "What matter who's speaking, someone said, what matter who's speaking."

¹⁰⁸ L. Pirandello, "Comment et pourquoi j'ai écrit *Six personnages en quête d'auteur*", *Revue de Paris*, 15th July, 1925. This article

Notes: II.3.a. Modernism and the Death of the Author; II.3.b.
Machiavelli Revisited

first appeared as "Come e perchè ho scritto i *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*", *Comoedia*, anno 7, no.1, Milan, 1st January, 1925, and it is reprinted as the Preface to *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, MN I, pp.33-46, with two important excisions. The following remarkable passages which appear in the article, do not appear in the Preface: the opening and closing sentences of the article have been removed. They read as follows: "J'ai écrit les *Six personnages en quête d'auteur* pour me délivrer d'un cauchemar" (*Revue de Paris*, p.332); "Si ma modestie ne peut accepter l'affirmation de G.-B. Shaw, à savoir que les *Six personnages en quête d'auteur* constituent l'oeuvre la plus originale et la plus puissante de tous les théâtres, antiques et modernes, de toutes les nations, ma conscience sait bien que leur apparition dans l'histoire du théâtre italien marque une date qu'on ne pourra oublier" (p.347). [The first performance of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* took place in Rome, at the Teatro Valle, by the Niccodemi company, 10th May, 1921]; see also A. Barbina, *Bibliografia della critica pirandelliana 1889-1961* (Florence, 1967), p.55.

II.3.b. Pirandello's *Belfagor*: Machiavelli Revisited

¹⁰⁹Cf. N. Machiavelli, "Belfagor", *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, edited by F. Gaeta (Milan, 1977), pp. 169-79. The date of composition cannot be fixed with any precision. Cf. "Nota introduttiva", p.xix and p.xv: the novella "Belfagor", first appeared under Machiavelli's name in 1549, but a version had appeared four years earlier.

¹¹⁰Cf. N. Machiavelli, *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, p.160, note 16.

¹¹¹Cf. J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, pp. 103-15; see also C. Tisdall and A. Bozzola, *Futurism* (London, 1977), p.14.

¹¹²Cf. N. Machiavelli, Chapter XXV of *Il Principe*, *Il principe e I Discorsi*, edited by S. Bertelli (Milan, 1980); see also J. R. Hale, *Machiavelli and Renaissance Italy* (Harmondsworth, [1961] 1972).

¹¹³N. Machiavelli, *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, p.330.

¹¹⁴Cf. N. Machiavelli, *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, p.179.

¹¹⁵Cf. SPSV, 1068-72.

¹¹⁶Cf. E. Lauretta, *Luigi Pirandello: Storia di un personaggio "fuori di chiave"* (Milan, 1980), p.231.

¹¹⁷Cf. "Allegre", section VII of *Mal giocondo* (1899), SPSV, 464-66.

Notes: II.3.b. Machiavelli Revisited

¹¹⁸Cf. L. Capuana, "Belfagor di Luigi Pirandello", *Roma di Roma*, 16th September, 1896. This article is reprinted in *Capuana inedito*, edited by A. Barbina (Bergamo, 1974), pp.167-69; see also P. M. Sipala, *Capuana e Pirandello: storia e testi di una relazione letteraria* (Catania, 1974).

¹¹⁹Cf. E. Providenti, "Belfagor, poemetto di Luigi Pirandello", *Belfagor*, no.3, anno xxii, f.V, 30th September, 1967, pp.572-81; and his "La formazione del giovane Pirandello e il poemetto *Belfagor*", *L'Osservatore politico letterario*, Milan, January-February, 1978, 1-2, pp.1-56; for details of the various versions, see SPSV, 690.

¹²⁰Cf. "La visita", *Belfagor*, SPSV, 690-701.

¹²¹L. Capuana, "Belfagor di Luigi Pirandello", *Capuana inedito*, p.167.

¹²²Cf. E. Providenti, "Belfagor, poemetto di Luigi Pirandello", *Belfagor*, p.579.

¹²³Cf. E. Providenti, "La formazione del giovane Pirandello e il poemetto *Belfagor*", *L'Osservatore politico letterario*, pp.3-5.

¹²⁴Cf. E. Providenti, *L'Osservatore politico letterario*, p.3.

¹²⁵Cf. E. Providenti, *L'Osservatore politico letterario*, p.3. [This article supplied by Providenti is not quoted in my earlier version, "Il *Belfagor* di Pirandello: Machiavelli rivisitato", in *Pirandello Poeta*, edited by P. D. Giovanelli (Florence, 1981), pp.180-96.]

¹²⁶Cf. *Erotica di Machiavelli*, edited by G. Lazzeri (Milan, [undated]), p.156: "Il titolo 'Novella piacevolissima', che recano molte edizioni moderne, risale pure alla ricordata edizione wolfiana [1558]."

¹²⁷Cf. L. Capuana, *Capuana inedito*, p.169.

¹²⁸Cf. "L'umorismo" (1907, 1908, 1920), SPSV, 127.

¹²⁹Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Poetics and Linguistics", *Style in Language*, edited by T. A. Sebeok, p.358: "we must recall the two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behaviour, *selection* and *combination* The selection is produced on the base of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymity and antonymity, while the combination, the build up of the sequence, is based on contiguity. The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence."

¹³⁰Cf. R. Jakobson, "Poetry of grammar and grammar of poetry", *Lingua*, 21, 1968, pp.597-609; see also J. Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics and the Study of Literature* (London, 1975), p.56.

¹³¹Cf. SPSV, 694: "Pluto, re mite e benevolo,/ tra i tormenti tuoi ci togli;/ ci parran carezze d'angeli/ a confronto de le mogli!"

Notes: II.3.b. Machiavelli Revisited

¹³²Cf. S. Freud, *The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words*, SE 11, 155-61; see also G. C. Lepschy, "Freud, Abel e gli opposti", *Mutamenti di prospettiva nella linguistica*, pp.137-98.

¹³³Dante, *Inferno*, viii, l.31.

¹³⁴Cf. G. Steiner, "The Language Animal", *Extraterritorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution* (Harmondsworth, 1975), p.92.

¹³⁵Cf. Dante, *Rime*, edited by G. Contini (Turin, 1965), p.46 (CIII), l.1.

¹³⁶Cf. SPSV, 694: "Pluto in mezzo delirava,/ sghignazzando; restringevasi/ ne le cosce, poi saltava/ e gridava: 'Ecco, ecco vengono! Ridon tutti ... Ajuta! aiuta!/' Pluto re mite e benevolo,/ ognun d'essi mi saluta! ...'"

¹³⁷Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Poetics and Linguistics", *Style in Language*, edited by T. A. Sebeok, p.358: "Poetry and metalanguage, however, are in diametrical opposition to each other: in metalanguage the sequence is used to build an equation, whereas in poetry the equation is used to build a sequence."

¹³⁸Cf. J. P. Sartre, *Huis clos* (1944) (Paris, 1947), p.75.

¹³⁹"L'umorismo", SPSV, 127.

¹⁴⁰Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Poetics and Linguistics", *Style in Language*, edited by T. A. Sebeok, p.358.

¹⁴¹N. Machiavelli, *Il teatro e tutti gli scritti letterari*, p.171.

¹⁴²Cf. J. Derrida, "Le facteur de la vérité" (1975), *La carte postale: de Socrate à Freud et au-delà* (Paris, 1980), pp.439-524.

¹⁴³Cf. S. Freud, *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis* ["Wolf Man"] (1914; 1918), SE 17, p.44 and p.38.

¹⁴⁴"La tragedia di un personaggio", NA I, 715; see also SPSV, 696: "Di dannati ora rigurgita/ nuovamente il regno negro,/ questi modo non vi tengono/ degli antichi meno allegro./ Come prima entrati, traggono/ dal profondo un gran respiro./ Trae qualcuno anche un binocolo/ da viaggio, e guarda in giro."

¹⁴⁵Cf. A. F. Artaud, *Machiavel: son génie et ses erreurs* (Paris, 1883), p.94; see also *Erotica di N. Machiavelli*, edited by G. Lazzeri, p.155.

¹⁴⁶Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, pp.88-89; see also K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.17.

¹⁴⁷Cf. E. Lauretta, *Luigi Pirandello: Storia di un personaggio "fuori di chiave"*, p.231.

¹⁴⁸Cf. L. Capuana, *Capuana inedito*, p.167.

Notes: II.3.b. Machiavelli Revisited

¹⁴⁹Cf. E. Providenti, "*Belfagor*, poemetto di Luigi Pirandello", *Belfagor*, p.574.

¹⁵⁰Cf. *Il fu Mattia Pascal*, TR, 397: "A noi uomini, invece, nascendo, è toccato un tristo privilegio: quello di *sentirci* vivere, con la bella illusione che ne risulta: di prendere cioè come una realtà fuori di noi questo nostro interno sentimento della vita, mutabile e vario, secondo i tempi; i casi e la fortuna."

¹⁵¹Cf. *Belfagor*, SPSV, 695: "I demoni si consigliano/ con grandi occhi, a bocca aperta .../ Ed io dico: 'Ahimè, il plutonio,/ alto senno si sconcerta!'" ; [Pluto's delirium as beleaguered king anticipates that of Enrico IV.]

¹⁵²Cf. E. Lauro, *Luigi Pirandello: Storia di un personaggio "fuori di chiave"*, p.232.

¹⁵³Cf. L. Pirandello, "Come e perchè ho scritto i *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*", *Comoedia*, anno 7, no.1, Milan, 1st January, 1925: "Ho scritto i *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* per liberarmi da un incubo"; see my note 108, above.

Notes

III. Playscripts: A Wilderness of Words

III.1. "L'azione parlata"

¹ Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, translated, with an introduction by G. F. Else (Ann Arbor, 1970), pp.27-28: "Again: a tragedy cannot exist without a plot, but it can without characters: ...; Again: if one strings end to end speeches that are expressive of character and carefully worked in thought and expression, he still will not achieve the result which we said was the aim of tragedy; the job will be done much better by a tragedy that is more deficient in these other respects but has a plot, a structure of events. It is much the same case as with painting: the most beautiful pigments smeared on at random will not give as much pleasure as a black-and-white outline picture. Besides, the most powerful means tragedy has for swaying our feelings, namely the peripeties and recognitions, are elements of plot."

² MN II, 159-180.

³ Cf. J. Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris, 1967); see also D. McDonald, "Derrida and Pirandello: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of *Six Characters in Search of an Author*", *Modern Drama*, vol.xx, no.4, December, 1977, pp.421-36.

⁴ Cf. S. D'Amico, ed., *Storia del teatro italiano*, pp.5-27; see also T. Kowzan, "'Le théâtre comique' de Goldoni: entre Molière et Pirandello", *Mélanges à la mémoire de Franco Simone. France et Italie dans la culture européenne*, II, XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles (Geneva, 1981), pp.531-43.

⁵ L. Pirandello, "Introduzione al teatro italiano", p.25.

⁶ Cf. J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, pp. 103-15; and see my note 46, in section III.3. below.

⁷ Cf. L. Pirandello, *La parlata di Girgenti*, introduced by S. Milioto; and see my note 71, in section I.2. above.

⁸ *L'esclusa* (1893), TR, 9-176.

⁹ Cf. L. Hjelmslev, *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, p.119; see also K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, pp.154-56.

¹⁰ Cf. A. L. Lepschy, "La figura dell'attore nelle opere di Pirandello", *Inventario*, p.36: "Così con il metateatro di Pirandello, se supponiamo che si possa considerare l'attore in una commedia come significante (l'espressione, ciò che si vede in effetti sul palcoscenico), e il personaggio che egli interpreta come significato (il contenuto, ciò che l'attore rappresenta), allora quando Pirandello presenta la figura dell'attore fra i suoi personaggi abbiamo un'esatta analogia del modo in cui si costituisce un metalinguaggio, nel quale esistono significanti che hanno dei segni completi come significato; qui abbiamo degli attori che interpretano attori che interpretano personaggi."

Notes: III.1. "L'azione parlata"; III.2. "Parole in libertà"

¹¹ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.5-6.

¹² Cf. J. Lacan, "L'instance de la lettre dans l'inconscient ou la raison depuis Freud", *Écrits* I, pp.249-89.

¹³ Cf. E. Bentley, *The Theatre of War* (New York [1954] 1973), pp. 26-29.

¹⁴ Cf. M. Foucault, "What is an Author", *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, edited by D. Bouchard, pp.131-36.

¹⁵ Cf. F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, p.157.

¹⁶ Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style and Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.364-67.

III.2. "Parole in libertà"

¹⁷ Cf. L. Scrivo, ed., *Sintesi del Futurismo: storia e documenti* (Rome, 1968); see also G. Antonucci, *Lo spettacolo futurista in Italia* (Rome, 1974); *Cronache del teatro futurista*, edited by G. Antonucci (Rome, 1975); U. Apollonio, ed., *Futurist Manifestos* (London, 1973); R. Banham, *Theory and Design in the First Machine Age* (London, 1960); G. Bartolucci, ed., *Il gesto futurista: materiali drammaturgici* (Rome, 1969); J. Dashwood, "The Italian Futurist Theatre", *Themes in Drama: Drama and Society*, no.1, 1978, pp.129-46; L. de Maria, ed., *Marinetti e il Futurismo* (Milan, 1973); *Opere di F. T. Marinetti* (4 vols.), edited by L. de Maria (Milan, 1969); V. de Grazia, "Privileging the Clerks", *The Culture of Consent*, p.149: "But this 'human machine' had been transmogrified by fascism: endowed by the corporative economy with 'dignity, recognition, and responsibility', the clerk had become a futurist, with an entirely new psychological and physical dimension"; C. G. de Michelis, ed., *Il Futurismo italiano in Russia 1909-1929: temi e problemi* (Bari, 1973); R. Dombroski and S. Sharkey, "Revolution, Myth and Mythical Politics: The Futurist Solution", *Journal of European Studies*, vol.6, part 4, no.24, December, 1976, pp.231-47; *The Drama Review*, vol.19, no.5 (T68), December, 1975, pp.88-94: "Two manifestos: The influence of Italian Futurism in Russia" by F. Deák; G. Ferrata, ed., *Avanguardia e neo-avanguardia* (Milan, 1966); R. W. Flint, ed., *Marinetti: Selected Writings* (London, 1972); M. Gallot, "F. T. Marinetti et la politique en 1905", *Revue des études italiennes*, N.s. xvii, 1971, pp.133-60; I. Gherarducci, ed., *Il futurismo italiano* (Rome, 1976); M. Kirby, "Futurist Performance" (TDR Document), *TDR: The Drama Review*, vol.15, no.1 (T49), Fall, 1970, pp.126-46; and his *Futurist Performance*, translated by V. N. Kirby (New York, 1971); M. Kozloff, *Cubism/Futurism* (New York, 1974); G. Lista, ed., *Marinetti et le futurisme* (Lausanne, 1977); F. T. Marinetti, *Come si seducono le donne e si tradiscono gli uomini* (Milan, 1920); J. Rawson, "Italian Futurism", in *Modernism 1890-1930*, edited by M. Bradbury and J. McFarlane (Harmondsworth, 1976), pp.243-58; G. Rizzo, "Futurism, Pirandello and

Notes: III.2. "Parole in libertà"

the Contemporary Theatre", *Altro Polo*, 1978, pp.91-105; E. Sanguineti, *Ideologia e linguaggio* (Milan, 1975); V. Shklovsky, *Mayakovsky and his Circle*, translated and edited by L. Feiler (London, 1974); A. Tilgher, "Il teatro di F. T. Marinetti (a proposito del *Suggestore nudo*)", in *Il gesto futurista*, edited by G. Bartolucci, pp.63-67: "E se non avesse avuto altro affetto che di spianare la via a Pirandello, il teatro futurista sintetico non sarebbe passato invano sulle scene italiane" (p.63). [This article was first published in *Cinema-teatro*, 1930]; C. Tisdall and A. Bozzola, *Futurism* (London, 1977); L. Trotsky, "Futurism", chapter IV of *Literature and Revolution* (Ann Arbor, 1971), pp.126-61; M. Verdone, "Cinema e letterature del Futurismo", *Bianco e nero: rassegna mensile di studi cinematografici e televisivi*, anno xxviii, no.10-11-12, October-November-December, 1967, pp.1-171; *Teatro italiano d'avanguardia: drammi e sintesi futuriste* (Rome, 1970); *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone (Milan, 1973).

18 Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.50-53.

19 Cf. *Marinetti e il Futurismo*, edited by L. de Maria, pp.99-111. The version in Scrivo's edition, although dated the same (11th May, 1913), is substantially abbreviated, and has the title "L'immaginazione senza fili e le parole in libertà", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, pp.73-76.

20 Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.50.

21 F. T. Marinetti, "Contro l'amore e il parlamentarismo", [undated], in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.25.

22 Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.53.

23 Cf. *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone, pp.102-3.

24 Cf. *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone, p.103.

25 Cf. *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone, pp.177-82.

26 Cf. *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone, p.177 and p.181.

27 J. Lacan, "Du traitement possible de la psychose", *Écrits II*, p.44.

28 Cf. M. Black and R. Coward, "Linguistic, Social and Sexual Relations: A review of Dale Spender's *Man Made Language* [London, 1980]", *Screen Education*, no.39, Summer, 1981, pp.69-85; see my note 46, in section III.3. below.

29 Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.52.

30 Cf. M. Black and R. Coward, "Linguistic, Social and Sexual Relations", p.85.

31 Cf. *Marinetti e il Futurismo*, edited by L. de Maria, pp.84-91.

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The version in Scrivo's edition has the title "Supplemento al Manifesto tecnico della Letteratura futurista", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, pp.54-57.

³² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.50-53.

³³ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.57.

³⁴ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, p.164; S. Freud, *The Neuro-Psychoses of Defence* (1894), SE 3, 58.

³⁵ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, p.116 and p.166.

³⁶ Cf. J. Derrida, "Living on. Border Lines", in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, by H. Bloom et al., pp.75-176.

³⁷ Cf. H. Bloom, as quoted by R. Young, in his "Preface" to his edition, *Untying the Text*, p.viii.

³⁸ Cf. S. Fish, *Is there a text in this class? the authority of interpretive communities* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980).

³⁹ Cf. J. Derrida, "Living on. Border Lines", p.81.

⁴⁰ Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, p.385; "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", *Selected Writings*, pp.239-59; and with L. Waugh, *The Sound Shape of Language*, pp.90-92; I have drawn on Jakobson's theories in order to account for gendered language in Marinetti and Pirandello.

⁴¹ Cf. A. Wilden, *System and Structure: Essays in Communication and Exchange* (London, [1972] 1977), p.458: "In utilizing a Lacanian perspective, we can continue to retain the notion of the phallus as sign, but as a sign which is converted by the ideological discourse of our culture into a signifier. It is a sign governed by the signifier, and in our culture the signifier (*savoir*) is the agent of exploitation (*pouvoir*)"; see also J. Lacan, *The Language of the Self: The Function of Language in Psychoanalysis*, translated with notes and commentary by A. Wilden (New York [1968] 1975). [This text has been reprinted with the title *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis* (Baltimore and London, 1981)]; J. Stone, "The Hidden Sign: Script and Scopophilia", in *The Politics of Theory*, edited by F. Barker et al. (forthcoming).

⁴² F. T. Marinetti, "Suffragette e Indian Docks", *La grande Milano tradizionale e futurista*, vol.III of *Opere di F. T. Marinetti*, edited by L. de Maria, p.294: "Vorremmo gustare il successo berlinese ma ci riafferrano le grazie di due deliziose inglesine ed eccoci ad esprimere parol liberamente i gesti dei policemen nell'ammannettare odori tinte grigiaste d'acque motose e cataste di pelli di becco fasci di acagiù lane agli cipolle fiammiferi fave fagioli salsicce carne congelata cavoli carote Ferocissima tirannia di cinghie e catene che hanno il dovere di soffocare la rivolta delle calorie e degli odori."

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⁴³ R. Barthes, *Leçon*, p.14.

⁴⁴ Cf. *Marinetti e il Futurismo*, edited by L. de Maria, p.104.

⁴⁵ Cf. M. Black and R. Coward, "Linguistic, Social and Sexual Relations", p.85.

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⁴⁶ Cf. S. Plath, "Daddy", *Ariel* (London, 1965), p.55; see also P. Adams, "Representation and Sexuality", *m/f*, no.1, 1978, pp.65-82; N. Bassanese and G. Buzzati, eds., *La mascherata: La sessualità femminile nella nuova psicoanalisi. Saggi e interviste* (Milan, 1980); M. Black and R. Coward, "Linguistic, Social and Sexual Relations: A review of Dale Spender's *Man Made Language* [London, 1980]", *Screen Education*, no.39, Summer, 1981, pp.69-85; The Cambridge Women's Studies Group, *Women in Society: Interdisciplinary Essays* (London, 1981); C. Caplan, "Radical Feminism and Literature: Rethinking Millet's *Sexual Politics*", *Red Letters*, no.9, 1979, pp.4-16; "Stein and Kristeva", in *The Politics of Theory*, edited by F. Barker et al., (Colchester, 1983 - forthcoming); H. Cixous, "La missexualité", *Poétique*, 26, 1976, pp.240-51; H. Cixous, *Portrait de Dora* (Paris, 1976); P. Cook, "Star Signs", *Screen*, vol.20, nos.3/4, Winter, 1979/80, pp.80-88; C. F. Copeland, *Language, Time and Gertrude Stein* (Iowa, 1975); L. Caldwell, "Abortion in Italy", *Feminist Review*, no.7, 1981, pp.49-63; R. Coward, "Are Women's Novels Feminist Novels?" *Feminist Review*, no.5, 1980, pp.53-64; E. Cowie, "Woman as Sign", *m/f*, no.1, 1978, pp.49-64; T. de Lauretis, "Snow on the Oedipal Stage", *Screen*, vol.22, no.3, 1981, pp.24-40; "Through the Looking-Glass", in *The Cinematic Apparatus*, edited by T. de Lauretis and S. Heath (London, 1980), pp.187-202; G. Desideri, ed., *Psicoanalisi e critica letteraria* (Rome, 1975); A. Dworkin, *Pornography: Men Possessing Women* (London, 1981); R. Dyer, *Stars* (London, 1979); *Gays and Film*, edited by R. Dyer (London, [1977] 1980); L. Eichenbaum and S. Orbach, *Outside In ... Inside Out. Women's Psychology: A Feminist Psychoanalytic Approach* (Harmondsworth, 1982); J. Ellis, "On Pornography", *Screen*, vol.21, no.1, 1980, pp.81-108; J. Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman* (Oxford, 1981); *dwf: donnawomanifemme*, edited by M. Fraire: *dwf: Donne e letteratura*, no.5, October-December, 1977; *dwf: La donna dello schermo*, no.8, July to September, 1978; *dwf: Il corpo della donna: ideologia e realtà*, no.9, October-December, 1978; L. Froggett and A. Torchi, "Feminism and Italian Trade Unions", *Feminist Review*, no.8, Summer, 1981, pp.35-47; J. Gallop, *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction* (London, 1982) [*The Daughter's Seduction* (New York, 1982)]; "The Mother Tongue", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); S. Gilbert and S. Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven and London, 1979); S. Griffin, *Pornography and Silence: Culture's Revenge against Nature* (London, 1981); S. Heath, "Difference", *Screen*, vol.19, no.3, Autumn, 1978, pp.51-112; *The Sexual Fix* (London, 1982); A.-M. Houdebine, "Les femmes et la langue", *Tel Quel*, no.74, Winter, 1979, pp.84-95; L. Irigaray, "Le

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schizophrène et la question du signe", *Recherches sémiotiques: les deux Saussure*, no.16, September, 1974, pp.31-42; *Speculum de l'autre femme* (Paris, 1974); "La femme et la sexualité", in *Les femmes aujourd'hui, demain*, edited by CERM (Centre d'études et de recherches marxistes) (Paris, 1975), pp.147-70; *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un* (Paris, 1977); "Women's Exile", an interview edited by E. Engelstad and translated by C. Venn, *Ideology and Consciousness*, no.1, May, 1977, pp.57-76; M. Jacobus, ed., *Women Writing and Writing about Women* (London, 1979); Jay St. Collective, "Freud's Dora: A Case of Mistaken Identity [filmscript]", *Framework*, issue 15/16/17, 1981, pp.75-80; C. Johnston, "The Subject of Feminist Film Theory/Practice", *Screen*, vol.21, no.2, Summer, 1980, pp.27-34; M. Kelly, "Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism", *Screen*, vol.22, no.3, 1981, pp.41-62; J. Kristeva, see my note 70, in the section "Prologue", above; R. Lakoff, *Language and Woman's Place* (New York and London, 1975); J. Laplanche, *Life and Death in Psychoanalysis*, translated and with an introduction by J. Mehlman (Baltimore and London, 1976). [In French: *Vie et mort en psychanalyse* (Paris, 1970)]; *Lessico politico delle donne*, series co-ordinated by M. Fraire: *Teorie del femminismo* (Milan, 1978); *Cinema, letteratura, arti visive* (Milan, 1979); *Sociologia della famiglia: sull'emancipazione femminile* (Milan, 1979); M. Loriga, *L'identità e la differenza: conversazioni a Radiotre su donne e psicoanalisi* (Milan, 1980); T. Lovell, "Feminism, Literary Criticism and Theory", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); E. Lemoine-Luccioni, *Partage des femmes* (Paris, 1976); M. A. Macciocchi, see my note 30, in section I.1. above; C. MacKinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method, and the State: An Agenda for Theory", *Signs*, Spring, 1982, pp.515-44; A. Kremer-Marietti, *Lacan et la rhétorique de l'inconscient* (Paris, 1978); "Chantal Akerman's films: a dossier", compiled and introduced by A. Martin, *Feminist Review*, no.3, 1979, pp.24-47; V. Martini, *The World Without Women* (1934), translated by E. Capouya (New York, 1971); H. McNeil, "Fellini's City of Women", *Framework*, Summer, 1981, pp.103-4; C. Miller and K. Swift, *Words and Women* (Harmondsworth, 1979); K. Millet, *Sexual Politics* (London, [1971] 1978); J. Mitchell, *Psychoanalysis and Feminism* (Harmondsworth, 1974); E. Marks and I. de Courtivron, eds., *New French Feminisms: An Anthology* (London, 1981); L. Melandri, *L'infamia originaria* (Milan, 1977); m/f: *Double Issue - Sexuality*, nos. 5 and 6, 1981; The Marxist-Feminist Literature Collective, "Women's Writing: Jane Eyre, Shirley, Vilette, Aurora Leigh", 1848: *The Sociology of Literature*, edited by F. Barker et al. (Colchester, 1979). [This article by J. Joseph [Stone] et al., also appears in *Ideology and Consciousness*, no.3, Spring, 1978, pp.27-48]; E. Moers, *Literary Women* (1963) (London, 1977); T. Moi, "Representation of Patriarchy: Sexuality and Epistemology in Freud's Dora", *Feminist Review*, no.9, Autumn, 1981, pp.60-75; "Sexual/Textual Politics: Feminist Literary Criticism and its Problems", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); M. Montrelay, "Inquiry into Femininity", m/f, no.1, 1978, pp.83-102; A. Oakley, *Subject Women* (Glasgow, 1982); R. O'Rourke, "Summer Reading", *Feminist Review*, no.2, 1979, pp.1-17; C. Pajaczkowska, "The Heterosexual Presumption - A Contribution to the Debate on Pornography", *Screen*, vol.22, no.1, 1981, pp.79-94; R. Parker and G. Pollock, *Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology* (London and Henley, 1981); S. Piro, *Il linguaggio schizofrenico* (Milan, 1967); J.-B. Pontalis, *Frontiers in Psychoanalysis: Between the Dream and Psychic Pain*, translated by C. Cullen and P. Cullen (London, 1981). [In French: *Entre le rêve et*

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la douleur (Paris, 1977)]; E. Rasy, *La lingua della nutrice* (Rome, 1978); C. Register, "Literary Criticism", *Signs*, vol.6, no.2, Winter, 1980, pp.268-82; A. Rich, *On Lies, Secrets, and Silence: Selected Prose 1966-78* (London, 1980); J. Rose, "'Dora' - fragment of an analysis", *m/f*, no.2, 1978, pp.5-21; "Psychoanalysis and Feminism: Impasse", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); J. Sayers, "Psychoanalysis and Personal Politics: A Response to Elizabeth Wilson", *Feminist Review*, no.1, Spring, 1982, pp.91-95; *Screen Reader 2: Cinema and Semiotics*, introduced by M. Eaton and S. Neale (London, 1981); E. Showalter, *A Literature of Their Own* (London, 1978); D. Spender, *Man Made Language* (London, 1980); G. Spivak, "Finding Feminist Readings: Dante-Yeats", *Social Text*, no.3, Fall, 1980, pp.73-87; "The Politics of Theoretical Production", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); L. Stern, "Feminism and Cinema - Exchanges", *Screen*, vol.20, no.3/4, Winter, 1979/80, pp.89-106; J. Stone, "The Hidden Sign: Script and Scopophilia", in *The Politics of Theory* (forthcoming); C. Tagliavini, "Modificazioni del linguaggio nella parlata delle donne", in *Scritti in onore di Alfredo Trombetti* (Milan, 1938); S. Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution* (New York, 1978); P. Willemen, "Letter to John [Ellis]", *Screen*, vol. 21, no.2, Summer, 1980, pp.53-66; E. Wilson, "Psychoanalysis: Psychic Law and Order", *Feminist Review*, no.8, 1981, pp.63-78; V. Woolf, *Women and Writing*, edited by M. Barrett (London, 1979); M. Yaguello, *Les mots et les femmes* (Paris, 1978). *Yale French Studies: Literature and Psychoanalysis*, no.55/56, 1977; *Yale French Studies: Feminist Readings: French Texts/American Contexts*, no.62, 1981.

⁴⁷ Cf. C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy: A Study of Dramatic Form and its Relation to Social Custom* (Princeton, 1972). [This is a feminist adaptation of his ideas in chapter 3, "Misrule as Comedy; Comedy as Misrule", pp.36-57.]

⁴⁸ J. Kristeva, *La révolution du langage poétique*; and see my note 70, in the section "Prologue", above.

⁴⁹ Cf. L. S. Roudiez, "Introduction", *Desire in Language*, p.18: "*le sémiotique* refers to the actual organisation, or disposition, within the body, of instinctual drives (hence the "semiotic disposition") as they affect language and its practice, in dialectical conflict with *le symbolique*"; and p.19: "For Kristeva, *le symbolique* ("the symbolic") is a domain of position and judgement. Genetically speaking, it comes into being later than the semiotic, at the time of the mirror stage; it involves thethetic phase, the identification of the subject and its distinction from objects, and the establishment of a sign system. Synchronically speaking, it is always present, even in the semiotic disposition, which cannot exist without constantly challenging the symbolic one"; where Eco uses the term "semiotics", Kristeva substitutes "semanalysis".

⁵⁰ Cf. L. Irigaray, "Le schizophrène et la question du signe", *Recherches sémiotiques: les deux Saussure; Speculum de l'autre femme*; "La femme et la sexualité", in *Les femmes aujourd'hui, demain; Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*; "Women's Exile", *Ideology and Consciousness*; and see my note 46, in section III.3, above; for criticism which discusses women in Pirandello, see R. Alonge, *Pirandello: tra realismo e*

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mistificazione (Naples, 1972); N. Borsellino, *Immagini di Pirandello* (Cosenza, 1979); R. Dombroski, *Le totalità dell'artificio* (Padua, 1978); N. Ciarletta, "Personaggi maschili e personaggi femminili", *Temì di Pirandello* (Urbino, 1963); C. Crifò, "Sentimento della femminilità e dell'infanzia in Pirandello", in *Atti del congresso internazionale di studi pirandelliani*, Fondazione Giorgio Cini, Venice, 2-5th October, 1961, pp.743-88; M. Jeronimidis, "Personaggi femminili nei primi drammi di Pirandello", *L'Osservatore politico letterario*, no.8, August, 1978, pp.56-66; N. Jonard, "L'amour, la femme et la société dans l'oeuvre narrative de Pirandello", *Revue des études italiennes*, N.s. xii, 1966, pp.19-60; A. L. Lepschy, "La figura dell'attore nelle opere di Pirandello", *Inventario*, N.s., no.3, September-December, 1981, pp.30-43; F. May, "Introduction", *Short Stories*, by L. Pirandello and translated by F. May (London, 1965), pp.ix-xxx; M. McCarthy, "Nicola Chiaromonte and the Theatre", a discussion of "On Pirandello's *Clothing the Naked*", by N. Chiaromonte, translated by M. McCarthy and R. Strom, *The New York Review of Books*, 20th February, 1975, pp.25-31; L. MacClintock, *The Age of Pirandello* (Bloomington, 1951); G. Piroué, *Pirandello: un essai* (Paris, 1967); C. Puelli, "Il problema della famiglia nel teatro pirandelliano", *Revue des langages néo-latines*, January, 1958, pp.43-48; J. Stone, "Beyond Desire: A Critique of Susan Sontag's Production of Pirandello's *Come tu mi vuoi*"; "Il Belfagor di Pirandello: Machiavelli rivisitato"; D. Vittorini, *The Drama of Luigi Pirandello* (Philadelphia, 1935).

51 Cf. J. Kristeva, in my notes 48 and 49, in section III.3. above; see also S. Schneiderman, ed., *Returning to Freud*.

52 J. Kristeva, "Politique de la littérature", *Polylogue*, p.17.

53 Cf. R. Brustein, *The Theatre of Revolt: An Approach to Modern Drama* (London, 1965).

54 Cf. C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*.

55 Cf. X. Gauthier, "Oscillation du 'pouvoir' 'au refus'", an interview with J. Kristeva, *Tel Quel*, 58, Summer, 1974, pp.99-100; see also J. Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*, pp.14-15.

56 Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.53; and see III.2., p.128, above.

57 Cf. M. Foucault, *Maladie mentale et psychologie* (Paris, 1954); *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique*.

58 L. Irigaray, *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, p.28.

59 Cf. S. Freud, *Fragment of an Analysis of a case of Hysteria* (1905 [1901]), *SE* 7, 7-122 [hereafter "Dora"]. See *SE*, 7, p.53.

60 Cf. L. Pirandello, "Eleonora Duse", in *The Theory of the Modern Stage*, edited by E. Bentley (Harmondsworth, [1968] 1976), pp.158-69, where Bentley explains that this article, "not found in Pirandello's collected works in Italian, not known to his Estate in Rome, has been printed several times in English; the present text is that of *Century Magazine*, June, 1924" (p.151).

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61 Cf. L. Pirandello, "Eleanora Duse", p.165.

62 Cf. L. Irigaray, in my notes 46 and 50, in section III.3, above; see also J. Gallop, "Keys to Dora", *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction*, pp.132-50; S. Heath, "Difference", *Screen*; *The Sexual Fix*, pp.33-49; J. Rose, "'Dora' - fragment of an analysis", *m/f*; and see my note 46, in section III.3, above.

63 L. Irigaray, *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, p.134.

64 Cf. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *L'Anti-Oedipe: capitalisme et schizophrénie* (Paris, 1975); *Sémiotexte: Anti-Oedipus. From Psychoanalysis to Schizopolitics*, vol.II, no.3, 1977.

65 Cf. J. Kristeva, "Sujet dans le langage et pratique politique", in *Psychanalyse et politique*, p.61.

66 Cf. *Vestire gli ignudi*, MN I, 892: "- Bada che posso dir tutto, io, adesso - quello che nessuno ha mai osato dire - tocco l'ultimo, l'ultimo fondo, io - la verità dei pazzi, grido - le cose brute di chi non pensa di rialzarsi più - di coprire la sua più intima vergogna!"

67 Cf. *Prosa e critica futurista*, edited by M. Verdone, p.102; and see III.2., p.129, above.

68 J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, p.113.

69 J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, p.188.

70 Cf. R. Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbances", *Selected Writings*, pp.239-59; and see my note 40, in section III.2, above.

71 Cf. F. May, "Introduction", *Short Stories* by L. Pirandello, pp.xxv-xxvi.

72 Cf. J. Kristeva, "Politique de la littérature", *Polylogue*, p.17; L. Irigaray, *Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un*, p.134.

73 Cf. S. Freud, *Remembering, Repeating and Working Through* (*Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psychoanalysis*) (1914), SE 12, 145-56; *The 'Uncanny'* (1919), SE 17, 217-52; *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), SE 18, 1-64; see also R. Bellour, *L'Analyse du film* (Paris, 1979); "Cine-Repetitions", *Screen*, vol.20, no.2, Summer, 1979, pp.65-72; T. Kowzan, "'Le théâtre comique' de Goldoni: entre Molière et Pirandello", pp.537-41; A. L. Lepschy, "Questa sera prova d'orchestra", *Lettera*, 21, October, 1980, pp.43-44; L. Sciascia, *Il teatro della memoria* (Turin, 1981).

74 Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.86-89 and pp.1-2.

75 Cf. S. Freud, *From the History of an Infantile Neurosis* ["Wolf Man"] (1918 [1914]), SE 17, 1-122; see also P. Meisel, "Introduction: Freud as Literature", in *Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays*, pp.25-26.

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⁷⁶ Cf. S. Freud, *The Dynamics of Transference* (1912), SE 12, 97-108; *Observations on Transference-Love (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis)* (1914), pp.157-71; SE 12, 150-53; SE 23, 89; see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.33-36: "Après-coup" [nachträglich; deferred action]; p.240: "Mise en acte" [Agieren; acting out]; pp.6-8: "Acting out". They point out that in English the term, "acting out" is used to signify "Agieren" as well, and this leads to some confusion, since "acting out", in French, "différencie, voire oppose, le terrain du transfert et le recours à l'*acting out*, et voit dans ce dernier une tentative de rupture de la relation analytique" (p.7).

⁷⁷ Cf. *Hamlet*, III,ii. Hamlet also attempts to make the players stick to his "original" dramatic text: "O reform it altogether, and let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them ..." (III, ii, 37-38).

⁷⁸ Cf. M. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History", *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, p.143.

⁷⁹ R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, pp. 75-76.

⁸⁰ Cf. M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*.

⁸¹ Cf. M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, pp.18-67; see also W. Reich, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism*.

⁸² S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 53.

⁸³ S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 64-65.

⁸⁴ Cf. P. Meisel, "Introduction: Freud as Literature", p.29.

⁸⁵ A Moravia, *La vita interiore* (Milan, 1978), p.408.

⁸⁶ Cf. E. Bentley, "Father's Day", a lecture on *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*, given at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, New York, 14th December, 1967, to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of Pirandello, and printed by the Istituto (New York, 1968); see also F. May, "Introduction", *Short Stories*; "Three Major Symbols in Four Plays by Pirandello", *Modern Drama*, February, 1964, pp.378-96.

⁸⁷ M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, p.168.

⁸⁸ M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, p.108.

⁸⁹ E. Bentley, "Father's Day", p.13.

⁹⁰ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p. 420. Giudice also relates how *La favola del figlio cambiato* did not receive official approval: on 24th March, 1934, at the Teatro Reale dell'Opera in Rome, it was hissed off the stage by a group of Farinacci's followers a few days after Hesse's Ministry of Culture, on behalf of the Nazi government, had forbidden the opera to be performed because it was "subversive and contrary to the principles of the people's German State" (p.455).

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These two incidences are supposed to demonstrate that Pirandello had no affinity with fascism. Throughout this study, I have argued that the texture of his writing is consistent with fascist discourse, so these examples are marginal. In the main, *Vestire gli ignudi* reproduces conventional attitudes to women, and *La favola del figlio cambiato*, despite its satire of upstart monarchs, is linked closely to Pirandello's "mythic" visions in the last plays. See IV.3., "Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse", below; see also M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*, p.120: "Penser à la fois le sexe sans la loi, et le pouvoir sans le roi."

⁹¹ Cf. *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* (Florence, 1921), p.80; (Florence, 1923 and 1924), p.74; and see my discussion in IV.1, p. 227, below; see also J. Lorch, "The 1925 Text of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and Pitoëff's Production of 1923", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society*, no.2, 1982, pp.32-47. [I am grateful to Jennifer Lorch for making the earlier versions available to me]; G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p. 274.

⁹² S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 48.

⁹³ S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 48.

⁹⁴ S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 48.

⁹⁵ S. Freud, "Dora", SE 7, 49.

⁹⁶ S. Freud and J. Breuer, "On the Psychical Mechanism of Hysterical Phenomena: Preliminary Communication" (1893), *Studies on Hysteria* (1883-1895), SE 2, 7; see also S. Heath, *The Sexual Fix*, pp. 33-49.

⁹⁷ Cf. S. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), SE 18, 12.

⁹⁸ S. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, SE 18, 57.

⁹⁹ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p. 518.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. L. Brooks, "On Making Pabst's *Lulu*", in *Women and the Cinema*, edited by K. Kay and G. Peary, pp.82-83.

¹⁰¹ L. Brooks, "On Making Pabst's *Lulu*", p.82.

¹⁰² L. Brooks, "On Making Pabst's *Lulu*", pp.82-83.

¹⁰³ Cf. Plautus, *The Brothers Menaechmus, The Pot of Gold and Other Plays*, translated by E. F. Watling (Harmondsworth, [1965] 1977), pp.97-146.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. M. Foucault, *Surveiller et punir*.

¹⁰⁵ B. Mussolini, vol.IV of *Opera omnia* (Florence, 1951), p.174; see also E. Nolte, *I tre volti del fascismo*, p.240. [In English: *Three Faces of Fascism*, p.213.]

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¹⁰⁶Cf. R. Barthes, *Éléments de sémiologie*, II.2.1: "on pourrait donner le nom d'*isologie* au phénomène par lequel la langue 'colle' d'une façon indiscernable et indissociable ses signifiants à ses signifiés, de façon à réserver le cas des systèmes non-isologues (systèmes fatalement complexes), où le signifié peut être simplement juxtaposé à son signifiant."

¹⁰⁷Cf. J. Lacan, "La ligne et la lumière", *Le séminaire livre xi: Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse 1964* (Paris, 1973), pp.85-96.

¹⁰⁸Cf. L. Capuana, "Parola di donna", *Novelle*, edited by E. Scuderi (Catania, 1972), pp.133-69; *Profili di donna* (Milan, 1877); *Ribrezzo* (Catania, 1885); see also MN II, 1341, where Cotrone describes Maria Maddalena: "Una povera scema, che sente ma non parla."

¹⁰⁹Cf. A. Bernardini Capuana, "Il primo atto del *Vestire gli ignudi*", in *Capuana e Pirandello: storia e testi di una relazione letteraria*, by P. M. Sipala, p. 126. This article first appeared in *Giornale d'Italia*, 21st and 22nd November, 1922. The play, *Vestire gli ignudi*, bears a resemblance to Capuana's novella, "Dal taccuino di Ada", in the volume *Il braccialetto* (Milan, 1897). See p.91, where Sipala has reproduced a review of *Il braccialetto* by Giulian Dorpelli [Pirandello], first printed in *Rassegna settimanale universale*, 5th December, 1897. Pirandello wrote: "Bella e commovente, soprattutto, mi è sembrata la novella *Dal taccuino di Ada* dove il Capuana dimostra come un soggetto non nuovo si possa riprendere e trattare quando si sappia impersonare in un tipo nuovo e rinnovare nell'ambiente e nei particolari"; see also A. Barbina, ed., *Capuana inedito*.

¹¹⁰TR, 895-1106.

¹¹¹S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905), SE 8, 81.

¹¹²S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 81.

¹¹³Cf. S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 149-56 and 174-79; see also H. Bergson, *Le rire: essai sur la signification du comique* (1899), (Paris, 1975); R. Dombroski, "Laudisi's Laughter and the Social Dimension of *Right You Are (If You Think So)*", *Modern Drama*, vol.xvi, nos.3 and 4, December, 1973, pp.337-46; and his contribution to the round table on "L'umorismo", at the conference, "Pirandello Saggista", Agrigento, December, 1981, to be published in the proceedings, *Pirandello Saggista*, edited by P. D. Giovanelli (Florence, 1982 - forthcoming); U. Eco, "Pirandello Ridens", *Altro Polo*, 1978, pp.79-90; G. Guglielmi, *Ironia e negazione* (Turin, 1974); T. Lipps, *Komik und Humor* (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1898); G. B. Milner, "Homo Ridens: Towards a Semiotic Theory of Humour and Laughter", *Semiotica*, V, 1972, pp.1-30; J. Milner, "Langage et Langue - ou De quoi rient les locuteurs?" *Change*, 29, 1976, pp.185-18; nos.32-33, 1977, pp. 131-54; A. Soffici, "Ironia", in *Primi principi di un'estetica futurista 1914-17*, vol.I of *Opere* (Florence, 1959), pp.709-11; S. Weber, "The Divaricator: Remarks on Freud's Witz", *Glyph*, 1, 1977, pp.1-27; "The

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Critics' Choice", in *1789: Reading Writing Revolution*, edited by F. Barker *et al.*, pp. 147-59.

¹¹⁴S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 174; see also L. Pirandello, "Ironia" (1920), SPSV, 1026-29: "A non intendere, cioè, che - signori - anche una tragedia quando si sia superato col riso il tragico attraverso il tragico stesso, scoprendo tutto il ridicolo del serio, e perciò anche il serio del ridicolo, può diventare una farsa" (p.1029); and "L'umorismo", SPSV, 71: "'Dualismo doloroso, - esclama qua il Momigliano, - che condanna il Pulci a rappresentare nel *Morgante* la parte d'una maschera allegra ...'."; Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II, iv, 115-16: "She sat like Patience on a monument,/ Smiling at grief."

¹¹⁵S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 174.

¹¹⁶S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 144; see also S. Weber, "The Critics' Choice", p.153.

¹¹⁷S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 156.

¹¹⁸R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.364-67; and see chapter IV.3. below.

¹¹⁹S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 181.

¹²⁰Cf. S. Freud, *The Antithetical Meaning of Primal Words*, SE 11, 156-61; see also G. C. Lepschy, "Freud, Abel e gli opposti", *Mutamenti di prospettiva nella linguistica*, pp.173-98; and "Enantiosemy and Irony in Italian Lexis", *The Italianist*, no.1, pp.82-88; and see my note 114, in section III.3, above.

¹²¹S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 88.

¹²²S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 179.

¹²³Cf. J. Lacan, "La ligne et la lumière", *Le séminaire livre xi: Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse* 1964, p.96.

¹²⁴Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.95.

¹²⁵Cf. A. Soffici, "Ironia", in *Primi principi di un'estetica futurista* 1914-17, pp.709-11.

¹²⁶A. Soffici, "Ironia", in *Primi principi di un'estetica futurista*, p.709.

¹²⁷S. Freud, *Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious*, SE 8, 13, where he quotes from *Hamlet*, II, ii, 90.

Notes

IV. Spectacles: The Visual Illustration

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¹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.71

² Cf. *Vulcano, otto sintesi incatenate*, in vol.III of *Teatro F. T. Marinetti*, pp.137-206; *La Salamandra*, SPSV, 1185-90; see also G. Antonucci, *Cronache del teatro futurista*, pp.211-22 and pp.249-52.

³ Cf. "Ciàula scopre la luna", *NA* I, 1272-78.

⁴ Cf. G. Calendoli, "Introduzione", in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, p.LXII.

⁵ Cf. M. Verdone, *Teatro italiano d'avanguardia*, pp.377-80.

⁶ Cf. S. D'Amico, "Noi Censori del Cinematografo" (1920), *Le strade che portano a Roma: Diario spirituale 1916-23*, p.105: "Pare che il Cinematografo, finchè rimanga com'è oggi arte del bianco e nero, debba rifugiarsi fuori delle variopinte età passate nel nostro scolorito ambiente contemporaneo, dove predominano le tinte grigie; e dove la suprema eleganza è quella dell'abito tipicamente cinematografico, il *frack*."

⁷ Cf. G. Antonucci, *Cronache del teatro futurista*, p.252.

⁸ Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.364-67; and see my "Prologue", above.

⁹ Cf. G. Livio, *Il teatro in rivolta*; R. Brustein, *The Theatre of Revolt*; see also P. Raffa, "La crisi del linguaggio naturalista (Pirandello)", (1961), *Avanguardia e realismo* (Milan, 1967), pp.9-37; C. Salinari, "La coscienza della crisi", *Miti e coscienza del decadentismo italiano* (Milan, [1960] 1973), pp.249-84.

¹⁰ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.29.

¹¹ Cf. "Il teatro di varietà", [*Daily Mail*, 21st November, 1913], in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.84.

¹² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.29; and F. T. Marinetti, "La voluttà d'essere fischiati", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, p.17.

¹³ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, pp.332-36.

¹⁴ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.83.

¹⁵ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.44; V. de Saint-Point, "Manifesto della lussuria", 11th January, 1913, in *La*

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donna "nera": "consenso" femminile e fascismo, by M. A. Macciocchi, pp.150-54.

¹⁶ F. T. Marinetti, "L'amica delle mogli", in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.267.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Lacan, "La ligne et la lumière", *Le séminaire livre xi: Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse* 1964, p.95.

¹⁸ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.82-83.

¹⁹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.84.

²⁰ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.85.

²¹ Cf. F. T. Marinetti, E. Settimelli and B. Corra, "Il teatro futurista sintetico", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.116.

²² *The Interpretation of Dreams*, SE 4, 279.

²³ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.117; F. T. Marinetti, "La voluttà d'esser fischianti", in *Sintesi del Futurismo*, p.17: "L'arte drammatica non deve fare della fotografia psicologica, ma tendere invece ad una sintesi della vita nelle sue linee più tipiche e più significative."

²⁴ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.117-18.

²⁵ Cf. A. Hauser, *Naturalism, Impressionism, The Film Age* (1951), vol.4 of *The Social History of Art*, translated by S. Goodman (London, 1977), pp.228-30; see also F. de Saussure, *Cours de linguistique générale*, p.117: "La première chose qui frappe quand on étudie les faits de langue, c'est que pour le sujet parlant leur succession dans le temps est inexistante: il est devant un état. Aussi le linguiste qui veut comprendre cet état doit-il faire table rase de tout ce qui l'a produit et ignorer la diachronie. Il ne peut entrer dans la conscience des sujets parlants qu'en supprimant le passé. L'intervention de l'histoire ne peut que fausser son jugement. Il serait absurde de dessiner un panorama des Alpes en le prenant simultanément de plusieurs sommets du Jura; un panorama doit être pris d'un seul point. De même pour la langue: on ne peut la décrire ni fixer des normes pour l'usage qu'en se plaçant dans un certain état. Quand le linguiste suit l'évolution de la langue, il ressemble à l'observateur en mouvement qui va d'une extrémité à l'autre du Jura pour noter les déplacements de perspective"; R. Jakobson, *Six leçons sur le son et le sens* (Paris, 1976), pp.117-18; and see my note 74, in section II.2, above.

²⁶ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.118.

²⁷ F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, in vol.II of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.310.

²⁸ F. T. Marinetti, *Simultaneità*, p.309.

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- ²⁹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.175-76.
- ³⁰ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.192-98.
- ³¹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.199-201.
- ³² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.161-62.
- ³³ Cf. *Futurist Manifestos*, edited by U. Apollonio, pp.200-202. This manifesto was first published in French, in *Der Futurismus*, no.4, Berlin, August, 1922; see also G. Bartolucci, "La luce come elemento 'nuovissimo' della scrittura scenica", in *Il gesto futurista*, edited by G. Bartolucci, pp.117-23; and G. Antonucci, "La funzione della luce nel teatro 'sintetico' futurista", in *Il gesto futurista*, pp.125-131.
- ³⁴ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.84.
- ³⁵ Cf. *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* (Florence, 1921), p.80; and see my note 91, in section III.3. above. Madama Pace speaks the same mixture of Spanish and Italian in all four versions; see also J. Lorch, "The 1925 Text of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and Pitoëff's Production of 1923", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society*, no.2, 1982, pp.32-87.
- ³⁶ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.171-74.
- ³⁷ F. T. Marinetti, *Vengono, dramma d'oggetti*, in vol.II of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, pp.281-85.
- ³⁸ Cf. G. Calendoli, "Introduzione", in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, p.XL.
- ³⁹ Cf. R. Tessari, *Il mito della macchina*, pp.243-56.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. D. McDonald, "Derrida and Pirandello: A Post-Structuralist Analysis of *Six Characters in Search of an Author*", *Modern Drama*, vol. xx, no.4, December, 1977, pp.421-36.
- ⁴¹ Cf. J. Derrida, *De la grammatologie* (Paris, 1967), p.430.
- ⁴² Cf. "Illustratori, attori e traduttori", *SPSV*, 207-24.
- ⁴³ B. Dylan, "Shelter from the Storm", *Blood on the Tracks*, CBS 69097, 1974.
- ⁴⁴ F. T. Marinetti, "Teatro antipsicologico astratto di puri elementi e il teatro tattile. Manifesto", in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.199.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, vol.I, pp. 197-203.
- ⁴⁶ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.84.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.83.

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⁴⁸ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p.475; "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro", *SPSV*, 1031; see also A. Gramsci, "Il teatro di Pirandello", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.51: "È da vedere quanto nella 'ideologia' pirandelliana sia, per dir così, della stessa origine di ciò che pare formi il nucleo degli scritti 'teatrali' di Nicola Evreinov."

⁴⁹ N. Evreinoff [Evreinov], *The Theatre in Life*, edited and translated by A. Nazarov, and with an introduction by O. Sayler (London, 1927), pp.141-42.

⁵⁰ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p.475.

⁵¹ Cf. B. Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre*, edited and translated by J. Willett (London, 1964), p.86 and p.139; see also K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.18 and p.77.

⁵² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.117.

⁵³ F. T. Marinetti, "Teatro antipsicologico astratto di puri elementi e il teatro tattile. Manifesto", in vol.I of *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, p.200.

⁵⁴ Cf. G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p.475.

⁵⁵ N. Evreinoff [Evreinov], *The Theatre in Life*, p.142; see also U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.270; K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.25.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.171-74.

⁵⁷ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.175-76.

⁵⁸ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.17.

⁵⁹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.83; see also G. Brandt, "Twentieth-century comedy", in *Comic Drama: The European Heritage*, edited by W. D. Howarth (London, 1978), pp.175-77.

⁶⁰ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.195.

⁶¹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.161.

⁶² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.162.

⁶³ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.162.

⁶⁴ Cf. *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, vol.I, p.210.

⁶⁵ Cf. *F. T. Marinetti Teatro*, edited by G. Calendoli, vol.I, p.210.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.192-98.

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⁶⁷ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.194.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, pp.195-96.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.196.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.197.

⁷¹ Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.201.

⁷² Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.198.

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⁷³ Cf. C. L. Barber, *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*.

⁷⁴ Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, pp.49-50 and pp.35-37.

⁷⁵ Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.35.

⁷⁶ Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.36.

⁷⁷ Cf. L. Pirandello, in an interview given to the *Corriere della Sera*, 2nd February, 1920; see also F. Firth, "Introduction", *Three Plays*, by L. Pirandello, edited by F. Firth (Manchester, [1969] 1974), p.xxiii; W. Starkie, *Pirandello* (London, 1926), p.170; A. Tilgher, *Voci del tempo* (Rome, 1923).

⁷⁸ J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits II*, p.104.

⁷⁹ Aristotle, *Poetics*, p.42.

⁸⁰ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Déni", *Le vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, p.115; see p.116: "Si le déni de la castration est le prototype, et peut-être même l'origine, des autres dénis de la réalité, il convient de s'interroger sur ce que Freud entend par 'réalité' de la castration ou perception de celle-ci. Si c'est le 'manque de pénis' de la femme qui est dénié, il est difficile de parler de perception ou de réalité, car une absence n'est pas perçue comme telle, elle ne devient réalité que dans la mesure où elle est mise en relation avec une présence possible.... Ces remarques permettent de se demander si fondamentalement le *déni*, dont les conséquences dans la réalité sont si évidentes, ne porterait pas sur un élément fondateur de la réalité humaine plutôt que sur un hypothétique 'fait perceptif'."

⁸¹ Cf. R. Barthes, "Littérature et signification" (1963), *Essais critiques* (Paris, 1964), p.258.

⁸² Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, pp.45-47.

⁸³ Cf. J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits II*, p.113.

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⁸⁴ J. Lacan, *Écrits* II, p.113.

⁸⁵ J. Lacan, *Écrits* II, p.113; see also C. S. Peirce, *Collected Papers*, 1931, 1.171: "This clothing never can be completely stripped off, it is only changed for something more diaphanous."

⁸⁶ S. Freud, *On Dreams* (1901), SE 5, 684.

⁸⁷ S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, SE 4, 154.

⁸⁸ J. Lacan, "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je" (1949), *Écrits* I, p.90.

⁸⁹ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Narcissisme primaire, narcissisme secondaire", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.263-65.

⁹⁰ Cf. J. Lacan, "L'aggressivité en psychanalyse", *Revue française de psychanalyse*, no.3, July-September, 1948, pp.367-88.

⁹¹ G. Dulac, "From 'Visual and Anti-visual Films'", in *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism*, edited by A. Sitney (New York, 1978), p.33. This article first appeared in *Le Rouge et le Noir*, July, 1928, and is translated by R. Lamberton; see my note 75, in the section "Appendix", below.

⁹² Cf. P. Puppa, *Fantasmî contro giganti: scena e immaginario in Pirandello* (Bologna, 1978); see also *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Laurotta (Agrigento, 1978).

⁹³ Cf. J. Epstein, "The Essence of Cinema", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.25; and see my note 41, in the section "Appendix", below.

⁹⁴ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Moi idéal", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.255-56: "Formation intrapsychique que certains auteurs, la différenciant de l'idéal du moi, définissent comme un idéal de toute-puissance narcissique forgé sur le modèle du narcissisme infantile" (p.255).

⁹⁵ Cf. *Il fu Mattia Pascal*, TR 397: "A noi uomini, invece, nascendo, è toccato un tristo privilegio: quello di sentirci vivere, con la bella illusione che ne risulta: ..."; "L'umorismo", SPSV, 146: "Ci vediamo noi nella nostra vera e schietta realtà, quali siamo, o non piuttosto quali vorremmo essere?"

⁹⁶ Cf. D. W. Winnicott, *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development* (1965) (London, 1976); *Playing and Reality* (1971) (Harmondsworth, 1974); see also J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Investissement", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.211-15.

⁹⁷ Cf. J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, "Abréaction", *Vocabulaire de la psychanalyse*, pp.1-2.

⁹⁸ Cf. S. Freud, *The 'Uncanny'* (1919), SE 17, 233-38.

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⁹⁹A. Gramsci, *Lettere dal carcere*, selected and introduced by P. Spriano, p.163.

¹⁰⁰A. Gramsci, *Lettere dal carcere*, p.163.

¹⁰¹J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, p.114.

¹⁰²J. Lacan, *Écrits* II, p.110.

¹⁰³Cf. S. Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, SE 18, 14-17; see also D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality*, pp.1-30; J. Lacan, "Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage", *Écrits* I, pp.203-4: "Nous pouvons maintenant y saisir que le sujet n'y maîtrise pas seulement sa privation en l'assumant, mais qu'il y élève son désir à une puissance seconde. Car son action détruit l'objet qu'elle fait apparaître et disparaître dans la provocation anticipante de son absence et de sa présence" (p.203); "Du traitement possible de la psychose", *Écrits* II, pp.92-93.

¹⁰⁴Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.17.

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¹⁰⁵Cf. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *L'Anti-Oedipe: capitalisme et schizophrénie*, pp.43-50.

¹⁰⁶E. Bentley, "Appendix II: Bibliographical and Historical", *Naked Masks*, edited by E. Bentley, p.379: "They [the myths] show that, in some degree, Pirandello lived an 'inner emigration' like many German writers under Hitler"; and see my note 19, in section I.1, above.

¹⁰⁷N. Borsellino, *Immagini di Pirandello*, p.76; see also P. Puppa, *Fantasmî contro giganti: scena e immaginario in Pirandello*, p.178.

¹⁰⁸J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour" (1981), *Tel Quel*, 91, Spring, 1982, p.17; see also *Pouvoirs de l'horreur: essai sur l'abjection*, pp.9-39; and my note 70, in the section "Prologue", above; L. Dällenbach, *Le récit spéculaire: Essai sur la mise en abyme* (Paris, 1977); C. Sicari, *Lo specchio e lo stigma: Il racconto pirandelliano* (Ravenna, 1979); D. Radcliff-Umstead, *The Mirror of Our Anguish: A Study of Luigi Pirandello's Narrative Writings* (London, 1978).

¹⁰⁹J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", p.22.

¹¹⁰J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", p.25.

¹¹¹Cf. J. Kristeva, *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*.

¹¹²Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", p.29: "À cet égard, l'arbitraire du signe saussurien nous a mis devant une barre, voire un

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vide constitutif de la relation référent/signifié/signifiant, dont Lacan n'a repris que l'aspect 'visible' dans la *béance* du stade du miroir. L'*arbitraire* chez Saussure, la *béance* chez Lacan nous indiquent directement ce qu'on peut entendre dans l'incertitude malaisée de l'ubiquité et de l'inconsistance du 'narcissisme' chez Freud...."

¹¹³Cf. J. Epstein, "On certain characteristics of *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, no.10, Autumn, 1981, pp.20-23; P. Willemen, "On Reading Epstein on *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, pp.40-47; see also S. Heath, "On Suture", *Questions of Cinema*, pp.76-112; and my note 41, in the section "Appendix", below.

¹¹⁴S. Heath, "On Screen, in Frame: Film and Ideology", *Questions of Cinema*, p.14.

¹¹⁵A. Gramsci, *Lettere dal carcere*, selected and introduced by P. Spriano, p.118.

¹¹⁶J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", p.22.

¹¹⁷S. Heath, "On Screen, in Frame: Film and Ideology", *Questions of Cinema*, p.13.

¹¹⁸Cf. "Ironia", *SPSV*, 1028-29; see also G. Giudice, *Pirandello*, p.327.

¹¹⁹Cf. *Serafino Gubbio operatore*, *TR*, p.1151: "Solo i fanciulli han la divina fortuna di prendere sul serio i loro giuochi. La meraviglia è in loro; la rovesciamo su le cose con cui giuocano, e se ne lasciano ingannare. Non è più un giuoco; è una realtà meravigliosa."

¹²⁰Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", p.26.

¹²¹S. Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *SE* 4, 285.

¹²²S. Freud, *SE* 4, 288; and *SE* 4, 245-46.

¹²³Cf. J. Mehlman, "Trimethylamin: Notes on Freud's Specimen Dream", in *Untying the Text*, edited by R. Young, p.186.

¹²⁴Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.151.

¹²⁵Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.151.

¹²⁶Cf. *Sintesi del Futurismo*, edited by L. Scrivo, p.150.

¹²⁷Cf. P. Puppa, *Fantasmî contro giganti: scena e immaginario in Pirandello*, p.229; see also G. Petronio, "Pirandello e il cinema", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Laurotta, p.34.

¹²⁸S. G. Colette, "They're all going to the Cinema" (1917), *Colette at the movies: criticism and screenplays*, edited and introduced by A. and O. Virmaux, and translated by S. Smith (New York, 1980), pp.37-39. [In French: *Colette au cinéma* (Paris, 1975).]

Notes: IV.3. Dreamscapes: From Adventure to Apocalypse

¹²⁹S. G. Colette, *Colette at the movies*, p.39; see also E. Vuillermoz, *La musique des images*, vol.III of *L'Art cinématographique* (Paris, 1927).

¹³⁰Cf. A. Farrasino, "Il dibattito su teatro e cinema nelle teoriche cinematografiche italiane tra le due guerre", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Laurotta, p.54.

¹³¹Cf. A. Farrasino, "Il dibattito su teatro e cinema ...", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Laurotta; p.54.

¹³²Cf. A. Farrasino, "Il dibattito su teatro e cinema ...", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Laurotta, p.54.

¹³³Cf. P. Cudini, "Elementi di una 'teoria del cinema' in Luigi Pirandello", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, p.96.

¹³⁴Cf. P. Cudini, "Elementi di una 'teoria del cinema' in Luigi Pirandello", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, p.97; see also S. Luciani, *L'Antiteatro - Il cinematografo come arte* (Rome, 1928).

¹³⁵A. Gramsci, "Teatro e cinematografo", 26th August, 1916, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, pp.248-49.

¹³⁶A. Gramsci, "Teatro e cinematografo", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.248.

¹³⁷Cf. W. Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", *Illuminations*, p.244.

¹³⁸Cf. S. Heath, "On Suture", *Questions of Cinema*, p.85.

¹³⁹D. Dayan, "The Tutor-Code of Classical Cinema" (1974), in *Movies and Methods*, edited by B. Nichols (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1976), p.449; see also S. Heath, "On Suture", *Questions of Cinema*, p.95.

¹⁴⁰Cf. L. Althusser, "Freud and Lacan", *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, p.195 and p.198, note 7.

¹⁴¹Cf. T. Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House*.

¹⁴²A. Gramsci, *Lettere dal carcere*, selected and introduced by P. Spriano, p.291.

¹⁴³A. Gramsci, *L'Ordine Nuovo*, 2nd January, 1921; see also C. Mercer, "After Gramsci", *Screen Education*, no.36, Autumn, 1980, p.13.

¹⁴⁴Cf. G. P. Caprettini, *Aspetti della semiotica* (Turin, 1980), pp.27-31.

¹⁴⁵Cf. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, pp.162-64; pp.166-68; and "The formation of fascist low culture", pp.187-224.

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¹⁴⁶Cf. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, p.191 and p.190; and "The nationalization of the public", pp.182-83, where she discusses the function of mass outings and cycle rallies in promoting fraternal and interregional solidarity; Pirandello, in collaboration with Stefano Landi, wrote a screenplay, *Gioca Pietro!* which Walter Ruttmann adapted for his film about a worker-cyclist, *Acciaio*, Rome, 1932. The screenplay was published in *Scenari*, anno 2, no.1, January, 1933, pp.I-XV; see also C. Carabba, *Il cinema del ventennio nero* (Florence, 1974).

¹⁴⁷Cf. F. Sacchi, "Teatro contro cinematografo?", *La lettura*, January, 1934; see also A. Farrasino, "Il dibattito su teatro e cinema ...", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by E. Lauretta, p.61.

¹⁴⁸Cf. T. Wolfe, *The Painted Word; From Bauhaus to Our House*.

¹⁴⁹Cf. A. Breton, "Le Second Manifeste du Surréalisme", *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no.12, December, 1929.

¹⁵⁰Cf. V. de Grazia, *The Culture of Consent*, pp.202-16.

¹⁵¹Cf. A. Gramsci, "Liola di Pirandello all'Alfieri", 4th April, 1917, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, pp.283-84; "Il teatro di Pirandello", pp.46-53; see also L. Bernardi, *Letteratura e rivoluzione in Gramsci* (Pisa, 1973).

¹⁵²A. Gramsci, "Luigi Capuana", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.138; and see my note 72, in section I.2, above.

¹⁵³Cf. A. Gramsci, *Lettere dal carcere*, selected and introduced by P. Spriano, p.36.

¹⁵⁴Cf. A. Gramsci, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.47, p.59 and p.87.

¹⁵⁵R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, p.87.

¹⁵⁶E. Bentley, "Appendix II: Bibliographical and Historical", *Naked Masks*, edited by E. Bentley, p.379.

¹⁵⁷B. Giuliano, *Elementi di cultura fascista*, p.17; and see my note 74, in section I.2, above.

¹⁵⁸Cf. E. Sanguineti, *Ideologia e linguaggio*.

¹⁵⁹Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, p.364: "As to the actual infringements of metrical laws, the discussion of such violations recalls Osip Brik, perhaps the keenest of Russian formalists, who used to say that political conspirators are tried and condemned only for unsuccessful attempts at a forcible upheaval, because in the case of a successful coup it is the conspirators who assume the role of judges and prosecutors. If the violences against the meter take root, they themselves become metrical rules."

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¹⁶⁰Cf. G. Strehler, "I giganti della montagna di Pirandello" (1966-67), *Per un teatro umano: Pensieri scritti, parlati e attuati*, edited by S. Kessler (Milan, 1974), pp.272-78; see also MN II, 1371-76.

¹⁶¹G. Strehler, *Per un teatro umano*, p.272.

¹⁶²G. C. Lepschy, "Oral Literature", *The Cambridge Quarterly*, vol.8, no.2, 1979, p.185; see also J. Derrida, *De la grammatologie*, p.430.

¹⁶³Cf. G. P. Caprettini, *Aspetti della semiotica*, pp.27-31; K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.3 and pp.44-49; G. C. Lepschy, *A Survey of Structural Linguistics* (London, [1970] 1982), pp. 30-31; R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.364-67: "Far from being an abstract, theoretical scheme, meter - or in more explicit terms, *verse design* - underlies the structure of any single line - or, in logical terminology, any single *verse instance*. Design and instance are correlative concepts. The verse design determines the invariant features of the verse instances and sets up the limits of variations" (p.364); "How the given verse instance is implemented in the given delivery instance depends on the *delivery design* of the reciter" (p. 366); "We must be on our guard against simplistic binarism which reduces two couples into one single opposition either by suppressing the cardinal distinction between verse design and verse instance (as well as between delivery design and delivery instance) or by erroneous identification of delivery instance and delivery design with the verse instance and verse design" (pp.366-67); cf. the following schema which I have derived for clarification:-

Terminology: a scheme of approximations

Genre:	Narrative		DRAMA/poetry PLAY IMPROVISATION	
Convention:	PLAYSCRIPT/TEXT		PERFORMANCE	
Pirandello:	Original		Copy/Translation	
Derrida:	Writing/écriture text	Reading	Writing/écriture text	Reading
Saussure:	Langue	Parole	Langue	Parole
Chomsky:	Competence	Performance	Competence	Performance
Peirce:	Type	Token	Type	Token
Jakobson:	Verse design	Verse instance/ event	Delivery design	Delivery instance/ event
This analysis:	Dramatic text (DT)/ type/design	Dramatic text (DT)/ reading/token instance/event	Performance text (PT)/ type/design	Performance text (PT)/ reading/token instance/event

All types and tokens are reproducible. There is equisignificance in a group of types or in a group of tokens, but not across groups: e.g. the dramatic-text-design or -instance is not identical with the performance-text-design or -instance.

REHEARSAL is a re-representation of either the delivery design or instance. Narrative is enclosed in the conventional division, TEXT. Poetry and DRAMA require explanation in terms of both the conventional divisions, TEXT and PERFORMANCE.

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¹⁶⁴Cf. R. Jakobson, "Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics", in *Style in Language*, edited by T. Sebeok, pp.364-67; and see my note 163, in section IV.3, above.

¹⁶⁵Cf. L. Althusser, "Contradiction and Overdetermination", *For Marx*, p.111.

¹⁶⁶R. Barthes, *Leçon*, p.27.

¹⁶⁷R. Barthes, *Leçon*, pp.30-31.

¹⁶⁸Cf. G. C. Lepschy, "Transformational Grammar", chapter VIII of *A Survey of Structural Linguistics*, pp.126-38; and see my note 163, in section IV.3, above.

¹⁶⁹Cf. J. Lorch, "The 1925 Text of *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore* and Pitoëff's Production of 1923", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society*, no.2, 1982, pp.41-42; and see my note 35, in section IV.1. above; and note 91, in section III.3. above.

¹⁷⁰Cf. K. Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, p.3 and pp. 208-9; see also A. Canziani et al., *Come comunica il teatro: dal testo alla scena* (Milan, 1978); U. Eco, *Segno* (Milan, 1980); A. Helbo, ed., *Sémiologie de la représentation: théâtre, télévision, bande dessinée* (Brussels, 1975); S. Bassnett-McGuire, "An Introduction to Theatre Semiotics", *Theatre Quarterly*, vol.x, no.38, 1980, pp.47-53; G. Nencioni, "Parlato-parlato, parlato-scritto, parlato-recitato", *Strumenti critici*, anno x, fascicolo 1, February, 1976, pp.1-56; *Organon 80: Sémiologie et théâtre* (Lyon, 1980); M. Pagnini, *Pragmatica della letteratura* (Palermo, 1980); P. Pavis, "Problèmes d'une sémiologie du théâtre", *Semiotica*, 15, 3, 1975, pp.241-63; *Problèmes de sémiologie théâtrale* (Montréal, 1976); "Problems of a semiology of theatrical gesture", *Poetics Today*, vol.2, no.3, Spring, 1981, pp.65-93; *Poetics Today: Drama, Theater, Performance. A Semiotic Perspective*, edited by R. Amossy, vol.1, no.3, Spring, 1981; P. Raffa, "Due letture del teatro pirandelliano", in *I metodi attuali della critica in Italia*, edited by M. Corti and C. Segre (Turin, 1970), pp. 392-99; F. Ruffini, *Semiotica del testo: l'esempio teatro* (Rome, 1978); C. Segre, "La funzione del linguaggio nell'*Acte sans paroles* di Samuel Beckett" (1974), in *Letteratura e semiologia in Italia*, edited by G. P. Caprettini and D. Corno (Turin, 1979), pp.276-99; A. Übersfeld, *Lire le théâtre* (Paris, 1978); *Versus-Quaderni di studi semiotici: Teatro e semiotica*, n.21, September-December, 1978; *Versus-Quaderni di studi semiotici: Teatro e comunicazione gestuale*, n.22, January-April, 1979; U. Volli, "Il teatro e i suoi segni", *Alfabeta*, I, no.3-4, July-August, 1979, pp.15-16.

¹⁷¹Cf. J. Kristeva, *Polylogue*; and see my note 70, in the section "Prologue", above; and note 48, in section III.3. above.

¹⁷²G. C. Lepschy, "Oral Literature", *The Cambridge Quarterly*, vol.8, no.2, 1979, p.186.

¹⁷³G. C. Lepschy, "Oral Literature", *The Cambridge Quarterly*, vol.8, no.2, 1979, pp.179-87.

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¹⁷⁴J. Derrida, *De la grammatologie*, p.430.

¹⁷⁵R. Barthes, *Leçon*, p.23.

¹⁷⁶Cf. G. Strehler, *Per un teatro umano: Pensieri scritti, parlati e attuati*, edited by S. Kessler (Milan, 1974); L. Bragaglia, "Da Shakespeare a Pirandello", chapter 6 of *Ruggero Ruggeri: in sessantacinque anni di storia del teatro rappresentato* (Rome, 1968); *Interpreti pirandelliani 1910-1969: vita scenica delle commedie di Luigi Pirandello dalle origini ai nostri giorni* (Rome, 1969); P. Puppa, *Fantasma contro giganti: scena e immaginario in Pirandello* (Bologna, 1978); *Il salotto di notte: La messinscena di "Così è (se vi pare)" di Massimo Castri* (Turin, 1980). [Part of the series, *Quaderni di analisi dello spettacolo*, directed by R. Alonge, in collaboration with the Teatro Stabile di Torino]; A. Gramsci, *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, and see my note 3, in section I.1, above; see also T. Fitzpatrick, "Does Ilse die at the end of *I giganti della montagna*?" *Altro Polo*, 1978, pp.125-39; H. Hatem, "Du Texte à la représentation: *Liola* au Théâtre de la Commune d'Aubervilliers" (1973), in *Lectures Pirandelliennes*, by the group, Culture, idéologies et sociétés des XIXe et XXe siècles: section italien, at the Centre de recherche de l'Université de Paris VIII-Vincennes, vol.II (Abbeville, 1978), pp. 233-51; G. Salvini, "Il Terzo atto dei *Giganti della montagna*", in *Atti del congresso internazionale di studi pirandelliani*, Venice, 2-5th October, 1961, pp.925-27; A. R. Sogliuzzo, "Pirandello regista", *Istituto di studi pirandelliani: Quaderni I*, Rome, February, 1973.

¹⁷⁷A. Gramsci, "La personalità artistica di Pirandello", "Il teatro di Pirandello", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, pp.52-53.

¹⁷⁸A. Gramsci, "La personalità artistica di Pirandello", p.53.

¹⁷⁹A. Gramsci, "Luigi Capuana", *Letteratura e vita nazionale*, p.138; and see my note 151, in section IV.3, above.

¹⁸⁰R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, p.87.

¹⁸¹Cf. G. Strehler, *Per un teatro umano*, pp.276-78.

¹⁸²Cf. M. Pêcheux, "L'énoncé: enchâssement, articulation et dé-liaison", *Matérialités discursives*, Colloque des 24, 25, 26 avril 1980, Université Paris X - Nanterre (Lille, 1980), pp.143-48.

¹⁸³R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, p.54.

¹⁸⁴S. Freud, *Observations on Transference-Love* (Further Recommendations on the Technique of Psycho-Analysis III) (1915 [1914]), SE 12, 162.

Notes

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¹ Cf. U. Eco, *Trattato di semiotica generale*, p.95; see also my "Prologue", note 46.

² Cf. F. Jameson, "'In the Destructive Element Immerse': Hans-Jürgen Syberberg and Cultural Revolution", *October*, 17, Summer, 1981, p.112.

³ J. Lacan, "La ligne et la lumière", *Le séminaire livre xi: Les quatres concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse 1964*, p.95.

⁴ F. Pasini, *Luigi Pirandello - come mi pare* (Trieste, 1927), p.385.

⁵ Cf. R. Matthaei, *Luigi Pirandello*, translated by S. and E. Young (New York, 1973), p.5; see also F. Firth, "The Mask as Face and the Face as Mask: Some of Pirandello's Variations on the Theme of Personal Appearance", *The Yearbook of the British Pirandello Society*, no.2, 1982, pp.1-27.

⁶ F. Pasini, *Luigi Pirandello - come mi pare*, p.385; Pasini adds a more satisfactory explanation on p.397, note 2: "Con l'abbinamento dei due termini 'Maschere' e 'nude' il Pirandello esprime (o simboleggia) l'unificazione (o fusione) degli elementi contrastanti ch'è propria dell'umorismo: e si serve, a tal fine, dello stesso procedimento verbale di cui si è servito nel costruirsi il titolo di *Mal giocondo* per la prima raccolta delle sue poesie. (Titolo corrispondente a quello, scelto per le novelle, di *Erma bifronte*)."

⁷ Cf. SPSV, 98, where to the sentence, "Sentiamo in somma che qui il comico è anche superato, non però dal tragico, ma attraverso il comico stesso", Pirandello adds the following note: "Applico qui la formula del Lipps che definisce appunto l'umorismo: 'Erhabenheit in der Komik und durch dieselbe' (vedi *op. cit.* [*Komik und Humor* (1898)] pag.243). Ma come si spiega questo superamento del comico attraverso il comico stesso? La spiegazione che dà il Lipps non mi sembra accettabile per quelle stesse ragioni che informano tutta la sua teoria estetica. Vedi su questa la critica del Croce nella seconda parte della sua *Estetica*, pag.434.". See also SPSV, 130-31.

⁸ F. T. Marinetti, *Il suggeritore nudo, simultaneità futurista in undici sintesi*, in vol.III of *Teatro F. T. Marinetti*, pp.331-79.

⁹ F. T. Marinetti, "Il venero dei manoscritti", eleventh "sintesi" of *Il suggeritore nudo*, p.376.

¹⁰ F. T. Marinetti, *Il suggeritore nudo*, p.377.

¹¹ F. T. Marinetti, *Il suggeritore nudo*, p.376.

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¹² F. T. Marinetti, *Il suggeritore nudo*, p.378.

¹³ R. Barthes, "Sur la photographie", *Le grain de la voix: Entretiens 1962-80* (Paris, 1981), p.334. [This entry is based on interviews with A. Schwarz in 1977, and with G. Mandery in 1979, and it first appeared in *Le Photographe*, February, 1980.]

¹⁴ Cf. H. Bloom, "Freud and the Poetic Sublime: A Catastrophe Theory of Creativity", *Antaeus*, Spring, 1978, pp.355-77. [This essay is reprinted in *Freud: A Collection of Critical Essays*, edited by P. Meisel, pp.211-31.]

¹⁵ Cf. L. Mulvey, "Visual pleasure and narrative cinema", *Screen*, vol.16, no.3, Autumn, 1975, pp.6-18; see also J. Rose, "The Cinematic Apparatus: Problems in Current Theory", *The Cinematic Apparatus*, edited by T. de Lauretis and S. Heath (London, 1980), pp.172-86.

¹⁶ Cf. E. Jones, *Sigmund Freud: Life and Work*, vol.2 (London, 1955), p.468: "There is little doubt that Freud found the psychology of women more enigmatic than that of men. He said once to Marie Bonaparte: 'The great question that has never been answered and which I have not yet been able to answer, despite my thirty years of research into the feminine soul, is *What does a woman want?*'" [in German: *Was will das Weib?*]; see also J. Lacan, *Le séminaire livre xxx: Encore 1972-73* (Paris, 1975), p.75: "Ce qui j'aborde cette année est ce que Freud a expressément laissé de côté, le *Was will das Weib?* le *Que veut la femme?*"; E. Lemoine-Luccioni, *Partage des femmes* (Paris, 1976); S. Heath, "Difference", *Screen*, vol.19, no.4, Winter, 1978-79, p.51; J. Gallop, "Encore Encore", *Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction* (London, 1982), pp.43-55.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Kristeva, "L'abjet d'amour", pp.24-27; see also R. Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, p.20: "Ce n'est pas là le plaisir du strip-tease corporel ou du suspense narratif. Dans l'un et l'autre cas, pas de déchirure, pas de bords: un dévoilement progressif: toute l'excitation se réfugie dans l'espoir de voir le sexe (rêve de collégien) ou de connaître la fin de l'histoire (satisfaction romanesque). Paradoxalement (puisque'il est de consommation massive), c'est un plaisir bien plus intellectuel que l'autre: plaisir œdipéen (dénuder, savoir, connaître l'origine et la fin), s'il est vrai que tout récit (tout dévoilement de la vérité) est une mise en scène du Père (absent, caché ou hypostasié) ce qui expliquerait la solidarité des formes narratives, des structures familiales et des interdictions de nudité, toutes rassemblées, chez nous, dans le mythe de Noé recouvert par ses fils"; D. Porter, "The Erotics of Narrative", *The Pursuit of Crime: Art and Ideology in Detective Fiction* (New Haven and London, 1981), pp.100-11.

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¹ *Come tu mi vuoi*, edited by Centro Studi del Teatro Stabile di Torino (Turin [undated]), p.[2] (henceforth *T.S.T. programme*).

² "I giudizi della stampa italiana dopo la prima", *T.S.T. programme*, pp.[8-12].

³ Asti writes: "Forse anche la mia e perché no quella di Susan Sontag", *T.S.T. programme*, p.[2].

⁴ *T.S.T. programme*, p.[4].

⁵ Cf. Pabst's film, *Pandora's Box* (1928); Berg's opera, *Lulu* (1937); see also P. Conrad, "Forty Years On: A Review of Berg's *Lulu* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York", *The Times Literary Supplement*, 20th March, 1981, p.312: "Directors remain uncertain whether to assign *Lulu* to the 1890s, where Wedekind's plays belong, or to the 1930s, when Berg composed the music. The decision is more than a decorative one. A fin-de-siècle *Lulu* characterizes the heroine as a fatal vamp, a colleague of Beardsley's arachnoid Salome; transferring the action to the 1930s, as Patrice Chéreau did in Paris 1979, exonerates her - Chéreau even called her crypto-Jewish, the victim of a slick, greedy bourgeoisie against whose hypocritical pieties she offended. John Dexter's production at the Met situates itself in the ornate perversity of the 1890s, Götz Friedrich at Covent Garden has, like Chéreau, chosen the 1930s"; see also L. Brooks, "On Making Pabst's *Lulu*", in *Women and the Cinema*, edited by K. Kay and G. Peary, pp.77-85.

⁶ M. Serenellini, *Gazzetta del Popolo*, 26th October, 1979, as quoted in the *T.S.T. programme*, p.[8].

⁷ *As You Desire Me* [adapted from *Come tu mi vuoi*], directed by G. Fitzmaurice, with Greta Garbo (L'Ignota) and Erich von Stroheim (Salter) (Hollywood, 1932).

⁸ Cf. MN I, 924: "S'è combinata una faccia mefistofelica, ma così per ridere. Maschere, tanto per darsi un'apparenza e far colpo ...".

⁹ S. Sontag, "Remembering Barthes" (1980), in *Under the Sign of Saturn* (New York, 1980), p.171.

¹⁰ S. Sontag, *On Photography* (New York, 1978), p.87.

¹¹ S. Sontag, "Theatre and Film" (1966), in *Styles of Radical Will* (New York, 1976), p.117. Sontag's scene, where the Aunt and the Uncle sit opposite one another at each end of an oval table, greatly resembles the famous stark Art Deco environment designed by Richard Day and Cedric Gibbons for Greta Garbo's last silent film, *The Kiss* (1929), directed by Jacques Feyder. See P. Downing, J. Hambley et al., *The Art of Hollywood: Fifty Years of Art Direction* (London, 1979), p.66.

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¹² Sergio Ugolino replaced the original Carla Wachmeister whose picture appears in the *T.S.T. programme*.

¹³ Cf. P. Conrad, "Forty Years On", p.312: "Covent Garden's Schön, Günther Reich, is a portly, caponized house-husband ...".

¹⁴ S. Sontag, "Remembering Barthes", p.174.

¹⁵ *T.S.T. programme*, p.[4].

¹⁶ S. Sontag, "Bergman's *Persona*" (1967), in *Styles of Radical Will* (New York, 1976), p.131.

¹⁷ *T.S.T. programme*, p.[4].

¹⁸ Cf. J. Lacan, "La signification du phallus", *Écrits* II, pp. 103-15.

¹⁹ *T.S.T. programme*, p.[4].

²⁰ S. Sontag, "Bergman's *Persona*" (1967), p.141. Cf. p.136: "The Latin word 'persona', from which the English 'person' derives, means the mask worn by an actor. To be a person, then, is to possess a mask ..."; see also M. del Ministro, "Rito e passione di Bergman", *Pirandello scena personaggio e film* (Rome, 1980), p.145: "Al 'solipsismo', alla 'maschera', al 'silenzio' nell'accezione pirandelliana (di là dalla presenza sempre determinante di Kierkegaard e di Strindberg) è giunto anche Bergman. [G.] Aristarco, nel suo fondamentale saggio su *Persona* [cf. "Monologo e nulla, tragedia della persona bergmaniana", *Cinema Nuovo*, 1967, n. 185-86], mette in rilievo nel personaggio di Elisabeth Vogler, la scissione della personalità, che pur nella mediazione junghiana rimanda anche al grande scrittore siciliano, di cui Bergman ha messo in scena due volte *Sei personaggi in cerca d'autore*."

²¹ *T.S.T. programme*, p.[4].

²² Cf. "Femminismo" (1909), *SPSV*, 1068-72.

²³ Cf. S. Sontag, "Fascinating Fascism" (1974), in *Under the Sign of Saturn*, pp.73-105.

²⁴ Cf. R. Rossanda, *Le Altre*, pp. 133-43; see also M. A. Macciocchi, "Female Sexuality in Fascist Ideology", translated by J. Stone, *Feminist Review*, no.1, 1979, pp.67-82.

²⁵ For further details concerning Pirandello's attitude to the misappropriation of his theatre, see the essay, "Se il film parlante abolirà il teatro" (1929), *SPSV*, 1030-36. Cf. p.1034: "Il pericolo grave per il teatro era questo, che volesse avviarsi a somigliare al cinematografo." [In English: "Pirandello views the talkies", *The New York Times*, 28th July, 1929, V, pp.1-2]; for Pirandello's other comments against "régisseurs", and about the film *As You Desire Me*, see A. Illiano, "Pirandello e il cinema: film e filmati americani", in *Pirandello e il cinema*, edited by S. Milioto (Agrigento, 1978), p.111:

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"Pirandello, il quale aveva da tempo intuito le potenzialità del cinema muto come forma autonoma, fece giustamente notare, pur compiacendosi della lusinghiera interpretazione della grande attrice [Garbo], i limiti della versione filmata che, seguendo da vicino la configurazione drammatica e letteraria di un'opera concepita per la scena, finiva per diventare una brutta copia del teatro." See also André Rousseaux, "Conversation with Pirandello", *The Living Age*, February, 1935, p.514. It is possible that Pirandello may have been influenced by the world's first "talkie", *The Jazz Singer* (1927), directed by Alan Crosland, where Al Jolson uttered the catch-phrase, "You ain't heard nothin' yet". See E. Katz, *The International Film Encyclopedia* (London, 1982), p.288 and p.623; D. Robinson, *World Cinema 1895-1980* (London, 1981), p.163; P. Downing, J. Hambley et al., *The Art of Hollywood: Fifty Years of Art Direction*, p.25, where they quote the set designer, Ben Carré, who wrote in his reminiscences: "I saw that I would have to avoid the bouncing of the voices on hard surfaces and leave openings in my sets to prevent sound from echoing. It worked rather well but the trouble came from everything else: the grinding of the camera, talking going on behind the scenes etc. If *The Jazz Singer* was a big step in moving pictures, it was a very simple job for me."

²⁶ G. Dulac, "The Essence of the Cinema: The Visual Idea", in *The Avant-Garde Film: A Reader of Theory and Criticism*, edited by A. Sitney p.37. [This article first appeared in *Les Cahiers du Mois*, no. 16/17, 1925, and is translated by R. Lamberton.]

²⁷ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Film Makers*, translated, edited and updated by P. Morris (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), p.59. [In French: *Dictionnaire des Cinéastes* (Paris, 1965), p.63.]

²⁸ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Film Makers*, p.154[p.144].

²⁹ Cf. J. Epstein, "For a New Avant-Garde", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.27. [This lecture was delivered at the Vieux Colombier theatre, 14th December, 1924 and is translated by S. Liebman.]

³⁰ Cf. E. Katz, *The International Film Encyclopedia*, p.391.

³¹ Cf. W. Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", *Illuminations*, pp.219-54; see also the I Meridiani edition of *Tutti i romanzi*, edited by G. Macchia and M. Costanzo (Milan, 1979), p.1031 for details of the various versions of *Quaderni di Serafino Gubbio operatore*: it first appeared with the title, *Si gira ...*, in 1915. The revised edition with the new title only appears in 1925. [In the passages I am quoting, there are no substantial revisions.]

³² Cf. G. Giudice, *Luigi Pirandello*, p.515.

³³ Cf. G. Giudice, *Luigi Pirandello*, pp.517-18.

³⁴ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, vol.5 of his *Histoire générale du cinéma* (Paris, 1975), p.104.

³⁵ G. Dulac, "The Essence of the Cinema: The Visual Idea", in *The*

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Avant-Garde Film, p.41.

³⁶ G. Dulac, "The Avant-Garde Cinema", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.44. [This essay first appeared in *Le cinéma des origines à nos jours* (Paris, 1932) and is translated by R. Lamberton.]

³⁷ E. Rhode, *A History of the Cinema: From its Origins to 1970* (London, 1976), p.138.

³⁸ Cf. G. Dulac, "The Essence of the Cinema: The Visual Idea", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.38.

³⁹ Cf. P. Willemen, "On Reading Epstein on *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, no.10, Autumn, 1981, p.43.

⁴⁰ J. Epstein, "The Photogenic Element", *Afterimage*, p.24. [This lecture was delivered to the Club des Amis du Septième Art, 11th April, 1924, and is translated by T. Milne.]

⁴¹ Cf. P. Willemen, "On Reading Epstein on *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, pp.40-47; see also S. Heath, "On Suture", *Questions of Cinema*, pp.76-112; J. Epstein, "On Certain Characteristics of *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, pp.20-23. [This lecture was first delivered at the Salon d'Automne, 1923 and is collected in his *Le cinématographe vu de l'Etna* (Paris, 1926); it is translated by T. Milne]; "The Essence of Cinema", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, pp.24-25. [This article is dated 1923 and is translated by S. Liebman.]

⁴² J. Epstein, "The Photogenic Element", *Afterimage*, p.24.

⁴³ J. Epstein, "The Essence of Cinema", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.25.

⁴⁴ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.105.

⁴⁵ Cf. C. Vicentini, *L'estetica di Pirandello* (Milan, 1970), p.221; see also P. Puppa, *Fantasmî contro giganti: scena e immaginario in Pirandello*, pp.227-29.

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⁴⁶ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.88; see also L. O'Leary, "The cinema grows up, 1919-29", *The Silent Cinema* (New York, 1965), pp.56-156.

⁴⁷ G. Sadoul, *Le cinéma devient un art 1909-20*, vol.2 of his *Histoire générale du cinéma* (Paris, 1952), p.405.

⁴⁸ J. Epstein, "On Certain Characteristics of *Photogénie*", *Afterimage*, p.20.

⁴⁹ G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.89.

⁵⁰ G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.90; see also his *French Film* (London, 1953), pp.24-27: "In those early days he [L'Herbier] had himself directed a little quasi-experimental film, *Phantasmes*, an important feature of which was the systematic use of a technique

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employed since 1900 in artistic still photography, but never hitherto introduced into film, that of the 'soft focus'" (p.25). [This text is not a translation but was written for British readers, according to the "Foreword" by R. Manvell.]

⁵¹ J. Epstein, "For a New Avant-Garde", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.28.

⁵² G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Films*, translated, edited and updated by P. Morris (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), p.100. [In French: *Dictionnaire des films* (Paris, 1965), p.75.] [pp.75-76]

⁵³ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Films*, p.100; see also his *French Film*, p.25, where he indicates that Jacques Catelain played Hedwick.

⁵⁴ G. Sadoul, *Le cinéma devient un art 1909-20*, p.104.

⁵⁵ G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.84; see also his *Les merveilles du cinéma* (Paris, 1957); J. Chevalier et al., *Regards neufs sur le cinéma* (Paris, 1953); M. L'Herbier, *Intelligence du cinématographie* (Paris, 1946); J. Mitry, *Histoire du cinéma: art et industrie* (Paris, 1980).

⁵⁶ M. Verdone, *Le avanguardia storica del cinema* (Turin, 1977), p.62; see also G.-P. Brunetta, *Storia del cinema italiano 1895-1945* (Rome, 1979).

⁵⁷ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Film Makers*, p.59[p.63].

⁵⁸ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.54.

⁵⁹ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Film Makers*, p.59[p.63].

⁶⁰ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Le cinéma devient un art 1909-20*, p.405.

⁶¹ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.61.

⁶² R. Barthes, *La chambre claire: Note sur la photographie* (Paris, 1980), p.23.

⁶³ R. Barthes, *La chambre claire: Note sur la photographie*, p.56.

⁶⁴ R. Barthes, *La chambre claire: Note sur la photographie*, p.123.

⁶⁵ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.60.

⁶⁶ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Le cinéma devient un art 1909-20*, p.403; see also S. d'Amico, "Noi Censori del Cinematografo" (1920), *Le strade che portano a Roma: Diario spirituale 1916-23*, p.106: "È insomma l'idealizzazione della corsa a piacere, al lusso, al godimento, presentata come ideale alla folla dei popolani e delle popolane, dei piccoloborghesi e delle piccoloborghesi, che gremiscono quotidianamente le buie sale dell'arte muta. L'essenziale immoralità del Cinematografo italiano è in questo, ben più che nelle scene dove si scassina una cassaforte, o dove due bocche si uniscono insaziate."

⁶⁷ G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.101; see also E. Rhode, A

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History of the Cinema, p.135.

⁶⁸ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.74.

⁶⁹ S. G. Colette, "Film and Fashion", *Colette at the movies*, p.31.

⁷⁰ Cf. G. Sadoul, *French Film*, pp.28-29; see also *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.80; D. A. Cook, *A History of Narrative Film* (New York, 1981), pp. 322-23; M. Manuel, *Aspectos del cine frances*, nos.9-10 of *Cuadernos de cine* (Aniceto Ortega, Mexico, 1964), p.52: "... *L'inhumaine* anuncian apenas su obra fundamental (*El difunto Matías Pascal* 1925), influida por el expresionismo aleman y que a pesar de estar inspirada en una novela (Pirandello) es cine del mejor, con espacios abiertos, con un sentido extraordinario del decorado, del ritmo y del uso de la luz. Pero L'Herbier todavía se refiere al cine como 'cinematógrafo' e insiste demasiado en su concepto de 'arte'."

⁷¹ Cf. G. Sadoul, *Dictionary of Films*, p.114[].

⁷² E. Rhode, *A History of the Cinema*, p.138.

⁷³ M. Verdone, *Le avanguardie storiche del cinema*, p.62.

⁷⁴ L. Delluc, "Photogénie" (1919), in *Regards neufs sur le cinéma*, edited by J. Chevalier et al., pp.35-37.

⁷⁵ L. Delluc, "Photogénie" (1919), pp.35-37; see also G. Dulac, "From 'Visual and Anti-visual Films'", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.34: "The cinema can certainly tell a story, but you have to remember that the story is nothing. The story is a surface." This article first appeared in *Le Rouge et le Noir*, July, 1928, and is translated by R. Lamberton.

⁷⁶ Cf. R. Roud, "Memories of Resnais", *Sight and Sound*, vol.38, no.3, Summer, 1969, pp.124-29; and pp.162-63.

⁷⁷ G. Dulac, "The Essence of the Cinema: The Visual Idea", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.39.

⁷⁸ G. Dulac, "From 'Visual and Anti-visual Films'", in *The Avant-Garde Film*, p.33.

⁷⁹ Cf. G. Sadoul, *L'Art muet 1919-29*, p.52.

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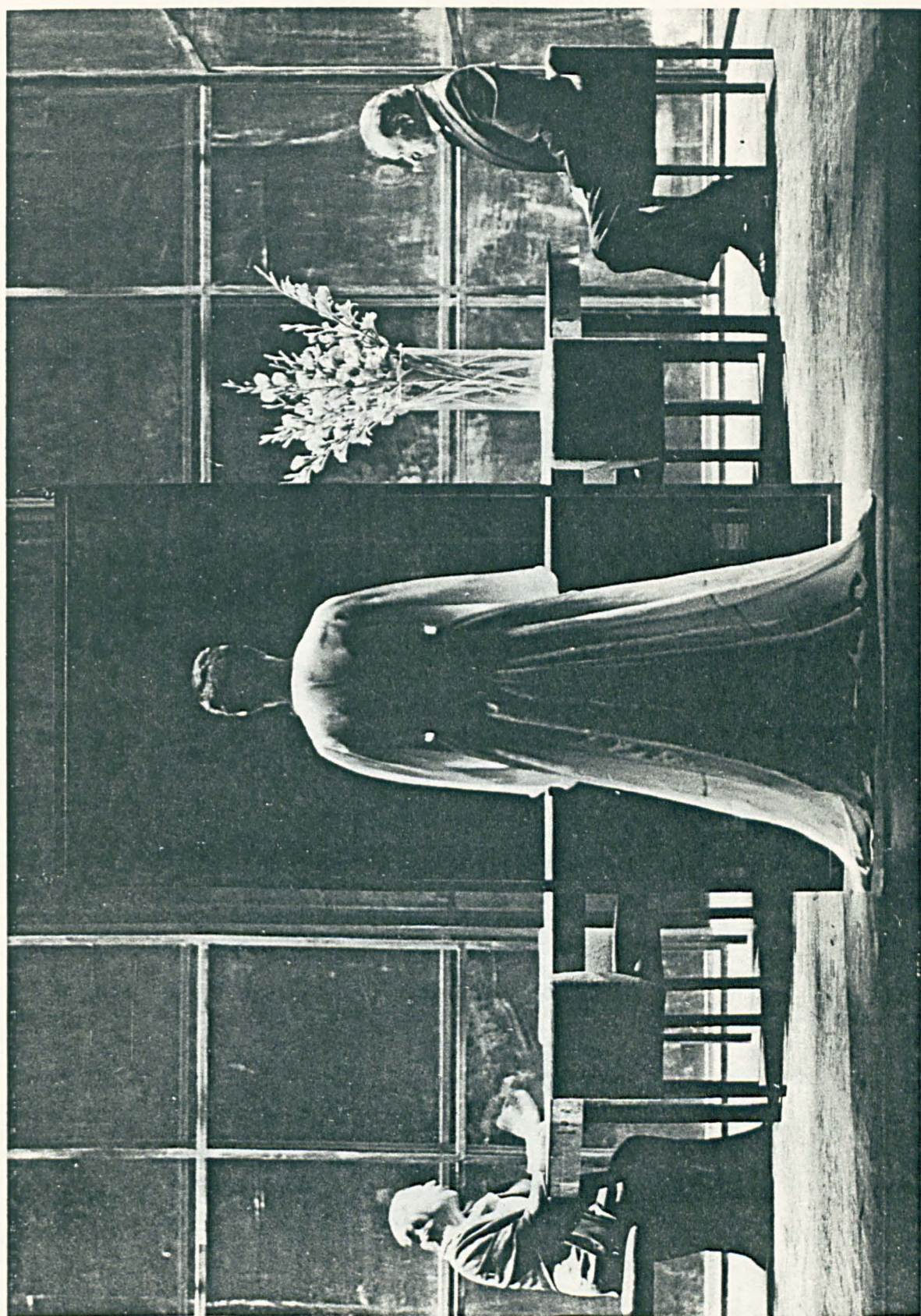
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