Shifting Eyes:

self-representation in words and images, re-reading Freud through the
semiotics of C.S. Peirce, with particular reference to the work
of poet H.D. and artist Claude Cahun

Sharon Morris

University College London

Ph.D. Thesis
Abstract

*Shifting Eyes*, presents a re-reading of Freud’s structural theories of the self, through the semiotics of C.S. Peirce. In place of the self split between unconscious representations and the syntax of speech, Peirce’s general sign theory provides an evolutionary account of symbol development within a trichotomy of sign-object relations, icon, index and symbol, as opposed to interpretations of Freud using the linguistic sign which reify the split subject and assimilate unconscious processes to the tropes of language.

Peirce’s sign-interpretant relation, is used to re-describe Freud’s account of the shift from narcissism to object relations, from the primary iconic dyad to the subject constructed through the symbol of sexual difference. One class of icons, the hypoicon, is evaluated as a representation of the subject, since the hypoicon, unlike the symbol, does not uphold contradiction. Metaphor, as hypoiconic Third, is compared with Freud’s account of the structure of identification, both in terms of ego development and dream formation.

The second part of the thesis uses these concepts to interpret the work of author H.D. and artist-writer Claude Cahun. H.D.’s œuvre - poetry, novels, memoirs and autobiography - lay bare the structure of the subject through the semiotics of the text, in particular transference and the act of naming. The poetry demonstrates the boundary between ego and world, myth and ideals of the ego, as the semiotics of identification.

Cahun’s photographic self-portraits raise questions of the relation between body-image and narcissism, ideals and the subject of sexual difference. The last chapter concentrates on *Aveux non avenus*, (1930a) a work which integrates text and image using the principles of collage, juxtaposing photomontages with fragments of dream, fantasy, polemic and fiction as an extension of self-representation. In conclusion, the signifyng self, as hypoiconic Third, is related to the body, re-posing the question of desire.
## Table of Contents

### Chapters:

1. Signs of Presence  
   pp. 6
2. Psyche and Sign  
   34
3. Self Interpretant  
   64
4. From Identification to Identity  
   92
5. The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose  
   124
6. The Semiosis of Self; Reading H.D.'s Poetry  
   156
7. Cahun in the Mirror  
   193
8. Cahun and the Semiotics of the Eye  
   226

### Appendices:

A

| fig.1 | Freud, S. (1891a p.79) |
| fig.2 | Freud, S. (1896a p.186) |
| fig.3 | After Peirce. |
| fig.4 | After Peirce. |
| fig.5 | After Peirce. |
| fig.6 | Lacan, J. (1960b p.15) |
| Mss. copy | H.D. (Mss. 1911-'2) |

B

Translations (Cahun, C. 1925b, 1930a, 1936)  
260

C

Illustrations (listed overleaf).  
268

### Bibliography

Shifting Eyes  
303
Illustrations: Claude Cahun photographs and photomontages

1. *Que me veux-tu?*, 1928.
5. Self-portrait, 1927.
7. Self-portrait, 1928.
8. *Frontière Humaine*.

26-35 *Aveux non avenus* (Cahun, C. 1930a) photomontages, plates I-X.
Dedication

I would particularly like to thank Prof. Bernard Burgoyne, Head of Psychoanalytic Research at Middlesex University and director of CFAR, for years of patient support and critique.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to Prof. Norman Bryson, current Head of History and Theory of Art at The Slade School of Fine Art for his thorough reading of the final drafts, and Dr. Michael Newman, for his initial comments.

* 

Thanks to Ariane Smart for assistance with translation and to staff at the Watson Library, The Metropolitan Museum, New York; Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; and in particular Louise Downey, curator of The Wakeham Collection, Jersey Museum.
Chapter One: Signs of Presence

Preamble

On the ground floor of the Metropolitan Museum New York there is a large white room devoted to artefacts from the Pacific and Australasia. Each time I’ve stood in this room, I find it really difficult to move on and look at the other splendours of the museum. During my first visit, I was suddenly arrested, brought face-to-face, with totem poles and masks from the Alamba peoples of New Guinea. The quality of this shock was repeated each time I visited. Is this the aesthetic power of these objects as art, their sheer beauty accentuated by the vast space of the museum, the way the totem poles rise upwards into the daylight falling from the skylight; or are my feelings those of envy, fantasies associated with ‘other’ cultures?

I felt that I was confronted with a bare aspect of human reality that I still cannot name, only tell you that I encountered a face made of straw with unsheathed holes for eyes and a circular vacuole where the mouth should be. This was not a representation of a body that sloughed off its skin like the garments of fashion, but a legacy of someone, an effigy perhaps: a recall of existence calling me to attention. An artefact that has the qualities of - what I can only call - presence or being.

This is one way of trying to give an account of why I have turned to the voluminous writings of the American logician and philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce, who in developing his theories of metaphysics, epistemology and logic, held ‘the sign’ as central to the nexus of presence and representation. In contemplating the world and the place of human beings, Peirce faces the problem of how to separate the cognition of an individual entity from the totality present in the mind, which he called the *phaneron*, and the question of how to determine existence.

At the heart of our apprehension of phenomena is the question of organising our experience. Peirce does not give a theory of mind based on intuitive knowledge, but develops a theory that places the act of ‘judgement’ as fundamental to perception, cognition, and development of self. This act of judgement is essentially the ability to discriminate and make distinctions between things, to group qualities by kind, and thus define both classes of things.
and individual entities. Without radically splitting representation from the phaneron, Peirce tries to convey an understanding of the world as representation. That which represents doesn’t then conceal the thing-in-itself; there is no deliberate veil of language acting as a cloak over the unavailable and intrinsically unknowable. Peirce brings a triadic classification to metaphysics, capturing the distinctions of experience - Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. Rather than reifying his metaphysics into distinct ontologies, Peirce focuses his attention on formulating a theory of relations, relations which are then formulated as signification, which Peirce refers to as ‘semeiotics’. Firstness is Peirce’s attempt to grasp the radical impossibility of direct apprehension, free from a priori conceptualisation:

‘What the world was to Adam on the day he opened his eyes to it, before he had drawn any distinctions, or had become conscious of his own existence - that is first, present, immediate, fresh, new, initiative, original, spontaneous, free, vivid, conscious and evanescent. Only, remember that every description of it must be false to it.’ (1890 1.357)

Firstness as a hypothesis of experience, expresses an impossibility, since experience prior to any categorisation whatsoever precludes representation. Yet, by analogy, Peirce’s oblique grasp of Firstness holds the phenomenon of seeing anew that I experienced looking at the Alamba masks and totems. The Alamba artefacts presented an unfamiliar world beyond the confines of my narrow cultural experience, a world in which my habitual categorisation of myself, life and death, had to break down; but the shock of the encounter with these masks, face-to-face, that raised the hairs on the back of my neck, belongs to the metaphysical category that Peirce calls Secondness:

‘The genuine second suffers and yet resists, like dead matter, whose existence consists in its inertia. ... We find secondness in occurrence, because an occurrence is something whose existence consists in our knocking up against it. A hard fact is of the same sort ...’ (1890 1.358)

It is the kind of shock experienced when recognising the other’s existence as resistant, with her or his own will; recognising the other as a subject rather than the object of one’s desire, fantasy and coercion. Secondness is the brute reality of the actual, the present, apprehended through the recognition of difference from the continuum; for example, the changing pitch of

---

1 Peirce introduced the terms, ‘semeiotics’ and ‘semeiosis’, in order to differentiate his general sign theory from that of William James; I will use the more usual spelling.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence 7
a moving train whistle: 'Now that which particularly characterises sudden changes of perception is a shock. ... That must be the fact; because if there were no such resistance there could be no shock when the change of note occurs.' (1905b 1.336) Such change constitutes experience. In developing the concept of Secondness, Peirce takes over Duns Scotus concept of haeccity, the individual 'thisness' of the unique identity. The intensity of my experience, the 'presence' that the Alamba masks evoked, could also be attributed to the materiality of these strange artefacts that challenged the category of 'the object': the disparate collage of elements - wood, feathers, soldered with bits of bent metal, painted black and orange and woven with light straw - and resists my easy assimilation of their 'otherness'.

Thirdness, is the metaphysical underpinning of the synthesis of reality and the persistence of identity of things, including the experience of oneself: 'By the third, I mean the medium or connecting bond between the absolute first and last. ... Continuity represents Thirdness almost to perfection. Every process comes under that head. ...' (1875 1.337) Critical to understanding Peirce's philosophy is the realisation that Thirdness includes the sign; we think in signs, we experience signs, we are signs for one another and to ourselves: '... whenever we think, we have present to the consciousness some feeling, image, conception, or other representation, which serves as a sign. ... When we think, then, we ourselves, as we are at that moment, appear as a sign.' (1868 5.283) The construction of persistence, continuity and therefore self-identity is a feature of Thirdness, which finds its expression in signification. Self-reflection and interaction with another is therefore an engagement with the self as sign. So, as I stood there in the Metropolitan Museum in front of these artefacts, not only did the question of meaning hang over the objects, a similar question hung over my head: how in the face of these objects, so disruptive to my sense of Thirdness, could I operate as a sign for myself?

The operation of a sign depends upon the triadic concept of the sign; there is no sign without its relation, first of all to 'something else', the object, and secondly to 'its interpreter', the interpretant. The sign-object relation is divided according to the mode of signification - icon, index, symbol. The interpretant, functions as 'a more developed sign', generating a chain of 'sign-interpretant-sign' relations that Peirce calls semeiosis. In this sense Peirce's

---

1 'What Scotus calls the haeccities of things, the hereness and nowness of them, are indeed ultimate.' (1890 1.405) as discussed below, p. 20.
semiotics is not merely a taxonomy of signs but, as we will see later, falls into a hierarchy of signs - a concept that has heuristic value.

In encountering the Alamba people's masks and totem poles, though I found their significance within Alamba culture to be an enigma, since the Alamba symbolic code is not accessible to me, my encounter was governed by the interpretative codes of museum collections. Through Peirce's description of how signs have meaning, however, I am trying to access the play between the iconic and indexical force of these objects as signs on myself as interpretant, to try and articulate the raw power of their emotional effect. Acknowledging that signs are Thirds, Peirce also persists in the faith that somehow, signs aim to represent the impossible:

"... [We have seen that] the conception of the absolute first eludes every attempt to grasp it; and so in another sense does that of the absolute second; but there is no absolute third, for the third is of its own nature relative, and this is what we are always thinking, even when we aim at the first or second." (1890 I.362)

From sense to signification

Peirce starts his philosophical speculations with Kant's question, how are sensations organised? Like Kant, Peirce conceives of sensations as qualities which are then mapped onto the subject-predicate division of the proposition. The first stage in making sense of experience is therefore an act of judgement:

"From two things which are alike in one respect and different in others we can separate mentally the unlike elements form the like and distinguish separately. If we consider each compound as an expression, the peculiar meaning, of each will be its peculiarity; the common abstraction will be the condition of the abstraction of meaning, that is the language. ... the mind notices through resemblance and difference. (Peirce, C.S. 1861a in Murphey, M. 1961 p. 50)

This quotation from the 'Analysis of Creation', cited by Murray Murphey in his study of Peirce's philosophy, shows how the act of differentiation depends on our being able to abstract qualities and that it is this process of abstraction which provides the basis for judgement:

"Every judgement consists in referring a predicate to a subject. The predicate is thought, and the subject only thought-of. The elements of the predicate are experiences or representations of experience. The subject is never experienced but
only assumed. Every judgement, therefore, being a reference of the experienced or known to the assumed or unknown, is an explanation of a phenomenon by hypothesis, and is in fact an inference. Hence there is a major premiss behind every judgement...'. (Peirce, C.S. 1861b in Murphey, M. 1961 p.21)

We are therefore engaged in a continuous act of perceptual judgement. Judging similarity and difference between qualities, enables us to infer the subject of these predicates as a result of our reasoning. This quotation makes clear that inference by 'Barbara' is assumed to govern the \textit{a priori} workings of the mind. Such is Peirce's faith in the logic of mental reasoning that he interprets contradiction as either pointing to the effect of an 'unconscious idea' or that 'our faculties did not act in a normal way.' (Peirce, C.S. 1861b in Murphey, M. 1961 pp.30-'1) It also suggests that parody, irony and humour, require that 'unconscious ideas' be free from such absolutist constraints.\footnote{This can be compared with Freud's interest in Fechner's Law as governing the distribution of energy in the neuronal nets and Freud's exclusion of negation and contradiction from his account of primary processes of the unconscious. (Freud, S. 1895b p.376) as discussed below, chapter two, p.40.}

It is this recognition of logical relationships - identity, repetition and similarity - which underpins Peirce's ability to extrapolate from verbal languages to the conceptual structures of the world, therefore laying the foundation of his general sign theory:

'Language is an abstraction not capable of realisation alone, but combined (in a way of which we shall think directly) with other abstractions gives them realizability. Geometrical figures, letters, conversation, music are such languages. We seem to see their analogies in Vegetables, Animals, Chemical Compounds, Nebular systems etc.'  

Peirce, C.S. 1861a in Murphey, M. 1961 p.50)

Peirce reveals his 'Weltanschauung': Peirce inhabits a semiotic universe giving primacy to analogy - likeness - the concept which evolves into his theory of iconicity. Murphey is critical of Peirce's conflation of the phenomenal world and 'things in themselves', however this is to malign Peirce's enterprise. As a philosophical realist, Peirce takes the expedient strategy of avoiding problems of ontology in favour of developing a theory of relations, a standpoint later vindicated - in his terms - by his belief in evolutionary theory.
In another early unpublished book, 'Principles', (1861b), however, Peirce attempts to introduce the difference between the phenomena that we perceive and things-in-themselves, in terms of the representational 'correlates'.

'Cor. I. Only the phenomena can be thought of as thought, the things in themselves are thought of as unthought.
Cor. II. All neumena (things-in-themselves) are unconditioned because they cannot even be thought of as thought.
Cor. IV. ... all the unconditioned is apprehended and may be so without error.' (Peirce, C.S. 1861b in Murphey, M. 1961 p.28)

Although Peirce is notoriously cryptic in this early paper and therefore open to misinterpretation, the key concept is the distinction between 'apprehension' and 'thinking of'. The possessive relation, 'think of', suggests a re-presentation, that something stands for an object, be it another object or another thought. The 'apprehended' neumena, however, cannot be represented in this way. What kind of neumena then is Peirce referring to? Whereas Murphey insists that a priori ways of ordering the world must apply to the objects of phenomena and Kantian transcendental objects, Peirce, holds to a certain indifference about the relation between phenomena and the world as a deliberate strategy that allows him to keep on exploring, defining and re-defining, the relation between experience and representation: 'A quality I can think. A thing I can think of.' (Peirce, C.S. 1859 in Murphey, M. 1961 p.28)

This suggests that quality is an apprehension and not the same as a representation within a conceptual framework.

This entails the division of perception from that which perceives, first articulated in an early paper with a particularly apt title: 'The Synonyms of the English language classed according to their meaning on a definite and stated philosophy', (1857) Peirce uses the terms, I, Thou and It, to designate the abstract, mental and sensory world. By (1861b) with a characteristic change of meaning but without changing terminology - I, Thou and It, also designate ontological categories - the abstraction, the thought and the thing respectively. In a lecture on logic given in (1866), Peirce goes on to describes sign relations in terms of an analogy with self and the other:

'Murphey gives an excellent account of how Peirce's metaphysics develops from an analysis of signs, however, I am proposing the opposite thesis, that Peirce's semiotics has evolved in order to answer questions about subjectivity and phenomenological experience.

Shifting Eyes chapter one : Signs of Presence
'A symbol in general and as such has three relations. The first is its relation to the pure Idea or Logos and this (from the analogy of the grammatical terms for the pronouns I, It, Thou) I call its relation to the first person, since it is its relation to its own essence. The second is its relation to the consciousness as being thinkable, or to any language as being translatable which I call its relation to the second person, since it refers to its power of appealing to a mind. The theirs is its relation to its object, which I call its relation to the third person or It.' (Peirce, C.S. 1866 in Murphey, M. p.88)

Taking for example, a trail of smoke, the I is what I see, the phenomenon of 'smoke', the It is the object of the sign, smoke and Thou is my thought, "that smoke means there is a fire somewhere". This mapping of the signifying relation onto the relation between self and world, suggest that signification is intimately linked with becoming and being, the development of the infant, separation from the world, the apprehension of another and mimicry of the other's many means of communication.

From judgement to signification

'On a New List of Categories', (1867a) preserves much of Peirce’s early terminology but with a change of meaning. The paper re-addresses the question of how our sensations are organised, aiming to discover the concepts by which the vast array of sense impressions are reduced. Peirce persists with taking the subject-predicate division as innate:

'The unity to which the understanding reduces impressions is the unity of a proposition. This unity consists in the connection of the predicate with the subject; and, therefore, that which is implied in the copula, or the conception of being, is that which completes the work of conceptions of reducing the manifold to unity. ... The conception of being, therefore, plainly has no content.'

'If we say "The stove is black," the stove is the substance, from which its blackness has not been differentiated, and the is, while it leaves the substance just as it was seen, explains its confusedness, by the application to it of blackness as a predicate.' (1867a 1.548)

'Being', of course, is not in Peirce’s conceptualisation to be confused with ‘presence’, as feeling or experience. ‘Being’ as copula, is a relational concept which ties abstraction of a predicate to the ‘thing’ itself. Similarly substance is experientially empty, it is merely the
concept of the 'thing' that supports the attributes, in this example substance is that which supports 'blackness'.

Yet, two years earlier, (1865) Peirce had already conceived predication as a sign relation: 'The subject is a sign of the predicate, the antecedent of the consequent; and this is the only point that concerns logic.'(Murphey, M. 1961 p.63) It was not until a further revision of the 'New List', that Peirce disclosed his further realisation that causality could also be described as a sign relation: 'This led me to see that the relation between subject and predicate, or antecedent and consequent, is essentially the same as that between premiss and conclusion.'(1898 4.3) This conclusion further confirmed, for Peirce, the value of a semeiotic world view. At the kernel of any such theory of representation is the question of how the sign relation emerges from the act of comparison, which depends upon discriminating between qualities:

'Moreover, the conception of a pure abstraction is indispensables, because we cannot comprehend an agreement of two things, except as an agreement in some respect, and this respect is such a pure abstraction as blackness. Such a pure abstraction, reference to which constitutes a quality or general attribute, may be termed a ground.' (1867a 1.551)

'The occasion of the introduction of reference to a ground, therefore, is generalisation or contrast.' (1865a in Murphey, M. 1961 p.79)

'Empirical psychology has established the fact that we can know a quality only by means of its contrast with or similarity to another. By contrast and agreement a thing is referred to a correlate, if this term may be used in a wider sense than usual.' (1867a 1.552)

At the heart of the act of comparison is the recognition of similarity, which therefore requires a prior recognition of identity. It is this ability to affirm sameness, a judgement of identity, which provides Peirce with the basis for generalisation. Psychologically this is the process of attention, paying greater attention to one element as opposed to another and therefore allowing the abstraction and differentiation of qualities. (1867a 1.549) How exactly does this happen? Peirce enlarges on the process of comparison, bringing in reference to a third term, the

---

1 Compare with Freud's concept of 'the Thing', Freud (1895b p.390) as cited below chapter two, pp.37 and 44.
2 I have included these lengthy quotations because the act of 'judgement' is central to Freud's (1895b) theory of ego development, please see below chapter two, pp.42-46.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence
correlate. It is this reference to a 'triadic' formulation of the process of comparison which lends itself to representation as a sign relation, a sign, which by definition is a triadic relation.

It is not surprising, given his later writings on the importance of iconic expression to reasoning, that the correlate is explained in terms of images:

'Suppose we wish to compare the letters p and b. We may imagine one of them to be turned over on the line of writing as an axis, then laid upon the other, and finally to become transparent so that the other can be seen through it. In this way we shall form a new image which mediates between the images of the two letters, inasmuch as it represents one of them to be (when turned over) the likeness of the other.' (1867a 1.553)

'Likeness', so important in this 'New List' of 1867, is the foundation of what Peirce later calls the iconic sign. The above example is particularly clear because the commutative mirror relation is easily recognisable; Peirce has chosen a visual relation of symmetry. Peirce goes on to give a verbal example 'man'; the mediating representation between the words, 'homme' and 'man', is, 'the same two-legged creature'. Unlike the first example, the signified of the words may here be confused with the referent as something in the external world. This second example therefore depends upon Peirce's theory reference. As we would expect from his theory of empirical psychology the meaning of the word is connotative, based on a collection of associated qualities,\(^1\) but as we will see later, the name also denotes particular entities, along the same lines as the demonstrative pronouns, 'this' and 'that'.

The correlate requires a further concept, a mediating representation, which provides the basis for Peirce's articulation of the third term of the signifying relation, the interpretant:

'... it would be found that every comparison requires, besides the related thing, the ground and the correlate, also a mediating representation which represents the relate to be a representation of the same correlate which this mediating representation itself represents. Such a mediating representation, may be termed an interpretant, because it fulfills the office of an interpreter who says that a foreigner says the same thing which he himself says.' (1867a 1.553)

The interpretant is the concept or thought, a sign. To 'say the same thing' is an identity statement, but this statement is also an interpretant sign. The interpretant sign, acting as

\(^1\) Compare with Freud's use of J.S. Mill's theory of naming, see below chapter two, pp.37,54. Peirce's insight may also be compared to Benveniste's critique of Saussure, that a necessary connection exists between the signifier and signified, not between signifier and referent; (Benveniste, E. 1971 pp.43-44).
interpreter is embedded in the complexities of translation.¹ Peirce concludes the ‘New List’ by providing three categories of representation by virtue of the sign relation to the ‘object’:

‘First. Those whose relation to their objects is a mere community in some quality, and these representations may be termed likenesses.
Second. Those whose relation to their objects consists in a correspondence in fact, and these may be termed indices or signs.
Third. Those the ground of whose relation to their objects is an imputed character, which are the same as general signs, and these may be termed symbols.’ (1867a 1.558)

‘Likenesses’, based on a shared quality which is later defined as isomorphism, act at the heart of comparison between things and qualities: ‘likenesses’ are ‘firsts’. ‘Indices’, relating sign to object by a relation of fact are distinct from the conventional correspondences of the symbol. The foundation is laid here for the development of Peirce’s mature sign-object trichotomy, 1903.

‘The New List’ divides the category of the symbol according to the form and scope of representation; term, proposition and argument. Symbols, which identify qualities are terms, for example ‘blackness’; terms operate within the structure of a proposition to refer to an object, for example, ‘the raven is black’, such a symbol is capable of assertion, truth or falsehood; symbols directed to an interpretant take the form of arguments:

‘In an argument, the premisses from a representation of the conclusion, because they indicate the interpretant of the argument, or representation representing it to represent its object. The premisses may afford a likeness, index or symbol of the conclusion’. (1867a 1.559)

That the argument itself takes the form of a sign relation, the premises being a likeness, index, or symbol of the conclusion, becomes a corner stone of Peirce’s theory of self. Self-reflexivity is described as having the form of an argument, that is a symbol involving icons and indices. Peirce also gives a further categorisation of symbols on the basis of their extension, the range of objects it refers to; first of all its denotation, the depth of a term; the common references of its objects, connotation or breadth; and by reference to the interpretant, which in this paper is defined as the information ‘it embodies.’²

¹ Freud’s concept of translation as a fundamental process of the psyche (1896b p.175) is discussed below, chapter two, pp.53-56.
² C.f. Peirce (1867b 2.419).

*Shifting Eyes* chapter one: Signs of Presence 15
The index in the ‘New List’, (1867a) was a generalised means of indicating existence: ‘the present, in general’ (1.547); in a paper for the American Journal of Mathematics, 1885, Peirce presents a revision of the index:

‘The index asserts nothing; it only says “There”’ ... Demonstrative and relative pronouns are nearly pure indices, because they denote things without describing them ...’. (1885a 3.361)

‘The introduction of indices into the algebra of logic is the greatest merit of Mr. Mitchell’s system. He writes $F_1$ to mean that the proposition $F$ is true of every object in the universe, and $F_\alpha$ to mean that the same is true of some object. That distinction can only be made in some such way as this.’ (1885a 3.363)

Murphey points out that the generalised concept of ‘IT’ in the ‘New List’ is inadequate in even simple atomic propositions, such as ‘this is red’, since the reference of “this” requires another statement or sign to qualify and individuate. (Murphey, M. 1961 pp.299-302) It is the impact of quantification that allows Peirce to cut through generalisation of existence and designate the ‘thisness’ of an individual entity.

‘One Two Three : Fundamental Categories of Thought and of Nature’ (1885b) is Peirce’s first paper to fully integrate the impact of quantification on his logic of relations and therefore his sign-theory. Improving on the formulation of likeness in the ‘New List’, (1867a) Peirce introduces the concept of the icon:

‘One very important triad is this: it has been found that there are three kinds of signs which are all indispensable in all reasoning; the first is the diagrammatic sign or icon, which exhibits a similarity or analogy to the subject of discourse; the second is the index, which like a pronoun demonstrative or relative, forces the attention to the particular object intended without describing it; the third [or symbol] is the general name or description which signifies its object by means of an association of ideas or habitual connection between the name and the character signified.’ (1885 1.369)

The initial act of recognising ‘similarities’ between qualities, is fundamental to the process of perceptual cognition has now been extended to describe the function of the sign, ‘exhibiting similarity or analogy’. In other words, the icon now anchors the relation of similarity at work in the process of cognition. I am labouring this point because it demonstrates how Peirce’s
increasingly sophisticated classification of signs emerges from his epistemology. It also supports the later arguments that iconicity is fundamental to recognition and to the acquisition of knowledge. This definition of the icon touches on the epistemological distinction between ‘analogy’ and ‘metaphor’.

The index which forces attention onto this particular experience, as opposed to Secondness in general, includes the demonstrative pronoun and the name. The symbol in this paper, as a third, bridges the name and its description, setting the individual within its collective classification. The focus in this paper (1885b) is on the recurrence of the triad as a form of analysis which Peirce applies to reasoning, metaphysics, psychology and other bodies of knowledge. The triad is not only derivative of Kant, but is also according to Peirce, a mathematical proposition; first, the triadic relation is irreducible to dyadic relations and secondly, triadic relations are sufficient to account for any other more complex relation.

‘A road with a fork in it is the analogue of a triple fact, because it brings three termini into relation with one another. A dual fact is like a road without a fork; it only connects two termini. Now no combination of roads without forks can have more than two termini; but any number of termini can be connected by roads which nowhere have knot of more than two ways.’ (1885b 1.372)

Peirce applies his triadic formulation to consciousness:

‘It seems that the true categories of consciousness are: first feeling, the consciousness which can be included with an instant of time, passive consciousness of quality, without recognition or analysis; second, consciousness of an interruption into the field of consciousness, sense of resistance, of an external fact, of another something; third synthetic consciousness, binding time together, sense of learning, thought.’ (1885b 1.377)

In the next paragraph Peirce goes on to say that these fundamental modes of consciousness afford an explanation of the three logical concepts, quality, relation and synthesis. Again the defining characteristics of the metaphysical triad, Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, are repeated in the description of sign, logic and consciousness.

---

1 I am once again reversing Murphey’s thesis that semiotics dictated Peirce’s theory of reality and epistemology. (Murphey, M. 1961)
2 The importance of both iconicity and dissimilarity in the formation of metaphor, is discussed below, chapter four, pp.108,118.
3 This can also be compared to Peirce’s analysis of graphs: ‘It is therefore not surprising to find that beyond the three elements of Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, there is nothing else to be found in the phenomenon.’ (1903a 1.347)

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence 17
Presence and the shock of negation

In 1890 Peirce planned a book, ‘A Guess at the Riddle’, a title taken from Emerson’s poem of the same name, addressing the riddle of the Sphinx, the answer to Œdipus. The opening chapter ‘Trichotomy’ extends the discussion on the usefulness of the triad as ideas:

‘The first is that whose being is simply in itself, not referring to anything nor lying behind anything. The second is that which is what is by force of something to which it is second. The third is that which is what it is owing to things between which it mediates and which it brings into relation to each other.’ (1890 1.356)

The First, the idea associated with Firstness and therefore a phenomenon of apprehension, is absolutely radical in its signification of presence. As opposed to previous accounts of ‘being’ as the function of the copula, ‘being’ in this account has the resonance of presence. Firstness, unlike Secondness and Thirdness, applies to the experience of an imagination free of concepts, laws of logic, acts of discrimination and judgement:

‘It is also something vivid and conscious; so only it avoids being the object of some sensation. It precedes all synthesis and all differentiation; it has no unity and no parts. It cannot be articulately thought: assert it, and it has already lost its characteristic innocence, for assertion always implies a denial of something else. Stop to think of it, and it has flown! ... Only, remember that every description of it must be false to it.’ (1890 1.357)

Freed from the demands of assertion, Firsts cannot be formulated as a proposition or called to account as true or false. Does the experience of Firstness therefore require that we suspend our self-consciousness or is such experience prohibited by signification, as we think only in signs?

Returning to the anecdotal opening to this chapter, I experienced the Alamba artefacts at the Metropolitan Museum as an encounter with such a strong ‘presence’, precisely because as Peirce indicates, Firstness demands a suspension of self-reflexive consciousness. The symbolic construction of self as argument, with an identity based on persistence through time, has to be suspended in the act of apprehension. There can be no pure experience of ‘Firsts’ in our material Euclidean mode of existence.
The forcefulness of the experience that I felt in that crucial encounter with these artefacts, owes its emotional impact, not just to Firstness, but to the very facticity of their existence. Peirce goes on to point out that Firstness is critically important to Secondness:

"But we need not, and must not, banish the idea of the first from the second; on the contrary, the second is precisely that which cannot be without the first. It meets us in such facts as another, relation, compulsion, effect, dependence, independence, negation, occurrence, reality, result. ... The genuine second suffers and yet resists, like dead matter, whose existence consists in its inertia. ... That [the idea] of first is so tender that you cannot touch it without spoiling it; but that of the second is eminently hard and tangible. ... In youth, the world is fresh and we seem free; but limitation, conflict, constraint, and secondness generally, make up the teaching of experience." (1890.1.358)

There are a number of points that I want to draw from this quotation, first of all the dependency of one type of experience on another. The experience of the Second includes the radical deconstructive principle of the First: Firstness is necessary for Secondness. As Peirce clarifies in the later writing, there cannot in practice be pure signs of Firstness, although apprehension of Firstness is fundamental to other categories of experience. This principle also applies to Peirce's semiotics; the trichotomy of signs is hierarchically ordered with the iconic sign as fundamental.

Secondness therefore acts as a 'constraint' on this realm of Firstness - the possible, fantasy, dream, utopia or the pre-conceptualised. The Second is therefore a form of negation that sets the limits of reality and delimits the realm of the possible. This is not the symbol of negation but negation as Second, experienced as the force of resistance between self and world, a shock which defines the boundary of the ego:

"That shock which we experience when anything particularly unexpected forces itself upon our recognition .... Low grades of this shock doubtless accompany all unexpected perceptions; and every perception is more or less unexpected. Its lower grades, are I opine, not without experimental tests of the hypothesis, that sense of externality, of the presence of a non-ego, which accompanies perception generally and helps to distinguish it from dreaming." (1905a 1.332)

This is taken from a section called, "Ego and Non-Ego", in a later paper, 'Phaneroscopy or the Natural History of Concepts', (1905a) which in describing perception as a kind of shock provides a means of distinguishing the boundary between ego and non-ego in terms of
Secondness as a form of negation. Peirce continues to hone down his concept of the index to refer to particular individual entities, borrowing the concept of *haeccity*, from the work of Duns Scotus:

"In truth, any fact is in one sense ultimate - that is to say, in its isolated aggressive stubbornness and individual reality. What Scotus calls the haeccities of things, the hereness and nowness of them, are indeed ultimate. ... Why IT, independently of its general characters, comes to have any definite place in the world, is not a question to be asked, it is simply an ultimate fact." (1890 1.405)

In a paper of 1896, Peirce develops the concept of the indexical in terms of the brute force of opposition: "Existence is that mode of being which lies in opposition to another....". (1896 1.457)

Apart from its importance as referring to the existence of single entities, *haeccity* also address one of the key problems associated with the search for the identity relation at the heart of the act of judgement, the problem of the 'identity of indiscernibles':

"*Hic et nunc* is the phrase perpetually in the mouth of Duns Scotus, who first elucidated individual existence. It is a forcible phrase if understood as Duns did understand it, not as describing individual existence, but as suggesting it by an example of the attributes found in this world to accompany it. Two drops of water retain each its identity and opposition to the other no matter in what or in how many respects they are alike." (1896 1.458)

The question of the identity of indiscernibles follows from a connotative theory of naming, how can we keep two entities apart, if formally they share the same qualities, without resorting to an extension of Euclidean concepts into mental space? The answer to this question is fundamental to the logic of identity statements, reflexivity and the existence of the individual entity. Haeccity is also fundamental to the act of naming, and the belief that the name confers individual existence.

The problem of how to distinguish between two entities which bear the same qualities is important for a theory of naming in which the individual entity is defined through characteristics. Identity of indiscernibles is addressed by Leibniz:

---

1 This gives a semiotic account of Freud's development of the ego through structures of negation, including 'attention' (Freud 1895b p.426); see below chapter two, p.40. This will also be discussed in relation to H.D.'s *Sea Garden* (H.D. 1916) see below chapter six, pp.158-167.

2 This is central to H.D.'s use of names and demonstrative pronouns as indexical, in particular, (H.D. 1926-'7), see below chapter five, pp.141-148.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter one: Signs of Presence
respective. For example, two eggs - for its necessary that some things can be said about one of them that cannot be said about the other, else they could be substituted for one another and there would be no reason why they were not called one and the same. Moreover, if they have diverse predicates the concepts too, in which these predicates are contained, will differ.' (Schmidt, F. 1960 in Wiggins, D. 1980, pp.55-'6)

Resolving this conundrum through introducing co-ordinates of time and space is not accepted by Leibniz as an adequate solution:

'In addition to the difference of time or of place there must always be an internal principle of distinction: although there can be many things of the same kind, it is still the case that none of them are exactly alike ... Thus, although diversity in things is accompanied by diversity of time or place, time and place do not constitute the core of identity and diversity ... it is by means of things that we must distinguish one time or place from another, rather than vice versa ...'. (Leibniz, G.W. 1704 p.230)

Peirce avoids the trap of introducing the individuation of an entity as a quality, 'an internal principle', by resorting to the signifying capacity of the entity. The name or demonstrative pronoun confers haeccity, which through generating the *emotional* interpretant of shock, confirms existence.\(^1\) Of course, Peirce's interpretation applies only to 'existence' as experienced; Peirce avoids the ontological.

Returning to the development of 'A Guess at the Riddle', (1890), Peirce writes of Thirdness: 'The third is that which bridges over the chasm between the absolute first and last, and brings them into relationship.' (1890 1.359) Thirdness is the basis of law, as in the 'New List', (1867a) Peirce goes on to build another assertion on his previous account of the Third:

"Uniformities in the modes of action of things have come about by their taking habits. At present, the course of events is approximately determined by law. In the past that approximation was less perfect; in the future it will be more perfect. The tendency to obey laws has always been and always will be growing.' (1890 1.409)

This is Peirce's answer to the riddle of the sphinx. Evolutionary belief not only underlies his 'realist' view of the mental evolution in accord with the evolving universe but also underpins one of the basic premises of his semiotics, namely that symbolic representations grow from the indexical and iconic: symbols evolve.

\(^1\) *Haecceity* is therefore perceived and not inferred. (1901 3.613)

*Shifting Eyes* chapter one : Signs of Presence 21
Sign, interpretant and semiosis

'A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen.' (1897 2.228)

This quote is taken from an unidentified fragment, c.1897, a definition which builds on the 'New List' theory of the ground is abstracted from the object, instigating a chain of signification. The sign creates in the mind another sign - the interpretant - which may be more 'developed' than the first sign; in other words the act of interpretation produces new knowledge. The interpretant may then be taken as a new object sign which in its turn demands an interpretant, thus generating the chain of semiosis.

Following Peirce’s previous definition of the interpretant as the ‘translator’, Peirce provides a way of considering the act of translation as semiosis, the translated sign being a more developed sign than the first. The chain of signification through sign and interpretant, describes a specific movement in writing, the expansive wave of interpretation-translation:

‘If a Sign is other than its Object, there must exist, either in thought or in expression, some explanation or argument or other context, showing how - upon what system or for what reason the Sign represents the Object or set of Objects that it does. Now the sign and the Explanation together make up another Sign, and since the explanation will be a Sign, it will probably require an additional explanation, which taken together with the already enlarged Sign will make up a still larger Sign; …’ (1910 2.230)

This quotation, taken from a late essay, ‘Meaning’, shifts the act of interpretation into the domain of epistemology, aptly providing a description for writing this thesis. I am setting up such a chain of signs, signs which interpret the semiotics of Peirce and Freud through the writings of H.D. and the photographs and text of Cahun. ‘Explanation’ may not be the best term to describe my process of textual exegesis, but as I write this I am giving expression to interpretants which generate new meaning.

\[1\) For an account of ‘translation’ as fundamental to psychic structure (Freud 1896b p.175), please see below, chapter two, pp.53-56.

Shifting Eyes chapter one : Signs of Presence 22
‘Nomenclature and Divisions of Triadic Relations, as far as they are Determined’, a manuscript continuation of ‘Syllabus’ (1903b) presents Peirce’s mature classification of signs according to the metaphysical division, Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness:

‘Signs are divisible by three trichotomies; first, according as the sign in itself is a mere quality, is an actual existent, or is a general law; secondly, according as the relation of the sign to its object consists in the sign’s having some character in itself, or in some existential relation to that object, or in its relation to an interpretant; thirdly according as its Interpretant represents it as a sign of possibility or as a sign of fact or a sign of reason.’ (1903b 2.243)

This architectonic construction brings together the trichotomy of metaphysical entities, the sign-object relation and the sign-interpretant relation, into an embedding of triadic classifications.1 The second trichotomy, icon, index, symbol, focuses on how the sign relates to the world, the Object:

‘An Icon is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes merely by virtue of characters of its own, and which it possesses, just the same, whether any such Object actually exists or not. It is true that unless there really is such an Object, the Icon does not act as a sign; but this has nothing to do with its character as a sign. Anything whatever, be it quality, existent individual, or law, is an Icon of anything, in so far as it is like that thing and used as a sign of it.’ (1903b 2.247)

‘An Index is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of being really affected by that Object. It cannot, therefore be a Qualisign, because qualities are whatever they are independently of anything else. In so far as the Index is affected by the Object, it necessarily has some quality in common with the Object, and it is in respect to these that it refers to the Object. It does, therefore, involve a sort of Icon, although an Icon of a peculiar kind; and it is not the mere resemblance of its Object, even in these respects which makes it a sign, but it is the actual modification of it by the Object.’ (1903b 2.248)

‘A Symbol is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. It is thus itself a general type or law, that is, is a Legisign. As such it acts through a Replica. Not only is it general itself, but the Object to which it refers is of a general nature. Now that which is general has its being in the instances which it will determine. There must, therefore, be existent instances of what the Symbol denotes, although we must here understand by “existent”, existent in the possibly imaginary universe to which the Symbol refers....’ (1903b 2.249)

I have quoted these definitions in full, since this is Peirce’s definitive taxonomy of the sign-object relation; it also demonstrates how the symbol is dependent on the indexical and the

---

1 Peirce goes on to make a division according to its materiality of signifying character; Qualisign, Sinsign, Legisign. (1903b 2.244-'6)

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence 23
iconic. The first trichotomy refers to the metaphysical characteristics of quality, existence or law. The second trichotomy lays out a triad of modalities by which the sign signifies the object - iconic, indexical, symbolic.

The iconic relation is mimetic, yielding a chain of resemblance comparable with entering a hall of mirrors - I look at you and see the same positioning of eyes, nose and mouth, characteristic of primates. Looking at myself in the mirror, or Narcissus' reflection in a pool of water, is an iconic relation, reversing, point for point, the image of the face. Similarly - the hand-prints of the first cave paintings, the crystalline pattern of salt, the truth of an axiomatic argument, the flow of dream, fantasy, primary processes of the unconscious - bear iconic relations. No guarantor of existence, iconic signification generates the play of images into infinity, the simulacrum par excellence.

Indexical relations on the other hand, involve existence; for example, smoke tells us of the existence of fire, from the symptom we diagnose illness and unconscious memories are indexical signs from which we infer the existence of past experience. The indexical relation therefore includes causality; I speak to you, the air molecules vibrate in your inner ear and you interpret my speech, a complex series of events reliant upon the indexical relation between my speech and your hearing. Causality defines our sense of time, Boltzman's arrow, ageing, our inexorable hurtling towards death. As a sign of Secondness, a name denotes a particular individual, its haecity confers existence of the 'other', someone other than ourselves.

Symbolic relations generalise the existential; we notice the recurrent patterns in events, we make up codes, words and 'PC icons', that operate within their signifying structure -regardless of their status as fiction, fact or fantasy. The object of the law is then the logic of regularity, the regularity of the word or symbol being its use, over and over again; for example company logos, Nike sportswear slogan, 'just do it', flags, New Labour's pink rose, the laws of gravity and relativity. The symbol, represents the action of the law, thus the symbol of negation acts as a logical operator capable of establishing contradiction, re-ordering the iconic and indexical according to the law of the excluded middle. The symbol is therefore capable of upholding sexual difference as it conventionally mapped onto a binary logic, female or male.

1 Absence of the symbol of negation defines the boundary of the unconscious according to Freud, (Freud, 1925b p.239), see below, chapter two, pp.58-63.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence 24
Peirce’s third trichotomy classifies different relations to the interpretant. An argument is a sign of law and therefore has the structure of a generalisation. As we shall see later this is the sign by which Peirce understands the construction of self-identity, self-as a form of inference.¹

Returning to the subject-matter of this thesis Shifting Eyes, self-representation through words and images, I am now in a position to begin to consider ‘words and images’ as signs and look at how they act as representations. Peirce fortuitously uses the photograph as an example of a complex sign.

The photograph as sign

Starting with the second trichotomy based on the sign-object relation - icon, index and symbol - to what extent does the photograph employ this structure of signification?

To recap the icon: ‘... is like that thing and used as a sign of it.’(1903b 2.247) Photographs obviously exhibit this quality of mimetic resemblance and therefore signify as icons.² It cannot be over-stressed that, for Peirce, ‘being like something’ is the repetition of a relation based on ‘likeness’, as it is defined in the ‘New List’, (1867a) : it is not necessarily a visual or pictorial image. As an acoustic image is a mapping of sound, so Peirce is concerned with the logical relation of similarity and its relation to identity. In the case of the photograph, it is the fact that the two-dimensional picture repeats a proportional relation - light reflected off the object releases silver from silver halides in direct proportion to the amount of light received - that constitutes the image.

The truth of the icon, its verisimilitude, is acquired through apprehension. Though Peirce is vehement in his denial of a-priori knowledge, intuition, or any innate mental structure other than the faculty of judgement, the heuristic value of the icon is that it gives rise to new knowledge through ‘direct observation’:

¹For a great distinguishing property of the icon is that by the direct observation of it other truths concerning its object can be discovered than those which suffice to

²This trichotomy, theme, dicisign and argument, repeats the general triadic formulation with respect to the interpretant. Only the argument will be referred to later in chapter three, please see below, 76-77.

³I am quite specifically confining the definition of ‘photograph’ to the tradition of a lens based system with a photo-chemical process, excluding digital generation and manipulation.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence 25
determine its construction. Thus by means of two photographs a map can be drawn, etc. Given a conventional or other general sign of an object, to deduce any other truth than it explicitly signifies, it is necessary, in all cases, to replace that sign by an icon.

(1895a 2.279)

This quotation from, ‘That Categorical and Hypothetical propositions are one in essence, with some connected matters’, c.(1895a) stresses the most obvious feature of the icon namely that this capacity to uphold direct observation provides a criterion of intelligibility. Intelligibility of certain truths, for example, realising how a diagram or a map represents reality, depends upon the recognition of a simple logical relation based on a partial identity relation. The importance of the icon is in a sense a by-product of this characteristic of likeness: it generates new knowledge. As an example of how new knowledge may be generated, Peirce refers to the diagram and the equation:

\[ a_1x + b_1y = n_1, \]
\[ a_2x + b_2y = n_2. \]

This is an icon, in that it makes quantities look alike which are in analogous relations to the problem. In fact, every algebraic equation is an icon, in so far as it exhibits, by means of the algebraic signs (which are not themselves icons), the relations of the quantities concerned.’ (1893 2.282)

Although Peirce stresses the non-visual character of the icon, he resorts to using the language of the visual; ‘look alike’, ‘revealing’ new knowledge. How can the photograph act as revelation? This sounds rather mysterious, when for the most part, we look at the photograph as a recording device or a mnemonic. It is this iconic function which allows us to recognise the photographic image as referring to an object, but revelation has to do with what we notice only as a result of the mediating principle of the camera, the way the play of light on a face may reveal an aspect of the structure or features - eyes, nose, mouth - that we hadn’t noticed before; how the direction of the look caught in an informal snapshot may show us another aspect of personality, as fleeting as the wing of a bird caught in flight.
How can the photograph assert anything about the 'truth' of the object in front of the lens? Peirce points out that 'direct apprehension' of truth requires that the signs are established on the basis of an iconic relation:

'The only way of directly communicating an idea is by means of an icon; and every indirect method of communicating an idea must depend for its establishment upon the use of an icon. Hence, every assertion must contain an icon or set of icons, or else must contain signs whose meaning is only explicable by icons.' (1895a 2.278)

As noted previously, the icon cannot assert anything and in this sense the icon is not itself concerned with truth: 'Icons and indices assert nothing. If an icon could be interpreted by a sentence, that sentence must be in a "potential mood," that is, it would merely say, "Suppose a figure has three sides," etc.' (1893 2.291) But Peirce's claim is that the whole chain of assertion and reasoning must be built on the foundation of the icon, otherwise the whole edifice of language and signification is unintelligible. For speech to be meaningful it must contain icons. Heuristically, the icon provides the foundation of intelligibility and semiosis but is insufficient to determine truth and meaning.

How can we cut across the hall of mirrors, the photographic simulacrum, this endless chain of mimetic babble, the infinite commutative iconic chain of signs? The icon of mere potential is inadequate to refer to anything specific, the icon cannot refer to existence, therefore we need another kind of relation to the world that can give us the shock of Secondness:

'Anything which focuses the attention is an index. Anything which startles us is an index, in so far as it marks the junction between two portions of experience. Thus a tremendous thunderbolt indicates that something considerable happened, though we may not know precisely what the event was.' (1893 2.285)

The thunderbolt names the shift in consciousness. The index becomes a marker of difference in experience that cuts across, qualitatively, the more subtle play of similarity and distinction between icons. This develops the argument quoted previously on the particularity or haeccty of experience. 1 A genuine index acts a guarantor of existence: 'A genuine Index and its Object must be existent individuals (whether things or facts), and its immediate Interpretant

---

1 The iconic play of dream and fantasy is brought to a halt by the shock of reality, the indexical. This concept will prove useful in discussing the development of the ego and Lacan's 'mirror phase', (Lacan 1936) please see below, chapter four, pp.96-98.
must be of the same character.' (1902 2.283) Examples of the genuine index, include the sundial and weather-vane where the casual link is evident; other examples include symptoms and letters annotating a diagram or argument. Photographs are, therefore, not only iconic but also indexical:

‘Photographs, especially instantaneous photographs, are very instructive, because we know they are in certain respects exactly like the object they represent. But this resemblance is due to the photographs having been produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature. In that respect they belong to the second class of signs, those by physical connection.’ (1895b 2.281)

Peirce’s *Grand Logic*, chapter two, ‘The Art of Reasoning’ (1895b) points out that photography is a physical process of cause and effect. Silver separates from the silver halides coated on the negative in direct proportion to the amount of light it receives, a process enhanced by immersion in alkaline chemicals, producing therefore a pictorial replica, but in negative. In this particular case the iconicity of the sign, the photograph, depends upon its indexical relation to the object. The iconic and indexical functions of the photograph are therefore inextricably locked together.

As defined previously, the shocking capacity of the index is what Peirce refers to as an ’experienced limitation’ placed on the repetition of iconic relations; indexical negation is then the act of limiting the iconic chain. The real shock of the photograph lies in the negative rather than the more obviously mimetic prints, the negative holds more directly the light particles that bounced off the lost object and energised the halide molecules into their act of separation. The negative is the guarantor of existence, a sign of existence that sustains the death of the subject in a portrait, the lost moment, history.

We are inundated by photographs, the photograph is a culturally produced image and read, interpreted, as part of our mediated culture. The reading of the photograph is an acquired skill devised according to a generalised code of meaning, an aspect of our visual literacy: the photograph is therefore also a symbol. Truth and falsehood, contradiction and the symbol of negation, are therefore functions of the symbolic capacity of mind to construct

---

1 The photograph as index is the basis of several critical studies on the function of photography, references, chapter seven, p.209.

2 The relation between iconicity and indexicality, gives me a conceptual distinction to analyse the relation between ‘mimesis’ and ‘causality’ in Cahun’s photographs, please see chapter seven.
arguments of reason and continuity, but as Peirce emphasises, the symbolic grows out of the
iconic and indexical: the iconic is guarantor of intelligibility, the indexical the guarantor of
existence. The Art of Reasoning’, (1895b), spells out this trichotomy of signs as an embedded
hierarchical progression.¹

‘A regular progression of one, two, three may be remarked in the three orders of
signs, Icon, Index, Symbol. The Icon has no dynamical connection with the object it
represents; it simply happens that its qualities resemble those of that object, and
excite analogous sensations in the mind for which it is a likeness. But it really stands
unconnected with them. The index is physically connected with its object; they make
an organic pair, but the interpreting mind has nothing to do with this connection,
except remarking it, after it is established. The symbol is connected with its object by
virtue of the idea of the symbol-using mind, without which no such connection would
exist.’ (1895b 2.299)

‘Symbols grow. They come into being by development out of other signs, particularly
from icons, or mixed signs partaking of the nature of icons and symbols. We think
only in signs. These mental signs are of mixed nature; the symbol-parts of them are
called concepts.... A symbol, once in being, spreads among the peoples. In use and in
experience, its meaning grows. ... The symbol may, with Emerson’s sphynx, say to
man,

Of thine eye I am eyebeam.’ (1895b 2.302)

The assertion that symbols develop in particular from icons illuminates the prevalent use of
the ‘icon’ in computer interfaces, the success of advertising, logos of designer clothing and
their relationship to identity. The current emphasis on visual culture is particularly concerned
with the iconic-symbolic.

Icon at the heart of everything

The impact of the icon is not only metaphysical and semiotic, but as cited previously
reflects a particular state of consciousness associated with Firstness, the tearing away the
habitual ways of seeing the world, making way for a radical re-visioning.² It is the space of
fantasy and play, away from the demands of cause and effect and the logic of negation and
contradiction, that can precipitate ‘utopian’ vision.

¹This is particularly useful for describing the relation between signs of the systems unconscious and pre-
conscious as a continuum in Freud’s 1895 schema of psychic structure, chapter two, pp.38, 46-51.
²For one possible form of ‘re-visioning’ as radical and utopian, please see for example the contemporary

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence
As the trichotomy of sign-object relations is embedded in a hierarchical order, so the metaphysical categories of Thirdness and Secondness necessarily involve Firstness:

‘An Icon is a Representamen whose Representative Quality is a Firstness of it as a First. That is, a quality that it has qua thing renders it fit to be a representamen. ...

A Representamen by Firstness alone can only have a similar Object. Thus, a Sign by Contrast denotes its object only by virtue of a contrast or Secondness, between two qualities. A sign by Firstness is an image of its object, and more strictly speaking, can only be an idea. ... But a sign may be iconic, that is, may represent its object mainly by its similarity, no matter what its mode of being. If a substantive be wanted, an iconic representamen may be termed a hypoicon. Any material image, as a painting, is largely conventional in its mode of representation; but in itself, without legend or label it may be called a hypoicon.’ (1902 2.276)

The extraordinary emotional impact that a photograph can convey relies on the indexical relation that can succeed death; however the emotional effect of the photograph relies on the iconic aspect of the photograph that conveys mimesis and Firstness - Firstness radical in its abandonment of the rational co-ordinates of existence, Firstness as the world as Adam first saw it. Although the photograph, like the painting, is largely symbolic, according to the above definition it is also a form of icon, a hypoicon, implying that its interpretant may aim at the radical pre-conceptualisation of Firstness. This is one of the definitions by which Peirce introduces the complex and intriguingly elusive concept of the hypoicon. Peirce presents a trichotomy of the hypoicon, according to the categories of experience:

‘Hypoicons may be roughly divided according to the mode of Firstness of which they partake. Those which partake of simple qualities, or First Firstnesses, are images; those which represent the relations, mainly dyadic, or so regarded, of the parts of one thing by analogous relations in their own parts, are diagrams; those which represent the representative character of a representamen by representing a parallelism in something else, are metaphors.’ (1902 2.277)

The clue to the difference between the diagram and metaphor lies not so much in the difference between ‘analogy’ and ‘parallelism’, since both are dyadic iconic relations, but that the metaphor creates a parallel ‘in something else’. In other words two separate objects or ideas are brought together on the basis of an iconic relation. Metaphors become linked, shifting associations like the iconic chains referred to earlier. Image, diagram and metaphor are semiotic structures based on ‘likeness’ with the capacity to generate to infinity unless

---

1 For further exposition of the relation between the hypoicon and symbol, please see below, chapter four, pp.114-116.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence
stopped by the indexical which precipitates singular existence, through cause and effect or negation.

In the customary hierarchy of the triad, Firstness, Secondness, Thirdness, metaphor depends upon an analogical form, like the diagram, which in turn depends on sharing qualities of Firstness with the object. In this definition, Peirce presents metaphor as a condensed simile based around two separate entities, ideas, or feelings, holding 'the same qualities' in common. The question arises, as to whether this commonality is based on an *a priori* identity relation. The radical feature of the metaphor, however, is that it is capable of generating new knowledge by virtue of its iconicity:

‘For every symbol is a living thing, in a very strict sense that is no mere figure of speech. The body of the symbol changes slowly, but its meaning inevitably grows, incorporates new elements and throws off old ones. But the effort of all should be to keep the essence of every scientific term unchanged and exact; although absolute exactitude is not so much as conceivable. Every symbol is, in its origin, either an image of the idea signified, or a reminiscence of some individual occurrence, person or thing, connected with its meaning, or is a metaphor.’ (1903c 2.222)

This quotation is extracted from, *Syllabus of Certain Topics of Logic*, (1903c) and appears in the *Collected Papers* (1931) under the heading ‘The Ethics of Terminology’. This is a passage in which Peirce concludes that in good scientific language each word should have a single exact meaning and that different concepts should have different terminology. As this quote shows, Peirce also puts forward the notion that the symbol changes and grows through incorporation, following the previous account of the evolution of the symbol, in which Peirce puts forward the hypothesis that the symbol may evolve from the metaphor, the hypoicon. Given that the relationship of ‘analogy’ is one of Firstness, and is the principle relation of the diagram, it points to the possibility that this growth in new scientific language is itself metaphorical.

This paragraph continues: ‘...if the conceptions are strictly analogous in their principal suggestions, this is rather helpful than otherwise, provided always that the different meanings are remote from one another...’. (1903c 2.222) The idea here is that metaphor based on seeking analogy, for example ‘I’m so green’, draws an analogy between the youthful naiveté...
of the 'self and the green of a sapling, but is interesting only to the extent that this brings in another dimension, for example that this person is as static as a rooted plant. This also shows how the metaphor can be conventionalised, so that green codifies naivété as a generalised symbol.

Another passage points out how the symbol incorporates both indexical and iconic signs through use of a simile, drawing parallels between images:

'Consequently, a constituent of a symbol may be an Index, and a constituent may be an Icon. A man walking with a child points his arm up into the air and says, “There is a balloon.” The pointing arm is an essential part of the symbol without which the latter would convey no information. But if the child asks, “What is a balloon,” and the man replies, “it is something like a great big soap bubble,” he makes the image a part of the symbol.' (1902 2.293)

The importance of these quotations is that they show that the dictum, 'symbols grow from icons and indices', implies more than simply a change in function of the icon and index. Yes, the symbol arises from the mental symbolic structuring of signs, but to make recourse to the 'image', as above, reinforces a more radical view of how conceptualisation changes. It is the conceptual change that is of greater significance than the acquisition of more empirical facts. 'It is something like a great soap bubble', is an act of comparison that structures a simile which anticipates the formation of a symbol. Metaphor, however, is more radical, in that disjunctions can be clashed together to produce a new nonsensical image that does not easily accede to symbolic ordering. The metaphor or hypoicon, unlike the symbol, tolerates non-law like regularity. For example, 'rock-rose', as a metaphor brings together two terms which could imply contraries; the hypoicon is not simply based on the substitution of one image for another. Another way of describing this feature of the hypoicon is to say that it tolerates negation.

Returning to the disjunctive qualities of the Alamba masks and objects, their heterodox wholeness defied my interpretation of the object as a type of symbol. I could not occupy the position of the symbolic interpretant; it was as if the object required me to suspend my symbolic self, the self as argument that determines its interpretant through rule:

1 'Rock-rose' is a drawn from H.D.'s poem 'Garden', (H.D. 1916 pp. 24-25) as discussed below, chapter six, p.163.

Shifting Eyes chapter one: Signs of Presence

32
‘A Symbol is a Representamen whose Representative character consists precisely in its being a rule that will determine its Interpretant. All words, sentences, books and other conventional signs are Symbols.’ (1902 2.292)

‘A Symbol is a law, or regularity of the indefinite future. Its Interpretant must be of the same description; and so must be also the complete immediate Object, or meaning. But a law necessarily governs, or is “embodied in” individuals, and prescribes some of their qualities.’ (1902 2.293)

The symbol indicates a growing law-like regularity in the evolution of the Universe, a viewpoint that underpins the cosmology of Peirce’s late work. Although the hypoicon is also a complex signifying structure, it is only the symbol which acts as a law through determining qualities of particular instances. The hypoicon on the other hand, does not obey law-like regularity.

Peirce’s semiotics provides a means of representing the phenomena of experience that distinguishes between different metaphysical registers, Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness. Self awareness implicates all of these registers, including the most elusive, Firstness. In order to find a means of representing the complex signifying structure of the self, the next chapter turns to Freud’s earliest theories of ego-development, theories which Freud conceived in terms of structural conceptualisations of the psyche based on signs.
Chapter Two: Psyche and Sign

Freud’s theory of signs

Psychoanalysis, the ‘talking cure’, taking seriously suffering, is based on a theory of listening to the other; psychoanalysis is founded on the belief that speech, dreams, symptoms, slips of the tongue, jokes and denials are meaningful. Freud’s interpretation of the rhetoric and poetics of language - tropes, metaphor, metonymy, catachresis and figuration - as signs capable of revealing unintended significance constituted a revolution in theories of mind. Freud denied ever being a philosopher, but in developing the theories of psychoanalysis, Freud constructed hypothetical schemas of the structure of the psyche based on both physiological and semiotic hypotheses, their topology reflecting both the energetic and semiotic definitions of psychic processes.

The following quotation from ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’ (Freud, S. 1900b) is a concise statement of Freud’s innovative theory of interpretation; rather than thinking of dreams as a lexicon of known symbols, Freud conceives of dreams as a translation of the dream-thoughts into another mode of representation, whose characters and syntactic laws have to be inferred:

‘... The dream-content seems like a transcript of the dream-thoughts into another mode of expression, whose characters and syntactic laws it is our business to discover by comparing the original and the translation. ... The dream-content, on the other hand, is expressed as it were in a pictographic script, the characters of which have to be transposed individually into the language of the dream-thoughts. ... we can only form a proper judgement of the rebus if we put aside criticisms such as these of the whole composition and its parts and if, instead, we try to replace each separate element by a syllable or word that can be represented by that element in some way or other. ... A dream is a picture-puzzle of this sort ...’. (1900b p.278)

Applying the same method of unravelling the dream that Freud developed in relation to the symptoms of hysteria, Freud traces chains of word and image associations to their origin in unconscious wishes; dreams are therefore the ‘royal road’ to the self. (1900b p.608) The unconscious chains of the ‘pictographic’ script obey the syntactical relations that Freud describes as ‘displacement’, ‘condensation’ and ‘dramatisation’.¹ Freud’s aim is to deduce the

¹ Condensation and displacement will be discussed in chapter four, as below, pp.101-106.

Shifting Eyes chapter two: Psyche and Sign
modality of psychical forces of the unconscious from the semiotics of representation. (1900b p.1)

This chapter looks at Freud’s three distinct semiotic theories, 1891, 1895 and 1925, from the point of view of C.S. Peirce’s semiotics of the sign-object relation in order to address the problematic question raised by all of Freud’s semiotic theories, what precisely is the relation between the sign systems of the unconscious and the syntactical laws governing speech?*

Freud’s first semiotic theory was developed through his clinical work on aphasia and published as a monograph, *Zur Aufussung der Aphasien* (1891a) which attempts to explain the relation between language and perception on the basis of evidence of the effect of brain lesions on speech.† Freud formulates three types of aphasia; *word aphasia* attributed to speech confusion, *agnostic aphasia* that results in disturbances in object recognition, and *asymbolic aphasia*, a loss of intelligibility and meaning.

In order to explain *asymbolic aphasia* Freud develops a theory of how language relates to the world in terms of presentations of words and objects, ‘Wortvorstellungen’ and ‘Objektvorstellungen’. (1891a p.79) The basis of Freud’s semiotics of 1891 is the signifying term, ‘Vorstellung’, which represents both the phenomenological object and language. What kind of signifying term is the ‘Vorstellung’? ‘Vorstellung’ appears in the work of Helmholtz and the philosophers J. F. Herbart and W.F. von Volkmann. Freud adopts several concepts of psychic structure and process from Herbart, in particular the basic premise that representations define the co-ordinates of space and time and that the underlying structure of the psyche bears a mathematical description.‡ Herbart’s conceived of rows or chains of psychic representations, ‘Vorstellungen’, describing a space, its dimensions limited by the then current theories of geometry. Freud developed a graphic notation for his branching chains of complexes of presentations, ‘Vorstellungen’, which resembles the then new schematics of molecular valencies. (fig.1, Appendix A)

---

*The main hypothesis here challenges Lacan’s assumption of primary processes to the tropes of language, this will be developed in chapter four, please see below, pp.110-112.
†The relevant extract, ‘Words and Things’, (1891b), was appended by Strachey to ‘The Unconscious’, (1915a).
‡This is the subject of Burgoyne B. and Leader, D. ‘Freud’s Scientific Background’ in (Leader, D. 2000 pp. 11-48) which traces the history of the misrepresentation of Freud’s relation to Helmholtz, who was not simply a materialist, and to Herbart.

Shifting Eyes  chapter two : Psyche and Sign
Word-presentations are broken down into pictures of qualities related to sensory perception; the ‘Klangbild’ of sound, ‘Bewegungsbild’ of movement, ‘Schriftbild’ of writing, and the ‘Wortbild’ and ‘Lesebild’ of reading. The most important link, represented by a double bond, lies between the sound-image and the visual. Object associations are similarly represented as a complex association of sensations, but in the case of the object complex the chain of attributes is conceived as open-ended, as compared to the closed chain of the word.

What kind of signifying chain links the molecular network? Those terms on the side of pictures, ‘Bilden’, such as ‘Klangbild’, ‘acoustic-image’, present a concept closer to Peirce’s icon than a pictorial theory of representation. As a sensory representation caused by the movement of air - the vibration of the ear drum - the acoustic-image is an indexical sign. The open chain of object associations unfolds as our apprehension of the object increases, giving rise to chains of qualities, that are both iconic, referencing Firstness and also contiguous, indexical, referencing Secondness. The word chain however at some point will hit the existential terms ‘this’ and ‘that’, conferring specific identity on the single object; the indexical that in Peirce’s thinking allows us to confer a unique identity, its haecceity.

In describing how infants learn to speak, Freud draws on an imitative theory, comparing what they hear, the speech-image and its associated physical feeling, with the physical legacy of what they have heard before, which includes their own attempts at speaking. This embodiment of the word is based on Freud’s belief that speech is registered in the neuronal systems as ‘motor-speech innervations’, ‘Sprachbewegungsvorstellung’ actual modifications of the physical neuronal system. (1891a p.75 ; 1891b pp.210,211) Speech is therefore always associated with bodily signs: innervations are indices of experience. The key concept, which reappears in the ‘Project’, (1895b) is that the infant repeats what is heard until there is an ‘identity’ between the speech-innervations and those innervations that accompany the new acoustic image. Freud therefore presupposes the ability to discern similarity and to seek identity, as if the template of experience once formed seeks its own mimetic echo.

Intelligibility and meaning in language depend on the indexical link between language and the world, the relation between words and objects, as the foundation for the evolution of symbolic language:

___

1 That is an act of comparison central to the theory of judgment.

Shifting Eyes chapter two : Psyche and Sign 36
A word, however, acquires its meaning by being linked to an "object-presentation", at all events if we restrict ourselves to a consideration of substantives. The object-presentation itself is once again a complex of associations made up of the greatest variety of visual, acoustic, tactile, kinesthetic and other presentations. Philosophy tells us that an object-presentation consists in nothing more than this - that the appearance of there being a "thing" [eines "Dinges"] to whose various "attributes" these sense-impressions bear witness is merely due to the fact that in enumerating the sense-impressions which we have received from an object, we also assume the possibility of there being a large number of further impressions in the same chain of associations. The object-presentation is thus seen to be one which is not closed and almost one which cannot be closed, while the word-presentation is seen to be something closed, even though capable of extension.' (1891a p.80 ; 1891b pp.213-'4)

From whom does Freud draw his theory of language and reference? As a student Freud attended Brentano's lectures in Logic and Philosophy during 1875. In an essay entitled 'Mental Phenomena in General', Brentano deems that the 'subject' is merely a concept of linguistic analysis and has no ontological status: "...we never encounter that something of which these things are properties. It is a fiction to which no reality of any sort corresponds, or whose existence could not possibly be proved, even if it did exist. (Brentano, F. 1973 pp. 11, 291) Similarly, 'The thing', 'Das Ding', of Freud's schema, 1891, has no ontological status.

It is, however, to the philosopher J.S. Mill's descriptive theory of language that Freud makes direct reference. In Mill's theory of naming, names are connotative, signifying through all the associated predicates as opposed to a small class of essential qualities. Mill on the class of 'men' writes, it is: "...because they [men] possess and signify that they possess certain attributes. These seem to be corporeity, animal life, rationality and a certain external form, which for distinction we call the human. Every existent thing, which possessed all these attributes would be called a man...". (Mill, J.S. 1843 p.19) Individuation emerges from these classes of qualities, a viewpoint which gives one answer to Freud's fundamental problem, how to organise sensations into entities.

In Freud's valency schema, 1891, as noted above, the connection between the visual signs of the object and the sound-image associated with the word, is privileged above other associations. This ranking of relations has the potential to form a semiotic theory of how perceptual signs can become parts of spoken language. Peirce's semiotics re-describes the primacy of this key bond, between visual signs of the object and the acoustic image, as a

1 Freud attended Brentano's lectures on Mill and metaphysics. (Freud, S. 1871-1881 p.66)
2 Freud (1891b pp.213-'4) makes specific reference to J.S. Mill, A System of Logic, 1843 Book I. Freud also translated vol. 12 of the collected works of J.S. Mill under the auspices of Gomperz.
3 My insert.

Shifting Eyes chapter two: Psyche and Sign
complex signifying structure based on both an indexical and symbolic relation. The visual aspects of the object association are both iconic and indexical; as perceptions they have a 'likeness' to the object, as photons or waves of light, they are causally related to the object. Freud's analysis of aphasia grounds words as experiences of the body, the acoustic-image is not only a part of the symbolic order of speech but also an index of the experience of speech in the body. This is the key concept of Freud's 1891 schema, that speech is experienced as a modification of the nervous system: written into the body. Intelligibility, meaning and significance are therefore founded in this key double bond, the indexical-symbolic, as it is graphically represented. Peirce's theory of the symbol as evolving through the incorporation of indices and icons re-describes this conceptual link, that which for J.S. Mill is only a question of naming.

In the above schema, 1891, the word complex is not split up into a subject-predicate division, the phenomenological concept of the object does not necessarily imply a 'subject' to which these qualities are attributed. The 'thing', 'das Ding', is therefore epistemological, representing that which is not yet known, as opposed to an ontological lack. Although Freud describes the word-chain as 'closed' though 'capable of extension', the limit of the chain is language itself.

A taxonomy of signs

Amidst a lengthy correspondence with his colleague and friend Wilhelm Fliess, Freud sketched a schema for the structure of the psyche, posthumously published as 'Project for a Scientific Psychology'. (1895a and 1895b) Freud tries to marry a neuronal theory of the brain with a semiotic theory of mental structure, attempting to avoid both the pitfalls of reductionism and parallelism, reductionism implying that the physical can account entirely for the mental, parallelism implying a strict one-to-one correlation between physical and mental events. Freud, following Hughlings Jackson, proposes a mental-physical correspondence as a relation between processes: 'It is probable that the chain of physiological events in the nervous system does not stand in causal connection with the psychical events. ... Accordingly,

1 Rather than the Masson, J (ed) of the Freud-Fliess correspondence, (Freud, S. 1887-1904) all references are to (Freud, S. 1887-1902a and b) giving a direct relation between the German and English texts.
the psychical is a process parallel to the physiological - a "dependent concomitant". (1891c p.214)

The schema, 1895, is an icon of Freud's attempt to bring together two different theories of representation, the neuronal representation of pathways of energy and the semiotic representation of the sign systems of perception, memory and speech. The precise relation between mental and physical processes is left open to question. This schema 1895 attempts to improve on the 1891 valency theory by differentiating the 'images' of word and object complexes into a semiotic theory of signs; traces, 'Spurren', signs-of-perception, 'Wahrnehmungszeichen'; memory-pictures, 'Erinnerungsbildenge'; pictures-of-movement, Bewegungsbilde and signs-of-speech, 'Sprachszeichen', which carry the physical quality of verbal memories. Freud does not theorise precisely the modes by which these signs signify except through this choice of terminology, but the terms he employs can be interpreted within Peirce's trichotomy of sign-object relations. The signs of perception are both iconic and indexical, the trace 'Spurren' of memory emphasising the indexical and the 'Erinnerungsbild' giving primacy to iconic value. These signs form a palimpsest with the representation of neuronal networks. The result is a schema of separate systems of signs ordered according to different principles, the systems of the Unconscious, Pre-conscious and Consciousness.

The structures of neurones are divided according to the proposed mental functions of perception and memory. Freud postulates that there are two levels, the $\psi$ of perception and the $\psi$ of memory. The difference between $\phi$ and $\psi$ is accounted for by their respective ability to conduct an electric impulse, quantifiable as the resistance or 'facilitation' of neuronal contacts. Topologically, $\psi$ interfaces directly with the body while $\phi$ mediates external reality and therefore belongs to the sense organs.

As in the later 'telescope' analogue, 1900, the apparatus as a whole obeys the principle of constancy of energy. The energy input into the perceptual system $\phi$ is

---

1 It is essential to refer to the original German in order to gain the full force of Freud's semiotics; Strachey's translation of 'Zeichen' as 'indicator' avoids placing Freud in the tradition of realist semioticians.

Shifting Eyes chapter two: Psyche and Sign 39
‘transferred’ as a specific quantity Q through the network of neurones. Memory is explained as preferential connections built up through repetition or habit, which bring about a permanent change in the highly resistant neuronal structure of ψ. This inner system ψ is therefore in a different state of ‘bound energy’ Qₐ, innervated in proportion to resistance. But the schema also requires that there is a distinction of ‘quality’ to this energy Q as opposed to merely a registration of quantity. Although ‘quality’ is related to the periodicity or wavelength of energy, Freud’s choice of terminology suggests that ‘quality’ is an indication of the phenomenological character of experience, Firstness or Secondness. It is the representational demands of the schema itself which leads Freud to introduce another system of neurones, ω, located between φ and ψ.

In this imagined topography perceptions enter the psyche via the sense organs of φ, energising the neuronal network. A transference of energy takes place from φ to ψ which somehow results in a registration of ‘quality’ difference in ω that is indexical of the transference of energy. It is both their origin in the system φ and their residual perceptual characteristics which gain the attention of consciousness. But signs of the quality of perception are also reality-signs, ‘Realitätszeichen’, indices which indicate their origin in the external world, unlike iconic signs which originate from the memory ψ systems and gain perceptual qualities through regression. (1895a p.460)

In the schema, 1895, Freud represents the flow of energy through the psychical systems as transformations of sign relations. The basic premise is that the overall system discriminates according to the pleasure principle. Excessive build up of energy is associated with unpleasure, while the dissipation of excess is pleasurable. Since perceptions enter the psychic systems of φ with a level of energy exceeding the capacity of ψ, Freud proposes a psychical function of ‘attention’, which inhibits the motor-discharge of these energised neurones of perception. It is this process of ‘attention’ which is responsible for binding the energy Q as Qₐ such that only a small amount of energy is then conducted into ψ. This dissipation of energy from φ to ψ generates a complexity according to a mathematical principle which Freud relates to Fechner’s Law. (1895b p.376) This is important since it

---

1 ‘Transference’, ‘Übertragung’ is first used in this paper (1895a p.399, 1895b p.375) to describe an energetic and semiotic process; it is this structure which underpins Freud’s later clinical development of the phenomenon of ‘transference’ within analysis.

2 A fortuitous parallel with Peirce’s use of ‘habit’, please see chapter three, pp.76-78.

Shifting Eyes chapter two: Psyche and Sign
emphasises the law-like regularity of dissipation of energy and underlies his later hopes that the laws of logic are founded on biological rules.¹

‘Attention’ as an inhibitor and deflector of excess energy protects both the preliminary act of judgement in wish-fulfilment and the later processes of judgement involved in cognizing perceptual complexes.⁸ ‘Attention’ also accounts for how we may experience a deflection of pain during trauma or extreme conditions. The binding effect of ‘attention’ lies at the heart of this account of ego formation as a differentiation in neuronal structure:

‘The ego learns first that it must not cathect the motor images (with consequent discharge), until certain conditions have been fulfilled on the perceptual side. It learns further that it must not cathect the wishful idea beyond a certain degree, because, if it does, it will deceive itself in a hallucinatory manner. If, however, it respects these two restrictions and turns its attention to the new perceptions, it has a prospect of attaining the desired satisfaction. (1895b p.426)

The ego has to learn not to immediately cathect the mnemic-images of wishes generated in $\psi$, and to delay the experience of discharging the energy until the right perceptual complex has been brought about in the real world. In other words the ego has to focus ‘attention’, to bind the energy of these mnemic-images and stop the iconic mnemic images associating themselves with indices of perceptions and therefore becoming conscious as hallucinations. ‘Attention’, acting to delimit iconic association, is an example of an indexical form of negation.

Wish-motivation is teleological only in so far as repetition of ‘satisfaction’ fulfils the necessities of life.⁶ In the section dealing with normal $\psi$ processes Freud describes the way in which the ego dissipates the intensity of energy away from wishful images as a process of transference.

Since these acts of comparison intrinsic to ‘judgement’ take place at first entirely within the memory systems of the psyche, it is possible to see how the psyche generates fallacies of hallucination. In order to avoid ‘regression’, the ego has to bind the energy of mnemonic images so that the perceptual cortex is cathected instead. This produces a shift towards the demands of reality as opposed to generating pleasurable memories, a shift from the iconic to the indexical:

¹ Compare with Peirce, as above, chapter one, p.10.
⁸ Cognizing, ‘erkennen’, (1895a p.425) is closer to knowledge as opposed to recognition.
⁶ ‘Befriedungserlebnis’ (1895a p.448).
'Thus judgement is a ψ-process which is only made possible by the inhibition exercised by the ego and which is brought about by the difference between the wishful cathexis of a memory and a similar perceptual cathexis. It follows from this that when these two cathexes coincide, the fact will be a biological signal for ending the activity of thinking and for initiating discharge.' (1895b pp.390-1)

'Judgement' between perceptual-signs and memory-pictures stops only when 'identity' has been attained, which somehow constitutes a 'biological signal', a term distinct from a sign in Freud’s semiotics.

Is it possible to interpret this biological signal, as a sign for identity? and if so, what kind of sign? As Peirce points out, the identity relation is itself an icon, however, the function of identity within an argument will operate as a symbol. In the processes of judgement, identity stops the otherwise endless riffling through the iconic chains of the 'Bildern' in the memory systems, to match the signs of memory with the signs of perception.

Judgement, attention and the birth of the ego

In a letter to Fliess, 25th. May, 1895, Freud cites a recently published work on judgement as a psychological function by Wilhelm Jerusalem, *Die Urtheilsfunktion* (1895).

'...I have been greatly interested in a book by W. Jerusalem on the function of judgement, because it contains two of my main ideas, that judgement consists of a transposition into motor phenomena, and that inner perception can have no claim to be "evidential".' (1895b p.120)

Both Jerusalem and Freud emphasise the importance of emotional processes as the basis of the act of perceptual judgement and both presuppose a non-individuated precondition of expression which only subsequently, through the act of judgement, takes on names and the expressions of language. Jerusalem writes on this state of apprehension, giving as example, the perception of a tree in blossom:

---

1 'Man kann davon ausgehen, daß das Zusammenfallen beider besetzungen zum biologischen Signal wird, den Denkant zu beened und Abfuhr eintreten zu lassen.' (1895a pp.413)

2 The similarities and differences between Freud and Jerusalem’s hypotheses of judgment are discussed by Geeradyn, F. in his study: *Freud’s Project, the Roots of Psychoanalysis* (1997) ; see also Kaltenbeck, F. (1985).
‘When perceiving a blossoming tree, I can record an image of it even though I am ignorant of its name and I have never passed a judgement on it. The idea of the blossoming tree reveals itself as an entity and the idea of the tree may call up various associations, in accordance with the disposition of the person performing the ideational act.’ (Jerusalem, W. 1895 pp.78-’9 in Geeradyn, F. 1997 p.233)

Freud, similarly, proposes that perceptions are recorded and then subject to naming through the act of judgement which entails the subject-predicate division; Freud also proposes that this represents - in Peirce’s sense of taking a representative - the Neuron N and quantity of energy Q.¹ The other tie-up between Freud and Jerusalem is the importance they give to the ‘motoric’ or physical legacy of expression, it is the signs within our own bodies which allow us to recognise what we perceive, the indexical signs of our own bodily experience - thus according to Jerusalem:

‘The movements of one’s own body have, ever since early childhood, created the apperception-mass which had to interpret the movements of external objects...the stimulated ideational masses are themselves the recollected volitional impulses.’ (Jerusalem, W. p.94 in Geeradyn, F. p.237)

Jerusalem’s concept involves projection of bodily movements onto the external world whereas Freud’s ‘Project’ is founded on an imitative iconic relation. This is another example of how mimesis, mimicking another becomes integrated into our self, making the iconic relation to others both the ‘origin and the aim’ of the drive, and setting the scene for the recognition of the indexical reality of the other.²

‘While one is perceiving W, one copies the movements oneself, that is to say, one innervates one’s own motor image (which has been aroused to coincide with the perception) so strongly that one actually performs the movement. Thus one can speak of a perception as having an “imitative value.”’ (1895b p.395)

Freud’s account of judgement between the complexes of neurones is represented by an act of comparison between the perceptual neurones (a+b) and those of the cathected or energised memory complex (a+c). Again the act of judgement depends upon recognising the icon of

¹Geeradyn points to Jerusalem’s equivalent of a psychological substratum of judgment takes place ; the ‘root’ from which emotion and language are as yet differentiated : “... a process is expressed by two root sounds [of which] one root is spontaneously invested with the activity (and becomes the thing), while the other signifies the activity of the thing”...”. (1997 p. 239)
²This relation to the ‘other’ will be developed in terms of Freud’s theory of narcissism and Lacan’s ‘mirror phase’, see chapter three, pp.80-83 and chapter four pp. 98.

Shifting Eyes chapter two : Psyche and Sign 43
identity and in particular here, identity between the occurrence of ‘a’ in the complexes of perception and the reoccurrence of ‘a’ in the memory complex:

‘If we compare the W-complex with other W-complexes, we are able to analyse it into two portions: a neurone ‘a’ which on the whole remains the same and a neurone ‘b’ which on the whole varies. Language later applies the term “judgement” to this process of analysis, and discovers the resemblance which exists between the nucleus of the ego on the one hand and between the changing cathexes in the pallium and the inconstant portion of the perceptual complex on the other; language describes neurone a as a “thing” [das Ding] and neurone b as its activity or attribute - in short, as its “predicate”.’ (1895a p.413, 1895b p.390)

Freud takes the subject-predicate division of language as the fundamental relational structure between signs even in the ‘ψ’ systems of the Ucs. The ‘Thing’, ‘das Ding,’ corresponds to the Aristotelian tradition of substance to which attributes are predicated, but as in the schema, 1891, the ontology of the ‘thing’ is not ontological but linguistic. At the heart of the act of judgement is the ability to pick out the recurrence of a within the different neuronal complexes, that is to recognise the identity relation.

Absolute identity is not possible, since, as Freud says, one neurone may ‘stand in’ for a complex; how then are we to understand what is being compared? In terms of Peirce’s semiotics the comparison takes place between structures which hold together indices and operate primarily as icons, complex structures which may be better described as hypoicons. These hypoicons are then brought into the act of comparison, searching for the icon of identity. Does, a, the constant, act as a class concept to signify the kind of object perceived? and does this lead to the self-defining predicate that confers the existence of a single entity? Another way of formulating the semiotics of this, using Peirce, would be to try to formulate the relation between the existence of the individual entity, its haecceity, and the capacity to denote the genus, or symbolic name. Freud, however, does not use the concept of individual existence; Freud’s attachment to Mill’s connotative theory of names does not include a theory of demonstrative pronouns.

Only one of these hypoiconic complexes, however, is going to gain consciousness. The kind of battle that ensues in this act of judgement is governed by the production of displeasure, the wishful complex abandoned in favour of the perceptual complex signifies a displacement of energy in favour of the object: the dominance of a particular representation.

1W- is an abbreviation of “Wahrnehmung-”; therefore referring to the Perception-complex.

Shifting Eyes chapter two: Psyche and Sign
within the act of judgement is therefore the action of desire.\textsuperscript{1} In the section on remembering and judgement Freud hypothesises as to how the infant perceives a 'fellow human-being', 'Nebenmensch':

'The theoretical interest taken in it is then further explained by the fact that an object of a similar kind was the subject's first satisfying object (and also his first hostile object) as well as his sole assisting force. For this reason it is on his fellow-creatures that a human being first learns to cognize.\textsuperscript{2} The perceptual complexes arising from this fellow-creature will in part be new and non-comparable - for instance, its features (in the visual sphere); but other visual perceptions (for instance, the movements of its hands) will coincide in the subject with his own memory of quite similar visual impressions of his own body - a memory with which will be associated memories of movements experienced by himself. The same will be the case with other perceptions of the object; thus, for instance, if the object screams, a memory of the subject's own screaming will be aroused and will consequently revive his own experiences of pain. Thus the complex of a fellow-creature falls into two portions. One of these gives the impression of being a constant structure and remains as a coherent "thing"; while the other can be understood by the activity of memory - that is, can be traced back to information about the subject's own body.' (1895a pp.415-'6, 1895b pp.393-'4)

I have quoted this substantial section because it gives a remarkable insight into how Freud conceived of the developing sense of an 'other' from the point of view of the developing subject. Our understanding of the pain of an other is understood by associating what we hear and see of an other's expression of pain with our own internal body-images. Inverting this relation, we can then say that our self-perception becomes the guarantor of our knowledge about the feelings and existence of someone else, a guarantee based on physical embodiment, the indexical signs of feelings. It is also striking that new knowledge is referred constantly to what is already known.\textsuperscript{iii} This theory of mimicry also includes speech:

'In consequence of the impulse to imitate which emerges during the process of judging, it is possible to find a report of a movement [of one's own] attaching to this sound-image. So that this class of memories too can now become conscious. It remains to associate deliberately produced sounds with perceptions.' (1895b p.423)

\textsuperscript{1} Freud takes this concept directly from the work of Herbart, J.F. (1816, I.3 and III, 2.4), and (1824-'5, I, 2.4) Thus where the translation by Mosbacher and Strachey refers to the 'craving' (Freud, S. 1895b p.418) of the ego, the corresponding German, 'Begierde' (1895a p.440) reveals that the 'Project' is concerned with the formation of desire and its relation to wish-fulfillment; as discussed by Burgoyne and Leader in (Leader, D. 2000 pp.40 and 42)

\textsuperscript{2} 'Am Nebenmenschen lemt darum der mensch erkennen...'. (1895a p.415)

\textsuperscript{iii} The emergence of new knowledge here takes two forms, the iconic revelation as described by Peirce, see above, pp.25-27 and the intervention of the indexical which breaks up the iconic chain forming new interpretants that lead to changes of 'habit'.

\textit{Shifting Eyes} chapter two: Psyche and Sign
In terms of psychical processes, the mnemonic systems provide the template for later thought processes. The whole process of mimicry is iconic: what is being sought is likeness. The interesting question arises when such a likeness has been achieved. Does this confer existence? The key lies in Freud’s emphasis on tying new perceptions to memories that are indexical. What is being sought is not only identity at the iconic level but also an identity between motor-innervations, indices. Recognition of otherness is an encounter with the index which stops our endless fantasmatic play iconic chains of apprehension.

Freud’s account of cognizing another ‘fellow-creature’, ‘Nebenmensch’, depends on being able to recognize that, although uniquely different, the other belongs to the same ‘kind’ as oneself. Again this raises the difference between an awareness of the indexical as it appears in the singular other, haecceity, and the symbolic genus. How do we recognize the constant without having an a priori apprehension of identity and difference? How do we then recognize that the structure of the complex remains as a coherent ‘thing’? Does the answer lie in an a priori subject-predicate structure of the psyche? Freud does not say that the subject-predicate division is inherent in the neuronal structure but rather that the differentiation, between ‘that which is constant’ and ‘that which is variable’, is ‘later’ called the subject-predicate division: it is the structure of difference which supports and enables syntactical language.

Speaking of signs

How does Freud in the schema, 1895, conceptualise ‘speech-signs’ as the means by which thoughts may become conscious? Because Freud has the idea that the acquisition of speech is imitative, based in physical bodily experience, speech and motor-signs are intimately connected; icons are intimately connected to indices:

‘These [speech-associations Sprachassoziation] consist in the linking of ψ-neurones with neurones which are employed by auditory images [Klangvorstellungen] and are themselves intimately associated with motor speech-images [motorischen Sprachbildern]. These speechassociations have the advantage over others of possessing two further characteristics: they are circumscribed (i.e., are few in number) and exclusive. The excitation proceeds from the auditory image [Klangbild] to the verbal image [Wortbild], and thence to discharge.’ (1895a pp.421-2, 1895b pp.443-4)
Speech-signs signify verbal memories through their indexical association with motor-speech images rooted in the physical sensations of the body. The link is existential if not causal. Distinctions between signs, pictures ‘Bilder’ and presentations ‘Vorstellungen’, suggest different types of signs with different signifcator possibilities. Signs which can signify the primary processes of condensation and displacement may evolve to signify as parts of verbal language. The ‘Bilder’ and ‘Zeichen’, may become part of complex semiotic structures, such as hypoicons. It is these sign structures which then act as the tropes of figurative language - metaphor, metonymic chains, synecdoche and catachresis.

Physical residues of speech-signs give rise to consciousness, otherwise consciousness can only be gained by regression to perception, therefore confusing reality. The categorical split between unconscious primary processes and the dialogic discourse of speech involving parts of language, such as possessive pronouns, names, definite articles, the symbol of negation, can be seen to emerge from the traces, pictures and presentations. This kind of hierarchy in the significatorv capacity of signs is precisely the kind of embedding in which Peirce orders the icon, index and symbol. If we follow through Peirce’s argument as to how the symbol depends upon the presence of indexical terms for reference and an iconic structure for intelligibility, then we have a conferring of Freud’s theory that mimesis is the founding principle by which the infant learns - as we have seen above - in both the processes of perception and cognitio:

'Thus, thought which is accompanied by the cathexis of indications of thought-reality or of indications of speech is the highest and most secure form of cognitive thought-process'. (1895b p.431)

Confrontation with the indexical, frees our ego from the confusions of wish-fulfilment and protects us from the unpleasure of a delusional world.

It is Freud’s hope that ‘logical thinking’ will one day be firmly anchored into the biological : ‘...in what do logical errors consist? Briefly, in disregarding the biological rules that govern trains of thought.’(1895b p431) Biological rules are indices which in acting as limitations on the iconic play of fantasy and wish-fulfilment, constitute the negation of primary defences. The error would be to ignore the ‘signal’, the index which brings to a halt

\(^1\) However it is crucial that semiotic theories of psyche do not assimilate primary processes to the tropes of language ; Peirce’s general sign theory, as opposed to Saussure’s theory of the linguistic signifier and signified, preserves the distinct semiotic relations of the unconscious.

Shifting Eyes chapter two : Psyche and Sign

47
the process of judgement operating under the cathexis of attention. The excess of energy
would then be felt as unpleasurable: contradiction is therefore experienced as unpleasure.\footnote{1}

Contradiction, as a thought process, is a form of negation that cannot be captured by
the mimetic play of the icons; there is then no contradiction in unconscious primary
processes, no saying “no” in the unconscious. To contradict is to bring into operation
argument via signs that act as symbols. Freud’s description of the action of ‘attention’ and the
biological ‘signal’ are therefore indexical forms of negation, which precipitate contradiction,
that is negation. The symbol of negation is therefore formed through gaining attachment to
speech signs and becoming a part of the system $P_C$s.

Transference

To re-cap, in Freud’s quantitative schema of the psyche, 1895, disturbances in
thought may be brought about by transference of energy from excessively excited wishful
mnemonic-images onto other signs. In this energetic account, transference is an indexical relation.
It is the ego’s faculty of ‘attention’ which makes it possible to distinguish between memory
and perception according to the quality of the signs, where ‘quality’ is also quantitatively the
amount of energy that has to be inhibited or ‘bound’ by the ego: ‘... whereas indications of
quality derived from outside makes their appearance whatever the intensity of cathexis, those
derived from $V$ only do if the intensities are large.’ Freud goes on to draw a distinction
between primary and secondary processes, between dream representation and speech, based on
the ego’s inhibitory faculty of attention:

\footnote{1\textit{Wishful cathexis carried to the point of hallucination and a complete generation of
unpleasure, involving a complete expenditure of defence, may be described as
“psychical primary processes”. On the other hand, these processes which are only
made possible by a good cathexis of the ego and which represent a moderation of the
primary processes may be described as “psychical secondary processes”. It will be
seen that the \textit{sine qua non} of the latter is a correct exploitation of the indications of
reality and that this is only possible when there is inhibition on the part of the ego.\textsuperscript{3}}

(1895b pp.388-'9)

\footnote{1 As pointed out previously this is directly derived from Herbart’s theory of desire, see above, p.35,45.}

Shifting Eyes  chapter two :  Psyche and Sign 48
In other words it is the effect of the ego which inhibits regression in the system. The binding effect of ‘attention’ takes the form of secondary modifications of mnemic images. Secondary modification of highly intense mnemic-images is one of the aims of psychotherapy.\footnote{Its [psychotherapy’s] task is to make possible for the unconscious processes to be dealt with finally and be forgotten. For the fading of memories and the emotional weakness of impressions which are no longer recent, which we are inclined to regard as self-evident and to explain as a primary effect of time upon mental memory-traces, are in reality secondary modifications which are only brought about by laborious work. What performs the work is the preconscious, and \textit{psychotherapy can pursue no other course than to bring the Ucs. under the domain of the Pcs.} (Freud, S. 1900b p.578)} Bringing the Ucs. under the domain of the Pcs. is equivalent to a semiotic modification of iconic mnemic-images. The binding of energy produces a change in signification, from the iconic-indexical to the symbolic. Energy is transferred from the complex to the thinking process itself, which is the equivalent of memories and thinking becoming conscious through ‘transference’ to speech-signs.\footnote{‘Die Sprachabfuhrzeichen sind in gewissem Sinne auch Realitätszeichen Zeichen der Denkrealität, aber nicht der externen..’. (1895a p.452)} (1895a p.448, 1895b p.427) Consciousness Cs. in this schema is represented as a part of the psychical processes in the neuronal system - namely, of the perceptual processes (co-processes). In Freud’s neuronal theory this is represented by an attachment or linking between cathected neurones involving a transference of a quantity of energy Q. Transference is then a ‘transitive’, indexical, relation between the signs - mnemonic-images, presentations and speech-signs. Cognition, the act of judgement seeking identity between perceptions and memory traces and images, becomes conscious through transference to word presentations and motor-speech-signs, ‘Sprachbewegungszeichen’ in the silent act of inner speech. These are then signs of ‘thought reality’ not of the external world.\footnote{‘...what is essentially new in my theory is the thesis that memory is present not once but several times over, that it is registered in various species of “signs.”’ (1895a pp. 186-’7, 1895b pp.173-’4)} This use of ‘transference’ describes the flow of energy through the memory systems - but what is the semiotic representation of transference?

In a letter to Fliess dated the 12th. December, 1896, Freud develops an aspect of the schema, 1895, as a written palimpsest of successive transcriptions that are re-written, ‘Niederschriften’. Signs are written down: ‘...what is essentially new in my theory is the thesis that memory is present not once but several times over, that it is registered in various species of “signs.”’ Freud notates the signs systems as a diagram, a hypoicon, in which signs of perception, signs-of-perception, unconscious, preconscious and consciousness act as terms. Although the graphics follow the convention of

\[\text{\textit{Shifting Eyes} chapter two : Psyche and Sign} 49\]
western writing - from left to right - the cluster of crosses privileges a network structure over
the serial linearity of the 'telescope' analogue, 1900. (fig.2 appendix A) Freud writes that
this particular diagrammatic version of his semiotic theory of the structure of the psyche, 1896, is new because:

'As you know, I am working on the assumption that our psychical mechanism has
come about by a process of stratification: the material present in the shape of
memory-traces is from time to time subjected to a rearrangement in accordance with
fresh circumstances - is, as it were, transcribed.' (1896b p.173)

The first stage of the schema shows that the neuronal structure \( W \) gives rise, 'entstehen', to
perceptions which are not retained. This is the phenomenological apprehension of the world -
prior to our faculty of recognition, individuation and classification, the realm of Peirce's
Firstness and the iconic sign.

Indexical-iconic, signs of perception are recorded as the first system I according to
relations of simultaneity. This differentiation of 'perceptions' and 'signs-of-perception'
denotes a distinction between the phenomenological apprehension of sensory data and the
recording of that data as signs according to the subject-predicate division. If we categorically
make a distinction between apprehension and recognition, then perhaps we are able to
obliquely grasp the fleeting Firstness of perception, as distinct from the realm of Secondness
and the recorded signs of perception, the signs that bring in reference to the world and the
existence of that world. The sign that effects the senses - aural, visual, touch - bears a mimetic
iconic relationship to the world also acts as an index.

System II is the second registration or transcription according to other relations -
including causality. Here Freud's terminology of the sign changes to \( \text{Ucs.} \) 'traces', 'Spurren',
signifying memories inaccessible to consciousness. It is these earliest infantile memories
which constitute the unconscious. The very word trace privileges the index, like the
scratching of a stone or the trace of light on the emulsion of a negative, it implicates a

\(^1\) (Freud, S. 1900b pp.536-'42). For the relative merits of the schemas 1891, 1895 and 1900, please see
(Morris, S. in Burgoyne, B. 2000).

\(^2\) '.... Material von Enmungsspuren eine Umordnung nach neuen Beziehungen, eine Umschrift
erfährt.' (1896a p.185). The problem of the 'originary' text, which in this chapter is obviated in favour
of play of semiosis, is the subject of Derrida's paper 'Freud and the Scene of Writing'. (Derrida, J. 1978
p.211)
physical process and its legacy of cause and effect. The index here acts as the guarantor of existence.

System III represents a reordering of the signs through their attachment to word-presentations, ‘Wortvorstellungen’, which may gain consciousness. This system III represents the ‘pre-conscious’ corresponding to the official ego. Speech signs and word-presentations, as opposed to the other sign systems of memory and perception, in this representation are clearly shown as belonging to a subsequent epoch of development.

This schema, 1896, is determined by the governing mode of representation, that signs are written and rewritten as transcriptions ordered according to semiotic laws, semiotic laws which determine on the one hand, the primary processes of the system Ucs., and on the other, the syntax of the Pcs. The theory of attachment to word-presentations not only refers back to the indexical speech-signs and speech motor-signs of the schema, 1891, but also describes the evolution of symbolisation. The kernel to the theory, 1895-'6, is the trace, ‘Spur’, as index, that guarantees existence.

The science of traces

The indexical trace underpins Siegfried Bernfeld’s attempt to put psychoanalysis on a scientific basis, ‘Der Begriff der “Deutung” in der Psychoanalyse’, (1932). In addressing the question of the truth value of psychoanalytic interpretation, Bernfeld takes as a basic premise that there is a regular and consistent relation between psychic ‘events’ and their traces. Literalising Freud’s analogy between psychoanalysis and archaeology, Bernfeld founds psychoanalytic interpretation on the process of ‘reconstruction’. Symptoms, jokes and character traits have the same interpretative aim, the reconstruction of concrete, mental processes.8

Interpretation of dreams and symptoms entails the construction of a chain of events from traces that have been partially effaced, as in the detective work of Sherlock Holmes. Bernfeld is careful to point out that the security or reliability of the ‘science of traces’

---

1 ‘The Concept of “Meaning” in Psychoanalysis’, extracts are my translation.
2 ‘Es handelt sich allemal um die Rekonstruktion eines konkreten, abgelaufenen, seelischen Vorganges.’ (Bernfeld, S. 1932 p.471)
depends on the logical structure of the connection between events and traces as part of an inductive chain, 'Induktionsketten'. In this respect the 'science of traces' is open to the fallacies of inductivism, and is therefore no more or less secure than any other form of knowledge. (Bernfeld, S. 1932 p.473)

As in the 'interpretative' work of the archaeologist or the detective Sherlock Holmes, the act of interpretation leads to different possibilities, different models of the underlying processes are built: '... We do not reconstruct exactly the process, but build a model [Modell] of it...'. (1932 p.475). How then are we to choose between competing models? Bernfeld's answer is to refer to the intelligibility of the interpretation through an archaeological analogy; one cannot put a Gothic dome on an Ionic model. This second premise is therefore founded on the iconic character of the reconstruction, the icon acting as guarantor of intelligibility. Therefore Bernfeld's 'science of traces', Spurrenwissenschaft, depends on the logic of the relation between psychic 'processes' and 'traces'. (1932 p.473)

In thinking about the significance of psychoanalytic methodology, in particular the technique of 'free association', Bernfeld describes the 'veiled' connection between words, not in terms of a linguistic relation such as a trope, but as a relation between signs comparable to a mathematical variable, 'dx/dy'. (1932 p.484) Bernfeld effects a transition from Freud's linguistic analysis of 'free association' towards a semiotic reading of interpretation. This acute focus on signification as a mathematical relation suggests an alternative to linguistic interpretation, an interpretation that leads not in the direction of conscious quotidian narrative but a reconstruction of psychic processes.

Bernfeld concludes that psychoanalysis, as a science, lies between the interpretative work of Gestalt, personal or character theories, and psychology; Gestalt being concerned with personal testimony whereas Bernfeld's view of psychology is that as a discipline it is mainly confined to conceptual understanding. Psychoanalysis, although not itself a logical process, requires a logic of relations of the psyche to sustain its methodology of interpretation. How then does Bernfeld conceptualise fantasy or 'false memories'? Although he writes about 'right' or 'wrong' interpretation, the science of traces refers to the indexical relation between expressions - verbalisation, symptoms, the slips of everyday life - and the structure of the psyche.
The key is that previously hidden structural formations of the psyche, previously hidden from consciousness become available for scrutiny, their truth subject to the act of judgement: the trace is therefore an index of experience.¹

The really exciting aspect of Bemfeld's epistemological evaluation of psychoanalysis is that in focusing on the logic of the relation between psychic structure and event, he avoids the problem of generalisation. (1932 p.475) Psychoanalysis as the 'science of traces' is a science of the particular events, haecceities, and therefore less prone to the fallacies of inductivism that occur in the general sciences.² Regularity, rule-like behaviour, applies to the signifying relation itself between event and trace; it is a science of the existential relation, the indexical signifying relation.

**Transference and translation**

The diagram, 1896, is precisely at odds with Freud's later 'telescope' account, (1900b pp.538,541) in which he warns explicitly against the notion of the psychical locality of the systems Ucs., Pcs, Cs. being represented by 'successive transcriptions'. Within the context of the 'telescope' analogue, 'successive transcriptions' suggests repetition of signs in different spatial localities, but here Freud needs to show that these transcriptions are distinct from each other, because they correspond to successive epochs of life, and yet do not fall into a linear topology. How then are these systems related to each other?

Freud proposes that the boundaries between systems I, II, and III, arise from the re-organisation of signs as successive acts of 'translation', 'Übersetzung':

'At the frontier between any two such epochs a translation of the psychical material must take place. I explain the peculiarities of the psychoneuroses by supposing that the translation of some material has not occurred - which involves certain consequences. ... If the later transcription is lacking, the excitation will be disposed of according to the psychological laws governing the earlier epochs and along paths which were then accessible. Thus an anachronism remains: in a particular province fueros are still in force.' (1896a p.187 ; 1896b p.175)

¹ Bemfeld's account of interpretation as the reconstruction of indexical traces, provides another basis for Freud's discussion of interpretation and verbal dissent; (Freud, S. 1925b) discussed below, p.58.
² For the role of metaphor in generalized symbol formation, please see below, chapter four, p.120.

_Shifting Eyes_ chapter two: Psyche and Sign 53
The adage, 'there is no time in the unconscious', need not deny the sense of chronology, only relations of causality, Boltzmann’s arrow and the direction of time. The fixed traces, 'Dauerspuren', are left as the true memories: the passing of time alone cannot change memory. Repression and trauma are accounted for as failures of 'translation':

"A failure of translation is what we know clinically as “repression”. The motive for it is always a release of unpleasure which would result from a translation; it is as though the unpleasure provokes a disturbance of thought which forbids the process of translation." (1896a p.187; 1896b p.175)

Repression is the failure to reorder the sign systems from one epoch to another. The 1896 concept of 'translation' between transcriptions gives us a means of explaining trauma; in trauma memory signs have no adequate translation. The event as it happens is then severed from the associated affect: 'We invariably find that a memory is repressed which has only become a trauma after the event.' Learning and understanding present a 'new translation', a re-ordering of signs, which then leads to the repetition of early memories as if they occurred for the first time. This is the phenomenon of deferred action or 'Nachträglichkeit'.

In semiotic terms, what is Freud's concept of 'translation'? This letter of 6th December 1896, makes direct reference to his earlier discussion on the concept of re-arrangement of signs during the course of his work on aphasia. (1896b p.173) As referred to earlier, the linguistic theory that underpins Freud's schema of 1891 is the work of philosopher, J.S. Mill. The section of Mill (1843) which is of particular interest, is the description of how names creep from subject to subject, a process which Mill calls 'transference'. Mill derives this concept from Dugald Stewart's *Philosophical Essays* (1810).

"... that A,B,C,D,E denote a series of objects; that A possesses some one quality in common with B; B a quality in common with C; C a quality in common with D; D a quality in common with E; while at the same time, no quality can be found which belongs in common to any three objects in the series. ... In this manner, a common appellation will arise between A and E, although the two objects may, in their nature and properties, be so widely distant from each other, that no stretch of imagination can conceive how the thoughts were led from the former to the latter." (Stewart,D. 1810 in Mill, J.S. 1843 pp.216-7)

¹Überall findet sich, dass eine Erinnerung verdrängt wird, die nur nachträglich um Trauma geworden ist." (1896a p.435; 1896b p.413)
²The importance of the work of Stewart,D. to Freud’s semiotics is analysed in (Burgoyne,B. 1981).
‘Transference’ as a semiotic process can therefore slide from one connotation to its opposite, producing a complex relation between ‘A and E’ capable of holding together contraries. Dugald Stewart’s example is based in his theory that psychological connections are founded in the intensity of experience: ‘Transferences are more remarkable when the mind is strongly influenced by pleasurable or unpleasurable sensations.’ (Stewart, D. 1810 p.218 and 224). Mill also refers to Payne Knight’s formulation of the transference as a ‘transitive’ relation, for example the chain: “E, ex, extra, extraneus, étranger”, stranger.” (Knight, P. 1786 in Mill, J.S. p.217n*) Knight’s example illustrates how an emotional relation is created both through the transitive relation between signs and an iconic chain of rhyming syllables.

The concept of ‘translation’ in the schema, 1896, can be interpreted as both transferential and transitive relations combining indexical and iconic chains. ‘Transference’, is also the concept used to describe the shift of energy between neurones in the ‘Project’, which underpins the semiotic attachment between signs. What is the effect of abandoning Mill’s linguistic description of transference in favour of Peirce’s semiotic description of the evolution of incorporate sign structures - the hypoicon and the symbol? Peirce’s evolutionary theory of symbol formation gives a more precise account of the signifying relations involved in transference and translation and also shows how tropes of speech evolve from strings of signs; Freud’s schema therefore provides examples of how symbols evolve from hypoicons, icons and indices.

The graphic schema of 1896 suggests a direction to the movement of ‘translation’ - a re-arrangement of signs according to the relational rules of the ‘higher epoch’. Analytic interpretation can therefore be understood as an undoing of these translations. This semiotic description of re-arrangement of signs avoids the spatial reification which occurs in the ‘telescope analogue’, 1900. The conceptual problems are therefore intimately connected with Freud’s choice of spatial metaphor. Resisting the temptation to spatialize the psyche allows us to conceive of these semiotic transferences in terms of the equivocation of the sign. Peirce’s evolutionary understanding of symbol formation obviates Freud’s problem of the

---

i Original spelling. For further discussion of Knight’s use of transference, please see below, chapter three, pp.86-87.
ii Jean Laplanche’s proposition of ‘the drive to translate’ entails a view of psychoanalytic interpretation as ‘de-translation’, (1992).
iii These ‘re-arrangements’ are conceived as a palimpsest in Freud’s ‘A Note Upon the “Mystic Writing Pad”’. (1924b)
spatialization and re-writing of signs: signs do not have to be re-recorded, the same signs can be conceived as having multiple signification. Primary processes of condensation, displacement and figuration are also then capable of evolving into the tropes of language - metonymy and synecdoche, metaphor and catachresis - and subsequently translated into the syntactical structures of subject-predicate division. Communicative speech arises out of the same basic array of iconic and indexical signs.

The movement of translation is directed towards the symbolic as the symbol embeds the indexical and the iconic; but if we then take seriously Peirce’s concentration on the heuristic value of iconic signs, this opens up the importance of primary processes and the function of the image in language in particular, giving primacy to the tropes of language, figuration and in particular metaphor.

It is my contention that ‘metaphor’, as a form of hypoicon, with its capacity to hold together opposites and thus drop under the symbol of negation, allows for the particular mutability of ‘signs of becoming’ that transform the concept of self-reflexivity. The primacy of the image in language, formulated as the importance of the hypoicon in both language and pictorial representation, is the hypothesis by which I approach both the work of H.D. and Claude Cahun.

**Antithetical images - antithetical words**

“The way in which dreams treat the category of contraries and contradictories is highly remarkable. It is simply disregarded. ‘No’ seems not to exist so far as dreams are concerned. They show a particular preference for combining contraries into a unity or for representing them as one and the same thing. Dreams feel themselves at liberty, moreover, to represent any element by its wishful contrary; so that there is no way of deciding at a first glance whether any element that admits of a contrary is present in the dream-thoughts as a positive or negative.’ (Freud, S. 1900b pp.318-9)

‘I have asserted above that dreams have no means of expressing the relation of a contradiction, a contrary or a ‘no’. I shall now proceed to give a first denial of this assertion. One class of cases which can be comprised under the heading of ‘contraries’ are, as we have seen, simply represented by identification - cases, that is, in which the idea of an exchange or substitution can be brought into connection with the contrast.” (p.326)

*C.f. ‘What representation do dreams provide for ‘if’, ‘because’, ‘just as’, although’, ‘either - or’, and all the other conjunctions without which we cannot understand sentences or speeches? ’ (Freud, S. 1900b p.312) This holding together of contraries is also feature of Herbart’s theory in which a ‘complex’ refers**

*Shifting Eyes* chapter two: Psyche and Sign 56
‘The Interpretation of Dreams’, raises the question as to whether the absence of negation in
the unconscious is intrinsic to the essentially pictorial representational system of dream or
whether negation belongs to a different form of conceptual ordering, that is symbolic. It
follows from the tripartite division of psychic structure developed in the ‘Project’ schema,
1895, that the system Ucs. represents a registration of signs distinct from the subsequent
syntactical re-ordering that he calls the system of Pre-consciousness, Pcs, the domain of
speech-signs, capable of sustaining contradiction and therefore the symbol of negation.

As we have seen earlier in the account of perceptual judgement and the birth of the
ego, the binding of energy which Freud attributes to the faculty of ‘attention’ acts as a form of
negation and institutes the primary defence. It is here that Peirce’s trichotomy of sign-object
relations becomes invaluable because we can re-conceive this first form of negation, the
encounter with reality opposing the pleasure seeking self and the shock of engagement with
the world as an encounter with the indexical. Whereas the dream follows the fluidity of the
iconic play with these signs, icons, indices and hypoicons, it is the domain of speech and
argument that re-orders these signs into symbols.

In a footnote to the above quotation from ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’, Freud makes
reference to a paper by the philologist Karl Abel, ‘The Antithetical meaning of Primary
Words’, 1884. This is picked up in Freud’s paper of the same title. The oldest languages,
according to Abel, contain primary words, ‘Urworte’ :

‘... in the Egyptian language, this sole relic of a primitive world, there are a fair number
of words with two meanings, one of which is the exact opposite of the other. The
meaning (either +ive or -ive) is resolved in written script by the use of “determinative”
signs.’ (Freud, S. 1910 pp.156, 158)

The numerous fallacies offered by Abel are effectively critiqued by the linguist Emile
Benveniste in his essay ‘Language in Freudian Theory’ through specific examples involving
Abel’s mistakes in etymology ; but Benveniste’s main point is that : ‘... a language in which
the distinction between “large” and “small” literally has no meaning and in which the category
of dimension does not exist is not a language allowing for contradictory expression of
dimension.’(1971 pp.69-71) Freud uses Abel to provide a linguistic basis for slips of the

---

to the linking of disparate ‘Vorstellungen’ ; see Burgoyne (2000a). In terms of Peirce’s semiotics this
linkage of contraries is also a feature of the hypoicon.

1 Please see above, pp.40,41.

Shifting Eyes  chapter two : Psyche and Sign  57
tongue that result in the opposite being said of what we intended to say. Such theories about Ur-languages suggest their capacity to form iconic chains bringing together opposites, that can be compared with the hypoicon, acting as pre-cursor to the symbolic capacity of speech.

This phenomenon of speaking the very opposite of what we intend was first noted by Freud in his clinical work with Emmy von N - but the full theory had to await his paper of ‘Negation’, 1925. Freud’s analysis of the symbol of negation constitutes another semiotic theory, distinct from his formulations of 1891 and 1895. The paper opens with this exchange with quotations from analysands:

"Now you'll think I mean to say something insulting, but really I've no such intention". We realise that this is a repudiation, by projection, of an idea that has just come up. Or: "You ask who this person in the dream can be. It's not my mother". We emend this to: "so it is his mother." In our interpretation, we take the liberty of disregarding the negation and of picking out the subject-matter alone of the association. It is as though the patient had said: "It's true that my mother came into my mind as I thought of this person, but I don't feel inclined to let the association count." (1925b p.235)

This clearly shows that there is an acceptance of the 'idea' of the dream and symptom's associated thoughts, even though their significance - the emotional relationships of the referent, the nexus of connections and associations - is negated. Bringing the analysand to the point of negation is therefore fruitful methodology. Freud gives the example of an obsessive patient: "I've got a new obsessive idea," he says, "and it occurred to me at once that it might mean so and so. But no; that can't be true, or it couldn't have occurred to me."(1925 p.235)

The analysand rejects, 'verwirft', the correct meaning of the obsessive idea. Rejection, ‘Verwerfen’, as a form of negation was first introduced in his paper on the ‘Neuro-Psychoses of Defence’, 1894: ‘... the ego rejects the incompatible idea together with its affects and behaves as if the idea had never occurred to the ego at all.’(1894a p.305 ; 1894b p.58)

Negation in speech indicates the presence of repression and acts as a ‘double negation’, since repression, as defined in the letter 1896, is a failure of translation, and therefore a form of negation. If we use Peirce’s taxonomy of object signs to clarify these structures of negation, repression, ‘Verdrängung’, can be analysed as a form of negation that defies the transferential relational attachment between Ucs. signs and the speech-signs of the

---

1 See above, p.54.
Denial, 'Vermeinung', however, acts only at the level of speech, and is dependent upon the creation of the symbol of negation, 'Vermeinungssymbol'. The very appearance of negation in speech is a partial acknowledgement that the repressed has existence: 'Negation is a way of taking cognisance of what is repressed; indeed it is already a lifting, 'Aufhebung', of the repression, though not of course an acceptance of what is repressed.'(1925a p.4) There is then an intellectual acceptance of the idea and a denial of desire, the emotional and affective associations. The freedom of the symbol is then freedom from the indexical impasses of primary and secondary repression:

'A negative judgement is the intellectual substitute for repression; its "no" is the hallmark of repression, a certificate of origin - like, let us say, "Made in Germany". With the help of the symbol of negation, [Vermeinungssymbols] thinking frees itself from the restrictions of repression....'. (1925a p.4 ; 1925b pp.235-'6)

To recap from the 'Project', primary repression is a defence against the attraction of unconscious wishes occurring when: '...a hostile memory-image has its cathexis removed as soon as possible...'. (1895b p.383) The inheritor to this experience is the judgement of existence, the recognition of the indexical, the aim of which is: 'not to find an object in real perception which corresponds to the one presented, but to re-find such an object, to convince oneself that it is still there.'(1895b p.440) This entails secondary repression of unconscious wishes in favour of the existence of the external object, the indexical supervening on the iconic. Following the earlier account of the 'oral phase', the period of internalisation and externalisation, this judgement of existence entails a contradiction, 'der Gegensatz', the contradiction between what is subjective and objective. (1925a p.6 ; 1925b p.237) Whereas previously: 'What is bad, what is alien to the ego and what is external are, to begin with, identical.'(p.236) Only the symbol is able to represent contradiction. In Peirce's terms therefore it is this understanding of the logic of exclusivity which designates the difference between indexical and symbolic negation: contradiction therefore marks the creation of the symbol of negation.

---

1 For an analysis of the four different forms of negation as they are found in the French language - see Damourette, J. and Pichon, E. (1928).
Freud goes on to discuss negation in terms of the opposition between the two groups of drives, those concerned with the preservation of life, including sexuality, versus the death drive. This follows from the progressive unification of the drives in the relation to the evolution from oral, anal to genital organisation. Freud writes in particular about the two phases of pregenital organisation, the ‘oral’, or ‘cannibalistic’, in which sexual activity has not yet been separated from the ingestion of food, and the sadistic-anal organisation. In these earlier phases of sexuality, subordination to the reproductive function of the genital is absent. In ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, (1920b) Freud describes the ‘binding’ effect of the mental apparatus as the movement towards unification of the ego and sexual drives. This ‘binding’ is an inheritor of the process of ‘attention’ as it is described in the ‘Project’, the pre-condition of the act of judgement. The first opposition between those instincts which preserve the ego and those involved in sexual procreation, is replaced by a polar organisation of Eros versus the death-drive:

‘... sich uns der Sexualtrieb zum Eros, der die Teile der lebenden Substanz zueinanderzudrängen und zusammenzuhalten sucht, und die gemeinhin so genannten Sexualtriebe erscheinen als der dem Objekt zugewandte Anteil dieses Eros.
... Die spekulation wandelt diesen Gegensatz in den von Lebenstrieben (Eros) und von Todestrieben um.’ (1920a p.254)

‘... the sexual instinct was transformed for us into Eros, which seeks to force together and hold together the portions of living substance. What are commonly called the sexual instincts are looked upon by us as the part of Eros which is directed towards object.
... Our speculations have transformed this opposition into one between the life instincts (Eros) and the death instincts.’ (1920b pp.60-'1)

Eros is here the force of unification, an index of unification. This articulates the movement towards oneness, that underpins Freud’s account of how negation is the inheritor of the negativity associated with the drives which carry the aggression of the anal-sadistic phase:

‘Die Bejahung’ - als Ersatz der Vereinigung - gehört dem Eros an, die Verneinung - Nachfolger der Aussöhnung - dem Destruktionstrieb.” (1925a p.239)

‘Affirmation - as a substitute for uniting - belongs to Eros; negation - the successor to expulsion - belongs to the instinct of destruction’. (1925b p.7)
As the symbol of negation provides freedom from repression, so ‘Bejahung’ serves as the precondition for the creation of the symbol of unification, a necessary means of articulating affirmation free from the disparity of plural drives: Freud does not give us a representamen of such a symbol. It is Lacan who identifies the symbol of unification with the phallus, the ‘Symbolic phallus’, within his metaphysical trichotomy of the ‘Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic’.

Negation of the phallus

Freud’s theory of sexual development includes the phallic phase, when children attribute the existence of the penis to both parents until they develop ideas how children are born. The phallic phase entails pretending that the mother also has a penis, a form of negation of the absence of the penis that Freud calls disavowal, ‘Verleugnung’. In Peirce’s semiotics, the child attributes the iconic phallus to the mother therefore negating the indexical phallus, the indexical phallus which signifies through the child’s experience of frustration in weaning provides the apprehension of castration. It is important that these registers, the iconic and the indexical, are kept separate, since the child has to preserve the indexical experience of the mother in order to instigate the process of separation and to enter into the negotiation of Oedipal conflict.

Freud’s particular formulation of this negation as disavowal, ‘verleugnen’, points to the gap in the construction of reality by which the child preserves integrity against castration and the edicts of Oedipal demands. The young French psychoanalyst René Laforgue, who considered himself a student of Freud, opened up a correspondence with Freud during the mid 1920’s. The topics covered included narcissism, birth trauma, clinical technique and a concept of Laforgue’s, ‘scotomization’. Laforgue’s paper, ‘Scotomization In Schizophrenia’ (1927) develops his theory of ‘scotomization’ as the creation of a ‘blind spot’ by which the

---

1 Hyppolite, J. (1956) points out the asymmetry between ‘affirmation’ and ‘negation’, that negation is also to deny and therefore more than the wish to destroy. However, I would also want to emphasize that ‘Bejahung’ is also to ‘answer “yes”’ as opposed to unconscious ‘binding’ as a form of negation.

2 Lacan’s use of the phallus as the signifier of sexual difference and therefore its equation with the ‘symbol’ of unification will be addressed in chapter three, pp. 88-91.

See reference to ‘leugnen’ in Freud (1923c p.235; 1923d p.143).
ego denies everything which conflicts with his ego, a 'scotomization' which Laforgue defines as a form of 'unsuccessful repression'. The infant who refuses to accept weaning, on the basis that this kind of separation is received as a pushing away under the threat of castration, results in a retreat into narcissism. This failure to tolerate separation gives rise to powerful disturbances in mental life. 'Mother' is split into the ideal all-loving mother image, while the actual experienced mother becomes an object of sadism:

'He [the child] thrusts her [mother] out of his circle of interests, equating her affectively with excrement. This is a hate-reaction: the subject shuts himself off, repudiates his real mother and becomes blind towards her. This is the process which I have proposed to designate scotomization.' (Laforgue, R. 1927 p.476)

'Mother' is equated with shit and externalised, the ego is consequently impoverished and turned into an object and the 'schizoid' personality that emerges is unable to sustain any frustration. Due to this 'blind spot' everything associated with the actual mother is negated, leading to difficulties in the unification of the personality and consciousness, that is effectively a refusal to recognise 'reality'. Although Freud expressed his early support for Laforgue's work, Laforgue's simplification of the concept of 'reality' evoked Freud's ire; in a highly critical letter, 31st. August 1925, Freud lambasted Laforgue for not taking into account the three 'meta-psychological' registers:

'... vous n'avez pas ma conception métapsychologique qui essaie de caractériser un fait psychique d'après trois coordonnées : dynamique, topique et économique. En négligeant surtout la coordonnée topique, vous renoncez à une sorte de certitude, vous n'êtes pas intéressé par ce qui passe dans les trois couches, du conscient, du préconscient et de l'inconscient, et il est alors possible d'interpréter ces phénomènes de plusieurs façons.' (Bourguignon, A. 1968 p. 174) [my translation]

Freud's critique presents not only the complexity of the signification of the phallus, but also articulates the metapsychological registers of reality. Peirce's distinction between iconic and the indexical modalities of signification provides a more discriminatory re-formulation of the

*Shifting Eyes* chapter two: Psyche and Sign 62
negation involved in scotomization, as the attribution of the iconic phallus and the negation of
the indexical phallus.

From the paper 'Negation', (1925b) the creation of the 'Verneinungssymbol', the
'symbol of negation', which upholds Peirce's definition of a symbol is sufficient to support
the logic of binary opposition, contradiction and entailment; the symbol of affirmation,
however, exists only as the negation of the 'Verneinungssymbol'. Logic of difference in the
above account is therefore supported by the symbol of negation without reference to a symbol
of sexual difference. The next chapter looks at the semiotics of self as constructed through
the structure of identification, concluding with a re-examination of the theory that the phallus
supports sexual difference.
Chapter Three: Self Interpretant

Semiosis: interpretation and interpretant

When I refer to myself, 'I', or 'me', look at myself in the mirror or set up a 'self-portrait', what are the signs involved; how can there be a sign of selfhood? This chapter uses the third term of Peirce's theory of signification, the sign-interpretant relation to analyse self-representation as a mode of signifying oneself. Whereas the previous chapter used Peirce's sign-object trichotomy to look at Freud's semiotic account of the structure of the psyche, here the sign-interpretant relation is used to re-read Freud's account of the development of the ego in relation to an other. This relation to an other, as interpretant of the self, is founded in the field of semiosis, the flow of signs which constitutes the self in a dialogic communication that is the precursor of speech. To recap, the sign, as defined by Peirce, is formed in the triadic relation of sign, object and interpretant.

'A sign, or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object.' (1897 2.228)

Semiosis describes the flow of interpretation in which the interpretant sign is itself taken as the object of another sign which then generates a new interpretant sign. This provides another criterion of the sign:

'Anything which determines something else (its interpretant) to refer to an object to which itself refers (its object) in the same way, the interpretant becoming in turn a sign, and so on ad infinitum.' (1901 2.303)

'... a sign is not a sign unless it translates itself into another sign in which it is more fully developed.' (1903a 5.594)

---

¹The triadic relation of the sign as representamen as introduced in chapter one, please see above, p.22.
²C.f. 'But by "semiosis" I mean, on the contrary, an action, or influence, which is, or involves, a cooperation of three subjects, such as a sign, its object, and its interpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable into actions between pairs.' (1906 5.484)

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpretant 64
As a 'more developed sign', the interpretant generates new knowledge, knowledge which includes thoughts, ideas, feelings, and values. If the interpretant is another person, then this is a description of the process of reaction to an other, the way in which we change through this mysterious semiosis communication. Writing this text *Shifting Eyes* finds its meaning precisely in this chain of semiosis. In re-reading Peirce and Freud, I enter into the process of semiosis forming interpretants which change my consciousness. Interpreting the work of H.D. and Claude Cahun from this point of view, a to-and-fro between object sign and interpretant, puts into play interpretants which give rise to a new sense of self and therefore opens up the possibility of a radical re-conceptualisation of self-identity.

Peirce introduces two triadic formulations of interpretants; first, the kinds of interpretation, emotional, energetic and logical and secondly the stages of interpretation, immediate, dynamical and final. The first effect of a sign is the emotional interpretant:

"The first proper significate effect of a sign is a feeling produced by it. ... This "emotional interpretant," as I call it, may amount to much more than that feeling of recognition; and in some cases is the only proper significate effect that the sign produces." (1906 5.475)

The emotional interpretant may, however, give rise to action, an energetic interpretant. A piece of music which makes us feel full of life and joy, the emotional interpretant, may make us feel that we need to get up and dance, that dancing is then the energetic interpretant. The logical interpretant is a further effect of the energetic interpretant, in this case the logical interpretant could be the recognition of the beat - waltz, rock, soul, hip-hop, techno:

"To this may be added the consideration that it is not all signs that have logical interpretants, but only intellectual concepts and the like; and these are all either general or intimately connected with generals, as it seems to me. This shows that the species of future tense of the logical interpretant is that of the conditional mood, the "would-be."" (1906 5.482)

Hypotheses of science are therefore logical interpretants, they make sense of the energetic interpretants within an explanatory framework. On the everyday level, our pre-conceptions, desires, expectations and habits - are the logical interpretants by which we organise and understand our experience. Desires and expectations, however, also bring about further
energetic interpretants; in this schema it is only habit that acts as the conclusion to an energetic interpretant.¹ Change of consciousness, is therefore a critical change in habit, a function of the process of semiosis.²

'The deliberately formed, self-analyzing habit - self-analyzing because formed by the aid of analysis of the exercises that nourished it - is the living definition, the veritable and final logical interpretant.' (1906 5.491)

It is as if the semiosis of affect, the shift from emotional, energetic to logical interpretants is a teleological process, directed towards a re-revision of the habitual conceptual framework, a change in the logical interpretant.³ The direction of this particular semiotic chain meets Peirce's second trichotomy of interpretation, the stages of interpretation - the immediate, dynamical and final interpretants. In order to conceptualise the immediate and dynamical interpretants, Peirce introduces a split between the immediate object, the object signified by the sign, and the dynamical object, the referent in the ‘real’ world. This extract, from one of a series of letters to William James, demonstrates the limitations of ostension:

'We must distinguish between the Immediate Object, - i.e. the object as represented in the sign - and the Real (no, because perhaps the Object is altogether fictive, I must choose a different term, therefore) say rather the Dynamical Object, which, from the nature of things, the Sign cannot express, which it can only indicate, and leave the interpreter to find out by collateral experience. For instance, I point my finger to what I mean, but I can't make my companion know what I mean, if he can't see it, or if seeing it, it does not, to his mind, separate itself from the surrounding objects in the field of vision.' (1897-1909 8.314)

To communicate what 'I' see to someone else requires 'collateral experience', the shared context of interpretation. This quotation also sheds illumination on Freud’s conflation of the ‘object’ and the ‘object-association’ in his schema of psychic structure, 1891.⁴ Freud elides phenomenological experience and the object, that is the singularity of the object is presupposed. In Peirce’s terminology the immediate object is individuated by the choice of conceptual schema, for example in Freud’s schema, 1891, the immediate object is the object-

¹ ‘Desire however, is cause, not effect, of effort.’(1906 5.486).
² C.f. (1906 5.485).
³ The conceptual divisions of interpretants - emotional, energetic and logical - will be taken up later in relation to the work of Colwyn Trevarthen, (Trevarthen, C. 1994), please see below, this chapter, p.81.
⁴ Please see chapter two, as above, pp.35-37.

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpretant 66
complex of associations, and in the schema, 1895, it is the subject-predicate division: the
dynamical object, however, is unknown. Rather than struggle with the philosophical problems
of the referent both Peirce and Freud take a ‘realist’ viewpoint as a working hypothesis. This
allows Peirce to shift emphasis onto the interpretant and resist the recursive tangle of the
existence of the referent. Peirce’s analysis of the object, is paralleled by the division of
interpretants; the immediate, dynamical and final interpretants. Peirce goes on to give an
anecdotal example of how this works:

‘...For instance, suppose I awake in the morning before my wife, and that afterwards
she wakes up and inquires, “What sort of a day is it?” This is a sign, whose Object, as
expressed, is the weather at that time, but whose Dynamical Object is the impression
which I have presumably derived from peeping through the window-curtains. Whose
Dynamical Interprétant, as expressed, is the impression which I have presumably derived from peeping through the window-curtains.

The first sign, $S_1$, is Mrs. Peirce’s question: ‘What sort of day is it?’, which implies as its
immediate object, $O_1$, ‘the weather’. The dynamical object, $O_d$, of $S_1$ is Peirce’s perception of
‘the weather’, $S_1$ generates an immediate interpretant, $I_a$, which is the response to the question,
(conceptual and feelings) and further an actual effect, the dynamical interpretant $I_d$ (in this
case looking out of the window). ‘The weather’ is then the dynamical object, $O_d$, of the
dynamical interpretant, $I_d$ which functions as the new sign in the semiotic chain, $S_2$ (fig. 3
appendix A).

The final interpretant, extends the chain of semiosis into questions of value and
significance. As opposed to the concept of the logical interpretant as the formation of ‘habit’,
the final interpretant, sets the agenda for an abandoning of habit, a radical paradigm shift, not
only of conceptual framework but also the scheme of values and states of consciousness. The
final interpretant points forward to Peirce’s ideals of interpretation and mutual co-operation,
the *summum bonum* that founds his belief in an ethical community.¹ Peirce’s continuation of this example, a dialogue with his wife, gives an account of the interpretant trichotomy in terms of the phenomenological division, Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness:

*I reply, let us suppose: “It is a stormy day.” Here is another sign. Its Immediate Object is the notion of the present weather so far as this is common to her mind and mine - not the *character* of it, but the *identity* of it. The Dynamical Object is the *identity* of the actual or real meteorological conditions at the moment. The Immediate Interpretant is the *schema* in her imagination, i.e. the vague Image or what there is in common to the different Images of a stormy day. The Dynamical Interpretant is the disappointment or whatever actual effect it at once has upon her. The Final Interpretant is the sum of the Lessons of the reply, Moral, Scientific, etc.’* (1897-1909 8.314)

Peirce’s reply Si, has as its immediate object Oi the idea of ‘stormy weather’, whereas the dynamical object Oi is the actual state of the weather. The immediate interpretant Ii is a conflation of vague images, possibilities like Firsts, that appear in his wife’s imagination; the dynamical interpretant Ii is a real effect, Secondness, for example disappointment or another expression of emotion. S2 the proposed final interpretant takes the form of a third. (fig.4 appendix A)

The final interpretant offers another possibility of interpretation, a new context, a future conditional; ‘... the Dynamical Interpretant indefinitely approaches the character of the (Final Immediate) Interpretant.’(1897-1909 8.315) Peirce readily admits such a definition yields a vague and elusive concept: ‘I confess that my own conception of this third interpretant is not yet quite free from mist.’(1906b 4.536) Peirce concludes his letter to William James by pointing out the overlap between his categories of interpretant and Lady Welby’s distinctions of ‘Sense’, ‘Meaning’ and ‘Significance’. It is this latter category of Welby’s, ‘Significance’, which throws light on Peirce’s concept of the final interpretant; both theorists are concerned with the ethics of knowledge and science, and both, as semioticians, firmly believe that these ideals are brought about through conceptualisation and language.

---

¹C.f. (1868 5.311)

*Shifting Eyes* chapter three: Self Interpretant 68
Lady Victoria Welby 1837-1912

From 1903 to 1911, Peirce corresponded with the English 'woman of letters' Lady Victoria Welby, an aristocrat, well versed in mathematics, philosophy and linguistics who held a particular ethical agenda - to maintain what Welby believed to be values in language. Welby pointed out the dangers of adhering to out-dated terms for concepts, the tendency to interpret metaphors literally and therefore confuse the metaphor with reality itself. ‘Links and Clues’, (1883), which succinctly refers to the non-transparency of language, takes as an example phrases which indicate the opposite of their scientific meaning: ‘the sun rises, the air is heavy and oppressive’. (1883 p.311)

In ‘Sense, Meaning and Interpretation’ (1896) Welby gives a radical definition of ‘sense’ as that which reveals the residue of the physical senses. Locating linguistic development in evolutionary theory, Welby speculates that the first thing any animal does is to ‘recognise’ and then discriminate between food, warmth and danger. This act by which an object, impression or perception becomes a sign, Welby calls sensifying. To decide what to do next is then a question of ‘meaning’, even, according to Welby, for the very simplest life-forms. Even the simplest of organisms is therefore engaged in an act of ‘interpretation’:

‘Does the living organism from its lowest beginnings in some “sense” “interpret” sense? And does this “interpretation” gradually become more conscious and more complex until the “senses” of temperature, of resistance, or effort, of touch, of sight, of smell and taste, of hearing resolve themselves into the intellectual “sense” in which all experience, but especially all language, is to be interpreted?’ (Welby, V. 1896 p.186)

The importance of Welby’s insight is that her theory of ‘sense’ presents a continuum between instinctive response to stimuli - the smell of food, the glimpse of danger, drop in temperature, wind, earth tremors, and other sensory experiences of predators - and the act of ‘linguistic’ interpretation. Like Peirce and Freud, in Welby’s theory there is no absolute schism between world and word. Welby reminds us of the urgency of bodily needs, the indexical, that

---

1 Without a university education, Lady Welby nevertheless corresponded with many key philosophers and linguists throughout Europe - including Wilhelm Jerusalem and Henri Bergson. Her theories and ability to raise ‘heretical’ questions outside the canon of convention had a substantial influence on her contemporaries including Schiller, Ogden and Richards and the Dutch school of semiotics around van Eeden.

2 This is a radical use of the term ‘sense’ and has no reference to either syntax, or connotation of words.

Shifting Eyes chapter three : Self Interpretant 69
intervenes into the iconic realm of perceptions and wish-fulfilment; her answer to the fundamental question of semiotics: '...what do we suppose to be the genesis of "sign"?', is therefore the urgency of survival.

As Peirce noted, Welby's theory is a general theory of signs, which therefore makes it so exciting compared with her contemporaries, linguists who were for the most part concerned only with words. This 'instinctive' response, as we have seen in the work of Freud and Peirce, requires an act of recognition founded on an act of judgement. If something is good for the ego then it is internalised, and if it is not, then it is left outside. Welby points out how the 'sense' residue of words, in western philosophy in particular, retains its residual attachment to the visual - *Oh yes, I see what you mean.*

'...the word seems to give us the link between the sensory, sensible and the significant: there is apparently a real connection between the "sense" - say of sight - in which we react to a stimulus, and the "sense" in which we speak or act.' (1896 p.27)

'Sense' brings in to play the indexical character of perception and cognition, as well as the iconic value of sight and recognition, into the triad of signification. To return to Peirce's trichotomy of interpretants based on effect, 'Sense' arises not only from the emotional interpretant of experience but also the reaction to feeling, the energetic interpretant. The logical interpretants in Welby's account may then be influenced by the emotional and energetic. Tropes of language, in particular metaphors which carry associations of the physical world, even when they appear in theoretical texts, jerk us back into the sensory world and articulate a movement towards embodiment. This experience of embodiment of metaphor plays with Freud's articulation of how the acquisition of language is always accompanied by motor-speech signs, changes in the nervous system. In this way metaphors have a particular 'significance' based in the residual memory of the senses. Peirce commented on Welby's concept *significance*, in the course of discussing her 'three grades of meaning' in his Lowell Lecture, 1903:

---

1 This refers to Freud's account of the act of judgment in the development of the ego, please see chapter two, above, pp.42-46.
2 Please see above, p.65.
3 See reference to Freud's schemas, 1891 and 1895, please see above, pp.36,46-48.
'But besides the consequences to which the person who accepts a word knowingly commits himself to, there is a vast ocean of unforeseen consequences which the acceptance of the word is destined to bring about, not merely consequences of knowing but perhaps revolutions of society. One cannot tell what power there may be in a word or phrase to change the face of the world; and the sum of these consequences makes up the third grade of meaning.' (1903a 8.176)

This is an example of Peirce at his most radical, acknowledging the revolutionary force of language, the *significance*, for which the final interpretant is a sign, that precipitates us into the unknown. For Lady Welby this is the question of the ethics of language, the value of imagery, analogy, figurative language and metaphor as bearers of meaning and their role in constructing current theory. The most revolutionary final interpretant is that which re-directs the structure of self identity, through re-interpreting the fundamental psychic processes that structure the ego, including the act of judgement at the heart of perception and cognition. Since the act of judgement includes the template of social conventions, stereotypes of difference, race, class and sexuality, the shift in final interpretant may re-politicise both our self-perception and our perceptions of others.

**Perceptual judgement as interpretation**

Peirce's analysis of the act of 'perceptual judgement' in terms of stages of interpretant, offers a means of re-stating the organisation of sense-data through a semiotic organising principle of Thirds, from Percepts as Firsts:

'...That we are conscious of our Percepts is a theory that seems to me beyond dispute; but it is not a fact of Immediate Perception. A fact of Immediate Perception is not a Percept, not any part of a Percept; a Percept is a Seme, while a fact of Immediate perception or rather the Perceptual Judgement of which such fact is the Immediate Interpretant, is a Pheme that is the direct Dynamical Interpretant of the Percept, and of which the Percept is the Dynamical Object, and is with some considerable difficulty (as the history of psychology shows) distinguished from the Immediate Object, though the distinction is highly significant. (1906b 4.539)'

_C.f. perceptual judgment as a proposition of existence, (1903d 5.115)_

*Shifting Eyes* chapter three: Self Interpretant
Peirce introduces 'logical terms' for what he previously called term and proposition. Seme is a term which in some way is representative of the object and pheme stands for the proposition. The percept sign seme $S_i$ can only be inferred retrospectively, in this case from the act of perceptual judgement which imposes a propositional structure, the pheme. The pheme has as its dynamical object, $O_4$ the percept of Secondness. The pheme is then the dynamical interpretant, $I_4$, of the percept. The immediate interpretant $I_i$ is the immediate perception, which as in this case of all Firsts, we cannot actually become aware of: we are aware only of the effects, the dynamic interpretant, $I_4$. From Peirce's definition of the final interpretant, the dynamical interpretant tends towards the final interpretant, that is the act of perception itself has the capacity to articulate a radical re-conceptualisation. (fig. 5 appendix A) This goes some way towards clarifying the paradox of perception that nags at Freud's account of perceptual judgement in the schema of the structure of psyche, 1895, and the difference between perceptions, 'Wahrnehmungen', and the signs of perception, 'Wahrnehmungszeichen', as they appear in Freud's schema, 1896. Percepts, are Firsts, semes, which can only be inferred from the act of judgement. However the percept is also the dynamical object of the act of interpretation, the dynamical interpretant; paradoxically the percept as First, is also conferred with Secondness, indexicality. There is no awareness of the Percepts, except in the act of judgement.

Peirce's account of perceptual judgement also illuminates the shift that Freud makes from the mode of memory sign as pictures, 'Erinnerungsbilden', and memory traces, 'Spurren', which as noted previously indicates the difference between the iconicity and indexicality, respectively, of the sign-object relation. Whereas the percept is conferred existence as result of the act of judgement, through being the object of the dynamical interpretant, the pure perceptual icon must remain as an elusive, intangible, element of Firstness:

'...How is it that the Percept, which is a Seme, has for its direct Dynamical Interpretant the Perceptual Judgement, which is a Pheme?'

'... My opinion is that a pure perceptual Icon - and many really great psychologists have evidently thought that perception is a passing of images before the mind's eye,

---

1 Seme and pheme coextensive are with 'rheme' and 'dicisign', as previously referred to in chapter one p.251.
2 Please see above, chapter two, p.50.
3 Please see above, chapter two, p.51.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter three: Self Interpretant 72
much as if one were walking through a picture gallery - could not have a Pheme for its
direct Dynamical Interpretant.' (1906b 4.540)

This paragraph also articulates the phenomenological paradoxical world of Firstness that is
necessarily present in perception, yet never described, 'thought of,' or consciously
experienced, but in the chain of semiosis it must enter into the play that makes the percept
indexical. In the chain of interpretants, the iconicity of the percept enters into the dynamic
directed towards the final interpretant. The final interpretant of perception is therefore
capable of producing a fundamental change in the self: '... a process of change in thoughts or
signs, as if to induce this change in the Interpreter.' (1906b 4.538)

Returning to my introductory anecdote, walking into the Metropolitan Museum
involves the complex interaction of levels of interpretants, the immediate, emotional
interpretant that include my feelings of awe, the logical interpretant bringing in my desire to
know, to understand, to want to find out more about the Alamba peoples' culture - and the
final interpretant? The failure of my habitual understanding of how masks, effigies, artefacts
can signify 'presence', require a change of habit based on the dynamical interpretant, the
shock of this heterodox dynamical object - masks and effigies - driving me towards seeking a
new final interpretant. As in the analysis of perceptual judgement, this process of looking and
witnessing, brings into being the paradox of the seme, the inexorable connection between
Firstness and Secondness; one way of trying to articulate the extraordinary, disturbing quality
of an encounter with presence and beauty.

**Signs of self**

How do we perceive ourselves? If we are signs to ourselves, what kind of sign?
Peirce's paper, 'Some Consequences of Four Incapacities', (1868) addresses this question by
arguing against the Cartesian subject who bases existence on doubt. Such excessive doubt is
an offence to the evolutionary theory of mind that holds that we are necessarily best adapted to

1 C.f.: 'Although the immediate Interpretant of an Index must be an Index, yet since its Object may be
an Object of an Individual [Singular] Symbol, the Index may have such a Symbol for its indirect
Interpretant.' (1902 2.294)

_Shifting Eyes_ chapter three: Self Interpretant 73
our environment: '... we cannot proceed from the position of complete doubt. ... Let us not pretend to doubt in philosophy what we do not doubt in our hearts.' (1868 5.265) In this spirit Peirce produces the following maxims:

1. We have no power of Introspection, but all knowledge of the internal world is derived by hypothetical reasoning from our knowledge of external facts.
2. We have no power of Intuition, but every cognition is determined logically by previous cognitions.
3. We have no power of thinking without signs.
4. We have no conception of the absolutely incognizable.' (1868 5.265)

Peirce is also determined not to return to the Scholastic belief in direct apprehension, in the context of extolling the scientific method held by the consensus of the scientific community Peirce advocates that we: '... proceed from tangible premises which can be subjected to careful scrutiny, and to trust rather to the multitude and variety of its arguments than to the conclusiveness of any one'. (1868 5.265) The modernity of Peirce's theories lies in recognising the importance of 'process'; cognition is therefore not conceived of as a single act of direct of single apprehension - but a long process of interpretation, that is semiosis.\(^1\) At the end of his account of perceptual judgement, Peirce concludes: '... I hold it to be impossible for thought not subject to self-control, as a perceptual Judgement manifestly is not, to be illogical.' (1906b 4.540) Peirce takes this one step further declaring the process of thinking one of logical inference: 'In every fallacy, therefore, possible to the mind of man, the procedure of the mind conforms to the formula of valid inference.' (1868 5.282) Peirce's conception of 'mind' as operating according to rules of logic overlaps with the work of Freud on thinking, for both theorists biological rules are the guarantor of the act of judgement itself.\(^2\)

'... whenever we think, we have present to the consciousness some feeling, image, conception, or other representation, which serves as a sign. But it follows from our own existence (which is proved by the occurrence of ignorance and error [233.f]) that everything which is present to us is a phenomenal manifestation of ourselves. This does not prevent its being a phenomenon of something without us, just as a rainbow is at once a manifestation both of the sun and of the rain. ... 'When we think, then, we ourselves, as we are at that moment, appear as a sign.' (1868 5.283)

---

\(^1\) C.f. (1868 5.267)
\(^2\) Please see above, chapter two, p.40.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter three: Self Interpretant
As in the analysis of perceptual judgement, the phenomenon - the percept - occupies the paradoxical state of being both immediate and dynamical object, dependent upon the act of perception; that is the introduction of the organising proposition acts as the dynamical interpretant which confers the existence of the object. This quotation also articulates the inextricable relation between the 'inner' and 'outer' sense of ourselves, the tenuous, fluctuating boundary of the ego. Even the formation of the dynamical object is insufficient to guarantee the existence of the referent; Peirce's discussion is confined to our experience of existence.

In many respects, therefore, this is another formulation of Freud's semiotic theory of the structure of the psyche, 1895. These semes are not necessarily signs of external reality since their phenomenological status is indifferent to their point of origin. At some point in our development we become aware of our existence through obeying the logic of inference based on the discovery of 'error'. Peirce gives the example of the child who is told not to touch a stove because it is hot:

"... he touches it, and finds the testimony confirmed in a striking way. Thus he becomes aware of ignorance, and it is necessary to suppose a self in which this ignorance can inhere. So testimony gives the first dawning of self-consciousness."

[5.225]

This example describes an encounter with the indexical, not only through the brute reality of sensory experience, but also through the testimony of an 'other'. Self, as sign, arises from the process of constructing a hypothesis based on indexical experience that can affirm or negate the premises. The experience of self therefore has the structure of an argument; the sign of the self is its conclusion, the proposition pheme. If we follow through the chain of object-interpretant, as in the above account of 'perceptual judgement', and extrapolate the semiotic structure of how the seme is the dynamical object of perception, then the indexical conferring of 'I', or naming oneself, is the dynamical object of the argument.

The 'sign of self' is therefore a complex signifying structure of interpretant and object signs. As the emotional, energetic and logical interpretants accord with experience, so

---

1Freud's use of 'Realitätszeichen' (1895a p.452).
2 For a comparison with linguistic shifters I and you and their dependence upon the context of utterance, please see Benveniste, E. (1971 pp. 224-25). The interpretant of the argument is then its conclusion, (1902b 2.95).

Shifting Eyes chapter three : Self Interpretant
the immediate and dynamical interpretants bring the self into being through conferring indexicality on the self as object - a dynamical object. 'Becoming' is therefore the movement of semiosis towards the final interpretant. How does Peirce describes the particularity of self-consciousness as an individual, the haeccity of 'this' self?

"The individual man, since his separate existence is manifested only by ignorance and error, so far as he is anything apart from his fellows, and from what he and they are to be, is only a negation. This is man,

"...proud man,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence." (1868 5.317)

In Peirce's quotation from Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, 'man' is introduced as an explanatory hypothesis for that which follows the rules of thought, or in which habit inheres. The individual 'man' is separate from the community of thought, both present and future. 'Glassy essence' suggests transparency, the transparency of an argument of inference which is therefore iconic, the guarantor of intelligibility.

What does Peirce mean by 'negation' here? Not only does negation separate the individual from the collective, it also puts a stop to the mimetic chain of icons, the hall of mirrors, the internal reflections of the glassy essence. As described by Peirce in the second trichotomy, it is the function of the index to disrupt the iconic - with shock and radical difference. There may be nothing more shocking than the effects of ignorance, error. Nothing more shocking than the 'other' who makes a demand on the omniscient self, who breaks the mimetic chain of the birth of the ego with the sharp cut of speech, the desire of the other and the laws of language, social rules and the law of sexual difference. Negation is both the indexical encounter with the other and also the formation of self as symbol, capable of utilising the symbol of negation, the 'Verneinungssymbol', which Freud uses to define the difference between the unconscious and consciousness.¹

¹'Please see chapter two, pp.58,59.

Shifting Eyes chapter three : Self Interpretant
Man and word are reciprocally dependent upon one another. This imaginative way of describing how the self evolves, both through language and in language, captures the sense of the primacy of language as a symbolic system of meaning in which we are socially embedded, without losing the sense in which we are able to play with our symbolic positioning. Freeing signs from the symbolic and the indexical, shuffling the iconic chains to create new selves, articulating our desires, we become new interpreters of ourselves, free to interpret ourselves to the extent that we are able to strive to becoming a final interpreter embracing a radical change of habit, sustaining the shock of a new paradigm. This freedom is therefore also a freedom from the logical interpreter and the symbolic of current ideology. Words, by introducing the final interpreter, change identity:

‘... the identity of a man consists in the consistency of what he does and thinks, and consistency is the intellectual character of a thing; that is, is its expressing something.’ (1868 5.315)

‘Thus my language is the sum total of myself; for the man is the thought.’ (1868 5.314)

‘Attention is the power by which thought at one time is connected with and made to relate to thought at another time; or, to apply the conception of thought as a sign, that it is the pure demonstrative application of a thought-sign.’ (1868 5.295)

Self-identity entails persistence through time, consistency of behaviour, habit. As in Freud’s use of the term ‘attention’ as an indexical form of negation that denotes the binding of energy in ego development, Peirce’s concept of ‘attention’ is also a form of negation, but in this case a ‘third’ which brings about the synthesis of thoughts. Ordinarily, as Peirce puts it, we are not aware of our structure as sign and word, rather we speak of our will, desire and need. The radical shift occurs when there is a movement away from the habitual logical interpreters, learnt codes of family and society, into the larger realm of the final interpreter - ideas, imaginative leaps, the recovery of lost histories, other languages, a new vision.

There is then no single sign that acts as the reflexive ‘sign of self’, rather there is a complex structure of signs created in the flow of semiosis, the self always in the state of becoming, always moving towards the final interpreter. Far from acting as a symbol - an argument - the complexity of self includes iconic relations, the indexical encounter with the

---

1 Peirce also points out that ‘consistency’ is characteristic of any sign by definition. (1868 5.313)

2 For the place of ‘attention’ in ego development, please see above, chapter two, pp.40-43.

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpreter
other, consciousness of the symbol of negation and difference, all of this indicates a complex structure of signs that defies a simple self-reflexivity. The structure which best articulates the heterodox character of this structure is Peirce’s concept of the hypoicon, a form of iconic structure which can encompass opposites; the hypoicon which includes metaphor, providing the ground for symbol formation. In Freud’s theory of the self, the semiosis of ‘becoming’ is anchored to the changes in the structure of the self, from narcissism, through oedipal ordering, to a self that aims to uphold the symbolic order of sexual difference. The next part of the chapter traces the development of the symbolic self in Freud and asks the question if the hypoicon of self has validity in Freud’s theories.

Freud: interpretant of self

Freud’s account of the boundary of the ego as legacy to the discrimination between that which is pleasurable and that which is not, in the schema 1895, laid the foundation for the later conceptual difference between ‘narcissism’ and ‘object-love’. ‘Narcissism’, a term which first appeared in Freud’s early career working with Breuer on hysteria, is developed in the paper, ‘On Narcissism: an Introduction’, (1914b) within the terms of an ‘ergonomic’ understanding of psychic processes, that is according to the ‘first topographical division’ - the conscious, preconscious and unconscious. ‘Narcissism’ as a clinical concept first arose during Freud’s work with clients whose libidinal development had suffered ‘some disturbance’:

‘We have discovered, especially clearly in people whose libidinal development has suffered some disturbance, such as perverts and homosexuals, that in their later choice of love-objects they have taken as a model not their mother but their own selves. ... In this observation we have the strongest of the reasons which have led us to adopt the hypothesis of narcissism.’ (1914b p.87)

In describing narcissism as self-love Freud makes a distinction between auto-eroticism and narcissism. The auto-erotic drives are taken as a priori, preceding the development of the ego. The earlier paper on sexuality, ‘Three Essays on Sexuality’, (1905b) includes annotations added in 19151 to his discussion on auto-eroticism:

1 Added to ‘Drei Abhandlungen Zur Sexualtheorie’, (1915a) the 3rd. ed. Leipzig/Vienna, Deuticke.

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpretant
'...To begin with, sexual activity attaches itself to one of the functions serving the purpose of self-preservation and does not become independent of them until later.' and '...At its origin it attaches itself to one of the vital somatic functions; it has as yet no sexual object, and is thus auto-erotic; and its sexual aim is dominated by an erotogenic zone.' (1914b pp.182-'3)

Auto-eroticism does not therefore require a sense of the subject as an 'object' for him-or-herself, the concept of self-reflection is as yet unnecessary. Indeed this activity fits into the more biological schema of the earlier work, based around the paradigm of the reflex-action and the primarily phenomenological description of sensual experience described previously by Freud. The interesting question arises in relation to narcissism - as opposed to auto-eroticism - in terms of perceiving the 'self' as an object. The differentiation of the object, as we have seen above requires an act of judgement that reaches its conclusion in the form of an argument; to narcissistically relate to 'myself' as a dynamical object requires the formation of a dynamical interprétant. Auto-eroticism establishes the immediate object of 'satisfaction' but not the dynamical object of desire. Immediate interprétants and immediate objects stay within the realm of the merely possible, Firsts, the phantasmatic iconic chain of signs. The infantile sexual aim is to repeat the early satisfaction of bodily needs, such as hunger, the sexual drive being at the outset undifferentiated from this drive for self-preservation. (1914b p.87) Freud’s recognition that any organ may function as an erotogenic zone is added in another footnote of 1915 added to ‘Three Essays on Sexuality’.

What then is the relation between auto-eroticism and primary narcissism? Freud defines primary narcissism as: ‘...the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation...’. Freud’s ergonomic understanding of this process is based on the recognition that all organs of the body are capable of erotic arousal with a concomitant change in the ‘cathexes’ of the ego. Freud opposes the two drives, sexual libido directed at objects and the drives for self-preservation; they are not the same ‘kind’ of energy. It is in fact the existence of object cathexes which makes it: ‘...possible to discriminate a sexual energy - the libido - from an energy of the ego-instincts [Ichtriebe].’ The separation of the immediate object and the dynamical object signifies the difference between the drives, the drives for self-

---

1 ‘...any other part of the body can acquire the same susceptibility to stimulation as is possessed by the genitals and can become an erotogenic zone.’ (1905b p.184)

2 This is one of the numerous instances when Strachey translates ‘Ichtriebe’ as instincts, therefore conflating the difference between ‘Instinkt’ and ‘Trieb’, which is now commonly understood as ‘drive’. (1914a p.158; 1914b p.74)

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interprétant
preservation and the sexual drive directed towards the other as object. This dynamic is played out in that point of recognition of self reflected in the mirror.

**Narcissism in the mirror**

Primary narcissism revolves around the point at which the developing self sees her or himself as object, the phase of perception which analyst Jacques Lacan (1936) calls the ‘mirror phase’. This is the stage of development in which the mimetic reflection of the infant in the ‘mirror’ - the iconic act of mirroring by the mother - is broken by the infant’s realisation that she or he is a separate whole.¹ The perception of the wholeness of self is greeted with jubilation, but the recognition of oneself as ‘other’, is an initiation into the alienation of the individual. There is then an intrinsic relation between the moment of recognising oneself as an external object for others and the internal phenomenological sense of oneself.

In terms of Peirce’s sign-object relation, the mirror stage describes commutative iconic relations, blurring the boundaries between self and other, for example the transitive slippage between, ‘my hand and your hand’. The hypnotic exchange through the eyes, the look, becomes a hall of mirroring relations, an iconic echo. This early self is primarily focused on these immediate, emotional interpretants. The ‘other’ is merely an immediate object of mimicry, and the immediate interpretant of the other is iconic. The world of emotional interpretants has to bring into effect action, the energetic interpretants. The way the infant demands attention through smiling, crying, laughing, and any other means of expression, evokes the mother’s emotional interpretants. The infant also echoes the mother’s responses, acting to fulfil the emotional interpretants of the mother’s desire, a reciprocity of affirmation played out through iconic mirroring. This is followed by an exchange of energetic interpretants, such as feeding, hugging and playing; speech emerges within this dynamic play.

¹ Lacan uses the break in the mimetic relation of the mirror, the moment of self-recognition as the logical moment in which the infant becomes aware of her/his initiation into the ‘Symbolic order’. It is this major shift from the ‘Imaginary’ to the ‘Symbolic order’ that re-orders early self-perception based on the ego’s illusory formation. Lacan’s metaphysical division, Real, Imaginary, Symbolic (1953) is not coextensive with Peirce’s metaphysical division, Firstness, Secondness, Thirdness.

_Shifting Eyes_ chapter three : Self Interpretant

80
of interpretants. For the infant to become a self independent from mother requires that the infant is recognised as another subject, rather than being the object of the mother's desire.

Affirmation has to be broken by recognition of the indexical otherness of both mother and infant. The mother who refuses to play to every demand of the infant self preserves her indexical self, for example through saying 'no' and weaning. These acts of refusal act as the indexical negation which breaks the iconic mimetic chain. This generates a range of responses in the infant, including on the one hand a return to fantasy and wish fulfilment - the immediate interpretants - and on the other hand an acknowledgement of 'mother' as 'other, creating dynamical interpretants that constitute mother as dynamical object.

Narcissistic object choice is never entirely free of primary narcissism and in that sense is never allowed to be fully an indexical sign. The external object choice, the dynamical object mirroring the self as object, takes the place of the immediate object following the iconic pattern of how the ego is formed mimaetically to another, the 'Nebenmensch', as described in the 'Project', 1895. How can narcissistic object choice break out of solipsism: '...when the aim and satisfaction in a narcissistic object-choice is to be loved?' (1914b p.98) In describing the conditions giving rise to a narcissistic object choice, Freud breaks down the possibilities as follows: -

'A person may love: -
(1) According to the narcissistic type: -
(a) what he himself is (i.e. himself),
(b) what he himself was,
(c) what he himself would like to be,
(d) someone who was once part of himself.' (1914b p.90)

---

1 Colwyn Trevarthen, Prof. of child psychology at Edinburgh, one of a team working on autism, has published corroborative evidence that the infant is born with a field of emotional responses that are activated in relation to an other; mimicking facial expressions, 'turn-taking' in vocalization, gestures with fingertips and eyes develop within a few hours of birth. These theories of brain development lead to the conclusion that the infant is born with a 'virtual other' ready for assimilating the emotional expressions of someone else. Trevarthen cites Peirce's theory of semiosis, in particular the movement from emotional, to energetic and then logical interpreters, which captures the process of semiosis, the prototype of dialogue that takes place between the infant and mother, but he also charges with Peirce with a rationalism that would appear to preclude the thesis that emotion operates as the drive of semiosis. Trevarthen describes the reciprocity of emotional interpreters between infant and mother as an 'emotional syntax' and an understanding of emotional significance as the basis of linguistic syntax and intention. (Trevarthen, C. 1994)

2 Muller, J. (1996), uses Peirce's insights on the importance of the indexical breaking of the mother-infant dyad, to re-describe the 'mirror phase' of ego development; Muller then extrapolates this as methodological insight into how psychotherapy may become arrested into iconic mirroring.

---

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpretant 81
There are therefore four different forms of narcissistic object: (a) the iconic reflection of himself as dynamical object; (b) the jubilant self derived from the self of the early mirror phase, which is the immediate object of fantasy and perfection; (c) the future conditional self, the logical interpretant, initially determined by the demands of the other, and (d) the lost internalised other, the object formed through the iconic identity between the other as immediate object and the ego as object.

Freud introduces a terminological distinction between the narcissistic ideals of the 'Ideal-ego' and the oedipal ideals of the 'Ego-ideal' which uphold the values of family and social law:

"The ideal ego [Idealich] is now the target of the self-love which was enjoyed in childhood by the actual ego. The subject's narcissism makes its appearance displaced on to this new ideal ego, which, like the infantile ego, finds itself possessed of every perfection that is of value....when, as he grows up, he is disturbed by the admonishments of others and by the awakening of his own critical judgement, so that he can no longer retain that perfection, he seeks to recover it in the new form of an ego ideal [Ichideal]." (1914a p.178 ; 1914b p.94)

Primary narcissism, in attempting to reproduce the former sense of self-satisfaction, meets the opposition of the ideals of others, the ideals of the Ego-ideal: the desire for emotional interpretants is modified through the demands of others. The symbolic placement of the individual in society, the familial naming of the social subject confers indexicality - in the same way that the propositional act of judgement confers the existence of the dynamical object - in obedience to the symbolic order. Conformity to the Ego-ideal entails repression of the pleasure-seeking unconscious wishes, which if acted upon would incur punishment, the withdrawal of affirmative emotional interpretants, signs of love, approval and affection. This account of repression reformulates the schema 1896 definition of repression as failure of translation, into an act of judgement. When the ego as object does not form an iconic relation of identity with the Ego-ideal as object, then the incompatible wishes and ideas are repressed. Such ego ideals are inculcated through the parents and other sources of authority via the watchful gaze and the voice of authority.

1 (Freud, 1896a p.187) please see above, chapter two, pp.53,54.

Shifting Eyes chapter three: Self Interpretant
This development of the Ego-ideal, is the emergence of the sign of self as the logical interpretant, capable of self-reflection and evaluation of emotional and energetic interpretants. The Ego-ideal is also a social ideal:

‘The ego ideal ... is also the common ideal of a family, a class or a nation. It binds not only a person’s narcissistic libido, but also a considerable amount of his homosexual libido, which is in this way turned back [zurückgekehrt] into the ego.’ (1914a p.186; 1914b pp. 101-2)

Social ideals of a heterosexual resolved oedipal society require either the negation or the sublimation of the incompatible sexual aim; sublimation is here defined as the re-direction of libido onto a non-sexual object. (1914b p.94) The homosexual, however, does not conform to the oedipal ideal, rather homosexuals are those: ‘...who have taken as a model [Vorbild] not their mother but their own selves...’. (1914a p.170; 1914b p.88) The homosexual love-object in Freud’s theory is an iconic image of the ego, a conflation of the immediate object of narcissistic fantasy and the dynamical object of self.

In the above account it is the Ego-ideal which acts to ‘bind’ libido, creates a categorical division between desire for the parent of the opposite sex and identification with the parent of the same sex. What then is the relation between the ‘binding’ effect of the Ego-ideal, which acts to enforce the dichotomy of sexual polarity, and the role of the phallus as a signifying term?

Phallic signification

Freud gives an account of the evolution of the phallus in terms of substitution, a semiotic relation of transference. What part does recognition of the difference between the iconic and indexical phallus play in sexual development? In ‘Infantile Genital organisation’, (1923d) Freud bases his hypothesis that infantile genital organisation differs from adult organisation in that for the infants of: ‘... both sexes, only one genital, namely the male one, comes into account. What is present therefore is not a primacy of the genitals but a primacy of the phallus [ein Primat des Phallus].’ (1923c p.234; 1923d p.142) Using Peirce’s semiotics to illuminate Freud’s concept, the ‘phallic phase’, the signifying mode which dominates is the
iconic phallic, the phallus of possibility, in which the absence of the actual existent phallus,
the indexical phallus is disavowed.¹

Whereas the boy's fear of castration, within the context of his rivalrous relation with
his father, resolves the Œdipus complex, it is the recognition of castration that precipitates the
girl's entry into the Œdipus complex. Freud's paper, 'The Dissolution of the Œdipus
Complex', 1924a spells out a binary logic: the girl drops her desire for mother and identifies
with her as the female Ego-ideal, which therefore entails switching her desire from mother to
father.² In the case of the little boy, the threat of castration is enforced through prohibition on
masturbation by both father and mother; the enforcement of the symbolic law of sexual
division is therefore acted out through the indexical phallus, the penis: 'In a number of cases
the women will themselves mitigate the threat in a symbolic manner... [eine symbolische
Milderung der Anrohung vor].' (1924a p.425; 1924b pp. 174-'5) This is in line with Peirce's
definition of the symbol extant through specific instances.

Controversially, Freud goes on to restate the symbolic development of sexual
difference in terms of the indexical, as in that often quoted phrase, 'anatomy is destiny'. In
breaking the iconic phallic phase, the girl has to recognise the inferiority of her clitoris as a
castrated penis, and it is her recognition of this absence of the penis, the indexical sign of
difference, which precipitates her Œdipus complex. The positive resolution of her desire for
her father takes the form of a symbolic slippage from penis to baby:

'Das Mädchen gleitet - man möchte sagen: längs einer symbolischen Gleichung -
vom Penis auf das Kind hinüber, sein Œdipuskomplex gipfelt in dem lange
festgehalten Wunsch, vom Vater ein Kind als Geschenk zu erhalten, ihm ein Kind zu
geboren.'

'She slips - along the line of a symbolic equation, one might say - from the penis to the
baby. Her Œdipus complex culminates in a desire, which is long retained, to receive a
baby from her father as a gift - to bear him a child.' (1924a p.429; 1924b pp. 178-'9)

The transference from penis to child, that Freud describes as a 'symbolic equation' is also an
acknowledgement of the reproductive outcome of heterosexual desire. Though Freud maps
this transformation as a symbolic exchange, it follows from Peirce's understanding of symbol

¹ For disavowal as negation of the iconic phallus, please see chapter two, pp.61,62.
² The semiotic structure of identification will form the subject of the next chapter four.
formation that this symbol involves both the indexical term, the penis, and the possibility of a child, the iconic term.

'Some Psychical Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between Sexes', (1925d) discusses some of the difficulties for the girl in giving up mother as the first love object and forming an identification with her. The girl may not ever completely accept the fact of her castration; penis-envy may be accompanied by disavowal, 'Verleugnung', (1925c p.13), producing behaviour that mimics the man, or hatred of mother, hatred of her own sex and the fantasy of being beaten: ‘... a relic of the phallic period in girls.' (1925d p.254)1 Freud is adamant that female heterosexuality depends upon giving up the pleasure of the clitoris, which as an active sexuality, is deemed masculine and therefore phallic. Concluding the paper, Freud lays out the resolution of the Oedipus complex as the abandonment of incest and the institution of conscience and morality, rather than as the acceptance of the law of sexual difference: ‘... all human individuals, as a result of their bisexual disposition and of cross-inheritance, combine in themselves both masculine and feminine characteristics, so that pure masculinity and femininity remain theoretical constructions of uncertain content.’ (1925d p.258) These papers do not therefore give an account of the phallus as the symbol of sexual difference, or unification of the drives, rather they point to a complex signifying structure that brings together the phallus as iconic and indexical terms. How then is the symbol of the phallus created?

In the section on symbol formation in 'The Interpretation of Dreams', (1900b) Freud makes a distinction between 'symbol' and personal interpretation of dream material, the 'symbol' represents the limits of personal narrative. Symbolic connections between dream elements indicate a 'genetic' character:

'Things that are symbolically connected to-day were probably united in prehistoric times by conceptual and linguistic identity. The symbolic relation seems to be a relic and mark of former identity.' (1900b p.352)

Freud writes that there are specific chains of signs between dream images and genitalia, from masturbatory imagery to imagery such as wings of desire.2 The adjective 'phallic', as applied to 'whips, lances and similar objects', refers not only to the penis in its erect form, but also to

1 '... phallischen Periode der Mädchen..' (1925c p.14).
2 Following the view of Hans Sperber that all primal words referred originally to sexual things, footnote added 1925.

Shifting Eyes chapter three : Self Interpretant
the flight of a bird. In the account of Bismarck's dream, Freud uses the term 'phallic symbol' as an adjective to describe a whip that extends to an infinite length. (1900b pp.379-'80) Winged power appears in the 'texts of the Ancients' as the winged phallus, a symbol of power which appeared to Moses as the rod capable of transgressing the law.1 ‘Phallic’ as an adjective indicating the quality of extension bears a mimetic relation to the phallus and therefore signifies the iconic phallus.

The ‘winged phallus of the ancients’ is the subject of a mythological study by Payne Knight, (1786) referred to in Dugald Stewart’s theory of transitive names. (1818) Knight, P. 'The Account of the Remains of the Worship of Priapus', puts forward a theory of words as: ‘...arbitrary signs of convention, instead of imitative representations of ideas.’ (1786 p.11) He concludes that words similar in form still retain differences in meaning. In his discussion on the names of gods, Knight envisages these names as concatenations of divine power, for example the name Osiris-Bacchus-Mithras operates as a result of a series of transferences, the transference of qualities related to the phallus.2 The following chains, taken from Knight, exemplify semiotic structures of transference. The first follows a metonymic chain with a logical inversion based on the premise of dualism; passive/active, light/dark, fire/water.iii

This second chain is brought about through one property held in common:

\[
\text{Ajax} \rightarrow \text{Ocean of Homer} \rightarrow \text{Pan, god of water} \rightarrow \text{Bacchus} \rightarrow \text{Pan, god of fire} \]

Names of goddesses can refer across a range of contradictory qualities, as in this example which combines a metonymic chain with the indexical name, Diana of Ephesus, Diana slides in reference from an association with Ephesus, to the Bull :

\[
\text{Diana of Ephesus} \rightarrow \text{targis} \rightarrow \text{Taurus} \rightarrow \text{Seythe} \rightarrow \text{Bull}
\]

1 This phallic chain of images of power appears in appears in HD’s Trilogy (1942-'6) as the flowering rod, caduceus, snake, wood, and the rood; please see below, chapter six, pp.177-179.
2 Please see previous discussion on Freud’s concept of ‘transference’, chapter two, pp.40,48-51.
3 This concurs with Freud’s belief in, ‘The Antithetical Meaning of Primary Words’, (1910) based on the work of Abel, A. 1884, as above, chapter two, pp.56-58.
4 I am introducing this graphic form, $\equiv$, indicating the specific term that constructs the transference relation, and $\equiv$, indicating identification, as graphic icons which make visible the chains of association that evolve into hypoicons and symbols.
In this following example, the image-trait of the phallus, that is the iconic quality of the phallus, is used to produce a chain of gods who personify this trait, again encompassing opposites:

Minerva $\equiv$ Moon $\equiv$ Horns of cow $\equiv$ Venus

Celtic ring of stones $\equiv$ Sun circle $\equiv$ Spires and pinnacles

These chains of names based on shared properties produce structures of 'equivalence', in which one thing can be substituted for another, not necessarily holding on to the metonymic relation but preserving an iconic relation. The sequence describes a movement in ritual from the actual 'generative organ' to the act of forgetting, the forgetting which allows the phallus to operate as a symbol: a shift from the indexical to the symbolic. As a sequence of interpretants, these names denote the shift from the emotional-energetic experience of fertility and re-generation, to the logical interpretant - for example making sense of seasonal change through marking the appearance of spring - towards the final interpretant which introduces the explanatory hypothesis of 'myth'. Where these chains reveal a condensation of opposites, however, the result is not an instanciation of the symbol of the phallus but a kind of hypoicon, which appears in language as metaphor. The shifts of power represented in Knight's examples, demonstrate the phallus as a mobile sign that includes iconic and indexical signification, but which need not necessarily act as the symbol of sexual difference. It is therefore questionable as to whether sexuality can ever be defined through the symbol of the phallus acting as the representamen of the binary law of sexual difference, $\Phi$.¹

**Negotiating the phallus: jouissance and bisexuality**

In an early dispute with Charcot about the relative role of hereditary characteristics as the cause of nervous disorders, hysteria and obsessional neurosis, Freud constructs a logic of trauma, based on sexually precocious experience, 'L'Hérédité et L'Étiologie des Névroses'. (1896c) The actual event, the trace, is held as '... le souvenir reste inconscient.' The passivity

¹ Designating the symbolic phallus, $\Phi$, distinguishes this from the iconic and indexical phallus reinforces its role as a binary operator of a law within Peirce's semiotics. Please note that there is no reference in Freud to the 'symbolic phallus' as such.
of the experience leads Freud to the theory that in the case of the young man this gives rise to
sexual aggression inspired by desire, whereas in the case of the little girl, it gives rise to
‘jouissance’ in further sexual encounters: ‘...d’un participation avec jouissance aux rapports
sexuels (en cas de petite fille).’ (1896c p.401) In the process of psychoanalysis, ‘jouissance’
is found to be linked to obsessive thoughts of guilt and self-reproach.

Freud’s paper ‘Female Sexuality’, (1931b) builds on the previous papers on
sexuality and the Œdipus complex to enforce the conclusion that the shift from mother, as
primary object, to father is never fully acceded; desire for the mother remains a hidden
structure, like the Minoan civilisation behind the Mycenean. Women’s sexuality is therefore
divided: ‘Their sexual life is regularly divided into two phases, of which the first has a
masculine character, while only the second is specifically feminine.’ (1931b p.228) The
enforcement of the Ego-ideal of sexual difference is never absolute and so Freud admits the
various complexities of female sexuality, for example the girl may never completely give up
her primary attachment to mother and even if such attachment is severed she may not
necessarily take her father as sexual object; clitoral sexuality may remain active in later life.¹

It is this quality of excess which Lacan picks up as jouissance, a concept distinct from
pleasure, since pleasure is limited by the Ego-ideal.² Building on Freud’s concept of the
‘phallic phase’ of sexual development, Lacan uses the phallus to signify sexual difference.
This concept emerges from Lacan’s denotation of sexual difference around ‘being’ or ‘having’
the phallus, ‘The Meaning of the Phallus’, (1958). It is in this paper that Lacan firmly
detaches the meaning of the phallus from fantasy and anatomy:

‘In Freudian doctrine, the phallus is not a fantasy, if what is understood by that is an
imaginary effect. Nor is it as such an object (part, internal, good, bad, etc. ...) in so far
as this term tends to accentuate the reality involved in a relationship. It is even less the
organ, penis or clitoris, which it symbolizes. And it is not incidental that Freud took
his reference for it from the simulacrum which it represented for the Ancients.

For the phallus is a signifier ...’ (Lacan, J. 1958 p.79)

The phallus entails the ‘signified’ of desire, desire which, in this paper, Lacan defines as the
difference between the demand for Love and the achievement of satisfaction. In other words,

²‘Jouissance’ first appeared in Lacan’s seminars of (1953-’4) in the context of the master-slave dialectic
and developed in relation to desire in the seminars of (1957-’8); by 1963, jouissance is deemed to be the
aim of desire. I have cited Lacan’s seminars (1972-3b) through the earlier translation (1972-3a). Evans,
in any love relation, including mother and child, the other is the cause of desire: the child
therefore signifies the 'phallus' for the mother. In sexual relations this devolves into the logic
of 'having' or 'being' the phallus, the woman occupying the place of 'being' the phallus in the
sexual relation.¹

‘Let us say that these relations will revolve around a being and a having which,
because they refer to a signifier, the phallus, have the contradictory effect of on the
one hand lending reality to the subject in that signifier, and on the other making unreal
the relations to be signified...’. (1958 p.85)

Lacan then identifies the phallus as a ‘signifier’ of sexual difference, ‘being or having’, with
the signifier of ‘oneness’, the binding principle of Eros, as referred to by Freud in ‘Negation’,
(1925b).² Female jouissance is therefore always in excess of phallic identity: ‘There is a
jouissance, since we are dealing with jouissance, a jouissance of the body which is, if the
expression be allowed, beyond the phallus.’ (1972-'73a) iii This builds on the concept of
jouissance as transgressive of the law of sexual difference which Lacan put forward in the
seminars of (1959-'60). Lacan’s concept of ‘transgression’, exceeding the pact of the Law and
the bargain extracted by ‘God’, is a re-reading of Freud’s ‘Civilised Sexual Morality and
Modern Nervous Illness’, (1908):

‘Generally speaking, our civilisation is built up on the suppression of instincts... The
piece of instinctual satisfaction which each person had renounced was offered to the
Deity as a sacrifice...’. (Freud, S. 1908 pp.186-'7)

This is another way of describing the costs of the ‘normal’ (that is ‘socially useful’ as defined
by Freud) oedipal resolution and sublimation; the social bond requires pleasure within limits,
limits determined by the law of sexual difference and prohibition of incest. Lacan takes two
examples, the first from Kant; a man is given the opportunity of spending a night with a
woman but only at the cost his life: jouissance necessarily entails death. The second, from
Sophocles’ Antigone, describes Antigone’s defiance of the law of her father Creon - Antigone

¹ The logic of ‘being or having’ the phallus as described by (Lacan, J. 1958 pp.83-84); see also
discussion of H.D.’s Trilogy, (1942-'6) as below, chapter six, p.177.
² Please see previous discussion on the phallus, ‘Eros’ and ‘Bejahung’, chapter two, p.61.
³ This jouissance is not, however, the same as clitoral orgasm, it is akin to the experience of the mystics,
for example as depicted by Bemini’s statue of St. Theresa, an experience of the ‘feminine’ face of God;
this will be referred to in relation to Cahun, C. (1930a) please see below, chapter eight, pp.239-242.

Shifting Eyes chapter three : Self Interpretant
gives her brother Polynices a second burial, an ethical act based on her *jouissance*. In this respect *jouissance* has nothing to do with pleasure, pleasure always stays within the boundary of what is acceptable to the Ego-ideal. (Lacan, J. 1959-'60 p.189) *Jouissance* is then the opposite of pleasure and is limited by pleasure. (Lacan, J. 1960a p.319)

In terms of Peirce's understanding of the symbol as the representamen of a law, the phallus, as referred to by Lacan, operates as the symbol of sexual difference, Φ. Freud, however, repeatedly states that the logic of male versus female sexuality is itself an 'ideal'. The binary logic of 'being' or 'having' the phallus is also an ideal. The complex semiotics of the phallus, combining indices and icons, means that the phallus does not operate with the law-like regularity of the symbol; the phallus is therefore closer to Peirce's definition of a hypoicon. Freud's understanding of the psyche as basically 'bisexual' produces a further complexity into a binary heterosexual oedipal resolution.³

'The Ego and Id', (1923b) which describes the Ôedipus complex as a negotiation of both the 'positive' and 'negative' routes, sets the agenda for a less categorical version of the complex and its outcome:

'It may even be that the ambivalence displayed to the parents should be attributed entirely to bisexuality and that it is not, as I have represented above out of identification in consequence of rivalry.' (1923b p.33)

Such ambivalence suggests a dramatic critique of the very existence of the Ôedipus complex and points to vacillation in the instanciation of the law of sexual difference; it is another version of how the phallus is not operating as the symbol, Φ, of oedipal prohibition or unification of the drives, Eros. It suggests a more complex structure of the subject, one in which the Ego-ideal does not completely supervene on the ego but forms a palimpsest or collage structure of signs including the phallus as iconic and indexical. From Freud's conclusion: '...the broad outcome of the Ôedipus complex as two identifications with both

---

¹ For further account of Lacan's analysis of Antigone, see chapter eight, pp.247'8.
² In the first part "Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality", (1905b) Freud firmly grounds the concept of bisexuality in biology, taking hermaphroditism as paradigmatic.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter three: Self Interpretant
mother and father...’, it is possible to infer that identification and object choice are not mutually exclusive:

‘The broad general outcome of the sexual phase dominated by the Ædipus complex may, therefore, be taken to be the forming of a precipitate in the ego consisting of these two identifications in some way united with each other.’ (1923b p.34)

In Peirce’s sign-interpretant trichotomy, ‘bisexuality’ is here described as two logical interpretants, held together in a semiotic structure of self that can bear contradictions, a structure such as the hypoicon. This suggests that sexuality is interpretation and opens the way for the consideration of sexual difference as the performance of characteristics, a charade necessary for the maintenance of heterosexuality and the law of sexual difference. The foundations of the symbol of oedipal law, Φ, are always capable of disconnection, open to iconic play and the formation of new hypoicons - new metaphors - moving towards the final interpretant of becoming. The next chapter describes the creation of the ego through identification with an other, looking again at the semiotics of the self as a complex play of signs, the hypoicon rather than the symbol.

---

1 This contradicts the prior formulation of ‘identification’ in ‘Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego’, (1921b p. 105) in which the ego either identifies with the object it would like to become or takes as a love object that which it would like to have.

2 Butler, J. (1990) puts forward the argument that heterosexuality has to be constantly ‘performed’ in order to enforce sexual difference, pointing to the fragility of the symbol ϕ.
Chapter Four: From Identification to Identity

The analysis of identification presented in this chapter traces the development of the concept in Freud’s writing, focusing in particular on a re-reading of Freud’s ‘The Interpretation of Dreams’, (1900b) through the semiotics of C.S. Peirce. Because of the complex overlap between the linguistic tropes of metonymy and metaphor, as derived from Aristotle, these tropes are shown to be less articulate in grasping the structure of identification, than a semiotic account of the unconscious primary processes - ‘displacement’ and ‘condensation’ - as they appear in dream and rhetorical forms of language. Lacan’s analysis of metaphor, as a form of identification, includes reference to the phonetics of the text, however, the importance of the iconic relation between words and images in bringing about structures of identification, requires further exegesis. Examples of how the shifting registers of the semiotic and the psyche relate through iconic metaphor, form the basis of the analysis of H.D.’s poetry and Cahun’s self-portraits.

Identification

To fall in love with another, to survive the loss of a loved one by modifying the ego and thereby inherit the legacies of others, to negotiate the family drama through forming identifications that act as template for future relationships, all these relationships which make us human are created through the structure of identification. Our identity, as described by Freud in the ‘Project’, (1895b) is intimately formed in the crucible of the other: our ego a skein over the skin of others.

Freud’s earliest conceptualisation of ‘identification’ is to be found amidst his correspondence with Fliess in the discussion on hysteria post-dating the ‘Project’. In the letter of the 17th December 1896, Freud writes to Fliess giving an explanation of the formation of phobia, in particular agoraphobia, in terms of identification:

---

1 Please see below, chapters six and seven.
I have confirmed, for instance, a long-standing suspicion about the mechanism of agoraphobia in women. You will guess it if you think of prostitutes. It is the repression of the impulse to take the first comer on the streets - envy of the prostitute and identification with her' (1887-1902b p.182)

Fundamental to the symptoms of agoraphobia is an act of judgement which follows the same model as that of perception and cognition.¹ This is, however, an act of judgement seeking identity not between external characteristics but an identity of unconscious desire; a desire which the prostitute lives out and which the 'woman' represses. Freud offers a similar explanation of Charcot's formulation of 'clownism' - a description of boys' hysterical attacks of craziness, somersaults and capers - in terms of an identification between 'nursery scenes' and 'sexual scenes'. In terms of Peirce's semiotics, the boys are mimicking the dynamical interpretants of the sexual scene on the basis that there is a common set of emotional interpretants, the demand for love. The letter of the 8th. Feb. 1897, offers a similar argument to account for somnambulism: 'It is the imitation of death with rigor mortis, i.e. identification with someone who is dead.' (1887-1902b p.192) On the same logic as above, there is a repetition of outward morphology, the somnambulist echoes the dynamical interpretants of the dead body, but the basic judgement of identity applies to unconscious desire.

In notes collated as Draft L, May 2nd. 1897 (1887-1902b p.198) Freud shows that the structure of a hysterical symptom is an amalgam of memory and unconscious phantasies. As an example he takes the 'middle class women' who may form an identification with 'servant girls' as a means of representing their own self-loathing, a debasement which acts to 'atone', not only for their own misdemeanours, but also for the sexual exploitation of the servant by the master. In this case, the identification based on failure to adhere to moral codes, takes as its basis the desire to be the sexual object of the master. Notes, Draft N, May 31st. 1897, (1887-1902b p.207) addresses how the hostile impulses of offspring against their parents may appear after the death of their parents as excessive grief and even the wish to die. The underlying identity statement brings together the two modes of experience, the dead parents as dynamical objects and their status as immediate objects of their children's death wish.

¹ For Freud's account of judgement, please see, chapter two, pp.42-46 and for Peirce's account of perceptual judgement, please see chapter three, pp.71-73.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity
Extrapolating from the concept of hysterical identification, Freud goes on to use the same argument to interpret fictional creation:

'Goethe combined in Werther something he had experienced (his love for Lotte Kastner) and something he had heard of (the fate of young Jerusalem, who killed himself). He probably toyed with the idea of killing himself and found a point of contact in this for identifying himself with Jerusalem, whom he provided with a motive from his own love-story.' (1887-1902b p.208)

Freud concludes that writing this phantasy as fiction probably prevented Goethe acting on his impulses. 'Werther', in the text, presents an amalgam of two identifications, the first based on the proposition of being in love, which is the immediate object, and secondly Goethe's identification with Jerusalem on the basis of a death wish, that is the negation of desire. The fictional immediate object is substituted for the dynamical object therefore obviating the need for Goethe to act out his death wish.

Freud sums up these examples with a general account of symptom formation as complex structures - impulses, phantasies, motives - resulting from 'transferences' between memories, that provoke a defensive reaction from the pre-conscious that forces its way into the unconscious. It is this account of how structural change take place in the ego that leads Freud to offer 'identification' as the basis of the phenomenon of multiple personality: 'Multiplicity of Personalities. The fact of identification may perhaps allow of this phrase being taken up literally.' (1887-1902b p.199) It is then a short step from this pathological definition of identification to a theory that accounts for the formation of the ego through identification with an other.

The shadow of the object

Mourning, as Freud points out in 'Mourning and Melancholia' (1917), arises not only from loss of another person but also that which may substitute for a person, for example, a country or place, liberty or another ideal, a future hope or ambition. The act of mourning requires that each of the memories and expectations involving the lost object has to be severed.
Freud conceptualises the residual attachment between the subject and her or his love object as a coalescence of sense-impressions of the object:

‘...the unconscious (thing-) presentation [Dingvorstellung] of the object has been abandoned by the libido. In reality, however, this presentation is made up of innumerable single impressions (or unconscious traces of them), and this withdrawal of libido is not a process that can be accomplished in a moment...’. (1917 p.256 inc. n1) [not my insert]

Using Peirce’s division of the object, the apparent schism between the external object, the ‘other’, and the internalised object can be described as the difference between the dynamical object of perception and the immediate object of fantasy. It is only during the act of perceptual judgement that the imposition of the propositional division onto the morass of sense data precipitates the object as the dynamical object of perception. Following the loss of a love object, the structure of judgement falls apart: there is then no dynamical object, only memories and fantasies, indices and icons. Such loss may result in the kind of suffering that points to a damaged narcissistic self image, a loss of self-regard that results in the energy, once directed towards the other, flowing back to the ego. When there is emotional ambivalence towards the object, however, a return to the narcissistic self is not possible: ‘...one part of the ego sets itself over against the other, judges it critically, and as it were, takes it as its object.’ (1917 p.247) In melancholia, reproach directed towards the object of the other, has been shifted onto her or his own ego:

‘Thus the shadow of the object fell upon the ego, and the latter could be judged by a special agency, as though it were an object, the forsaken object.’ (1917 p.249)

Melancholia thus indicates that the dynamical object was chosen on a narcissistic basis, that is, as Freud’s paper ‘Instincts and their Vicissitudes’ (1915b) points out, that the loss of the object results in regression to identification. Object love based on narcissism is characterised as an: ‘...incorporation or devouring - type of love which is consistent with abolishing the object’s separate existence and which may therefore be described as ambivalent.’ (1915b p.138) Identification, conceptualised as incorporation, derives from Freud’s theories of sexuality, in particular the paragraph on infantile pre-genital sexuality added to the 1915

---

1 The dynamical object is introduced above, chapter three, pp.64,66-68.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity
edition of 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality'. (1905b pp.197-8) The first oral or cannibalistic phase indicates that sexuality has not yet separated from eating, the sexual aim is then the literal incorporation of the object which acts as the prototype of identification. Thumb-sucking, for example, is a relic of this phase.

In concluding ‘Mourning and Melancholia’, Freud shows that narcissistic identification precedes hysterical identification: ‘whereas in the former the object-cathexis is abandoned, in the latter it persists and manifests its influence ...’. (1917 p.250) Unlike the regressive demolition of the object that underpins narcissistic identification, hysterical identification involves a transference of symptoms without demolishing the other, the other as object is preserved. In melancholia, part of the aggression towards the immediate object of the ego derives not from the experience of losing of the other, but from the constitution of the narcissistic self; that is the aggression stems from narcissism, the relation to the double in the mirror.

In the mirror

Lacan’s ‘The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the I’ (1936) draws a parallel between the infant’s recognition of her, or his, reflection and the work of Roger Callois on the sexual development in animals, in particular how the development of the sexual organs is precipitated by the sight of another of the same species. In the case of the human infant, this is replaced by the mirror-image which presents an image of completeness, or Gestalt, that acts as an ideal self, coherent and exhibiting self-control, that the infant recognises and can identify with.

Identification with the mirrored self is the outcome of a series of perceptual judgements: in terms of Peirce’s object-interpretant division, an identity relation has to be established between the mirror image, the dynamical object of perception, and the inner sense of self, the immediate object. This is also the psychological point at which the baby learns what that immediate object could be. The mirror reflects the mother, father and others important to the baby’s world, those who provide the baby with the new logical interpretants

---

1 As introduced, in chapter three, p.80.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity 96
of becoming. The initial jubilation and appreciation of the Gestalt of self, is tempered by the recognition of oneself as the object of the perceptions of others: the mirror introduces a split in the sense of self, that is the first experience of self-alienation. The double in the mirror, the dynamical object of others, is not the same as baby’s immediate object. It is this discrepancy that opens up doubt; which bears the ideals, the double in the reflection, or the ego? What kind of self-knowledge does the infant at the mirror-stage possess? Whereas Peirce conceptualises the self as the iconic resolution of an argument, taking as premise that there is a thinking being guaranteed by error, Lacan bases the very foundation of the ego on illusion: méconnaissance, a ‘paranoiac knowledge’.

Identification with the mirror image leads to phenomena of transitivity, for example how small children fail to distinguish between their own body and that of an other, confusing ‘my hand’ with ‘your hand’ - another instance of iconic mimesis. As described previously, it is the desire of the other, the other as indexical, which cuts across the endless chain of iconic mirroring. Weaning and saying “no” are actions which separate mother and infant and prepare for the introduction of social ideals. The Ego-ideal is created via introjection of a ‘single-character trait’, ‘einziger Zug’, creating new identifications that aim to supervene on the specular.

In the seminars of (1953-’4) Lacan introduces the two-mirror schema, a revision of the earlier account of the ‘mirror-phase’. A concave mirror is placed in front of a vase of flowers so that the real inverted image is reflected in a second mirror, a plane mirror, forming a collage in which the flowers appear to be placed in an inverted vase:

‘To be able to see the virtual subject, the subject must be positioned in relation to the plane mirror such that the image is rather hazy - not focused. ... Let’s say this represents the uneasy accommodation of the imaginary in man.’ (1953-’4 p.140)

Lacan suggests that the plane mirror stands for the function of the voice which introduces speech and the demands of others, the demand that constitutes the subject as the ‘symbolic’ object. The key transition in this account is the moment at which the subject asks, what is the

---

1 Peirce’s concept of logical interpretants, as cited above, chapter three, p.65.
2 It is paranoiac knowledge in the same sense in which Breton uses the term, please see chapter seven, p.219.
3 Please see the section on group identification, as below, pp.99-100.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity 97
desire of the other? and attempts to become the object of that desire. As Lacan puts it: ‘How
does the primitive mouth get transformed, in the end, into a phallus ...?’ (1953-14 p.141)
Peirce’s theory of symbol formation points out that the symbol as representamen of a law only
develops through particular instances of its action: the symbol is therefore only as effective as
its indices.

The shift from the specular ‘I’ of the mirror to the ‘symbolic’ I’ involves speech. To
be a ‘subject’ in Lacan’s formulation, follows Hegel’s definition of ‘Selbst-bewusstsein’, self-
consciousness, which emerges from the desire to be desired. In other words the infant realises
that these new logical interpretants require that she, or he, structures her, or his, desire
according to the desire of the parents.1 In the seminars of (1954-55 pp.235-247) Lacan
introduces the term ‘l’Autre’, to designate the ‘Other’ structured according to the Ego-ideal.
This enforces the extent to which the developing child becomes alienated from her or his own
desire. Identification with the ‘Other’, upholds the law of difference, Φ, giving rise to a split
self, the self of specular identification versus the self in identification with the ‘Other’. In this
definition, the subject is organised according to logical interpretants which free the self from
the specular, the speaking subject can then reply to the fascination of the mirror.2

Positive resolution of the Œdipus complex, as outlined in Freud’s paper ‘The
Dissolution of the Œdipus Complex’, (1924b) introduces secondary identification as the
introjection of the imago of the parent of the same sex, which ‘binds’ the prohibited sexual
energy of desire: the excess energy is then ‘sublimated.’3 It is this process of binding energy
which appears as a key concept in Freud’s paper, ‘Die Verneinung’, (1925a) as ‘Bejahung’,
the affirmative inheritor of Eros organising the partial drives of sexuality into a unity.4
Œdipal identifications in this situation are therefore logical interpretants which act to re-

---

matheine for structures of psychic development.
2 See in particular Amika Lemaire’s ‘dialectic of identification’ pointing out the imprisoning effect of
being perceived as trapped within the ideals of the Other, as the sense of ‘dispossession of the being by
itself’, (Lemaire, A. 1977 p.176). Œdipal resolution is therefore symbolic freedom from the fascination
with the image (p.180). The unconscious is structured as ‘the discourse of the Other’, (Lacan, J. 1955-
1956, p.112).
3 ‘The libidinal trends belonging to the Œdipus complex are in part de-sexualised and sublimated (a thing
which probably happens with every transformation into an identification) and in part inhibited in their
aim and changed into impulses of affection.’ (Freud, S. 1924a p177)
4 Please see above, chapter three, pp.90,91.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity
interpret the wildly differing erotic drives. To constitute the other in the mirror as the dynamical object of perception, becomes the signifying route by which the logical interpretants of desire of the Other are accepted.

According to this account, identification and desire are mutually exclusive, however, the version given in ‘The Ego and the Id’, (1923b) referring to the bisexual structure of the psyche as motivating complex identifications with parents of both sex, problematises the heterosexual conclusion of sexual difference organised through Φ as a binary operator. Peirce’s analysis of judgement, points out that what is at stake in the fragility of the symbol Φ as the organising principle of the subject, is the existential status of the ‘object’. Œdipal identifications construct the self as the dynamical object of the Other’s act of judgement. ‘Existence’ in the eyes of the Other is conferred in the act of judgement. This emphasises the price of resisting the edicts of the symbolic, to choose the meaning of life over and above social role is to risk ‘existence’.

Group identification

Freud’s theory of group identity, ‘Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego’, (1921b) explicates further the kind of identification that occurs when object relation regresses to identification: ‘...the identification is a partial and extremely limited one and only borrows a single trait [einen einzigen Zug] from the person who is its object.’ (1921a p.305 ; 1921b p.107) This form of identification is particularly relevant to the formation of the Ego-ideal in which a ‘single trait’ represents the ideals. The transference of a single trait becomes relevant to the formation of identifications organised through negotiating the Œdipus complex:

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

---

1 The formation of Œdipal identifications, however, can only take place if there is already a structuring of the subject with a rivalrous other, the double in the mirror; please see Lacan, J. (1948).
2 This has been referred to previously in terms of bisexuality organised around the phallus, please see above, chapter three, pp.87-91.
3 Lacan, in the seminars 1960-’1, theorises the ‘einziger Zug’ as a unitary trait, capable of unifying desire as a substitution for the Ego-ideal. Such substitution of a single trait for a class of qualities constitutes ‘metaphor’ under Aristotle’s definition as outlined below, this chapter, pp.106-110.

Shifting Eyes chapter four : From Identification to Identity
that is, depends upon whether the tie attaches to the subject or to the object of the ego.' (1921b p.106)

Identification with the father is based on an iconic mimicry of the other, but the father also presents new logical interpretants, the conditional of becoming that operate as the Ego-ideal. Taking the father as object, however, is to direct the libido towards the other as dynamical object, without modifying the ego: there is then a split between the structure of identification and desire at the level of signification.

Freud goes on to analyse group identity as a two part process; first of all the leader is set up in place of the Ego-ideal, that is an identification takes place through the transferential introjection of a single trait. Secondly, group identification occurs as a result of the now commonly held trait, the Ego-ideal. The leader is often over-valued in the same way that someone who has fallen in love confuses the immediate object of desire with the actual other. 'The object has been put in the place of the ego ideal.' (1921b p.113)³ The resulting, 'Einfühlung', empathy, between members of the group gives rise to the ethical issues associated with identification, an empathy that presumes to say - I know just how you feel - is in danger of engulfing the other, whereas an empathy that is overawed, like falling in love, results in the ego becoming lost in the object of the other.⁴

The ego that bears the residues of successive dynamical objects and has been modified according to the introjection of the single character trait representing the Ego-ideal, leads to a collage structure of the ego, a complexity of iconic and indexical signs. These identifications never fully align the ego according to 'being or having' the phallus as instances of a symbolic law of difference, Φ. The multiplicity of residual object identifications presents an ego of plurality: the self ordered as symbol never completely supervenes.

---

¹ The common meal or ritualistic object may operate the unitary trait through which the members of the clan identify with each other. The symbol provides the necessary logical interpretants to sustain the resultant social formation. (1921b p.140 n.2)
² See diagram (1921b p.116).
³ This is the ethical dimension of the problem of identification and empathy as developed by Silverman, K. (1996) reviewed Morris, S. (1999).

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity 100
Identification and dream; condensation and displacement

'The Interpretation of Dreams', (1900b) gives an analysis of dream representation, the picture-puzzle rebus of dream, from which Freud hypothesises the underlying structures of desire. In a quotation added in 1914, Freud opens the section on dream interpretation with a quote from Aristotle: '... the best dream interpreter was the man who could best grasp similarities; for dream-pictures, like pictures on water, are pulled out of shape by movement...'. (1900b p.97n2) The relations of similarity find their representation in the pictorial characteristics of dream:

'Parallels or instances of "just as" inherent in the material of the dream thoughts constitute the first foundations for the construction of a dream...

Similarity [Ähnlichkeit], consonance [Übereinstimmung], the possession of common attributes - all these are represented in dreams by unification [Einheit]...

Identification is employed where persons are concerned; composition where things are the material of the unification. Nevertheless composition may also be applied to persons. Localities are often treated like persons.' (1900a p.319; 1900b p.319-20)

The relations of parallelism, "just as", similarity, and consonance result in a unification between elements of the dream. In the case of identification between persons only one of the figures appears in the dream, the qualities held in common are thus obscured, and the dream figure serves to represent the associations of the hidden, censored, figure. In terms of Peirce's semiotics, these relations of similarity which lead to 'condensation' are iconic, parallelism being a condition of the hypoicon in its mode of Thirdness, metaphor.

Isolating the semiotic relations at work in dream formation points to a complex overlap of two accounts of sign functioning, first of all those that result from dream as a pictorial mode of representation, secondly a verbal play that is primarily phonetic. Analysis of the two main structures of dream formation, 'condensation' and 'displacement', reveal the diverse range of formal relations directed towards identification as a mode of disguising desire.

'Condensation', 'Verdichtung', is first introduced in a discussion of the 'common idea' exemplified in the 'Dream of the Botanical Monograph.' (1900b pp.282-4)

---

1 Hypoicon in its mode of Thirdness, please see chapter one, as above, pp.30,31 and this chapter as below, pp. 117-123.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity
sentence added in 1909, Freud points out that the tendency of the dream: ‘... to combine all the sources which have acted as stimuli for the dream into a single unity in the dream itself.’, (p.283) is an example of condensation. Each of the dream’s elements turns out to be ‘over-determined’, that is represented in the dream many times over:

‘CONTENT OF THE DREAM. - I had written a monograph on an unspecified genus of plant. The book lay before me and I was at the moment turning over a folded coloured plate. Bound up in the copy there was a dried specimen of the plant.’ (1900b p.282)

Freud’s first association is a memory from the night before of having seen a ‘botanical monograph’ on the genus Cyclamen, the second association generates a chain of connections starting with a previous written work by Freud on cocaine. From cocaine, the associations led to a Festschrift, and then to a conversation with Dr. Königstein about payment to certain medical colleagues that took place the previous night:

botanical monograph work on cocaine \(\rightarrow\) Festschrift \(\rightarrow\) conversation on payment of colleagues
dr. Königstein

The image, ‘Botanical monograph’ functions as an intermediate common entity between the two recent experiences. This explanation of ‘condensation’ bears a close correspondence to Peirce’s iconic reasoning in the definition of an interpretant:

‘Suppose we wish to compare the letters p and b. We may imagine one of them to be turned over on the line of writing as an axis, then laid upon the other, and finally to become transparent so that the other can be seen through it. In this way we shall form a new image which mediates between the images of the two letters, in as much as it represents one of them to be (when turned over) the likeness of the other ... \(\ldots\) a mediating representation which represents the relate to be a representation of the same correlate which this mediating representation itself represents.’ (1867a 1.553)

Freud goes on with his analysis of the dream by splitting up the image ‘botanical monograph’ and following the chains of association of both terms:

\(^1\) ‘\(x \rightarrow y\)’ that forms a transference and ‘\(x \rightarrow y\)’ to represent the terms of transference and identification respectively, as introduced in the discussion of Payne Knight, as above, chapter three, pp.85-87.

\(^2\) Please see above, chapter one, p.22.

Shifting Eyes chapter four : From Identification to Identity 102
botanical garden =t Professor Gärtnert =, wife and
patient Flora =, in the story of the flowers
Professor Gärtnert =, Dr. Königstein
botanical =, school event =, university examination
botanical favourite flowers =, artichoke =, thoughts about Italy, scene from childhood
Botanisch =, Artischocke

Freud similarly mentions two associations for the word ‘monograph’, the ‘mono’ one-sidedness of his studies and the costliness of one of his favourite hobbies. These patterns of connections are established through chains of association based on the one hand on memory, the indexical relation of contiguity, and on the other hand on the poetics of the text, multiple signification and transferential chains formed through iconic relations - anagram, partial rhyme, assonance and alliteration. Memories are therefore also recalled via the poetics of the text.

Analysis of Freud’s ‘Autodidasker’ dream, (1900b pp.298-302) clarifies the concept of ‘condensation’ as the formation of a transference and identification between terms, without reference to pictorial image, by tracing the formation of neologisms. ‘Autodidasker’ combines ‘Autor’ [author] and ‘Autodidakt’ [self-taught] with the name ‘Lasker’. ‘Lasker’ is associated with ‘Lassalle’ on the basis of a ‘real connection’, both Lasker and Lassalle were Jews, born in the same vicinity. This relation is reinforced through the rhyme between the two names:

Autodidasker =, Autodidakt
Autodidasker =, Lasker =, Lassalle

‘Autor’, Freud associates with giving his wife several books by J.J. David, an author friend of Freud’s brother who was also born in Freud’s birthplace. One of the books has an account of how a man wastes his talents, a fear which appears in the dream as Freud’s wife’s concern that their children may waste their talents. Freud replies that their good upbringing will protect their sons.

One of the underlying meanings of the dream is Freud’s fear that women bring about men’s downfall, which is represented in the dream by Lasker; Lasker died of syphilis and Lassalle died in a duel over a woman. Freud summarises these thoughts in the phrase, Cherchez la femme, which leads him to think of his unmarried brother Alexander: ‘almost the
same sound as an anagram of “Lasker”. Freud associates his wish that Alexander should have a happy domestic life with the brief account of Zola’s happy domesticity in his novel ‘L’œuvre’, in which Zola himself appears as the character, ‘Sandoz’. Inverted ‘Zola’ becomes ‘Aloz’, Freud then: ‘... replaced [ersetze] ‘Al’, which is the first syllable of ‘Alexander’ by ‘Sand’, which is the third syllable of the same name. ... “Autodidasker” arose in much the same fashion.’

Lasker = Lassalle
Lasker = Alexander
Alexander = Sandoz

The second part of the dream repeats a phantasy which Freud had the night before, that when he next sees his colleague, Prof. N., he should tell him: ‘The patient about whose condition I consulted you recently is in fact only suffering from a neurosis, just as you suspected.’ (p.299) This reminds Freud of a shameful incident in which Freud, doubting his own diagnosis that a client of his is suffering from a neurosis, consults Prof. N. expecting him to diagnose a physiological illness. Prof. N., however, insists that this is a neurosis, an opinion later confirmed when the client reveals his sexual history. Freud interprets this in terms of wish-fulfilment: ‘To be wrong was, however, just what I did wish. I wanted to be wrong in my fears, or, more precisely, I wanted my wife, whose fears I had adopted in the dream-thoughts, to be wrong.’ (p.299)

The first conversation with Prof. N. about the misdiagnosis of his patient is linked through a relation of ‘contiguity’ to a further conversation with Prof. N., in which he says boys ‘later on’ are more trouble than girls. Freud substitutes the first conversation for the second in order to avoid all connections leading to the fears expressed by his wife: ‘The same phantasy served unaltered to represent both of the opposing alternatives’. (p.302) The phantasy is therefore an example of multiple signification providing the nodal point of memory-associations. ‘Autodidasker’, is an example of condensation brought about primarily through the poetics of the text, in particular the iconic relation of homophony, rhyme. ‘Ersetzen’, translated by Strachey, as both ‘to replace’ and ‘to substitute’, is used to describe

1 Strachey translates ‘ersetze’ here as ‘replace’, (Freud 1900a p.301; 1900b p.300).
both the indexical relation of contiguity between memories and the iconic visual and aural relation between syllables: substitution is therefore at the heart of condensation.

Displacement, 'Verschiebung', describes the asymmetry between the dream centre and the associated dream-thoughts; they are 'differently centred'. In the dream of the botanical monograph, 'botanical' operates as the key sign of the dream, whereas the dream thoughts are all associated with Freud's relations to his professional colleagues. In the 'Autodidasker' dream, Freud's fears about bringing up his sons and the possibility of his own professional downfall are displaced onto the fears expressed by his wife. In all the dream examples, the basic semiotic process of displacement provides: '...a transference and displacement of psychical intensities ...'. (p.307) It is this energetic shift which leads to a difference in the text of the dream and the dream-thought.

'Displacement' also refers to the relations between verbal expressions: '... one element is replaced [substituiert] by another... ', and, '... a single element has its verbal form replaced [vertauscht] by another.' (1900a p.334; 1900b p.339) This latter exchange of verbal forms is often an exchange that moves from abstract thought to the concrete and pictorial, enabling the contrasts [Berührungen] and identifications [Identitäten] necessary for dream formation. (1900a p.334; 1900b p.340) Concrete terms are richer in associations than conceptual terms, one of the advantages of a pictorial mode of representation. Verbal play also contributes to displacement, for example the use of one word in the place of two, that is a pun or homonym, which leads to a 'misleading' effect.

Displacement is a structure of representation which gives rise to a shift of energy away from images associated with desire onto incidental images by way of 'intermediary links'. As Freud writes, we are all used to such 'displacements' in our everyday life: 'When a lonely old maid transfers her affection to animals ... a soldier defends a scrap of coloured cloth - a flag - with his life's blood, when a few seconds' extra pressure in a hand-shake means bliss to a lover ...'. (1900a p.177; 1900b p.177) The soldier, whose exchange of symbol, the flag, for love of country, community, and ideals, and the lover for whom a handshake stands in for the

---

1 '... anders zentriert', (Freud, S. 1900a p.304; 1900b 305).
2 Freud goes on to give an example of interpreting the dream image of a tower in the stalls at the Opera; Strachey translates this as taking the image 'metaphorically', 'wortlich'; which can be translated as 'literally'. (Freud, S. 1900a p.337; 1900b p.342).

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity 105
'bliss' of sexual contact, have followed the rules of metonymy. The woman who 'transfers' her love to animals, however, creates an existential link as extra-linguistic, the only link through 'naming', is to defines humans as a sub class of 'animals'.

There are therefore two separate forms of displacement; displacement of the psychical and narrative centre of the dream which emerges as the result of chains association, based both on memory and poetics; and displacement as 'substitution' of signs, including verbal expressions, that allows identification to take place.

**Metonymy and metaphor**

Tropes - metonymy, synecdoche, metaphor and catachresis - are parts of rhetorical or figurative language; trope refers to changes in meaning of individual words and figuration refers to the discourse itself. As noted above, Freud opens the section on dream interpretation with a quotation from Aristotle: 'the best dream interpreter was the man who could best grasp similarities...'. The relation of 'similarity' appears as one of the criteria of the formation of metaphor through the 'transference' of names, according to Aristotle's theory of naming in *Poetics*.

'A "metaphor" is the application [to something] of a name belonging to something else, either (a) from the genus to the species, or (b) from the species to the genus, or (c) from a species to [another] species, or (d) according to analogy.

By (a), "from genus to species", I mean e.g. "here stands my ship": for [the species] lying at anchor is a [part of the genus] standing. By (b), "from species to genus", I mean e.g. "truly has Odysseus done ten thousand deeds of worth": for [the species] "ten thousand" is [part of the genus] "many", and [Homer] uses it here instead of "a lot". By (c), "from species to species", I mean e.g. [Killing a man by] "draining out his life with bronze" [i.e. a weapon], and [drawing water by] "cutting it with long-edged bronze" [i.e. a bowl]: for here [the poet] calls cutting "draining" and draining "cutting". Both are [species of the genus] "taking away". By (d), "analogy", I mean when $b$ is to $a$ as $d$ is to $c$; for [the poet then] will say $d$ instead of $b$, or $b$ instead of $d$.' (1457 b 6-18) [not my inserts]

Aristotle is concerned, in this quotation, with general names as opposed to names which indicate *haecceity* or act as rigid designators in all possible worlds. The first two types

---

1 As above, p.101.
2 C.f. Payne Knight's (1786) example of 'transference' of names between gods, please see chapter two, as above, pp.85-87.
relations, (a) and (b), are transferences of names from 'genus to species' and 'species to genus', a definition which is coextensive with that of metonymy, defined as substitution on the basis of a 'conceptual relation'. The 'conceptual relations' of metonymy include material connection - causality and contiguity. For example, in the phrase 'Give us a smoke', the defining quality of the cigarette, the counterfactual 'smoke', is transferred in place of 'cigarette', which falls under Aristotle's definition of metaphor (a), is also an example of metonymy based on the material connection between cigarette and fire. The use of the word 'chair' to designate someone who chairs a committee, falls under definition (b), but also represents an example of metonymy, as an attribute associated with the role is substituted for the person. Aristotle's example (c), the exchange of the verbs 'cutting' and 'draining', involves a subject-predicate analysis of 'bowl-bronze' and 'sword-bronze', revealing the quality held in common upon which the transference take place. Subject-predicate analysis is itself the establishment of a metonymic relation, in this case the separation of the material of the object from the object itself: metonymy is, in Aristotle's account, inherent to metaphor type (c). It is only in example (d), analogy between entities, that metaphor effects a liberation from metonymy. The transferential relation, 'b instead of d' and vice-versa, requires the recognition, or the establishment of, a relation of similarity based on the iconic relation of 'likeness'.

'Catachresis', a term used to define metaphors which stray outside accepted norms of usage, is also used to refer to metaphors that coin new names through analogy. (Preminger, A. and Brogan, T. p. 172 and 410) Although Aristotle does not employ the term 'catachresis,' Poetics gives an account of a relevant poetic structure under the heading of metaphor:

"There may be no current name for some of the things in the analogy, but even so they will be expressed in the same way. E.g. to scatter seed is to sow, and to scatter radiance from the sun has no name; but this has the same relation to the sun as sowing does to the seed. For this reason [the poet] says "sowing god-wrought radiance."" (1457 b 26-30)

According to Aristotle, extension of the name is based on an a priori perception of analogy or 'likeness'. The most successful kind of metaphorical names according to the Poetics, are developed by those who are able to observe 'likeness' between things:

---
1 As defined by Preminger, A. and Brogan, T. (1993 p. 1261).  
Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity 107
'...but the metaphorical [kind] is the most important by far. This alone (a) cannot be acquired from someone else, and (b) is an indication of genius. For to make metaphors well is to observe what is like [something else].' (1459 a 6-9)

Aristotle’s *The Art of Rhetoric*, defines metaphor as a form of collapsed simile reinforcing the iconic relation of ‘similarity’ as intrinsic to the creation of metaphor:

‘When the poet says of Achilles that he “Leapt on the foe as a lion,” this is a simile ; when he says of him “the lion leapt,” it is a metaphor - here, since both are courageous, [Homer] has transferred to Achilles the name of a “lion”.' (1406 b 20-3)

Identity has been established between Achilles and the lion with respect to a single characteristic held in common, namely that they both leapt on their foe. The transference of names takes place as a result of a partial identity, a perception of similarity. What then is the difference between simile and metaphor? Aristotle, in *The Art of Rhetoric*, goes on to extol the virtues of metaphor as opposed to the simile:

‘Besides, it [the simile] does not say outright that “this” is “that,” and therefore the hearer is less interested in the idea.’ (1410 b 18-20) [my insert];

‘Liveliness is especially conveyed by metaphor, and by the further power of surprising the hearer ; because the hearer expected something different, his acquisition of the new idea impresses him all the more ...’. (1412 a 18-24)

The exciting feature of both of these definitions is that Aristotle points out the way in which metaphor exceeds its iconic basis, ‘likeness’. Metaphor’s most important function is to force an identification between particulars, “this” is “that”. It is this the clashing together of *haecceities*, that surprises the hearer, communicating, according to Peirce’s metaphysics, the phenomenon of Secondness: it is this shock of indexicality that characterises the radical force of metaphor.

---

1Translation from Ricoeur, P. (1977 p.26). Ricoeur points to six examples of where Aristotle subordinates simile to metaphor (p.24) Ricoeur, however, insists on the categorical distinction between metaphor as defined through transference in the *Poetics* and metaphor based on likeness in the *The Art of Rhetoric*. (Aristotle 1991 III 10.1410b36 ; 4.1406b31ff and 10.1411a1ff).
What then is the role of identification in the formation of the tropes, 'metonymy and metaphor', and Freud's concepts, 'displacement and condensation'? Taking another of Freud's dreams, 'Irma's injection', Freud gives as an example of displacement the relation between, the 'propyls' of dream and 'amyls' of the dream thoughts. This is reinforced by a memory that the night before, Freud's wife had opened a bottle of liqueur bearing the name 'Ananas', which Freud says is close to the sound of Irma's family name. (Freud, S. 1900b p. 115n.1) ‘Propyl’ is substituted for ‘amyl’, along a chain of substitution - propyl, methyl, and so on - which Freud states is legitimised by organic chemistry. According to Freud this is an example of displacement that facilitates condensation:

'It might be supposed that a single displacement had taken place at this point in the construction of the dream. This was indeed the case. But the displacement served the purpose of condensation, as is proved by the following addition to the analysis of the dream. When I allowed my attention to dwell for a moment longer on the word 'propyl', it occurred to me that it sounded like 'Propylaea'. But there are Propylaea not only in Athens but in Munich.'(1900b p.294)

The relation between 'amyls' and 'propyls' falls under both categories of tropes; first of all they are part of a metonymic chain according to the laws of organic chemistry, but they also fall under Aristotle's definition of metaphor as transferences of names between species of the same genus of drugs. The chain, amyl, methyl, propyl, Propylaea, however, is also homophonic based on the syllabic rhyme, 'yl'. Propylaea, a ceremonial portico, has double signification, the Propylaea in both Athens and Munich:

\[ \text{amyl} \rightarrow \text{methyl} \rightarrow \text{propyl} \]

\[ \text{Athens} \rightarrow \text{Propylaea} \rightarrow \text{Munich} \]

\[ \text{Irma's family name} \rightarrow \text{Ananas} \]

The condensation which takes place around 'propyls' represents the extent of over-determination of the dream: condensation is brought about not only through relations of metonymy, but also metaphor, rhyme, and double signification.

Aristotle's definitions of 'metaphor', even including the radical direction indicated by the extracts from The Art of Rhetoric, are not coextensive with Freud's concept of 'condensation'. First of all the extent of over-determination in Freud's use of 'condensation'

*Shifting Eyes* chapter four: From Identification to Identity
exceeds the linguistic transference between names, and secondly because ‘condensation’ is
dependent upon displacement of affect, a displacement conferred on the basis of a
combination of metonymy, metaphor and the aural aspects of the text.

The aural and visual play between signs based on iconic relation provides the freedom
from the strictures of metonymy and opens the way for the most radical forms of
identification, freeing signification from its indexical and symbolic role.

**Lacan: metaphor and metonymy**

Lacan’s seminars, (1955-'6 p.221) and his paper, ‘The agency of the letter in the
unconscious or reason since Freud’, (1957 pp.146-178) attempt to map condensation and
displacement onto the tropes of metaphor and metonymy. Taking poems using the word,
‘étincellement’,¹ Lacan demonstrates the function of metaphor as in the following example
from ‘Aux Platane’ by Paul Valéry:

‘Non! dit l’Arbre, ü dit ;  Non! dans l’étincellement
De sa tête superbe
Que la tempête traits universellement
Comme elle fait une herbe.’ (Lacan, J. 1957 p.155 and 177n19)

Lacan goes on to write that this poem exemplifies: ‘the same law of parallelism of the
signifier that creates harmony governing the primitive Slavic epic or the most refined Chinese
poetry.’¹ Such a conception of metaphor fits Aristotle’s definition of metaphor as it appears in
the *Poetics*, metaphor through analogy.² The iconic relation, between ‘tête’ and ‘tempête’, is
brought about through homophonie play, leading to an identification that Lacan terms
‘condensation’. Lacan goes on, however, to say something very different, that metaphor
depends not on parallelism but on disparity: ‘...the greatest possible disparity of the images
signified, needed for the production of the poetic spark, or in other words for metaphoric
creation to take place.’ (1957 p.156) This latter definition is close to the surrealist André

¹In the tradition of Longinus and his ‘spark’ of metaphor.
²C.f. Ezra Pound, that Chinese ideograms: ‘... couldn’t help being and staying poetic in a way that a
Breton’s manifesto criterion that a good metaphor should force the mind to seek a relation between disparate things:

‘If one accepts, as I do, Reverdy's definition it does not seem possible to bring together, voluntarily, what he calls “two distant realities.”...

*In the brook, there is a song that flows*

or:

*Day unfolded like a white tablecloth*

or:

*The world goes back into a sack*

... It is, as it were, from the fortuitous juxtaposition of the two terms that a particular light has sprung, *the light of the image*, to which we are infinitely sensitive. The value of the image depends upon the beauty of the spark obtained; it is consequently, a function of the difference of potential between the two conductors. When the difference exists only slightly, as in a comparison, the spark is lacking.’ (Breton, A. 1972 pp.36-'7)

Breton’s aesthetic demand is close to Aristotle’s emphasis, in *The Art of Rhetoric*, on the ‘liveliness’ of metaphor as opposed to the simile. According to Lacan’s (1957) paper, metaphor conceals a substituted term, which though covert, stands in metonymic connection to the new signifier. In this sense, metaphor is the disruption of endless metonymic substitution.

Lacan’s seminars, (1955-'56) clearly postulate that the relation between terms in a metaphor is *a posteriori*, taking as example Victor Hugo’s *Booz endormi*: ‘*Sa gerbe n’était point avare, ni haineuse*’:

‘*His sheaf was neither miserly nor spiteful* - Victor Hugo. That’s a metaphor. It’s certainly not a latent simile, it’s not *just as* the sheaf was willingly dispersed among the needy, *so* our character was neither miserly nor spiteful. There’s not a comparison but an identification.’ (1955-'6 p.218)

At the heart of this metaphor is an ‘identification’ between two previously unconnected terms, as a result of which the ‘lexical connections’ are undone. Yet, this identification of terms takes place within the subject-predicate division:

‘It’s by virtue of being the subject of miserly and spiteful that the sheaf can be identified with Booz in his lack of avarice and in his generosity. It’s by virtue of the similarity of position that the sheaf is literally identical to the subject Booz.’ (1955-'6 p.219)

---


*Shifting Eyes* chapter four : From Identification to Identity
In this example, the creation of the metaphor follows the syntactical position of the subject, that is, identification takes place on the basis of the subject-predicate judgement, which is itself an act of metonymy. Metonymy : '... involves substitution for something that has to be named - we are in fact at the level of the name. One thing is named by another that is its container, or its part, or that is connected to it.'(1955-'6 p.221) Following this designation of 'metaphor and metonymy' as coextensive with Freud's distinction between 'condensation and displacement', Lacan gives as an example of metonymy, Freud's analysis of how his daughter, Anna Freud, cried out in her dream:

> 'Anna Freud asleep - things are, you see, in their pure state - she talks in her sleep - Big strawberries, raspberries, cakes, porridge.' (Lacan 1955-'6 p.227)

Strachey’s English translation in The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Freud, renders this as:

> 'Anna Freud, stawbewwies, wild stawbewwies, omblet, pudden!' (Freud 1900b p.130)

The German, 'Die Traumdeutung', Gesammelte Schriften is dominated by the phonetics:

> 'Anna F.eud. Er(d)beer, Hochbeer, Eier(s)peis, Papp.' (Freud 1900a p.135)

Although this a metonymic chain, in that all these edibles can be substituted for one another, it is also an example of transference between names under the same classification of species and genus, that is Aristotle's Poetics (1987) definition (b) of metaphor. Like so many of Freud's examples drawn from dreams, the signifying chain that articulates Anna Freud's desire exhibits a playful use of rhyme, assonance and consonance:

Anna F.eud. Rename = Er(d)beer Reference = Hochbeer Reference = Eier(s)peis Reference = Papp

---

1 Metonymy : '...metonymy exists from the beginning and makes metaphor possible.' (1955-'6 p.227). For an account of Lacan’s theory of metonymy as the 'substitution' into the place of "nothing" and a critique that this creationist view of language is primarily catachresis, see Chaitin, G. (1996)


3 See above, p.108.

Shifting Eyes chapter four : From Identification to Identity 112
The fallacy, is to infer that memory is organised on the basis of a metonymic relation, when the poetics of the text, especially the phonetic, are as equally important as the existential and causal relations.

Freud gives two explicit examples in which the phonetic character of dreams is privileged over and above other relations; first an example drawn from ‘Maury’s dream’, in which Freud isolates the following chains: ‘(Pèlerinage - Pelletier - pelle ; kilomètre - kilogramme - Gilolo - Lobelia - Lopez - lotto.)’ (1900b p.59 and 531) Secondly an example in which pronunciation of the central syllable of the nonsense word erzefilisch is critical to deciphering the dream. The associated word, erzieherisch, ‘educational’, led Freud to the word erzehlerisch, which through partial rhyme also signifies erzählt, the act of conversing.(1900b pp.302-’3)

It is precisely the phonetic importance of language which leads Lacan to argue against basing metaphor on ‘likeness’, because ‘likeness’ enforces a realist view of language, that is a tendency to read images as pictures: ‘But one has only to listen to poetry ... for a polyphony to be heard, for it to become clear that all discourse is aligned along the several staves of a score.’ (1957 p.154) Freud’s understanding of the dream as a ‘rebus’, a picture puzzle of ‘hieroglyphic’ signs, follows the Egyptologist, Chompollion’s, discovery that hieroglyphic script is primarily phonetic rather than pictographic. Chompollion also recognised that certain hieroglyphs, ‘determinatives’, serve only to modify signification, a concept Freud extrapolated for dream interpretation: ‘... “My mother was there as well.” (Stekel.) An element of this kind in the dream-content may be compared to the “determinatives” used in hieroglyphic script, which are not meant to be pronounced but serve merely to elucidate other signs.’(Freud 1900b p.321)

Freud’s ‘rebus’ of dream representation founded on phonetic and visual play between signs privileges the iconic over the indexical. The processes of condensation and displacement have to encompass signifying structures which counter the lexical and syntactic. Identification and transference are the two modes of semiotic process which underpin the linguistic tropes, metaphor and metonymy. ii

i [‘Dreams] ... present no greater difficulty to their translators than do the ancient hieroglyphic scripts ...’. Freud (1900b p.431) It was the significance of phonetic relation which led Chompollion, 1790-1832, to the translation of the Rosetta Stone.

ii For an analysis of the written hieroglyphic rebus, ‘Amon’ as displacement that includes metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche, see (Vermus, P. 1983).

Shifting Eyes chapter four : From Identification to Identity 113
Symbol formation

Peirce’s semiotic theory gives primacy to iconicity in three fundamental respects; first of all, it is only the icon which can give us direct knowledge, secondly it is the icon which exhibits, or demonstrates, new knowledge and thirdly, as a necessary constituent of the symbol, the icon acts as guarantor of intelligibility. In addressing the question of the development of language Peirce follows the line of Chompsollion, emphasising not the relation between the pictograph and its object, but the conventionalised symbolic relation between the pictograph and the associated sound, a syllable or part of the word. In an unpublished manuscript, cited Haley, M. (1988) Peirce retains the relation of iconicity to signify the relation between the pictograph and ideas:

"The Egyptian language is ..., as far as we know, the earliest to be written; and the writing is all in pictures. Some of these pictures came to stand for sounds, letters and syllables. But others stand directly for ideas. They are not nouns; they are not verbs; they are just pictorial ideas." (1895c in Haley, M. 1988 pp.154-5)

Haley claims that Peirce held an evolutionary theory of language development, akin to his account of symbol formation. As the symbol necessarily involves both the index of denotation and the icon of intelligibility, so ‘ancient languages’ evolved from the pictographic to the ideographic. In the manuscript, ‘Kaina stoicheia’, (Peirce, C.S. undated) published in The New Elements of Mathematics by Charles S. Peirce, (Peirce, C.S. 1976) Peirce gives the word ‘buzz’ as an example of how words, as symbols, may yet retain an iconic relation to the object through the formation of iconic interpretants:

"Language and all abstracted thinking, such as belongs to minds who think in words, [are] of the symbolic nature. Many words, though strictly symbols, are so far iconic that they are apt to determine iconic interpretants, or as we say, to call up lively images. Such, for example, are those that have a fancied resemblance to sounds associated with their objects; that are onomatopoetic, as they say." (1976 p. 243)

This mimetic iconicity, however, does not dominate the more complex sign formations that include indices, and determinatives. The shift from the pictographic to the ideographic, for
example the formation of the cartouche in hieroglyphic script, preserves iconicity, but only as a form of Thirdness. Its iconicity acts as guarantor of intelligibility, in the same way that an algebraic formula is transparent and gives rise to self-evident truths. Freud's use of the 'rebus', however, relies on the iconic aural and visual play between signs, to undermine literal indexical signification and the intelligibility of syntax: it is this latter iconic play between signs which facilitates transformations of desire. As in the analysis of the processes of condensation and displacement, this iconic play between signs forms complex sign structures that may subsequently come to denote the object.

Up until circa 1902, the only complex structure in Peirce's lexicon of signs was the symbol: in a paper of (1867a) the symbol is categorised as term, proposition and argument:

1°. Symbols which directly determine only their grounds or imputed qualities, and are thus but sums of marks or terms;
2°. Symbols which also independently determine their objects by means of other term or terms, and thus, expressing their own objective validity, become capable of truth or falsehood, that is are propositions; and,
3°. Symbols which also independently determine their interpretants, and thus the minds to which they appeal, by premissing a proposition or propositions which such a mind is to admit. These are arguments.' (1867a 1.559)

According to the Lowell lectures of (1866-'7) on the relation between consciousness and language, the construction of the symbol relies upon the persistence of mind as a Third. Arguments, according to the above account, are structured Thirds, capable of forming logical interpretants, that is propositions capable of assertion, truth or falsehood. Terms in the above definition, are weak forms of denotation, functioning only within the structure of the proposition.

In 'The Short Logic', (1893) Peirce give an example of the formation of the proposition, demonstrating the role of indices and icon:

'A Symbol is a sign fit to declare that the set of objects which is denoted by whatever set of indices may be in certain ways attached to it is represented by an icon associated with it. ... Let the sentence, then, be “Ezekial loveth Huldah.” Ezekial and Huldah must, then, be or contain indices; ... Now the effect of the word “loveth” is that the pair of objects denoted by the pair of indices Ezekial and Huldah is represented by the icon, or the image we have in our minds of a lover and his beloved.' (1893 2.295)

---


4 (Peirce 1866-'7 7.578-7.596)
The prevailing character of symbol formation, according to the above example, is the identification of the indices, 'Ezekial' and 'Huldah', within an iconic relation, the image 'loveth'. The symbol designates the iconic identity relation created through the proposition, but within the context of its construction as a Third.

The function of the icon at the heart of the symbol, is to guarantee intelligibility; in order to understand any conventionalised mode of representation it is necessary to substitute an icon:

'Given a conventional or other general sign of an object, to deduce any other truth than it explicitly signifies, it is necessary, in all cases, to replace that sign by an icon.'
(1895a 2.279)

As Peirce puts it in, 'Kaina stoicheia', (Peirce, C.S. undated) the symbol necessarily involves both the index and icon: 'But a symbol, if sufficiently complete always involves an index, just as an index sufficiently complete involves an icon.' (1976 p.256) The symbol itself, however, has no necessary connection with its object; it evolves into signifying the object through the formation of logical interpretants: 'A symbol [on the other hand], that should not be interpreted, would either not be a sign at all, or would only be a sign in an utterly different way.' The experience, the dynamical interpretant, which the symbol evokes is therefore that of Thirdness.

Symbol, metaphor and hypoicon

In grappling with the paradox of representing the phenomenological experience of Firstness, Peirce in the paper 'Syllabus', (1902a) introduces a substantive of iconic signification, the hypoicon:

'A possibility alone is an Icon purely by virtue of its quality; and its object can only be a Firstness. But a sign may be iconic, that is, may represent its object mainly by its similarity, no matter what its mode of being. If a substantive be wanted, an iconic representamen may be termed a hypoicon. Any material image, as a painting, is largely conventional in its mode of representation; but in itself, without legend or label it may be called a hypoicon.' (1902a 2.276)
The icon in itself is an impossibility, since the phenomenon of Firstness, the fleeting quality of apprehension, defies description.¹ The class of hypoicons is differentiated according to the mode of Firstness by which hypoicons signify; the image, diagram and metaphor:

'Hypoicons may be roughly divided according to the mode of Firstness of which they partake. Those which partake of simple qualities, or First Firstnesses, are images; those which represent the relations, mainly dyadic, or so regarded, of the parts of one thing by analogous relations in their own parts, are diagrams; those which represent the representative character of a representamen by representing a parallelism in something else, are metaphors.' (1902a 2.277)

Iconicity, signifying Firstness, is embedded within sign structures that are constructed according to relations that are Seconds, diagrams, and Thirds, metaphors. In the above definition, the metaphor is the yoking together of indices within an iconic relation of enforced identity, that is the creation of an identification between terms. Giving primacy to the icon of identification at the kernel of metaphor presents a means of signifying the elusive First, that quality of seeing anew: 'What the world was to Adam on the day he opened his eyes to it ...'. (1890 1.357) Returning to the opening 'Preamble' of this thesis, my encounter with the Alamba masks and effigies in the Metropolitan Museum, it as if I fleetingly experienced Firstness between the interstices of these artefacts, constructed as heterogeneous Thirds.

Such a definition based on parallelism, raises the question of the status of 'similarity' as either, a priori to the perceived 'likeness' between things in the world, or, the a posteriori formation of connection as a result of identification. The above definition of metaphor as a Third mode of hypoicon falls under Aristotle's rubric of metaphor as 'collapsed simile'.² Peirce's definition of iconicity in 'The Art of Reasoning', (1895b) however, introduces the possibility that indexical terms, brought into an iconic identity relation, may be fundamentally disconnected:

"The Icon has no dynamical connection with the object it represents; it simply happens that its qualities resemble those of that object, and excite analogous sensations in the mind for which it is a likeness. But it really stands unconnected with them." (1895b 2.299)

¹ On Firstness c.f. (1894 1.302'3 and 1890 1.357) for the trichotomy Firstness, Secondness and Thirdness, and previous introduction to hypoicon, please see chapter one, as above, pp.7-9 and p.30.

Shifting Eyes chapter four : From Identification to Identity 117
This viewpoint is in accord with Aristotle’s characterisation of metaphor as that which identifies two previously disconnected terms: ‘this is that’. Peirce is able to hold the view that such iconicity can be discovered to exist in the world, rather than a creation of thought, since Peirce’s theorises ‘mind’ as part of the evolving universe. The creation of identification between indices, through as hypoiconic Thirds, is therefore a means of discovering previously unrecognised relations between specific entities or events.

What then is the difference between Peirce’s account of the symbol and the hypoicon as Third? Is the primacy of iconicity a sufficient characteristic of metaphor? Prior to the appearance of the hypoicon, circa 1902, metaphor is implicit within Peirce’s theory of the evolution of the symbol, for example this account from ‘The Art of Reasoning’ (1895b):

‘Symbols grow. They come into being by development out of other signs, particularly from icons, or from mixed signs partaking of the nature of icons and symbols. ... The symbol may, with Emerson’s sphynx, say to man, Of thine eye I am eyebeam.’ (1895b 2.302)

It does not seem accidental that Peirce concludes this entry with a ‘metaphor’ drawn from Emerson, given the importance Peirce attributes to the iconic signification of symbols.

Peirce’s analysis of the signifying function of the symbol, proposition and argument, prior to the introduction of the hypoicon, is illuminating about the significatory structure of metaphor. For example, in the paper ‘Kaina stoicheia’, (undated) Peirce reiterates that while pure indices and icons can assert nothing:

‘It is remarkable that while neither a pure icon nor a pure index can assert anything ... an index that forces something to be an icon, as a weather-cock does, or which forces us to regard it as an icon, as the legend under a portrait does, does make an assertion, and forms a proposition ...’. (Peirce undated in 1976 p.242)

This characterisation of the symbol by Peirce, is precisely that used by Paul Ricoeur, in his study ‘The Rule of Metaphor’, to define the unique capability of metaphor: the ‘event’ of metaphor as opposed to its meaning. (Ricoeur, P. pp.89-99) The ‘event’ emphasises the shock of disrupting the immediate context, which only becomes meaningful through repeated

---

2 C.f. (Peirce, C.S. 1903a 4.447)
use. According to Ricoeur, it is this indexicality, the collision of disparate elements, not the aptness of the similarity, which makes for good metaphor.\footnote{C.f. The Art of Rhetoric (1991 1410 b 18-20) and Breton, A. (1972) as cited above, p.111.} It is this forcefulness, bringing about an iconic interpretant and therefore revealing a unique connection between entities, that differentiates the metaphor from the symbol: the symbol articulates a generalised connection between entities and classes of entities according to law-like regularity.

‘Syllabus of Certain Topics of Logic’, (1903c) reveals that the creation of metaphor is particularly useful in symbol formation:

‘The body of the symbol changes slowly, but its meaning inevitably grows, incorporates new elements and throws off old ones. ... Every symbol is, in its origin, either an image of the idea signified, or a reminiscence of some individual occurrence, person or thing, connected with its meaning, or is a metaphor. Terms of the first and third origins will inevitably be applied to different conceptions; but if the conceptions are strictly analogous in their principal suggestions, this is rather helpful than otherwise, provided always that the different meanings are remote from one another, both in themselves and in the occasions of their occurrence.’ (1903c 2.222)

This is an example in which Peirce uses metaphor, ‘the body of the symbol’, for its explanatory value. Bringing together ‘body’ and ‘symbol’ performs three critical functions; first of all the icon, that is the object of the metaphor, is the idea that a symbol is an organic whole; secondly the index, ‘body’, provides the shock of the unexpected that calls for the reader’s attention; thirdly, ‘body’ brings concrete imagery into an argument that is otherwise abstract. The hypoicon Third, therefore, is an apt representation of identification in the logic of becoming, since such cross-predication facilitates the embracing of qualities that are ‘other’, the indexical other.\footnote{This will be developed in relation to H.D.’s use of metaphor, please see chapter six, as below, pp. 179-180.} In other words, the hypoicon Third defies the stability of the symbol as representamen of a law.

Metaphor is therefore the antithesis of the symbol, since the symbol signifies precisely as representamen of law-like regularity, that is its capacity to predict future behaviour: ‘If the prediction has a tendency to be fulfilled, it must be that future events have a tendency to conform to a general rule. ... The mode of being which consists, ... in the fact that future facts of Secondness will take on a determinate general character, I call a Thirdness.’ (1903a 1.26)

This quotation from the ‘Lowell Lectures’, (1903a) grounds the stability of the symbol in the
predictive hypotheses of knowledge. Facts of Secondness are general counterfactuals that indicate possible outcomes. For example, on the basis of repeated instances of an apple falling onto the ground, there is a probability that all apples in similar circumstances fall to ground. Such a proposition is a Third, within the generalising framework of logical interpretants, the theory of force between objects of mass. In this case the symbol represents the law of gravity:

"They [symbols] neither exhibit the very characters signified as icons do, nor assure us of the reality of their object, as indices do. ... Nevertheless, they have a great power of which the degenerate signs are quite destitute. They alone express laws." (Peirce, C.S. undated in 1976 p.243)

Metaphor, does not signify a law-like relation: precisely, however, because of its transgressive cross-predication between categories, the concrete and the abstract, the specific and the generic, metaphor is a particularly useful semiotic structure as a nascent form of symbol. It is only if such relations between things reveal a law-like regularity that the hypoicon signifies as a symbol. Heuristically, the identification of \textit{a priori} unconnected terms, as in Peirce’s account of metaphor as hypoicon Third, may lead to the further discovery that such a connection recurs with law-like regularity: metaphor may therefore lead to the discovery of a symbol.

This provides a methodological insight into the function of metaphor for scientific discovery. Cross-predication of metaphor, the identification of disparate terms, creates new logical interpretants that may point to a final interpretant, for example a shift in the overall theoretical framework. If this can be sustained as a law, the corresponding symbol signifies a paradigm shift, a radical departure in scientific explanation. Metaphor, however, in bringing together \textit{haecccities}, points towards a science of the particular, as in the definition given by Bernfeld for psychoanalysis. Bernfeld’s ‘science of traces’ is precisely a science of specific instances.

\textsuperscript{1} A \textit{Symbol} is a sign which refers to the Object that it denotes by virtue of a law, usually an association of general ideas, which operates to cause the Symbol to be interpreted as referring to that Object. (1903b 2.249).

\textsuperscript{2} This is precisely the advantage of Peirce’s analysis of ‘metaphor’, which provides a methodological distinction between metaphor and symbol, as opposed to the post-Aristotelian linguistic account of the complex semantic problems between metonymic and metaphoric as tropes.

\textsuperscript{3} Khun, T.S. (1962)

\textsuperscript{4} Bernfeld, S. (1932) as cited above, chapter two pp.51-53.

\textit{Shifting Eyes} chapter four: From Identification to Identity
Metaphor is therefore a means of designating new scientific concepts. Peirce, writing to Lady Victoria Welby in 1900, recalls how as a boy he developed a language in which metaphor, in particular catachresis, provided the means for creating signs of ‘sense’, as retaining the residue of the sensory.

‘... as a boy I invented a language in which almost every letter of every word made a definite contribution to its signification. It involved a classification of all possible ideas; and I need not say that it was never completed. I remember however a number of features of it. Not only must the ideas be classified, but abstract and psychical ideas had to be provided with fixed metaphors; such as lofty for pride, ambition, etc.’ (1977 p.95)

Peirce links this sensory value of language, the propensity to concretise the abstract and to the aesthetic experience of metaphor, including poetry. Poetic creation reveals truth, as all forms of iconic sign, hypoicons - diagram and metaphor - allow a greater truth to be inferred: ‘Bad Poetry is false, I grant; but nothing is truer than true poetry ...’. (1903d 1.315). Though metaphor forces the hearer-reader to ‘synthesise’ relations between terms as Thirds, that previously had no connection, the relation of identity is nevertheless a feature of the ‘world’. In this sense, beauty, as a constructed Third, has a basis in the ‘real’:

‘... the esthetic Quality appears to me to be the total unanalyzable impression of a reasonableness that has expressed itself in a creation. It is a pure Feeling but a feeling that is the impress of a Reasonableness that Creates. It is the Firstness that truly belongs to the Thirdness in its achievement of Secondness.’ (1903f in Haley, M.C. 1988 p.57)

Metaphor, defined as a hypoicon of Third, is the quintessential sign for this fleeting experience of Firstness, which may only be apprehended within the framework of a constructed Third. The hypoicon, in its capacity to signify transgression of boundaries, produces interpretants that refuse the law-like categorisation of symbolic norm. Returning to the opening ‘Preamble’ of this thesis, the masks of the Alamba, confront the viewer with the force of their existence, Secondness, challenges my construction of categories. These artefacts

---

¹ For Welby’s definition of ‘sense’, please see above, chapter one, pp.69-71.
² Haley suggests that Peirce came to a positive conclusion on the value of poetry and its aesthetic dimension, c. 1890, which could account for Peirce’s later work on the distinction of metaphor as a type of hypoicon. (Peirce, C. 1895c in Haley, M. 1988 p.29). This could explain the complex and fluid interchangeability between symbol and metaphor prior to 1902.

Shifting Eyes chapter four: From Identification to Identity
exist outside my previous definition of the symbol. In the demand to form new logical interpretants, that encompass Firstness, I am required to undo my symbolic self. The hypoicon directly challenges the stability of the symbol of self identity-through offering a transformative structure of becoming.

In explicating the semiotics of self, 'Some Consequences of Four Incapacities', (1868) Peirce again uses a metaphor, this time drawn from Shakespeare, emphasising the importance of both indexicality and iconicity:

'The individual man, since his separate existence is manifested only by ignorance and error, so far as he is anything apart from his fellows, and from what he and they are to be, is only a negation. This is man,

"...proud man,
Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
His glassy essence."

(1868 5.317)

The two indices, 'man' and 'glass', are brought together into an icon that is itself the interpretant of the symbol, 'essence of man'. 'Glass' stands for the transparency of the icon at the heart of the metaphor, introducing such qualities as, brittleness, the capacity to shatter into sharp fragments, that which lets in the light, mirror-like reflection, and appearing both hard and immaterial at the same time. This is the extension of the 'event' of the metaphor that produces new meanings, new logical interpretants. As a metaphor of 'self representation', it is a metaphor discursive of its own formation, pointing to the icon of identity as the 'essence' of self. The term 'glass', however, also acts as an index that forces the reader to confront the iconic structure of the self, providing a semiotic account of Lacan's description of the illusory ego constructed through narcissistic identifications. Peirce also uses 'negation' as the indexical term, which differentiates the individual from the category 'man'. Within the metaphor of self, the indexical term is precisely the term of disparity - another person, ideals, the inanimate world - that is brought into an iconic identification with the ego.

The concept of the hypoicon is therefore useful in describing the role of the 'phallus' in the overall signifying structure of the self. The phallus as icon, is ascribed to the mother, substituted in place of the absence of its index, the male genital. Whereas in the heterosexual resolution of the Œdipus complex, identification with the parent of the same sex instanciates the law of sexual difference, represented by the symbol, $\Phi$, the more complex account of

---

1 For the function of the index breaking up the mirroring dyadic relation, please see above, pp.97-98.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter four: From Identification to Identity
prevailing identifications with both parents, in Freud's 'The Ego and the Id', (1923b) puts the stability of the symbol, Φ, in jeopardy. It is in this sense that the hypoicon Third, in standing for the semiotic structure of self, allows the term phallus to function as icon, without signifying the phallus as symbol of the law of difference, Φ. As a sign of the self, however, the hypoicon is an active semiotic structure, in which the term phallus enters into relations of transference and identification. The precise instances of these transferences illuminate the relation between the paternal metaphor and the symbol, Φ.

---

1 Please see previous discussion on the signifying role of the phallus, as above, chapter three, pp.87-91.
2 Peirce gives an example of the self-reflexive symbol, a metaphor of paternity: 'If I write “Let Kax denote a gas furnace,” this sentence is a symbol which is creating another within itself. Here we have a certain analogy with paternity ...'. (1866-1877.590)
Chapter Five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose

... why must I write?
you would not care for this,
but she draws the veil aside,
unbinds my eyes,
commands,
write, write, or die.'

The above extract from the late trilogy Hermetic Definition, (1957-'61 p.7) expresses the main claim of this thesis, that there is a necessary relation between the self and representation of the self: there is no hyperbole in claiming that H.D. literally wrote herself into existence. The emotional drive of the text is inherent in H.D.'s poetics.

Identification, as the boundary between the self and other, appears in the text as the relation between the textual 'T' and the image; the image that coalesces from the poetics of the trope, figuration, pun and rhyme. Identifications of the textual 'T' are rendered across the prose and poetry as images, for example, a pine tree, a butterfly, worm and amoeba, Helen of Troy, Orlando, Psyche and Christ, giving rise to a sense of identity that ranges across 'natural' and mythological worlds.

In contradistinction to the image, the name, in its indexical mode, identifies the same entity through processes of radical transformation, but whereas the given name enforces the haeccticity of the individual, the family name represents the symbolic law of paternity. The point of complexity and resistance appears in the text when the name designates a complex signifying structure that resists its role as symbol, a mode that approximates Peirce's definition of the hypoicon as it partakes in Thirdness.

Pseudonyms for Hilda Doolittle's authorial role include, H.D., Rhoda Peter, J. Beran, Helga Dart, Helga Doorn, John Helforth, Delia Alton. Within the text, H.D. is referred...

---

1 Poetics in terms of 'sound patterning', 'the constitutive device of the sequence' as defined by (Preminger, A. and Brogan, T. 1993 p.930).
2 For the exposition of the hypoicon in its mode of Thirdness, please see above, chapter four, pp.116-123. C.f. (Peirce, C. 1931 2.277).
3 For an account of H.D.'s pseudonyms please see Friedman, S. (1990 pp.33-46). Within this thesis I use the prevailing convention, 'H.D.' to refer to the author.

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 124
to as Hermione, Hedylus, Midget, and Julia Ashton. The novel HER. (1926-'7) is structured through surrogate names for the textual self that includes the third person raised to its indexical function as a name, 'Her'.

The narratives of self transformation, narcissism and the drama of the Œdipus complex, appear not only as the narratives of the prose and poetry but are brought into being through the complexity of the poetics. A semiotic analysis of the text reveals how the familial drama is re-negotiated so that desire remains mobile. The emergent self is not defined through the bi-polarity of the symbol but maintains the capacity of the hypoicon to enter into streams of mutability that maintain the possibility of becoming.

A brief biography

Hilda Doolittle was born in Bethlehem Pennsylvania in 1886, the daughter of Charles Doolittle, Professor of astronomy at Lehigh University, and Helen Wolle, who taught music and art at a Moravian Seminary. (Silverstein, L. 1990) From 1905 to 1906 H.D. attended Bryn Mawr, where her studies included a mathematically based course but after inexplicably failing English she withdrew from college. H.D. became engaged, much to her parents disapproval, to the then young and unknown poet Ezra Pound, who encouraged her to read William Morris, Balzac, Ibsen and Swinburne. The engagement, however, did not evolve into marriage and H.D.'s attention focused on Frances Gregg, with whom she travelled to Europe in 1911.

Pound, already ensconced in Paris, introduced H.D. to a literary circle that included F.S. Flint, Ford Madox Ford, Violet Hunt, W.B. Yeats and her future husband, Richard Aldington whom she married in 1913. H.D. continued to show Pound drafts of poems ; the infamous incident when Pound wrote on her manuscript, 'H.D. Imagist', inaugurating Imagism as a movement and bestowing the name, H.D., took place in 1912 at the British Museum tea-room.\(^\text{ii}\) Pound later sent these poems to Harriet Monroe, editor of the journal Poetry, and H.D.'s first collection Sea Garden followed in (1916).

\(^{i}\)Biographical details are drawn from (Guest, B. 1984).
\(^{ii}\)'Autobiographical notes' : '... Ezra picks out certain poems to Poetry, Chicago. ... Hermes and Orchard are cut and line form changed, E signs them H.D. Imagist.', (H.D. mms. not dated).

Shifting Eyes chapter five : The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
H.D.'s war years were scarred by the traumas of love and loss. Aldington was sent to the Front in 1916, but prior to this enforced separation he had several affairs. At the same time H.D. fell in love with D.H. Lawrence and then with composer Cecil Gray. In 1915 H.D. gave birth to a still-born child. Following the death of her brother Gilbert in 1918, her father, who never recovered from the shock, died a year later. H.D. remained in London during the war except for a brief period in Cornwall with Gray. Again pregnant, H.D. caught the flu epidemic which swept Europe. Alone and living in lodgings, H.D. and her daughter Perdita, born in 1919, survived as a result of the prompt action of a younger woman, Bryher, the daughter of the wealthy shipping magnate, Ellerman. Bryher became both her lover and life-long support.

Soon after the birth, Bryher took H.D. to the Scilly Isles, where H.D. had her first 'vision' in which her consciousness took the form of an enveloping jar. H.D. hoped that her account of this, published as Notes on Thought and Vision, (1921a) would be taken by her friend, Havelock Ellis, to be a contribution to his theory of sexuality as a condition of mind rather than biology; H.D. was disappointed by his dismissive reaction. The following year, H.D. saw another series of 'visions' on the wall of a hotel bedroom in Corfu, images which included a ladder, tripos and the winged goddess Niké. These are the experiences which Freud would describe as her only 'dangerous symptom'. H.D. and Bryher then travelled to America where H.D. reacquainted herself with poets Amy Lowell, W.C. Williams, and Marianne Moore with whom H.D. remained in correspondence throughout her life.

In the inter-war years the three lived together in Burier-La-Tour, Switzerland, making occasional visits to Berlin and Paris. H.D. and Bryher both visited the 'modernists' in Paris, Gertrude Stein, Djuna Barnes, Nathalie Barney, Sylvia Beach and Nancy Cunard; H.D., however, was a recluse compared with the socially engaged Bryher. This was a period in which H.D. wrote the novels Asphodel (1921-'2) and Paint It Today (1921c) which, in working through H.D.'s early family drama and her relationship with Pound and Gregg, characteristically cross the genre divide between autobiography and fiction. This is also the period in which H.D. published her collection Hymen (1921b).

The excursions which H.D. made with Bryher in 1922-'3 to Asia Minor and Egypt provided H.D. with a living experience of a deep long-held fascination which was otherwise solely literary and mythological. From 1925-'32 they lived in London, a period when H.D. deepened her reading in both the occult and psychoanalysis. The theories and terms of
psychoanalysis became more evident in the autobiographical novel *HER* (1926-'7) and also marked her contributions to the early film journal, *Close-Up*, (1927-'32).¹ H.D. appeared with Paul Robeson in the first British film to attempt to explicitly deal with racism, *Borderline*. Directed by Kenneth Macpherson, H.D. and Bryher also worked on cutting and editing. Their relationship evolved into a form of 'ménage a trois': Bryher married Macpherson and H.D. became pregnant - an abortion followed in 1928.

The years of the Second World War precipitated a crisis in H.D.'s health, but these years were also highly productive; at the time of writing the three long poems dealing with the war, *Trilogy*, (1942-'46) H.D. also worked on another fictional autobiography, *The Gift*, (1941-'4a) which placed particular emphasis on her Moravian lineage.² After her 'breakdown' of 1946, H.D. entered a profoundly creative period in which she lived at a private clinic in Künacht and then at the Hôtel de la Paix at Lausanne. Under the encouragement of psychologist Erich Heydt, H.D. wrote her memoir of Pound, *End to Torment*, (1958) a memoir of her early years, *Bid Me to Live* (1960) and an unpublished novel *Majic Ring*.

During her visit to America in 1937-'8, Bryher had arranged a meeting between H.D. and Norman Holmes Pearson, who became her editor and the literary executor of H.D.'s manuscripts and papers at Yale. During this last decade of her life H.D. received substantial recognition for her literary achievements, an exhibition to commemorate her seventieth birthday at Yale and the Harriet Monroe Memorial prize 1958. H.D. was the first woman to be given the Award of Merit Medal for Poetry of the American Academy of Arts and Letters. These last few years, 1956-'61, saw the publication of the collection *Hermetic Definition* (1957-'61) and her epic, book-length poem, *Helen in Egypt* (1952-'5) which was placed in her hands by Bryher the day before she died on September 27th, 1961.

All of H.D.'s writings bear the mark of profound self-examination. It was not until 1931, however, that H.D. had direct experience of psychoanalysis, with Mary Chadwick at the Tavistock Clinic, followed by five sessions with Hans Sachs. It was Sachs who recommended H.D. to Freud. The first series of sessions took place in Vienna between March 1st. to June 12th., 1933, followed by further sessions from October 31st. to December 2nd. 1934. During

---


² (H.D. 1941-'4b) includes an introduction by Augustine, J. (pp.1-32) and comments on Notes by H.D., omitted in the Virago edition (1941-4a).
the years 1936-'7, H.D. went into analysis with Walter Schmiderberg. H.D. wrote two separate accounts of this analysis with Freud, dated 1944 and 1948, which were published together posthumously as *Tribute to Freud* (1944-8).

**The transference to Freud**

H.D. wrote two separate accounts of her analysis with Freud, 'Writing on the Wall', 1944, written entirely from memory and 'Advent', 1948, assembled in Lausanne directly from notebooks written during the course of her analysis. These were subsequently published together as *Tribute to Freud*. (1944-8) The correspondence between H.D. and Bryher during the period of her analysis reveals a greater sense of Freud's vulnerability, especially his fear of Nazism; the letters also confirm the trajectory of the transference. This chapter follows how the 'father' and 'mother' transferences are formed through chains of names, as described by J.S. Mill, and through memories, that establish the transference as the 'second edition' of a text, a text which repeats the cedipal dilemma.

Prior to the analysis H.D. refers to Freud as 'Professor', a name which immediately establishes an identification between Freud and her own father Charles Leander Doolittle, Professor of astronomy: this establishes the father transference from the outset. H.D.'s letter to Bryher, March 1st., 1933, giving an account of her first session, affirms that H.D. was fully aware of her cedipal relation to Freud: 'I think if the chow hadn't liked me, I would have left, I was so scared by Œdipus ... 'I am terrified of Œdipus Rex.' (H.D. mms. 1933-'4 folder 557)

Freud *professor* = father
Freud *father* = Œdipus Rex

This transference is reinforced by objects in Freud's study which evoke memories of her father; the stove at the foot of Freud's couch is associated both with a stove in her father's study and a favourite book of her mother's, *The Nürnberg Stove*. (1944-'8 pp.17-19) Freud, according to H.D., looks like an owl: 'He keeps telling me to speak out what is in my mind, but I don't, just

---

¹ Freud’s use of J.S. Mill’s theory of names, as cited above, chapter two, pp.54-56. *Shifting Eyes* chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 128
lie there and chirp to him (in my mind) "little, old, old, old hibou. You are nothing but a little old, old, old, owl." (1933-'4 mms. folder 557) This reminds H.D. of her father's stuffed owl, which she wanted to keep. Her father made her a gift of the owl, but only on the condition that it was not removed from his study. Freud interprets this as her father's coldness. Like Freud, H.D.'s father also possessed 'sacred symbols':

Freud $\equiv_{s}^{=} owl \equiv_{t}^{=} stoves \equiv_{t}^{=} father$

H.D. then draws a parallel between the childhood story of her brother setting light to paper with their father's magnifying glass, taken without his permission from the desk, and the myth of Prometheus. The magnifying glass looks like the Egyptian sacred symbol, the ankh, which her astronomer father uses to represent the planet Venus. (1944-'8 p.25) H.D.'s story becomes an allegorical version of the myth of Prometheus' unsuccessful challenge to the law of the Father. In this identification, Freud appears in the transference not as 'personal father' but 'Father as God'. H.D. reports, however, that there is only one occasion when Freud lays down the law, as a shalt not: "Please, never - I mean, never at anytime, in any circumstance, endeavour to defend me, if and when you hear abusive remarks made about me and my work." (1944-’8 p.86) Freud's rationale for this warning is that defence of his ideas merely leads to more entrenched prejudice. Elaborating on the mythic transference, H.D. constructs Freud as the Egyptian God Thoth, on the basis that her notes were written on September 19th., a day which according to the 'Mysteries of the Ancients' calendar is assigned to Thoth, bearer of the scales of justice 'St. Janarius'. Thoth is also associated with Janus, the god who faces both ways:

Freud $\equiv_{t}^{=} God the Father \equiv_{t}^{=} Thoth \equiv_{t}^{=} St. Janarius \equiv_{t}^{=} Janus$

The tension of the oedipal transference appears at the point when Freud says: 'The trouble is - I am an old man - you do not think it worth your while to love me.' (1944-'8 p.16) This is accompanied by what H.D. describes as an 'outburst' in which Freud beat the head-piece of the old horsehair sofa with his fist: 'What did he expect me to say? Exactly as if the Supreme Being had hammered with his fist on the back of the couch I had been lying. Why, anyway, did he do that? He must know everything or he didn't know anything.' This reveals

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
very clearly the shift in the transference from the personal father to the Absolute Father, the Supreme Being, the one who knows. The name ‘Supreme Being’ encompasses gender difference and at this point in H.D.’s account of the analysis inaugurates the ‘mother transference’.

H.D. introduces a verbal play between two names ‘Vienna’ and ‘Venice’, which signifies also a metonymic connection as her mother spent her honeymoon first in Italy and then Vienna. According to Freud, H.D. has come to Vienna to find her mother:

\[
\text{Vienna} \rightarrow \text{Venice} \\
\text{Freud} \rightarrow \text{mother}
\]

According to H.D.’s letter to Bryher, March 10th. 1933, Freud is not as comfortable with this transference:

> ‘My TRANSFERENCE seems to have taken place and what is it? ... then he said in his best small-dog manner, “but - to be perfectly frank with YOU - I do not like it - I feel so very, very, MASCULINE.” He says he always feels hurt when his analysands have a maternal transference.’ (1933-'4 mms. folder 557)

In the later text ‘Advent’ H.D. remembers buying an engraving of Freud with which she associates the image of Osiris, ‘the answerer’, so called because as double or ‘Ka’-, Osiris comes when called, unlike questions addressed to the Sphinx whose answer entails death. This identification, Freud and Osiris, reinforces mother transference: ‘I recall the Phoenix symbol of D.H. Lawrence and of how I had thought of the Professor as an owl, hawk, or sphinx-moth. Are these substitutions for the scripture hen gathering her chicks?’ (1944-'8 p.135) The name ‘Osiris’ brings an alternative scenario to the oedipal drama, the myth of Isis and Osiris.

\[
\text{Freud} \rightarrow \text{mother} \rightarrow \text{Osiris}
\]

Through her analysis, H.D. realises the influence of the ‘mother transference’ on her love affairs, including D.H. Lawrence. After his death, H.D. was haunted by Lawrence’s last work, The Man Who Died:

References to Isis are particularly important to both Trilogy (1942-'6) and Helen In Egypt (1952-'5) please see below, chapter six, pp.178-180, 185-'6.

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose
‘His [Lawrence’s] face comes back automatically when I switch off the bed-lamp. ... No how can I talk about the crucified Worm? I have been leafing over papers in the café, there are fresh atrocity stories. I cannot talk about the thing that actually concerns me, I cannot talk to Sigmund Freud in Vienna, 1933, about Jewish atrocities in Berlin.’ (1944-'8 pp134-'5)

At this point in the text, ‘death’ as trauma, is pervasive and yet remains unspoken. When H.D. dreams of a band of Nazis, she writes: ‘How can I tell him of my constant pre-vision of disaster?” The correspondence, however, reveals that they must have discussed the impending horror: ‘Freud says “the world looks very, very dark for us.”’ (1933-'4 mms. folder 557) H.D. attempts to reconcile this paradox with two images, by representing Freud through the image of the death-head or sphinx-moth, and secondly linking Freud with Faust, as if he has struck a pact with death itself: ‘“Eros and Death, those two were the chief subjects, in fact the only subjects - of the Professor’s eternal preoccupation.”’ (1944-'8 p.103) Through this parallelism, Freud is placed in H.D.’s transference as a figure of redemption: a saviour capable of holding out against death.

As the scale of the tragedy unfolding in Europe becomes evident, H.D. interprets her ‘visions’ as premonitions of War: ‘When that war had completed itself, rung by rung or year by year, I, personally (I felt), would be free, I myself would go on in another, a winged dimension ... Niké, Victory seemed to be my own especial sign or part of my hieroglyph.’ (1944-'8 p.56) The visions which appeared on the wall of her hotel room in Corfu 1920, described by Freud as her only ‘dangerous symptom’, included the image of a ladder, tripos, the goddess Niké and the last picture, a disk like the sun, which H.D. refers to as the ‘determinative’ hieroglyph of the sequence. These images presented in her ‘visions’ are signs of self: H.D. is the hieroglyph to be interpreted.

The identification between H.D. and Niké reappears as part of H.D.’s father transference. Freud’s favourite statuette was a version of Niké minus both her wings and spear. This Niké A-pteros is the name given to an aspect of Pallas Athené, a perfect example of: ‘...abstract thought, Pallas Athené, born without human or even without divine mother, sprung full-armed from the head of her father, our-father, Zeus, Theus, or God ...’. (1944-'8 p.70) In this transference, H.D. is the daughter of Freud as Father, born without need of a mother. As Niké without her spear, she is lacking the sign of the phallus:

1 Duality of the drives is fundamental to Helen in Egypt (1952-'5) see chapter six, pp.188,190-'2. Shifting Eyes chapter five : The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose 131
Towards the conclusion of ‘Advent’, Freud reminds H.D. that Athené, Victory, is also the ‘veiled’ Isis of Egyptian mythology.

This is typical of the trajectory of H.D.’s prose and poetry, the self formed through identification with ideals moves recursively through Greek classical associations towards earlier Egyptian references: the goddess, in particular Isis, representing an image of power that predates the œdipal resolution.

H.D.’s ‘daughter identification’ appears in Freud’s analysis of her most significant and luminous dream. In the dream, H.D. watches an Egyptian Princess descending a staircase towards the water’s edge. In the water beside H.D. is a baby in a boat. The Princess will find the baby and protect her, that is all that matters. The interpretation links the baby to the Doré illustration, ‘Moses in the Bulrushes’ which hangs above Freud’s couch, and the Egyptian reference to the engraving of Karnak that hangs above the analysand’s head. ‘Princess’ is also the name by which Freud refers to his benefactor, Mme. Bonaparte, an ‘obvious mother symbol’ and protector of Freud. Freud’s question, asking H.D. if she is the baby and therefore the founder of a new religion, implies another identification, that H.D. is herself a figure of redemption.

A letter to Bryher, March 23rd., 1933, describes a different account of the œdipal triangle, that emerges from this dream:

‘My triangle is mother-brother-self. That is early phallic-mother, baby brother or smaller brother and self. I have worked in and around that, I have HAD the baby with the mother and been the phallic baby, hence Moses in the bull-rushes.’ (1933-’4 mms. folder 557)

The complexity of H.D.’s identifications appears in her relationship with Bryher. H.D. presents the tension between the intimacy of their relationship and the social strictures which...
designate their role as ‘other’ to the man: ‘We were “always two women alone” or “two ladies alone,” but we were never alone.’ H.D. goes on to interpret her relationships with Frances Gregg and Bryher through Freud’s theories of sexual development: ‘The Professor said I had not made the conventional transference from mother to father, as is usual with a girl at adolescence.’ (1944-'8 p.136)

In a later entry to ‘Advent’, H.D. refers to Freud’s more cautious re-evaluation of the early psychoanalytic theories on female sexuality: the daughter may not always transfer her affection from mother to father. This, however, is not used to illuminate H.D.’s dream that includes ambivalent imagery: ‘I am not quite comfortable, not quite myself, my trouser-band does not fit very well; I realise that I have on, underneath the trousers my ordinary underclothes…’. (1944-'8 p.181) H.D. writes that she had been looking at pictures of Marlene Dietrich the night before the dream. Although the dream encodes ‘bisexuality’, both through cross-dressing and references to Dietrich, Freud’s interpretation of the dream focuses on her relation with Pound. There is no explicit reference to bisexuality in the text of Tribute to Freud, however in a letter to Bryher, Nov. 24th, 1933, H.D. writes:

‘He [Freud] says “you had two things to hide, one that you were a girl, the other that you were a boy.” It appears that I am that all-but-extinct phenomena, a perfect bi-. Well, this is terribly exciting, but for the moment, PLEASE do not speak of my own MSS., for it seems the conflict consists partly that what I write commits me - to one sex, or the other, I no longer HIDE.’ (1933-'4 mms. folder 563) [original spelling]

This quotation mitigates against the contemporary interpretation that conflict with Freud was unbearable or that it was simply impossible to be public about any lesbian or bisexual relationships. iii

Whatever the rationale, this omission of an explicit reading of bisexuality does not defer the text from presenting a complex view of the subject in analysis. The threads of the transferences unravel to reveal a self that is not organised exclusively according to a heterosexual order. The hieroglyph, by which H.D. presents herself, is not a symbol that

---

i H.D. Letter to Bryher, May 3rd. : ‘His idea is that all women are deeply rooted in penis envy, not only the bi-sexual or homo-sexual woman.’ (1933-'4 mms. folder 559).
Shifting Eyes  chapter five : The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose 133
upholds binary sexual division but a more elusive semiotic structure capable of change, like the
dream image of the baby, a sign of redemption.

Transference and myth, an alternative Òedipal myth in Paint It Today

The manuscript for Paint It Today, (1921c) the earliest of H.D.'s novels, was placed in
the Beinecke library at Yale marked with a note for the future: '(In preparation, White
Althea.)' (1921c p.89) Its narrative re-negotiates the family drama as a transference to a
variation of the Òedipus myth, the slaying of Clytaemnestra by her son Orestes.

The 'plot' covers the period after H.D.'s withdrawal from Bryn Mawr, the break up of
her relationship with Pound and her marriage to Aldington. The poetics brings out the
intensity of H.D.'s love for Frances Gregg, her feelings of betrayal by both Gregg and
Aldington and the hope that accompanied the appearance of her new love, Bryher. All the
main figures of her life are given pseudonyms in the text; H.D. appears as 'Midget', a name
which describes her diminutive sense of self as a child, a self-deprecating name that reflects
H.D.'s reading of developmental theories, such as those of Havelock Ellis. Bryher is
introduced first as, 'that Brindel', suggesting hybridity, and in the conclusion as 'White
Althea', white incorporating all colours. H.D.'s use of pseudonyms may have been a device of
concealment, given the explicit references to lesbianism in the text, an argument put forward by
Cassandra Laity, but the connotations of these particular names indicate a characteristic of
H.D.'s use of language, a plenitude of meaning that articulates over-determination. The 'name'
functions primarily not as index but as a form of mutative icon: the hypoicon capable of
designating the spectrum of possibility that makes up 'whiteness'.

The other theme that grounds the drama of Paint It Today is guilt: the guilt of a
woman obeying her own desire, taking her jouissance. What, then, is the ethical role of
woman? Is it love and marriage? Written in 1920-'21, this is soldered onto the question of the
ethics of the First World War. H.D.'s choice of the myth of Clytaemnestra and Orestes

---

1 Encoding, in Laity's terms, is ideological, a necessary escape from the censorship of homoerotic desire; (H.D. 1921c p.xxi.)

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 134
presents a variation on the oedipal drama that hinges on the bargain of *jouissance* and the cost of betrayal.¹ Central to the story is the dualistic goddess Artemis.

Clytaemnestra, sister of Helen of Troy and wife of Agamemnon, gives birth to two children, Iphigenia and Orestes.² Agamemnon has defiled the hunting grounds of Artemis and has to make an appeasement, a sacrifice. Agamemnon bargains his daughter Iphigenia. He tells Odysseus to pick up Iphigenia and take her to Aulis on the pretence that she is to marry Achilles. Agamemnon is then able to set sail for War. In vengeance Clytaemnestra takes a lover, Aegisthus. When Agamemnon eventually returns with his lover, Cassandra, Clytaemnestra kills them both. Orestes is told by the Delphic oracle to avenge his death: Orestes kills his mother. In the account by Euripides, Agamemnon plans to send word to Clytaemnestra, telling her not to believe Odysseus, but the message is intercepted by Menelaus. There are also two other versions of the myth in which the life of Iphigenia is spared; in one account Orestes exchanges Iphigenia with the body of a deer, while in the other Iphigenia is spared by Artemis herself, wrapped in cloud and appointed Chief Priestess. (Graves, R. 1955 112h, 116d, 161d,e)

These two versions describe the paradox of the goddess Artemis; in one account she is the prime cause of a chain of destruction that brings about a variation of the oedipal tragedy, in the other version she spares Iphigenia and is exonerated of blame. At Aulis the statue of Artemis depicts her with bow and arrow but also holding two torches. This refers to her role as Hecate, ‘Queen of the Night’ as Sappho calls her, two torches that act as eyes in the night. The key to Artemis is her duality, as goddess of wild animals she is both the hunter and the hunted: untamed, she is separate, she answers to no-one. Euripides’ *Hippolytus* dramatises the antithetical relationship of Artemis and Aphrodite, Artemis embodying free proud singleness while Aphrodite represents longing for union, yet Artemis is also the goddess of childbirth. The name Artemis,³ signifies the fundamental opposites of being, Life and Death: her demands are absolute.

Of central importance to *Paint It Today* is how the outlaw Artemis represents a renegotiation of the laws of sexual difference. The name ‘Artemis’ signifies a particular kind of

---

¹ *Jouissance*, as introduced in chapter three, pp.87-90.
² H.D. also refers to this myth in *Helen in Egypt*, (1952-5) please see chapter six, pp.183-'4.
³The name ‘Artemis’ was first found in linear B Cretan tablets, as a version of Cybele.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose
image capable of holding together opposing qualities and contradictory identifications, as in
the example given previously from Payne Knight, demonstrating how the names of gods and
goddesses enfold the transferential relation of power across opposing terms.

Goddess of Hunting = Artemis  goddess of childbirth = Artemis  three-headed goddess of night = Hecate

The semiotic structure which captures duality, without succumbing to the binary law of
exclusion, is Peirce's hypoicon as it appears as a mode of Thirdness. Through tracing the
identifications with Artemis underpinning *Paint It Today*, it is possible to approach the
question, is the hypoicon an apt signifying structure for the transformation of becoming?

*Paint It Today* opens with the quest for a mode of representation that captures the
immediacy of the present: 'A portrait, a painting? You cannot paint today as you painted
yesterday.' The demand is for a language torn from the conformable, a disruption of syntax
and literal signification capable of assigning emotional instability to that post First World War
subject. The subject of this portrait is Midget, the diminutive name for H.D.'s textual self of
childhood; as the work unfolds the way memory supervenes on the present is revealed:

"Paint her portrait; she is sitting in the grass, this Midget. She is playing with Edward's
children, of whom, not inappropriately, there are eight. The two oldest are, by one year
and two years, older than this Midget. They are wonderful and goddess like... ... Olive and Cornelia, like a young Hera and Artemis, the one mothering, the other
championing in games and hunts and expeditions... it was Midget who scaled the tree,
who shook the branches in a frenzy, till the multiplying Edwardses were drenched in
the soft, too-ripe, purple blackberries which yet tasted so unlike blackberries, mellow
oversweetened yet not sweet...". (1921c pp.4-5)

Hera, wife of Zeus, given the epithet *-boophis-‘cow-eyed’*, according to Homer signifies
marriage and obedience to domestic and social laws underwritten by the symbolic law of
paternity. (Baring, A. and Cashford, J. 1991 p.311) Hera is opposed to Artemis in her
particular designation as goddess of the hunt. From the outset of the narrative, Midget, the
tomboy, is identified with this aspect of Artemis:

Midget  goddess of hunting = Artemis

1 As above, chapter three, pp.86-'7.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: 'The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 136
Midget throws the purple blackberries, purple, which encodes lesbian passion, also signifies opposites in the above quote, 'sweet and not sweet', as desire is always doubled in the text and the range of identifications encompass androgyny and hermaphroditism.¹

The quest for identity starts with a poignant image of the nascent self: 'I am trying rather to give a picture of that being, that spider, that small, hatched bird, that flawless shell that once contained an unborn being.'(1921c p.6) This 'unborn being' is to become the child named Hermione. In the myth of 'Helen', Helen has one child by Menelaus, whom she calls Hermione. Through the myth of Helen of Troy, 'Hermione' also leads to H.D.'s mother, Helen Wolle. The initial condition of the 'textual self' defies the self-closure of narcissism:

'The person (who was, more or less, myself) stopped dead at a curve in the road.'

'Myself, who was an unformed sort of nebulous personality at the time of the wanderings around Frascati, shall have no name, people call me Miss Defrddie, which was surely not a name, or if it was a name it was a thing to be laughed at.' (1921c pp.24^-5)

The self denoted by the index of possession, 'myself', cannot denote a desiring subject. 'Myself' has no first name, only the name of her father, in this text Defrddie, the name that upholds the symbol of paternity. The name which denotes the particular individual, the term of haeccity, has yet to be found. At this point in the narrative, following the 'betrayal' of Gregg - Josepha in the text - who leaves her to marry Louis Wilkinson, the only way Midget may become an autonomous adult is also to take the same route as Gregg and marry Aldington.

One of the significant points about H.D.'s choice of myth, Clytaemnestra and Orestes, is that it articulates a particular aspect of the ōedipal complex, the required splitting of the relation of mother and child. H.D. explicitly acknowledges that she has not severed herself from the demands of the mother:

'Midget had never caused the pretty eyes annoyance. At least, she had never willfully done so. She had never in all her life, as far as, now standing by the window, she could in any way recall it, said to her mother, "I can't," or to her father, "I won't."

¹ Please see account of H.D.'s reading of Havelock Ellis and the importance of the hermaphrodite to his theory of inversion as 'doubling' in Collecott, D. (1999 pp.51-53).

Shifting Eyes chapter five : The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 137
The dyadic relation between mother and child, signified through the mirroring function of the 'eyes', requires the indexical other to intervene, to cut across the chains of iconic identification. This indexical act of negation, saying "no", appears in the text as Midget's acknowledgement that she has told a lie: "I didn't stay with the Westons as I said I was going to while father was ill. I didn't even tell you, when I wrote to Bournemouth. I was alone in the little place in Bloomsbury where I had been with the Mc.Alpins." (1921c pp.42-'3) This blow for autonomy, which her mother apparently ignores, is then immediately identified with Orestes avenging of the death of his father, Agamemnon, by the hand of his mother Clytaemnestra:

'How did Orestes feel when he held the knife to slay his mother? What did Orestes see? What did Orestes think?''

"Your mother has betrayed your father," spoke the present to Orestes.

"Your mother, your mother, your mother," the present said to Midget, "has betrayed, or would betray, through the clutch and tyranny of the emotion, your father, the mind in you, the jewel the king, your father gave you as your birthright. "Look," said the present, "and choose. Here is a knife, slay your mother. She has betrayed or would betray that gift." (p.42)

This extract sets up the complexity of Midget's identifications, she is identified with Orestes as the one who kills his mother but also with her father, who represents her rational mind and the symbolic Ego-ideal. It is the Ego-ideal, the way in which Midget conforms to her father's desire, which is jeopardised by Midget's 'failures'; the failure of her engagement to Pound and then her relationship with Josepha, which draws intense parental disapproval. It is as if Midget is aware that the price of jouissance is betrayal:

'The mind of Midget looked and the soul of Midget held the weapon, steel white, her frozen heritage.'...

'She seemed to be sobbing a confession when all the time, above her head, her mind stood, just above her head, and in its hands, a steel white javelin.' (p.43-'4)

The white javelin encodes Artemis' arrow of desire, a desire that is homoerotic. Lesbian desire first appears as Midget's desire for a twin sister, an attempt to turn away from the oedipal

---

1 For the account of the indexical cut across the dyadic relation in the mirror, please see chapter four, as above, pp.96-'8.
2 C.f. the birth of Athene from the head of Apollo, as cited above, p.131. The distinction between the oedipal Ego-ideal and Ideal-ego is described in chapter two, as above, p.82.
3 For an analysis of 'white' and 'purple-red' as significations of lesbian desire, please see (Tarlo, H. 1996b).

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
edict with an affirmation of the iconic dyad. Midge's meeting with Josepha, focuses on the eyes as a means of creating an iconic identification: '... eyes a Messalina might have wrought (to stab a Caesar) into bright steel; eyes the colour of wet hyacinths before the spikes have broken into flower.' (pp.8-9) These eyes, 'the colour of wet hyacinths', are reminiscent of her first published book of poems 'Sea Garden', 1916, as both works drawing connections between the self, plants and landscape. Messalina, the third wife of Claudius who was executed for her promiscuity and her bigamy, brings in another reference to the transgression of sexual codes, emphasising that the price of jouissance is death. This identification of Josepha with Messalina, points to future acts of betrayal, Gregg's exchange of 'kisses' with Pound and her subsequent marriage to Wilkinson.

Observing Josepha with her mother Julia, allows Midget to reflect on her own behaviour as a daughter. The pattern of mutual identification and desire repeats the dyad of mother and daughter: Midget=Josepha, Josepha=Julia. Again, the claustrophobic iconic chain has to be cut by the indexical reality of another. The scene is set for betrayal - Josepha's jealousy of Aldington: 'I hate him to open the door for you and brush your shoulder. I saw it was delicate. I think him under the surface, unclean.' (1921c p.28) The dualism of Josepha echoes the dualism of Artemis. Josepha leaves to marry Wilkinson, eventually sending Midget a letter: "Perhaps some day Wee Witches will grow up." H.D. retaliates by throwing back this image of Artemis: 'The hounds of Hecate might have dogged Josepha's foot-prints.' (p.32) A further letter reveals that Josepha is to have a child, exemplifying Artemis in her other guise as goddess of childbirth.

This provokes an acute crisis in Midget's relation to herself, her primary narcissism: 'Here I look at myself too much in the glass. Sometimes I say to it, "There is one person I recognise." Perhaps I look as odd to other people as other people look to me.' (p.54) In the midst of this iconic miasma of reflections, the act of recognition relies upon the index as unique referent, to act as the guarantor of existence. Losing Josepha is both a loss of self and a loss of mother, a severance of the mirror reflection which precipitates an 'unholy' rage breaking the anchor of the indexical. In its place, Midget substitutes the face of the goddess:

1 'Hyacinth' denotes Apollo's lover; see discussion of 'hyacinth' in Collecott, D. (1999 pp. 206-207).

Friedman, S. and Duplessis, R. (1990c p.219) however, read all of H.D.'s work, up until her analysis, 1933, as indicating H.D.'s lack of consciousness of the mother-daughter relationship.

Midget's nickname for Josepha, Faustine, derives from Swinburne's 'Faustine', a poem about a debauched Roman empress 'femme fatale'.

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose 139
Her face was like our mother's face. She was sister to our mother. She called us close to her, more loving than a mother, because her arms were hungry. Nothing would ease her heart.

Almost we loved her more than our lost mother because her heart was always unappeased. Almost we would give her anything to make her smile.’ (p.57)

This goddess is Artemis with heart ‘unappeased’, with the insatiable desire that drives the logic of becoming. The narcissistic relation has been replaced with Artemis; the name of the goddess that denotes conflicting opposites held in abeyance through the construction of a complex signifying structure, one that can sustain the index of existence without repeating the symbolic demand to conform to paternal law. The structure that approaches these qualities is the hypoicon in its mode of Thirdness.

The conclusion of *Paint It Today* introduces a new love, Bryher, who is to become the ‘White Althea’. Initially, this affair falls into the traps of narcissism and repetition of the ‘mother transference’, but it is Althea’s awareness of the phallus that provides the necessary indexical shock: “... danger is the Python conquered by the Delphian and danger is the lure calling the gods to earth, and it is only danger that summons the twins from heaven, Castor and Pollux, on snow-white horses.” (1921c p.86) The implication is that the phallus is, in some signifying capacity, a necessary concomitant of ‘twinned’ relationships, that is the phallus takes part in the play of seduction, the ‘lure’. This phallic term, however, is neither the iconic phallus of the mother, that is the disavowal of her castration, nor is it the symbolic phallus as it stands for the law of sexual difference, Φ; rather it is Althea’s recognition of her unique difference, her *haecceity* that operates as the agent of seduction. Althea as the indexical other represents the phallic term that splits the mirroring dyad of narcissistic relationships.

The conflation of the themes of betrayal, the personal love affairs that involve *jouissance* and the hideous killing fields of the First World War, are the second edition of a text, the transference of the myth of Clytaemnестra and Orestes. This chain of events, however, is precipitated by Artemis, her demand for human sacrifice being the cost of hunting in her playing fields. Artemis is the outlaw, obeying only the ethics of her own *jouissance*. The personal betrayal that operates between Midget and Basil, is described in terms of the wider context of War.¹ When Basil, Aldington, returns from the front he just sits, staring into space.

¹ This theme of ‘comradeship’ of War, recurs in the critical context of *Helen in Egypt* (1952-’5) as discussed below, chapter six, pp.186-’7.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: ‘The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose
Midget vents her anger, the anger of loss, trauma and personal betrayal, on the grounds that: 'He [Aldington] did not believe in the comradeship he spoke of. He did not believe in the dastardly enemy he spoke of.' (p.47)

Though *Paint It Today* relies on Artemis as a trope that guards Midget from her 'mother transference', the 'name' which introduces new logical interprets, is Althea; Althea who can both sustain the mirroring iconic relation yet also function as the index that grounds Midget in the present: Althea as the hypoicon Third.

**HER: semiosis of the name**

*HER* (1926-'7) covers the period of H.D.'s life prior to that represented in *Paint it Today*, that is H.D.'s withdrawal from Bryn Mawr, her engagement to Pound and her love for Frances Gregg. The 'plot' describes a transference of the oedipal myth, a second edition of the text of childhood drama, in terms of the shifting signification of 'names' that stand for the textual 'I'.

As a narrative of self-transformation, self-reference becomes the mode of bringing the self into existence: the drama unfolds according to how the name fails and succeeds in acting as an index, in particular as a name capable of conferring individual existence, *haecceity*. Counter-posed to the narrating voice, 'I', the first appearance of the 'name' is the third person object case, 'Her', but 'Her' is also as an abbreviation of 'Hermione Gart'. At the beginning of the book, 'Her' designates a shortened form of 'Hermione Gart', the family name, the name of the father. As in *Paint It Today*, (1921c) H.D. again uses pseudonyms for all the main characters - perhaps for the same reasons of discretion¹; Pound is called 'George Lowndes', Frances Gregg, 'Fayne Rabb'; H.D.'s brother Gilbert, 'Bertrand'; mother and father, 'Eugenia and Carl Gart'; 'Minnie' is H.D.'s sister in law.²

The language of *HER* is particularly rich in image and trope, the disruptive syntax and use of repetition mimic the semiotic processes of the unconscious. Reading *HER* is like

¹ Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* resulted in a court case, 1928.
² Friedman, S. and Du Plessis, R. analyze the meaning of 'Hermione' and 'Her' according to the relationship with George and Fayne respectively. (1990c p.212).
entering into the text of dream and then being present in the process of interpretation, an act of interpretation which forms the core of H.D.'s relation to herself and the world, a world which is revealed as semiotic:

"The Greeks made birdflight symbolic. I mean the Greeks said this spelt this. The sort of way the wing went against the blue sky was, I suppose a sort of pencil, a sort of stylus, engraving to the minds of augurers, signs, symbols that meant things. I see by that birdflight across an apparently black surface, that curves of wings meant actual things to Greeks, not just vague symbols but actual hieroglyphics...hieroglyphs...". (1926-'7 p.125)

The hieroglyph stands for a linguistic structure that makes reference to the world through its residue of pictorial mimesis yet its signification depends upon phonetics and the function of determinatives: 'Her' is a 'rebus' awaiting interpretation. The act of seeking self-identity is an act of interpretation, the formation of the interpretant of the hieroglyph of self.¹ The name capable of referring to the self as hieroglyph has to combine the function of the iconic with the indexical. H.D.'s book HER presents the gamut of naming as the trace of a trajectory through the oedipal complex, negotiating the edict to adopt the name of the father, in order to locate an index of desire.

The oedipal crisis, as described in HER, is contextualised within parental expectation and represented as a clash of values between 'science', associated with the father, and 'Her' desire, based on a mythopeic view of the world. Guilt and shame appear in the encounter with Gregg, as a sign of 'Her' jouissance and the transgression of the law of sexual difference, φ.²

At the beginning of HER, H.D. represents the relation between 'Her' and 'I' as evasive, they do not coincide, yet neither do they contradict each other:

'Her Gart went round in circles. "I am Her," she said to herself. she repeated, "Her, Her, Her."... She said, "I am Hermione Gart," but Her Gart was not that. She was nebulous, gazing into network of oak and deflowered dogwood.' (1926-'7 p.4)

H.D.'s account of the failure of self-identity is profoundly moving; HER is not an idle, playful, self-exploration, but an existential crisis. This is a young woman experiencing conflicting desires, held in the nexus of the Oedipal family but seeking to find her own path

¹The hieroglyph is also important to Helen in Egypt (1952-'5) see below, chapter six, p.182.
²For the concept of jouissance and φ, as the symbol of sexual difference, please see chapter three, as above, pp.87-91.

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
through life. The 'nebulous' designates the iconic field of possibility, the invocation of 'Her'; there is no stable index capable of conferring existence. The following quotation stresses the importance of the 'image', which not only characterises her drive to write but also anchors 'Her' to the world:

'She lost the bird, tried to focus one leaf to hold her on to all leaves; she tried to concentrate on one frayed disc of green, pool or mirror that would refract image. She was nothing. She must have an image no matter how fluid, how inchoate.' (p.5)

The raw emotional force of H.D.'s writing emphasises the very necessity of the 'image' and the need to find an appropriate sign. H.D. concentrates her language in chains of words, both metonymic and metaphoric, that follow Freud's thesis of condensation and displacement, coalescing an 'image' that stands in place of the name; the image therefore attempts to substitute for the failure of the index. To 'have no name' is to disappear into a state of 'non-being' echoing H.D.'s 'jelly-fish' vision that took place in the Scilly Isles: "... her mind filmed over with grey-gelatinous substance of some sort of nonthinking, of some sort of non-being or of nonentity... she felt herself clutch toward something that had no name yet.' (1926-'7 p.8) In this state of 'non-being' the relation between self and world is fluid, the boundary a tenuous conjecture; as in the poems of 'Sea Garden', (1916) and 'The God', (1913-'7) the self is identified with the world - especially plants, landscape and animals - through 'images':

The tree, for example, recurs as an image in identification, the tree which 'Her' complains that Lowndes, Pound, cannot love:

'Names are in people, people are in names.'
'Trees are in people. People are in trees. Pennsylvania.' (1926-'7 p.5)

'The circles of the trees were tree-green; she wanted the inner lining of an Atlantic breaker. ...
She wanted to get away, yet to be merged eventually with the thing she so loathed.'
(p.7)

This extract shows that H.D. was acutely aware of the risks involved in merger between self and other: the paradox of identification. As the ego is built through the residues of lost

\[1\]... I got stuck at the earliest pre-Œ stage, and "back to the womb" seems to be my only solution." Letter, 1933, March, 23rd., (1933-'4 mss. folder, 557).
\[2\] As below, chapter six, as below pp. 158-162.
\[3\] As above, chapter three, pp.92-100.
identifications, the moment of identification with another and the assimilation of the desired characteristic, the ideal, incurs a loss of identity. The name designates an identification between people and trees, brought about through the transference of the name. As in the examples of the names of the goddess in *Paint It Today*, the name combines iconic and indexical functioning, and therefore is more aptly described as a hypoicon; the hypoicon which can give primacy to one of its metaphysical modes. Here, H.D. uses the name to convey the disquieting lack of an anchor to being, the fleeting apperception of the self as First.

The use of the name 'Hermione' is multivalent, referring both to *A Winter's Tale* and the daughter of Helen of Troy. Helen is also the name of H.D.'s mother. 'Hermione' is used to name the self prior to her consciousness of psychoanalysis and the Oedipus complex: 'Hermione Gart would have been astounded in those days to learn that "Oedipus" links up with the most modern prophets. (pp.17-18) Hermione therefore refers to the ego's narcissistic identifications as opposed to the symbolic identifications of the resolved Oedipus complex. The key representation of narcissistic identification, as in *Paint It Today*, is the eye-to-eye encounter between Hermione and Bertrand, her brother: '... grey eyes that stared at grey eyes with some unexpressed and undefined craving, the craving of the fiend almost for his narcotic.' (p.18) The compulsive quality of the narcissist, here compared to an addict, reveals H.D.'s pejorative interpretation of narcissism. Such a strong identification between Hermione and her brother Bertrand could disrupt the oedipal resolution. As in *Paint It Today* (1921c), in the comparison between Midget and Orestes, identification and desire are entangled, as if gender difference is irrelevant. It demonstrates how such intense narcissistic identification resists the symbolic imperative:

Hermione = Bertrand

It is then not surprising that the full force of the rivalrous Oedipus complex is only felt after Bertrand marries Minnie, so that Minnie becomes added into the equation of sibling rivalry as representing the Ego-ideal: 'The word “father” as Minnie spoke it, reversed itself inward, tore at the inner lining of the thing called Her Gart...'. (p.15) In her attempt to live up to the Ego-

---

1 As above, chapter four, as above, pp.116-123.
2 'My triangle is mother-brother-self'. (1993-'4 mms. folder 557).

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
ideal, Hermione attempts to follow the scientific path of her astronomer father, however, she fails 'conic sections' and has to withdraw from her course at Bryn Mawr. Hermione's sense of shame indicates the action of the super-ego; the name 'Hermione' does not designate the assimilation of the Ego-ideal in the way that the name 'Her Gart' promises a nascent symbolic identification. Further conflict with her father stems from his disapproval of her engagement to Lowndes, Pound: 'He called her daughter like a Middle West farmer, like someone out of the Old Testament, like God saying daughter I say unto you arise.' (p. 100) Hermione, however, has failed to marry the right man, according to her father she has 'unholy eyes', suggesting that the relation between Hermione and Lowndes doesn't meet the standards of the Ego-ideal derived from the parents. It suggests, that rather than the sanctioned object relation of desire, Hermione and Lowndes are locked, eye-to-eye, in narcissistic identification:

Hermione $\sim$ Lowndes

(Oedipal conflict is introduced early on in the text as the experience of a tussle between the names of Hermione's parents, Eugenia and Carl:

'In Eugenia Gart, the fibres were rooted and mossed over and not to be disrupted. ...

Carl Gart was comforted, being at peace in the green shadows after the inland prairies and the stark glare of inimical Atlantic waters. In Hermione Gart, the two were never fused and blended, she was both moss-grown, inbedded and at the same time staring with her inner vision on forever-tumbled breakers. If she went away, her spirit would break; if she stayed, she would be suffocated.' (p. 9)

The presence of the two names suggests equal identifications with both parents as the basis of the oedipal crisis, rather than rivalrous desire for the parent of the opposite sex. The name 'Hermione Gart' is therefore a complex semiotic structure combining the indexical and the iconic, desire and identification operating as a hypoicon that signifies a tense stasis of an essentially riven self.

The name as hypoicon, has to act in contradistinction to the symbol; Hermione, picks up a copy of the Mhabharata:

---


Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
‘Hermione dropped the volume. This frightened her. God is in a word. God is in HER. She said, “HER, HER, HER. I am Hermione... I am the word AUM.”...

Hermione Gart hugged HER to Hermione Gart. I am HER. ... Her own name was ballast to her light-headedness. ... I am Hermione.’ (1926-'7 pp.32-33)

The name ‘HER’, attempts to designate the non-assimilable name, the transference of the name ‘God’. In a defence against this all-powerful God, Hermione repeats her own name, ‘Hermione’ : ‘Hermione’ operates as an index of haecceity against the assimilation to the order governed by God.

The event which intervenes into the ‘normal’ route through the Œdipal Complex is Hermione’s meeting with ‘Fayne Rabb’, Frances Gregg. Hermione’s dramatic encounter with Fayne illustrates the danger in the ‘look’ as an act of self-reflection : ‘Don’t look at the eyes that look at you. “A girl I want to see you.” The girl was seeing Her.’ (p.52) These ‘eyes’ that look are the subject of two extraordinary descriptions : the first describes Hermione’s eyes roaming the room seeking and avoiding an encounter with Fayne :

‘Facing eyes that that come “ in line with mathematics,” Hermione apprehended, but did not grasp, a thing that whirred like a bird up, up into a forest of metallic leaves and a forest of leaves that waved like sea-weed under water. She saw the girl who was “fey with some sort of wildness,” then she came to like coming out of some sort of ether.’ (pp.55-'6)

The circle of eyes metamorphoses into a bird as if the intangibility of the visual exchange seeks some a more concrete sign. The second extract stresses the plurality of these inner ‘eyes’, these points or possibilities of identification, a multiplicity of ‘I’ or selves to be brought into being through introjection :

‘Hermione let octopus-Hermione reach out and up and with a thousand eyes regard space and distance and draw octopus arm back, only to replunge octopus arm up and up into illimitable distance....It had not occurred to Her to try and put the thing in writing.’ (pp.71'-2)

There is a clear split between the hypoicon ‘Hermione’ as the contingent present ‘I’ who searches in the here and now through the visual, and the other self, the indexical ‘Her’ who has not put her experience into writing. Accessing the indexical name, ‘Her’, is brought about through identification with Rabb as an identification that exceeds iconic reflection. Rabb
represents the ‘Other’ of language itself: ‘Words with Fayne in a room, in any room, became projections of things beyond one...’ (pp.146-'7) Such identification provides new logical interpretants, new conditionals of becoming. The language points towards homoerotic desire and jouissance as opposed to the narcissistic identification of the mother-daughter dyad:

‘Things are not agaçant now I know her. I know her. Her. I am Her. She is Her. Knowing her, I know Her. She is some amplification of myself like amoeba giving birth, by breaking off, to amoeba, I am a sort of mother, a sort of sister to Her. “O sister my sister O fleet sweet swallow.”’ (1926-'7 p.158)

From this point in the text Her is Fayne: the relation of identification confers existence and self-recognition:

Her = Fayne

Fayne is no longer agaçant - annoying or irritating - after Fayne has becomes a part of ‘Her’; that is the indexical other has become part of the complex ‘Her’. The semiotic structure then is a hypoicon which has taken up the indexical other. The consequence of this particular semiotic description is to introduce an identification that differentiates between iconic reflection and the self that can take an other as a narcissistic object. Identification with Fayne does not then simply avoid the oedipal complex through narcissism but leaves ‘Her’ in a feverish state of struggle to understand what these conflicts may mean.

H.D. writes not only how important it is to have her words received but also of the inevitable devastating effect of the end of her affair as a ‘window’ that separates thought from dreaming; ‘Her’ is unable even through valiant effort to hold onto her ‘vast desire.’:

‘A project had formed in her head, a project and a determination. I will tell someone. When I have told someone it will fall from my forehead, heavily and visibly like the very scriptural millstone.’
‘Nothing could bring the thing back, no words could make the thing solid and visible and therefore to be coped with.’ (pp.213-'4)

The ‘thing’ that stands in the place of this unrealisable desire is unnameable, indescribable, remaining unspoken and resistant to conceptualisation. Words behave like iconic reflections,
shifting around desire without being able to name it, without the index of desire capable of resisting the symbolic directive:

'I will say, going back and back, remembering with the surface, the lava Her-surface that is sure to get me, I will say with the incarcerating part of her Gart, all that was vague, we only imagine such things. Fayne Rabb will become part of yesterday.' (p.215)

This image of 'lava surface' is an apposite representation of the process of negation, whether this is denial, repression or even foreclosure. But it is also an entombment of desire. The text concludes with 'Her' returning home to fetch her trousseau, the legacy of her grandmother, her grandmother's gift. Fayne remains upstairs alone in Her workroom, a conclusion which leaves open the interpretation of marriage, marriage to an other or marriage to 'Her' self.

The Gift

The Gift (1941-'4) coincides chronologically and thematically with H.D.'s great poem Trilogy, (1942-'6) both works being characterised, by what H.D. in a letter to Pearson, 14th October 1959, refers to as: '... the daemonic drive ... released by psychoanalysis ... and the second War.' (1941-'4a p.ix) As in the other autobiographical novels, the structure of The Gift is transferential between two periods of H.D.'s life, the early childhood years and WWII. This transference is brought about through the repetition of trauma; trauma defined by Freud as experience of signs previously not 'translated'. Trauma therefore appears in the poetics of the text at the level of naming. In the mutative play of names, shifting from the iconic to the symbolic, the location of the name as index signifies the drive of translation.

Trauma is introduced in the first paragraph with the horrific image of a young girl burned to death by a Christmas tree candle, who is unnamed - like the unnamed soldier; the image, generic of death, in its infinite capacity to disrupt psychic order requires the closure of naming. In other words, the iconic turbulence of trauma requires the closure of the index.

---

1 'We invariably find that a memory is repressed which has only become a trauma after the event[nachträglich].' (Freud, S. (1895a p. 435 ; 1895b p.413) The repressed as the 'non-translatable' is discussed above, chapter two, pp. 53-'6.

2 H.D. letter to Bryher, March 4th., 1933: 'He [Freud] seemed interested in the early candle-service and gave me a little lecture on the phallic significance of the lighted candle, and said of the early Moravian service as I described it, "that is the heart of true religion."' (1933-'4 mms. folder 557).
The signs of trauma are eventually caught in the nexus of a network of transferential chains. The first thread focuses on the ‘wounded’ father, in which the key word ‘wound’ leads to early Moravian rituals. Another chain, focusing on the name ‘Hilda’, also leads away from her family name, the father’s name, to that of her Moravian grandmother. As in HER (1926-'7) the narrative drive of The Gift (1941-'4b) is directed towards the quest for haeccity, the name signifying individuality in the face of parental expectation. Early in the text, Hilda riles against the arbitrariness of her given name:

‘My name was Hilda; Papa found the name in the dictionary, he said. He said he ran his finger down the names in the back of the dictionary, and his finger stopped at Huldah and then went back up to Hilda. What would I have been, who would I have been, if my initial had come at the beginning and he had put his finger on Alice? Had he put his finger on Alice?’ (1941-'4b p.40)

Alice is the name of Hilda’s half-sister from her father’s earlier marriage. The above quotation thus implicates the imperative of the maternal line, paving the way for the search for her name within the Moravian tradition of her grandmother. Names, following the Moravian belief in creationism, confer existence. Like the text of HER, the battle for the index of self requires a different path from attempting to fulfil the demands of the Ego-ideal through seeking parental approval. In The Gift, this is played out through retrieving the ‘gift’ of her maternal inheritance, her grandmother’s gift as visionary and interpreter.

The oedipal drama, as it appears in The Gift, points towards a familial and social structure based on the Moravian interpretation of Christianity that stresses love through love feasts, and a form of excess, jouissance, that breaks down the boundary between a knowing enactment of religious symbolism and an abandonment of self to that ritual. As in all of H.D.’s œuvre, however, there is no simple polarity of Ego-ideal versus the Ideal-ego, patriarchy does not supervene and obliterates all other relations. The Moravian rites also embroil her father through the term ‘wound’; ‘wound’ signifies both a childhood incident involving her father and a particular Moravian ritual that took place at Wunden Eiland.

When a young child Hilda remembers opening the door to find her father bleeding from the head, it is Hilda who washed his wounds, but when her mother and nurse appear she

---

*This is a reformulation of how the index signifies the shock of the ‘other’ that disrupts the iconic dyad at the mirror stage, please see above, chapter three pp.80-'2.

Shifting Eyes chapter five : The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose
is told to ‘run away’. The significance of the experience is not only the shock of discovering that her father can be ‘wounded’ but also her perception of this as an insult and her love for her father ignored. Later in the text, this incident is referred to as ‘the thing’ that happened to Hilda as a child, which was instantly forgotten, reappearing only during the War as trauma:

'I mean it was walled over and I was buried with it. I, the child was incarcerated as a nun might be, who for some sin - which I did not then understand - is walled up alive in her own cell or in some anteroom to a cathedral... I, the child, was still living, but I was not free to express my understanding of the Gift until long afterwards. I was not in fact, completely free, until again there was the whistling of evil wings, the falling of poisonous arrows, the deadly signature of a sign of evil magic in the sky.' (1941-'4b p.166)

Her father’s ‘wound’ is inseparable from her apprehension of ‘the Gift’. ‘Das Gift’ in German, translates as ‘poison’, German being the language that links Hilda’s father back into the Moravian tradition, when her father calls her ‘Tochterlein’: ‘It made a deep cave, it made a long tunnel inside me with things rushing through.’ (pp.102-'3) The wall of negation awaits the fall of poisonous arrows, the bombs of WWII, the signification of death that paradoxically signifies redemption. But why should this incident, her father’s wound, trigger such a categorical ‘wall’ of psychic negation?

The accident forces Hilda to recognize both her father’s fallibility and the possibility of his castration, not only the reality of his wound but also the possibility of symbolic castration. The ‘wall’, therefore, is not only indexical of repression but also a defence against the critical loss of the symbol of the father, thus Hilda associates her ‘wounded father’ with the image of Christ in the family’s illustrated Bible: ‘He [Christ] was looking and looking and never shutting his eyes and the thorns made great drops of blood run down his face and Mama thought it was a beautiful Guido Reni. (p.190) Christ, as son of God, partakes in ‘God the father’, so that Christ’s wounds represent sacrifice, the symbolic castration that signifies his acceptance of God’s laws:

\[\text{symbolic father} \approx \text{Christ}\]

1 Letter to Bryher, May 2nd., 1933, demonstrates arrow and walls signify psychic structures: ‘Also, if one faces the guns straight, one feels so much better and one would not mind the horrors if one believed in it at all. In this case I do believe, so I suppose it took away the actual u-n-c terrors.’ (H.D. 1933-'4 mms. folder 559).

C.f. Trilogy (1942-'6) and Helen in Egypt (1952-'5); please see chapter six, pp. 168, 188-'9.

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose
The wound, however, is also an index signifying the absence of the penis. This 'lack' then acts as the iconic trope of the feminine: Christ is therefore also a hypoicon, capable of signifying dualities, combining the indexical and the iconic without necessarily operating as symbol, the symbol as representamen of the law.\(^1\)

Hilda clearly differentiates between 'Papa', her indexical father, and the symbolic father, who is identified with the 'wounded one' at *Wunden Eiland*:

'I must go into the darkness that was my own darkness and the face that was my own terrible inheritance, but it was Papa, it was my own Papa's face, it wasn't the face of the wounded one at *Wunden Eiland*, though I got them all mixed up, but I will get them separated again and I will hold the cup in my hand that is a lily, that is a rose, that is ...'. (1941-'4b p.182)

The melange of substitution, flowers for cup, cuts across the iconic with the act of naming, the indexical, the lily and the rose. The separation of the iconic, indexical and symbolic, becomes the means by which Hilda disrupts the oedipal triangle.

Hilda learns of her Moravian inheritance from her grandmother, Mamalie, who accidentally mistakes Hilda for her sister Agnes. The transferential relation between 'wounded father' and *Wunden Eiland* depends upon three forms of relation: first of all the iconic rhyme between 'wound' and *Wunden*, secondly Hilda's memory of her father's accident, the index of the event, and thirdly on a family story that when her father returned from the Civil War he was confronted with his mother's disappointment that he had survived while his brother died from typhoid. In this case it is the 'mother' who through her rejection acts as the agent of symbolic castration. 'Father' is then already imbued with tragedy and severance from the maternal: the term 'wounded father' is therefore over-determined:

\[
\text{wound} \to \text{Wunden} \to \text{Eiland} \\
\text{wounded father} \to \underbrace{\text{castrated by mother}} \to \text{Wunden} \to \text{Eiland}
\]

It is this traumatic experience which provides Hilda with the transferential connection that links her to the initiates at *Wunden Eiland*.

---

\(^1\) A similar argument underpins the signifying status of 'Christ' in *Trilogy* (1942-'6) please see below, pp. 178-180.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
The 'gift' is ambivalent, meaning both the Moravian 'gift' of the visionary tradition and also 'gifted' in the sense of having a conspicuous talent. Hilda's mother was promised a 'gifted child' by a fortune teller, but:

'We were not any of us "gifted", as if we had failed them somehow. ... How could I know that this apparent disappointment that her children were not "gifted," was in itself her own sense of inadequacy and frustration, carried a step further?' (p.51)

This passage reveals Hilda's sense of shame in failing to realise the ideals of her parents, the Ego-ideal, which determined her choice to study mathematics at Bryn Mawr. Hilda's denial of her talent finds its representation in her grief for the child who died at birth before Hilda was born, 'Fanny', her mother's sister. Hilda is the inheritor of this family grief: 'The crying was frozen in me, but it was my own. The gift was there, but the expression of the gift was somewhere else.'(1941-'4b p.37) 'Grief' acts as the transferential term which links Hilda to her grandmother's experience of family and historical grief implicit in Mamalie's secret, her gift:

Hilda = Mamalie

'Grief' is associated with two key events in Moravian history, the ritual at *Wunden Eiland* and its concomitant massacre at Gnadenhuetten. *Wunden Eiland* is the name of an island on the Monocacy river where a secret meeting took place between the Moravians and the Indian tribes. The agreement between these peoples lay in their respective rituals and the identification between the Holy Spirit and the Indian Great Spirit. The ritual revolved around the exchange of names of leading figures from both peoples (1941-'4b 214):

'There was something very important about exchanging names because the inner band of Indians believed the name a person had, was somehow another part of him, like a ghost or shadow and Anna von Pahlen was to have the name of Paxnous' wife, who was Morning Star in English but she had the Indian words for it, written with notes of music to show exactly how it sounded.' (p.163)

---

1 A key event, a love feast, June 13th. 1746, a group of fifteen settlers left to establish a settlement entirely devoted to the needs of the Indians.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter five: 'The Transference of Names in H.D.'s Prose
Anna von Pahlen, the wife of John Christopher Frederick Cammerhof, was given the name of the Indian Paxnous’ wife, ‘Morning Star’. According to the Indian belief that names involve the metaphysics of being, naming is indexical, as the index is guarantor of existence. Hilda constructs a transference between her name and the exchange of names at Wunden Eiland:

‘... for I now understood I had another name; now I was Agnes, now I would really be Agnes and Aunt Aggie’s name was Agnes Angelica, so perhaps they had named her Angelica because of Anna von Pahlen, then I would be part of Anna von Pahlen, too, and I would be part of the ceremony at Wunden Eiland and I would be Morning Star along with Anna.’ (pp.163-'4)

This whole episode at Wunden Eiland, represents the apogee of rituals which were, according to Christian orthodoxy, highly heretical. The problem lay in their theatrical quality, the amount of money spent on feasts and the fact that followers were given the names of the Lord. Mamalie tells Hilda of the particular ‘secret’ left to her by her husband, Christian, who rediscovered a Moravian scroll bearing text written in Hebrew, Greek and Indian and headed, l’amitié passe même le tombeau. He also found a cup bearing the initial S. The ‘secret’ lies in language. Mamalie’s ‘gift’ is her musical talent which allows her to help Christian interpret ‘the scroll’ which is written in Gregor’s metres and includes picture-writing. Mamalie also ‘speaks in tongues’, giving voice to a language that is on a continuum with interpreting the world as sign:

‘... she herself [Mamalie] became one with the Wunden Eiland initiates and herself spoke with tongues - hymns of the spirits in the air - of spirits at sunrise and sunseting, of the deer and the wild squirrel, the beaver, the otter, the kingfisher, and the hawk and eagle’. (1941-'4b p.169)

‘I suppose the Gift was their all talking and laughing that way and singing with no words or words of leaves rustling and rivers flowing and snow swirling in the wind, which is the breath of the Spirit, it seems.’ (p.171)

As in HER, signification is written into the world, the Moravian and Indian world-views unite in their mutual conception of a semiotic universe. The key lies in sensing the world as text to be interpreted, not through the syntax of speech but through the ‘gift’ that Mamalie embodies, the ability to break away from the anchor points of literal signification, to free naming from its
symbolic code and to bring something into being through incantation: the incantation of the name as index.

The cup, or mystic chalice, bearing the initial ‘S’ is interpreted by Christian, Mamalie’s husband, as referring to his surname ‘Seidel’, a name that translates as cup or mug in German. This further confirms the transferential chain of names linking Hilda to the circle of initiates at Wunden Eiland. The optimism of Wunden Eiland, however, cannot be divorced from the terrible massacre that took place at Gnadenhuetten; trauma again underpins the transference between Hilda and Mamalie, which is articulated through names: ‘I am in the word, I am Gnadenhuetten the way Mamalie says it, though I do not know what it means.’ (1941-4b p. 154)

Mamalie’s ‘gift’, the gift of ‘vision’, alludes to a paradox: the vision of power and peace and the belief in the unity of peoples is locked into a history marked by trauma. This ‘gift’ of interpretation, points towards the need for redemption, that is new interpretants: in terms of Peirce’s late philosophy, the ‘gift’ signifies the final interpretant.

Redemption appears in the text as the transferences between ‘names’. Following her grandmother’s case of mistaken identity, Hilda places herself in the trajectory of redemption:

‘She [Mamalie] had called me, Agnes and she had called me Lucy. I was Lucy, I was that Lux or Light, but now the light had gone out. There was not even a small candle ... I could not achieve the super-human task of bringing back what had been lost, so the Promise might be redeemed and the Gift restored.’ (p. 214)

The poetics of the text, including homophony, eye-rhyme and translation, creates the transferential link from Hilda to Light:

\[ \text{I} \xrightarrow{\text{same}} \text{Lucy} \xrightarrow{\text{icon: rhyme}} \text{Luce} \xrightarrow{\text{same}} \text{Lux} \xrightarrow{\text{translation}} \text{Light} \]

Light, signifying spiritual awareness, also links back to the beginning of the text, the death of the child by fire as a result of a Christmas tree candle, reinforcing the paradox that redemption entails death. The Gift closes with a very emotionally charged image: ‘I push open the kitchen door and turn round. I stand by the kitchen door opposite the mirror, in a glass darkly.’ But

---

1 C.f. ‘S’ in transferential chain including Freud (H.D. 1944-'8 pp. 55, 67).

Shifting Eyes chapter five: The Transference of Names in H.D.’s Prose 154
now face to face. We have been face to face with the final realities." (p.222) She hears Christian Renatus repeating his incantation: ‘Wound of Christ, Wound of God, Wound of Beauty, Wound of Blessing, Wound of Poverty, Wound of Peace’, like the deep bee-like humming of the choir of Single brothers, and like the voice of her great-grandfather who made clocks and also kept bees. (1941-'4b p.222) The image of redemption is subordinated to the phonetics, the iconic repetition of the word ‘wound’ is the sonorous birth of redemption.

The trauma that crosses time, splicing together the Wunden Eiland, the father’s wounds and WWII, finds a parallelism in the terms of redemption: Anna von Pahlen whose exchange of names with Paxnous signifies the bridging of two races, Christ who signifies redemption, and Bryher who announces the all-clear after another air-raid on London. Bryher, as in Paint It Today appears as a figure of redemption: ‘When the terror was at its height, in the other room, I could let images and pictures flow through me, and I could understand Anna von Pahlen ... I saw it all clearly.’(213) It is the act of recognising Bryher as the indexical other, yet a transference of Anna von Pahlen, that releases Hilda into the present:

‘But I was not afraid. The noise was outside. Death was outside. The terror had a name. It was not inchoate, unformed. Wunden Eiland? Was that this island, England, pock-marked with formidable craters, with Death stalking one at every corner? (p.221)

Trauma echoes like an iconic charade around the image of Death, but through the appearance of the trauma in war, H.D. finds its signification through the transference of names: Wunden Eiland \( \text{homophony} = \) England. The unspeakable threat that dominated H.D.’s analysis with Freud has been named: death given its index.\(^a\)

---

\(^a\) Corinthians 1 : 13. C.f Lacan’s ‘two-mirror scheme’, as discussed above, chapter four, pp.96-'8 and below chapter seven, pp. 202-'7.

\(^a\) The prose works selected for this chapter have been drawn from periods prior to, and after, her analysis with Freud, 1934, focusing on how transference material appears in all the texts, including Paint It Today (1921c) and is shown to be constructed via the ‘name’ in its different modes of signification.
but if you do not even understand what words say,
how can you expect to pass judgement
on what words conceal?

... for gods have been smashed before
and idols and their secret is stored
in man's very speech,
in the trivial or
the real dream; insignia

in the heron's crest,
the asp's back,
enigmas, rubrics promise as before,
protection for the scribe;

(1942-'6 pp. 14-15)

What do words conceal? This quotation from H.D.'s *Trilogy* (1942-'6) 'The Walls Do Not Fall', implies two propositions which are significant for this chapter, first of all that words conceal meanings other than their immediate signification, and secondly, that things in the world can be read as signs - 'the heron's crest', 'the asp's back'. H.D. holds a semiotic view of the world, to understand the self is an act of interpretation and the sign that signifies 'self' is a hieroglyph.¹

How does this appear in H.D.'s poetics? This chapter looks at how the structures of identification are realised through the semiotics of the poetry in three periods of H.D.'s writing, the Imagiste collections, 1913-1917, (H.D. 1912-'44 pp. 3-68) *Trilogy* (1942-'6) and *Helen In Egypt*, (1952-'5).

The earliest collection, *Sea Garden*, (1916) is comprised of H.D.'s most quintessential Imagist poems, praised for upholding the tenets of Imagism following Pound's definition:

¹ C.f. *HER*, (1926-'7) as cited above, chapter five, p.142.
‘An “Image” is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time. I use the term “complex” rather in the technical sense employed by the newer psychologists, such as Hart, though we may not agree absolutely in our application.’
(Pound 1972 p.130)

‘Image’ is not simply an example of a trope or a mode of ostension but a term which refers to a psychological ‘complex’. There is parallel here with Freud’s schema of the Psyche, 1891.

The question of how words refer to things and how we communicate our experience of that thing - experience which encompasses our felt response - lies at the heart of the development of language. Viewing the object and word as inextricable, the goal of the Imagist was to make the word as transparent as possible. Imagism is, therefore, the attempt to reach into the very basis of the faculty of recognition to apprehend the truth of things. The ‘Imagists’ take the word-thing relation as a central tenet of their aesthetics:

'We are not a school of painters, but we believe that poetry should render particular details exactly and not deal in vague generalities, however magnificent and sonorous.'
(Pound, E. and Flint, R.S. 1915 p.135)

"'Imagism' refers to the manner of presentation, not to the subject....The "exact" word does not mean the word which exactly describes the object in itself, it means the "exact" word which brings the effect of that object before the reader as it presented itself to the poet's mind at the time of writing the poem. Imagists deal but little with similes, although much of their work is metaphorical." (Pound, E. and Flint, R.S. 1916 p.136-137)

This extract goes on to state that though Imagism is based in figurative language, the use of too many figures ‘blurs the central effect’, the effect being the realisation in the reader of a similar experience; that is in Peirce’s sign-interpétant theory, the emotional interpreptands bear an iconic relation to the text. Metaphor, conceived as a hypoicon structured as a Third, expresses the relation of identification. Peirce’s hypoicon Third, forces indexical terms into an iconic relation with each other that is utterly specific, a ‘this is that’, identification of particular entities. It is this haeccty of metaphor which distinguishes Peirce’s definition of metaphor from symbol. ‘Things in themselves’, as in the opening quotation from H.D.:

---

1 Freud, S. (1891a, b) as cited above, chapter two, pp.35-'8.
2 The importance of iconicity to the act of judgement is central to the discussion on Freud’s schemas of the psyche, 1895, as discussed above, chapter two pp.41-'6.
3 The inextricable relation of ego and ‘other’, in the formation of the ego through identification, is discussed above, chapter four, pp. 92-100.

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self ; Reading H.D.’s Poetry 157
‘... insignia / in the heron’s crest, / the asp’s back ...’, are signs that can be incorporated in hypoiconic and symbolic structures of language. (1942-’6 pp.14-15)

There is therefore no simple division of subject-object in ‘Imagist’ theory according to the list of ‘Imagist’ rules devised by R.S. Flint: ‘1. Direct treatment of the “thing”, whether subjective or objective.’ (Flint, R.S. 1913 p.129) Direct treatment of the thing involves the complexity of the subject-object relation, the dialectical structure of identification. For the Imagist in particular - where is the boundary of the ego and world in the poem?

Bridging the ‘not-I’

The poems of Sea Garden (1916) hold the tension of opposites encompassed by identification: the title throws together the controlled domestic space of the garden and the vast, untamed, extent of the sea. ‘Sea Garden’ operates as a hypoicon. The indices sea and garden are forced into an iconic parallel, for which the reader finds an uneasy iconic interpretant. ‘Sea Rose’, the opening poem similarly clashes together two indices, ‘rose’ and ‘sea’ in an iconic frame:

‘Rose, harsh rose,
marred and with stint of petals,

Stunted, with small leaf,
you are flung on the sand,
you are lifted
in the crisp sand
that drives in the wind.
...
’  (1912-44 p.5)

‘Sea’, the tenor of the metaphor, crashes against ‘Rose’, bringing together two indices into an iconic relation and forcing the reader to interpret the emotional effect rather than the pictorial referent. As condensation, the two images of sea and rose oscillate in a state of irreconcilability, an unease reinforced by the verbs, ‘flung’, ‘lifted’, ‘drives’. Forcing an iconic relation between disparate signs also undermines the stability of language, blurring the crucial distinction between opposites, the very basis of the subject-object syntactical division. The ‘you’ of the text marks the fragile boundary of the ego, which is represented in this poem though the formation of a hypoicon, ‘clashing together the terms ‘sea’ and ‘rose’.

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 158
The hypoiconic Third acts as the bridging the relation between the ‘I’ and the ‘not-I’, the indexical other. The poem ‘Mid-day’, inscribes a shift in the textual ‘I’ from simile to identification with the thing in itself:

A slight wind shakes the seed-pods - 
my thoughts are spent 
as the black seeds. 
My thoughts tear me, 
I dread their fever. 
I am scattered in its whirl. 
I am scattered like 
the hot shrivelled seeds.

The shrivelled seeds 
are split on the path - 
the grass bends with dust,

O poplar, you are great 
among the hill-stones, 
while I perish on the path 
among the crevices of the rocks. (p.10)

The initial act of comparison between the textual ‘I’ and ‘shrivelled seeds’ is based on a transference between ‘thoughts’ and ‘black seeds’. The split seeds then become the opening of the body of the I which finally perishes on the path, while the great poplar, which is identified with the ‘you’ of the text, is ‘bright on the hill’:

my thoughts \( \rightarrow \text{black seeds} \rightarrow \text{I} \rightarrow \text{split seeds} \)

you=rose

Mirroring, the narcissistic ‘I-you’ relation, takes place out there in the world, breaking open the dyad of lyric tradition. The self, as the constructed hypoicon Third, is here revealed as encompassing a transferential relation to the world at the heart of the ego. ‘Mid-day’ demonstrates how the ‘I-you’ relation is not an identity relation, but a complex ‘to-and-fro’ of transference and identification.

\(^{1}\)The graphic icon ‘\(=_{h}\)’ is introduced in order to distinguish a hypoiconic identification of disparate terms.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry
‘Oread’, from ‘The God’, (1913-17) represents the ‘you’, of the natural world, and the ‘us’, of the speaking voice, as a continuum:

‘Whirl up, sea -
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.’ (1912-'44 p.55)

‘Oread’ suggests that the categorical split between the human entity and the rest of the world is fragile, permeable, easily substituted terms in the conflation of identification. ‘Sea’ and ‘pine’ are initially brought together on the basis of a shared characteristic, ‘being pointed’, but the last line emphasises dissimilarity, the shared general quality ‘green’ has been replaced by the more specific name ‘fir’, producing an emotional interpretant without a concomitant pictorial reference. In terms of the beauty of the poem, the rhyme, ‘whirl’ and ‘fir’, provides a structure that reinforces the central metaphor, the hypoicon, that reveals the ‘you’ to be constructed through the indexical otherness of the world:

\[
\text{sea} \quad \text{toed} \quad \text{pine} \quad \text{sea} \quad \text{green} \quad \text{fir} \quad \text{you}
\]

\[
\text{whirl} \quad \text{misslike} \quad \text{fir}
\]

It is the common structures of identification in \textit{Sea Garden} and ‘The God’ which suggest that they are better thought of as one group of poems. Spiller, writing on the history of the sonnet, points out that the lyric ‘I’ was originally socially oriented, however, the \textit{stilnovisti} suspended the ‘I’ as unlocated in time and space: ‘... and what is left is the record of an epiphany, a moment whose meaning is entirely for the psyche of the speaker: ...’. (Spiller, M. 1992 p.35) H.D. was accused of occupying just such a position as an escape from reality, for example poet Untermeyer, that \textit{Sea Garden} featured a: ‘...wood-nymph lost in modernity, a Greek marble faintly flushed with life, a delightful but detached anachronism...’. (Untermeyer, L. 1924 p.260) H.D. in a letter to Pearson, December 12th. 1927, writes about her disappointment in receiving a letter from Harriet Monroe:\textsuperscript{8} : ‘Miss Monroe was one of the first

\textsuperscript{1} The \textit{stilnovisti}, were the sonneteers during the century prior to Petrarch, e.g. Dante Alghieri (1265-1321) and Guino Cavalcanti (1255-1300).

\textsuperscript{2} Harriet Monroe (1860-1936) was the founder and editor of \textit{Poetry}.

\textsuperscript{8} Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry
to print and recognise my talent. But how strangely, farcically blind to our predicament!'.
(Collecott, D. 1988 pp.71-2). H.D. felt entrapped by the critical response to her Imagist lyrics
as 'inhuman', 'cold', 'passionless'.\(^1\) In a letter dated, 25th. February, 1955, H.D. wrote to
Pearson, associating these Imagist poems with marble statues in the Louvre: 'I feel that the
early poems were written to be seen, painted or chiselled, rather than dramatised.'(Friedman, S.
1990 p.54). Contemporary reviews also referred to her work as 'crystalline', a term which H.D.
attempted to reclaim from male definitions of modernism:

> 'For what is crystal or any gem but the concentrated essence of the rough matrix, of
the energy, either of over-intense heat or over-intense cold that projects it? The [early]
poems as a whole...contain that essence or that symbol ...'  (H.D. 1949 p.184)

The 'essence' that H.D. writes of is the iconic capacity of the structure of the poem to signify
its content, as in the above example of the use of rhyme to reinforce the hypoicon, the central
metaphor of identification. The emphasis is placed on the terse juxtaposition of disparate
indices within an iconic frame: the form of the verse is a graphic icon of the textual self.

H.D. is adamant that she does not 'put her personal self' into her poems. Friedman
gives the following quotation from a letter H.D. wrote to the American writer John Cournos
while working on *Asphodel* (1921-2):

> '... the novel is a means to an end. ... I do not put my personal self into my poems. But my
personal self has got between me and my real self, my real artist personality ... You must
remember that writing poetry require[s] a clarity, a clairvoyance almost. But in the novel I am
working through a wood, a tangle of bushes and bracken out to a clearing, where I can see clear
again.' (Friedman, S. 1990 p.34)

Friedman equates H.D.'s 'real self' with Eliot's 'impersonal self' which requires the extinction
of personality. H.D.'s 'real self' of her poetry points to the ego constructed through
identification with an other, and is 'impersonal' only in the sense that the boundary of the self
is a dialectical relation between the 'not-I' of the 'natural world', and the 'you'. Whereas the
prose searches for the name as index, in the early Imagist poems the search is to discriminate
between, 'I' and 'you', 'I' and the world, to break the narcissistic dyad with the indexical

\(^1\) See Friedman, S. (1990 pp.52-4) for references and discussion.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 161
other. These poems reveal how the index of the other is hijacked into an iconic relation to the ‘I’, to form a hypoicon.

How does the self keep that boundary of the external world without anthropomorphising the world of ‘nature’? How does the ‘other’ avoid the rapaciousness of the self-reflecting ego, except by being unacceptable, and therefore the object of rejection? The tenuousness of the ego-world division in H.D.’s early poems, is identified by Gregory as one of the traits that H.D.’s poetry shares with the great lyric poet Sappho.* This identification is based on the state of being aphrodite: ‘...an interiorized quality of feeling indistinguishable from the goddess herself. Aphrodite dissolves boundaries between inner and outer, between self and other....’ (Gregory, E. 1990 p.133) Liminal space, the enclosure, the space of initiation and poetry, the sensuousness of flower imagery, landscape and islands, underpin the identification between the textual self and Sappho. The poetics of Sappho’s ‘Fragments’ range through simile and hypoicon of disparate terms in a discursive structure that signify aphrodite as the dialectical structure of identification:

‘1

Love shook my heart
like the wind on the mountain
rushing over the oak trees’

‘90

Persuasion is
Aphrodite’s daughter;
it is she who beguiles
our mortal hearts’ (Sappho pp.32, 72)

Liminal space is the indiscernible boundary of the dialectical relation between self and world: the bridge of ‘not-I’. ‘Fragment 1’ relies on simile, whereas ‘Fragment 90’ demonstrates Sappho’s faith in the force of rhetoric through the beguiling bringing together of images and form. The name ‘Aphrodite’, signifying love and unity and the liminal, functions as the transferential term that establishes the identification between H.D., as author, and Sappho:

---

* For an account of how the other as index breaks the mirroring dyad, please see chapter three, as above, pp. 80-2.

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 162
As Diana Collecott points out, *Sea Garden* weaves in and out of an inter-textual relation with the 'Fragments' of Sappho. In H.D.’s essay ‘The Wise Sappho’, (1920a) H.D. starts with a refutation of the poet Meleager’s naming of Sappho as ‘Little but all roses’:

‘Yet not all roses - not roses at all, not orange blossoms even, but reading deeper we are inclined to visualise these broken sentences and unfinished rhythms as rocks - ...

Not flowers at all, but an island with innumerable, tiny, irregular bays and fjords and little straits between which the sun lies clear (fragments cut from a perfect mirror...) or breaks, wave upon passionate destructive wave.

Not roses, but an island, a country, a continent, a planet, a world of emotion, differing entirely from any present day imaginable world of emotion.’ (1920a pp.58-'9)

Structured as a series of negations, H.D. reads ‘beneath’ the imagery of flowers - roses and orange blossoms - into the structure of the text itself, which is then identified with an island coastline, its diverse landscape signifying a ‘world of emotion’. H.D.’s poem ‘Garden’, clashes together two terms, the flower and landscape, ‘rose’ and ‘rock’:

‘You are clear 
O rose, cut in rock,
hard as the descent of hail.
I could scrape the colour
from the petals
like spilt dye from a rock.
...

(1912-'44 p.24)

Suddenly, the rose is as an artificial construction, ‘cut in rock’; the simile ‘hard as hail’ refers to this condensation of rock and rose. The disparate indices are forced together in an iconic relation as a constructed hypoicon. It is this disparity between terms which signifies the shock of Secondness reinforcing the metaphor. The clash of indices generates hard, forceful, uncomfortable emotional interpretants that are iconic of the feeling of hardness. The rhyme, rock and rose also bears an iconic consonance to the sound of the word ‘hard’.

Sappho’s use of flower imagery to draw the reader into the sensuality of the relationship between the textual ‘I’ and ‘you’ is exemplified in ‘Fragment 32’.

---

1 Earlier essays on the importance of Sappho in H.D.’s poetry include Gregory, E (1990 and 1997, pp. 148-161).

2 The flower is a kind of ‘metonym’ of the divine, as discussed by Gregory, E. (1997 p. 157).

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry
for many wreaths of violets,  
of roses and crocuses  
...you wove around yourself by my side

...and many twisted garlands  
which you had woven from the blooms  
of flowers, you placed around your slender neck  
...

(1912-'44 p.46)

The poem ‘Evening’ does not explicitly speak through the ‘I -you’ relation, however, the intensity of H.D’s writing about a particular flower, conveys the ‘presence’ of self or an other :i

...  
the petals reach inward,  
the blue tips bend  
toward the bluer heart  
and the flowers are lost.  
...

(1912-'44 pp.18-'9)

The word ‘heart’ signifies the corporeal, pointing to a transference between self and ‘flower’:

\[ \text{self}^\text{heart} = \text{flower} \]

In this way the self is constructed as a hypoicon, integrating the indexical term of the other - the flower - and as Peirce hopes to find in the hypoicon the substantive of Firstness, so this poem speaks of the quality of apprehension, the elusiveness of Firstness.\#

The transferential link between H.D. as author and Sappho is created also through explicit narrative, for example H.D.’s ‘Cliff Temple’, echoes the legend that Sappho jumped from a rock while yearning for the sun:

‘...  
Shall I hurl myself from here  
shall I leap and be nearer you?  
Shall I drop, beloved, beloved,  
ankle against ankle?  
Would you pity me, O white breast?  
...’

(p.27)

---

\(^i\) C.f. ‘The Presence was spectrum-blue/ ultimate blue ray ...’, H.D. Trilogy (1942-6 pp.20-21.  
\(^\#\) Please see above, chapter four, pp.121-'3.  
Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 164
This identification is established through the form and scansion of H.D.‘s poems, in particular the last stanza of ‘The Helmsman’:

```
... 
But now, our boat climbs - hesitates - drops - 
climbs - hesitates - crawls back - 
climbs - hesitates - 
O be swift -
we have always known you wanted us.’
```

(1912–44 p.7)

It is as if the very structure of the sentence, line breaks and dashes, represent Sappho’s words, as quoted above; irregular bays, fjords, little straits, fragments cut from a perfect mirror, wave upon passionate, destructive wave. In the same way that an algebraic formula is an icon, so the form of this last stanza is a graphic icon of H.D.‘s description of Sappho’s writing. Collecott correlates H.D.‘s citations of Sappho with the various translations that H.D. owned, but it is probable that H.D. worked from her own copy of the Greek. (Collecott, D. 1999 p.10, 266-272) The precise metrical and iconic stress relation between the ‘Fragments’ and ‘Sea Garden’ will always be open to speculation.

This textual identification with Sappho, raises the status of the sexuality of the textual I and the I-you relation in Sea Garden. Recent readings of H.D.’s poetry take the I to be lesbian, androgynous, bisexual or as indicating one of a set of possible sexual identities. H.D.’s most explicit love poem addressed to a woman, ‘The Gift’, concludes:

```
I who have snatched at you
as the street-child clutched
at the seed-pears you spilt
that hot day
when your necklace snapped
... 
Sleepless nights,
I remember the initiates,
... 
```

1 ‘When in algebra, we write equations under one another in a regular array, especially when we put resembling letters for corresponding coefficients, the array is an icon.’ (Peirce, C.S. 1902a 2.282)

2 As evidence that H.D. was concerned with stress patterns, I include a copy of the page of scansion from the original mss. (H.D. 1911–2 p. 67). Please see Appendix A.


Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry
I have lived as they
in their innermost rites -
...

(1912-'44 p.18)

‘Necklace’ provides the transferential term that positions the ‘I’ in the place of the child:

\[ I ^ { \text{necklace} } = \text{child} \]

The child is also the initiate in H.D.’s narratives of self-transformation. This poem places H.D. as initiate in the apostolic line of women writers who give voice to desire; H.D. is then an initiate of Sappho. Underpinning ‘The Gift’ is a parallelism between the woman’s desire and the needs of a child, reminiscent of this ‘Fragment 5’ by Sappho:

‘[I ran after you]
like a small child
flying
to her mother’ (Sappho 1992 p.33)

Identification with Sappho is created through their shared imagery and representations of desire and H.D.’s formal reference both to Sappho’s poetics and narrative. Returning to the first transferential term of the identification, Aphrodite signifies both liminal borders and love and unity. The goddess Aphrodite mediates ideals, ideals that do not necessarily conform to the Ego-ideal. The self that emerges through the poems bears the structure of the hypoicon, in which indexical terms, the ‘I’ and the ‘you’ as other - wind, flower, seed, tree - are yoked together irrespective of their disparity. As the hypoicon, unlike the symbol, doesn’t uphold law-like regularity or generalisation, so the self that emerges from these poems need not bear the binary law of sexual difference. Irrespective of how the sexuality of the ‘I’ is conceived in relation to the object, the focus of Sea Garden is the desiring subject, the self. ‘Sheltered Garden’, articulates the force of desire, starting with a protest against the containment:

‘...
For this beauty,
beauty without strength,
choke out life.

\[ ^{\text{I for example H.D.’s identification with Anna von Pahlen, The Gift (1941-'2b p.213, 223) as above, chapter five, p.153.}} \]

\[ ^{\text{The Ego-ideal that represents the template of heterosexual resolution to the Œdipus complex ; please see chapter two, as above, pp.82-'4.}} \]

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 166
I want the wind to break, 

... spread the paths with twigs, 
limbs broken off, 
trail great pine branches, 

... O to blot out this garden 
to forget, to find a new beauty 
in some terrible 
wind-tortured place. (1912-'44 pp.19-21)

Desperation is evoked by the aural structure of the poem; the rhyme of the last word 'place' with 'retrace' in the second stanza, is echoed in the assonance of 'taste'. As the tree incarnates the body, so wind incarnates desire. The verbs 'broken off', 'trail', 'hurled' and 'fling' activate the tremendous elemental forces at work. Beauty here is the artifice of closure, the garden as container that acts as the skein over horror. Gathering momentum, this desire is mutative, transforming the self through an endless series of identifications. It is an irreverent desire, not defined through lack but subsuming the 'other' in voracious identification.

This gives rise to a question of ethics, how the 'I' loves, and in identification is in danger of annihilating the other. Respecting the indexical force of otherness and maintaining Secondness as a signifying possibility of the self, points again to the hypoicon as the semiotic structure which preserves the differences between indexical terms: the hypoicon as the bridge of the 'not-I'.

Identification and transformation in Trilogy

Trilogy (H.D. 1942-'6) brings together three long poems, 'The Walls Do Not Fall', 1942, 'Tribute To The Angels', 1945, and 'The Flowering Of The Rod', 1946.1 The overall narrative follows the rites of passage of an 'initiate' in a re-working of the biblical birth and resurrection story, told from the perspective of Mary Magdalene. The redemption of the shunned female figure, Mary Magdalene, is structured in the poetics through an exposition of the name 'Mary', and her association with the goddess Astarte-Isis-Venus. As we know from the outset that the outcome is crucifixion, the narrative runs recursively against time, following

---

1 Hereafter abbreviated to [WDNF], [TA] and [FR] respectively.

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry
the path of psychoanalytic reconstruction. The biblical narrative is counter-posed to references to the WWII, in which the ‘walls’ of ‘The Walls Do Not Fall’ are over-determined, bearing links to the Walls of Jericho, Troy, London and the ‘inner’ walls of negation and repression. The call for redemption is also an appeal for healing following the traumas of war.

The initiate charts the redemptive narrative through a series of identifications starting with the opposition between those of the Ego-ideal, under the aegis of the super-ego, and the Ideal-ego, the inheritor of primary narcissism, moving to a complex of selfhood capable of transformation. The paternal metaphor ‘god,’ ‘the world-father’ is associated with the symbol of power, whereas the ‘mother-goddess’ is a hypoicon, capable of acting as an icon or index. H.D., however, does not simply lay out the chains of identification associated with the ‘Ego-ideal’ and ‘Ideal-ego’ as a binary opposition: the textual ‘I’ identifies with a series of redemptive figures - the scribe, prophet, Mary, the goddess and Christ.

Through the poetics of the text, H.D. traces the evolution of the symbol of power as it is constructed through the concatenation of image and sign. Breaking-down the names of gods, goddesses and Biblical figures, H.D. releases the encrypted meaning, the transferential relation of the icon of power. The narrative of redemption revolves around a re-signification of the symbol of power. The signifying structures of the textual selves, the ‘I’ and figures of transformation, can be differentiated using Peirce’s distinction between the hypoicon Third and the symbol to expose the relation between the paternal metaphor and the symbol of sexual difference, Φ.

The textual ‘I’ first appears in an identification with mollusc, [WDNF] poem 4:

```
... yet that flabby, amorphous hermit
within, like the planet

sense the finite,
it limits its orbit

... I sense my own limit,
my shell-jaws snap shut
```

1 The Ideal-ego represents the template of narcissistic reflection and is therefore for primarily iconic, whereas the Ego-ideal carries the ideals of resolution to the Ædipus complex and adherence to the symbolic law of sexual difference, Φ; please see chapter three, as above, pp. 81-93, 87-91.

2 For the importance of metaphor for symbol formation, please see chapter four, as above, pp.119-121.

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 168
so that, living within,
you beget, self-out-of-self,
selfless,
that pearl-of-great-price. (1942-'6 pp.8-9)

The image of the shell-fish is not a poetic conceit but the presentation of self in identification with the shell-fish, as in the Imagism of ‘Sea Garden’ (1916) the ‘I’ is the egg, mollusc, oyster and clam. The simile of comparison between the textual ‘I’ and the mollusc is based on a shared quality, the shell that defines the limits of self-hood and the limits of the world; the legacy of the pearl signifying both the enduring self and also functioning as an icon of female sexuality.

I shell = mollusc

Identification with the worm refers to censored desire and the possibility of transformation:

‘In me (the worm) clearly
is no righteousness...
...
I am yet unrepentant,

for I know how the Lord God
is about to manifest, when I,

the industrious worm,
spin my own shroud.’ (pp.11-12)

The worm becomes the caterpillar which is to be reconstituted as butterfly, ‘Psyche’ of the following poem [WDNF,7]. Indifferent to good and evil, the ‘worm’ is also the serpent.\(^1\) According to the Ophite sect the serpent is a symbol of rebirth, like the Gnostic soul shedding its shroud. The textual I does not consistently represent the position of the initiate undergoing transformation, but in [WDNF,16] forms an identification with god, the ‘world-father’:

‘Ra, Osiris, Amen appeared
in a spacious, bare meeting-house;

he is the world-father,
father of past aeons

\(^1\) Friedman, S. (1981 p.106)

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self : Reading H.D.’s Poetry 169
but whose eyes are those eyes?
...

There are two structures of identification taking place in this poem; first of all in poems [16-19] the image of the ‘world-father’ is brought into being through a common trait that links the Egyptian gods, Ra and Osiris, with the Theban god Amen:

Ra ▼ Osiris ▼ Amen

This identification forms the paternal metaphor, a hypoicon Third, with the possibility of acting as the symbol of sexual difference, Φ, in a context that obeys law-like regularity. Secondly, there is a narcissistic identification between the textual I and the ‘world-father’, signified by the meeting of ‘eyes’:

I ▼ ‘world-father

The hypothesis that I am putting forward here is that such a complex signifying structure as the hypoicon, may signifying as either an icon, index or symbol depending on context. Transferential identification with the paternal metaphor may then become the means of enforcing the codified law of sexual difference that the symbol Φ denotes.

The construction of the chain of identification that brings together the goddess and mother is not the same as that of the world-father. Poem [WDNF, 34] gives the terms of the identification that form the image ‘mother-goddess’:

‘...
let us, therefore (though we do not forget)
Love, the Creator,

her chariot and white doves),
entreat Hest,

Aset, Isis, the great enchantress,
in her attribute of Serquet,

the original great-mother,
who drove

---

¹ For ‘eyes’ as a term of narcissistic identification in *Paint It Today* (1921c) and *HER* (1926-'7) please see above, chapter five, pp.137,144-'7. It is also an inter-textual reference to Christ, Revelation 2, 18: ‘...eyes like unto a flame.’

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry
harnessed scorpions before her. (p.47)

The ideals of the ‘great mother’ are those precluded by the symbol, Φ, a negation which results in the repression, denial, or foreclosure of desire. As in Freud’s account of hysterical identification, the aim of identification with ‘mother’ is to release repressed desire, to give voice to the world of the mothers and assert the ‘Ideal-ego’ of residual primary narcissism.

Heš = Aset = Isis = Serquet = Great Mother

The ‘great mother’ is capable of harnessing the attribute of power as her own, represented by the scorpion which stands in for the serpent and asp in the following poem, ‘WDNF’, 35. The asp and the serpent bear only an iconic resemblance to the real phallus. The phallic terms, serpent and asp, are brought into the structure of the self as hypoicon Third. Lacan’s description of sexual difference, female versus male, as ‘being the phallus’ or ‘having the phallus’ respectively, is challenged by the ‘great mother’, who as hypoiconic Third, includes the phallus as icon, but signifies as index. This is an example of the hypoicon’s indexicality, providing the shock of Secondness. The ‘great mother’ provides a hypoicon in which the indexical terms, asp and serpent, are brought into an iconic relation, sufficient to function as the copula of being.

asp is = serpent

The above two chains of identification and transference, demonstrate the relation between ‘being a mother’ and the iconic phallus.

Mary Magdalene, the ‘other’ in the Biblical narrative, is built up as an image through chains of identification that run across all three poems of Trilogy. This quotation from ‘The Flowering of the Rod’, 16, reveals an identification between Mary and mother:

I am Mary - O, there are Marys a-plenty,
(though I am Mara, bitter) I shall be Mary-myrrh ;

---

1 For an account of ‘hysterical identification’ as iconic mimicry based on a comparison of unconscious desire, please see chapter four, pp.92–4.
3 ‘Flowering of the Rod’ abbr. to ‘FR’.

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self : Reading H.D.'s Poetry 171
I am Mary, I will weep bitterly, bitterly...bitterly. (p.135)

It is the rhyme ‘Mary-mynh’ that links Magdalene to the mother of mourning who weeps ‘bitterly’.

Mary thme= Mara bitnrs=, Myrrh m=, mother

The homophonic relation, is the iconic textual relation which creates the identificatory link. In the palimpsest narrative of Trilogy it is the outsider, the Arab, Kaspar, who remembers that the daemons, ‘Isis-Astarte-Venus’, were once part of one goddess prefiguring Mary. This appears in the poetics of [FR, 25], as a phonetic play on words:

'...
Isis, Astarte, Cyprus
and the other four;
he might re-name them,
Ge-meter, De-meter, earth-mother

or Venus
in a star.1' (p.145)

Mary Magdalene m Demeter m, Venus-Astarte-Aphrodite m Isis
Ge-meter n= De-meter=, earth-mother

H.D. also brings in reference to the processes of alchemy as a narrative of transformation, however, as opposed to the lapis stone or the Phoenix, the ‘final distillate’ in ‘Tribute to the Angels’, 8, is the mother:

‘Now polish the crucible
and in the bowl distill
a word most bitter, marah,
a word bitterer still, mar,
sea, brine, breaker, seducer,
giver of life, giver of tears;

Now polish the crucible
and set the jet of flame

1 ‘Tribute to the Angels’ abbr. to ‘TA’.
Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 172
under, till marah-mar
are melted, fuse and join

and change and alter,
mer, mere, mère, mater, Maia, Mary,

Star of the Sea,
Mother.'  (p.71)

The beauty of this poem lies partly in its structure. Homophonic rhyme produces the vertical spine of the poem - crucible-distill, breaker-seducer-tears-Mother ; the eye rhyme between ‘alter-mer’ leads into the chains of assonance, ‘mer-mère-mère-mater, Maia-Mary’. Encrypted in these chains are translations from Hebrew and Latin, for example ‘mar’ brine, ‘mor’ bitter, ‘marah’ bitterness, ‘mare’ sea, and ‘Maia’ mother of Hermes, the Greek Logos. All these chains of association converge on the image of the ‘great mother’. The ‘great mother’ is therefore a condensation of poetics and inter-textual reference :

mer - mère - Mother
Maia - Mary

It is clear from the following poem [TA, 9] that the direction of H.D.’s redemptive narrative does not rest in opposing identifications - the ‘mother’ versus the ‘paternal metaphor’. The desired substance remaining in the crucible is the ‘mother-father’, a duality beyond gender :

...what is this mother-father
to tear at our entrails?

what is this unsatisfied duality
which you cannot satisfy?’  (p.72)

This ‘duality’ signifies the complexity of desire, as in the earlier reference to H.D.’s early collection, Sea Garden and in particular the poem, ‘Sheltered Garden’, the desire that activates the process of becoming is not limited by the gender of the love object. This chain of the
'mother' leads to a mutative hypoiconic structure, embracing 'mother-father', distinct from the chain of the 'world-father', with its capacity to act as the symbol, Φ.

The other female figure who lies outside the 'great-mother' image, is the 'Lady' who appears in a dream recounted in [TA, 28-34]. Poem [29] lists the appearance of the female Ego-ideal:

‘Our Lady of the Goldfinch,
Our Lady of the Candelabra,

Our Lady of the Pomegranate,
Our Lady of the Chair;

... the painters did very well by her;
...
... you find
her everywhere (or did find),

in cathedral, museum, cloister,

at the turn of the palace stair.’ (p.93)

In a letter to Francis Wolle, H.D. writes of the image of the Lady: ‘There is a lady too - but she is the Troubadour’s or Poet’s Lady ; anyway, she put in an appearance - in a dream - in the middle of writing the sequence, so in she went to the book.’ (H.D. 1942-'6 p.ix) A letter to Norman Holmes Pearson links the Lady to the goddess Venus and to H.D.’s identification with Anna von Pahlen, the Moravian who changes place with a Native American:

‘The Venus name, I believe is Anael but I spelt it ANNAEL ; it didn’t seem to ‘work’ until I did - it links on too with Anna, Hannah or Grace, so has an authentic old-testament ring.... I distinctly link the LADY up with Venus-Anael, with the Moon, with the pre-Christian Roman Bona Dea, with the Byzantine Greek church Santa Sophia and the SS of the Sanctus Spiritus ....’. (1942-'6 pp.ix-x)

The quotation affirms that the Lady belongs to the pre-Christian lineage of goddesses. Jane Augustine’s new introduction to The Gift by H.D. : The Complete Text, (H.D. 1941-4b pp. 13-14 and 23) makes visible H.D.’s perception of Anna as the redeemer, peace-maker, poet and prophet of a new order. The poem [TA , 39] defines ‘The Lady’ through negation, - she is not the moral exemplar of the Ego-ideal, yet refuses simple signification:

‘... she is the counter-coin-side
of primitive terror,
she is not-fear, she is not-war,
she is no symbolic figure

of peace, charity, chastity, goodness,
...
her book is our book ...

the same - different - the same attributes,
different yet the same as before.’ (pp.104--’5)

‘The Lady’ is presented as a hypoiconic structure, capable of encompassing paradox, ‘same yet different’, re-signifying the book, the Bible, and by implication the text of creation and redemption.

How does Christ relate to the sequence of the paternal metaphor and the symbol, Φ? As an image of redemption and transformation, Christ does not enter into a symbolic identification with the ‘world-father’, but is introduced through an iconic relation to the god Ra-Osiris-Amen. This iconic aspect, the ‘Christos’ image, allows Christ to act as the fulcrum of poem [WDNF, 21] bringing together Amen-Ra, the Ram and the Lamb:

‘....
here am I, Amen-Ra whispers,
Amen, Aries, the Ram,
be cocoon, smothered in wool,
be Lamb, mothered again.’ (p.30)

The rhyme, ‘Ram’ - ‘Lamb’ - ‘Amen-Ra’, links Amen and the diminutive Lamb, in need of mothering, into an iconic association. The symbolic signification of Amen as an aspect of the ‘world-father’ is now paradoxically associated with the act of mothering. This example shows the tenuous stability of the symbol of difference as it operates in the ‘world-father’ and reveals the structure of the paternal metaphor.

Self-transformation is identified with the act of writing, the appearance of the word, through the parallel between Thoth-Hermes the scribe and the alchemical Hermes Trismegistus, the mercurial figure of transformation. This relates to the signification of Christ who appears in the following poem [WDNF, 10] only through inter-textual references to the Bible:

‘... Mercury, Hermes, Thoth
invented the script, letters, palette ;
...

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self : Reading H.D.’s Poetry 175
...remember, O Sword,
you are the younger brother, the latter-born,

your Triumph, however exultant,
must one day be over,

_in the beginning_
_was the Word._

(S.17)

'Sword and word' reflect each other in an iconic relation. The two indices are forced together into an emotionally resonant hypoicon, so that the 'word' becomes as cutting as the 'sword'. This is an example of how the hypoicon conveys the force of indexicality, shocking the reader while also signifying iconicity, in this case the iconic relation to the phallus.

_word_ -> _sword_

In the Book of Revelation the sword of Christ appears in the place of the word: 'And he had in his right hand seven stars; and out of his mouth went a sharp two edged sword...'. Revelation 1,16. Christ as 'two-edged', reinforces the hypothesis that Christ as hypoiconic Third stands outside the chain of identifications which constitute the symbol of patriarchal power.

In [FR, 8] H.D. moves the text towards a redemptive conclusion, constructing an identification between the textual 'I' and this 'paradoxical' hypoicon of Christ:

'I am so happy,
I am the first or the last

of a flock or a swarm;
I am _full of new wine_;

I am branded with a word,
I am burnt with wood,
...
I have gone forward,
I have gone backward,
...

(p.124)

The Christ of this poem and [FR, 11] bring together the biblical references: 'Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called: _I am he_; I _am_ the first, I _also_ _am_ the last.', Isaiah 48:12 and:

'I am the vine, ye _are_ the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.' John 15:5. Christ as image is dualistic, with
paradoxical attributes, holding together opposites through iconic identification which would otherwise be kept apart by symbolic law. The identification is constructed in the text through rhyme, bringing together aural and visual iconic relations, ‘wood-rood-rod’, which runs across all three poems of Trilogy.

The opening quotation of this chapter, on how words conceal meanings, applies to the poem [WDNF, 40] in which the name ‘Osiris’ is broken open to reveal the concealed ‘Isis’, who emerges, like a butterfly.

‘... I know, I feel
the meaning that words hide;
they are anagrams, cryptograms,
little boxes, conditioned
to hatch butterflies... (p.53)

For example:
Osiris equates O-sir-is or O-Sire-is;
Osiris,
the star Sirius,
...recover the secret of Isis,
... (p.54)

In one version of the myth of Isis and Osiris, in assembling the fragmented body of Osiris, Isis makes an artificial phallus to replace Osiris’ phallus, which had been swallowed by a fish. (Baring, A. and Cashford, J. 1991 p.230) The index of the phallus, Osiris’ possession of the phallus, is here replaced by Isis’ capacity to make an icon of the phallus - not a symbol. This also relates to the capacity to write, the iconic phallus operating as a sufficient term for the representation of being, in other words the copula. Like the previous reference to the ‘asp’ and the ‘serpent’, the attribute of power is assimilated to the hypoicon of the ‘great mother’ and is sufficient to operate with the force of the indexical. The act of mourning ties Isis to Mary, Our Lady of Sorrows.

---

1 Osiris is linked to the star Sirius or star of Isis. Sirius is identified with the goddess Inanna in Sumerian myth, please see Baring, A. and Cashford, J. (1991 p.119). This release of a contrary meaning from a word relates to Freud’s use of Karl Abraham’s work on Ur-languages, as cited above, please see, chapter two, pp.56-'8.

Shifting Eyes chapter six : The Semiosis of Self : Reading H.D.’s Poetry 177
Isis \textit{nixmyn} = \textit{Mary} \\

\textit{Trilogy} concludes with the figure of ‘Mary’ and her ‘the bundle of myrrh’. From the chain of identification in poem, [FR, 16] Mary Magdalene is also ‘Mary-myrrh’:

\begin{quote}
Mary \textit{dum} = \textit{Mara} \textit{kibesn} = \textit{Myrrh} \textit{nixmyn} = \textit{mother}
\end{quote}

In this final poem, [FR, 43] the drive of transformation is again directed towards a hypoicon:

\begin{quote}
‘…
she said, Sir, it is a most beautiful fragrance,
as of all flowering things together;

but Kaspar knew the seal of the jar was unbroken,
he did not know whether she knew

the fragrance came from the bundle of myrrh
she held in her arms.’
\end{quote}

(p.172)

Although Christ is not named, on the basis of biblical reference the ‘bundle of myrrh’ refers to Christ. On the other hand this is a complex image, ‘all flowering things together’ shows that Christ as a figure of redemption is a mutative sign structure, a dialectical hypoicon Third not a symbol; in particular not acting as the symbol of phallic difference, \( \Phi \). ‘All things flowering together’ represents desire, not founded on lack, but on excess. The emotional intensity of the poem relies on the hypoicon generated by clashing together two disparate indices, ‘fragrance’ and ‘myrrh’, in which myrrh carries the resonance of bitterness.

The image that stands for the patriarchal symbol of power is introduced in [WDNF, 3]:

\begin{quote}
‘Let us, however, recover the Sceptre,
the rod of power:

it is crowned with the lily-head
or the lily-bud:

it is Caduceus; among the dying
it bears healing:

or evoking the dead,
it brings life to the living.’
\end{quote}

(p.7)
The first chain of identifications coalesces around the sceptre. Through the development of the overall narrative of Trilogy the sceptre takes on signification first of the flowering rod of Jesse and then the tau cross of Osiris; the caduceus is associated both with the Minoan snake-goddess and the Egyptian god, Thoth:

\[
\text{sceptre} \leftrightarrow \text{caduceus} \leftrightarrow \text{tau cross} \leftrightarrow \text{stylus}
\]

Introduced as the ‘rod of power’, the sceptre, is re-signified through transference to a succession of gods as Trilogy progresses, including the stylus as attribute of Thoth, the god of writing. This chain points to the importance of the text itself and the process of writing as the modes of self-transformation. In [TA, 7] ‘rod’ is replaced by the ‘rood’:

\[
\ldots
\text{this is the flowering of the rood,}
\text{this is the flowering of the reed,}
\text{where, Uriel, we pause to give thanks that we rise again from death and live.}
\]

(p.70)

‘Rood’, as in rood screen, is linked through consonance to another attribute of redemption, the ‘reed’. This chain leads to the biblical references: ‘And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.’ Isaiah 11:1. And: ‘I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.’ Revelation 22:16. The ‘rod of power’ is re-signified through Christ, emphasising that the ‘rod of power’ stands as a term within the hypoiconic frame of Christ: the ‘rod of power’ does not enforce Christ as a symbol of the phallus.

\[
\text{rod} \leftrightarrow \text{reed} \leftrightarrow \text{root} \leftrightarrow \text{star}
\]

From the above chains of identification, in particular [FR, 16, 25, 43] it is possible to demonstrate a semiotic connection between Christ and Isis.

\[
\text{Christ} \leftrightarrow \text{Mary} \leftrightarrow \text{Isis}
\]

\[^1\text{As cited above, this chapter, p.177.}
\]

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 179
Christ ‘conceals’ the Egyptian goddess Isis, who is brought into the framework of Christ as hypoicon by virtue of her function as ‘mourning mother.’ Isis, in the myth of the reconstruction of Osiris, constructs an artificial phallus, an iconic phallus. In her guise as Sumerian goddess of writing, Ishtar, the iconic phallus is the agent of textual progeny: it is the iconic phallus which inscribes the hypoicon of becoming.

Signifying ‘Helen': *Helen In Egypt*

*Helen In Egypt*, (1952-’5) is in many respects H.D.’s most ambitious work, a long poem in three parts which runs to over three hundred pages which re-writes the Greek myth of ‘Helen of Troy’, reaching recursively to the Egyptian goddess Isis as in Trilogy (1942-’6).

H.D.’s text owes most to Euripides’ *Helen*, whose play is based on a version of the myth by Stesichorus, 640-’55 BC. In the basic Homeric account, Helen marries Menelaus, King of Sparta, but their marriage is doomed to failure. Like her sister Clytaemnestra, Helen is destined to commit adultery because of a chain of events instigated by failure to make sacrifice to the goddess Aphrodite. When Menelaus leaves for the Trojan Wars, the goddess Aphrodite sends Helen a new love, Paris, the only son of King Priam. Before his birth, Paris’s mother Hecabe had a dream that she gave birth to serpents. She awoke screaming that Troy was ablaze. Priam ordered his herdsman, Agelus, to kill Paris. Paris, however, survives and is cared for by Agelus. He later marries Oenone, despite his slave status. Paris’ conflict with the gods starts when he is asked to resolve a dispute started by Eris, the god of strife. Eris casts a golden apple before the three goddesses, Hera, Athene and Aphrodite. Paris is asked to judge who is the most beautiful. Aphrodite promises Paris that if he selects her, she will arrange that the beautiful Helen of Sparta will abandon her family for his love. Paris chooses Aphrodite. Paris receives permission from Menelaus to go to Sparta for purification having accidentally killed Antheus. Priam builds him a fleet, at the prow of which is a figurehead of Aphrodite. At this point Priam is warned by his daughters - Cassandra and Helenus - that this will cause battle, but he ignores their prophecies. In the Homeric account, Helen elopes with Paris to the island of Cranaë. Eventually they arrive in Troy, where all of Troy falls in love with her. Stesichorus, however, gives another version: Helen was stolen by Hermes and given to King

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 180
Proteus of Egypt. Meanwhile the goddess Hera created a phantom of Helen, ‘Helen of Troy’, which appeared to Paris simply to create strife.

Achilles’ role in the drama is equally complex. Agamemnon1 seizes Briseis, who is due to marry Achilles, whereupon Achilles refuses to go to battle. Achilles is only precipitated into War because of the death of his cousin Patroclus at the hand of Hector; his grief is such that he is described as ‘hysterical’. Achilles’ return to War is based on an ethics of vengeance, however, Achilles barters Hector for Polyxena, with whom he has fallen in love, and the return of Helen to her husband, Menelaus.8 The first account of love between Achilles and ‘Helen’ states that she appeared in a dream evoked by his mother, Thetis. On the ramparts of Troy, Achilles and Helen exchange a single glance, and fall in love. This glance of love, the arrow of Eros, causes his downfall; Achilles fails to fasten the greave of his armour over his ankle. Paris, or Apollo disguised as Paris, veiled by cloud, unleashes the arrow of Death.3 The question posed by Helen In Egypt is who is responsible for War? and in particular what is Helen’s role?9

Helen In Egypt is divided into three books, ‘Pallinode’, a poem which retracts what was said in a previous version, ‘Leuké’, the second, is a conflation of the names of two Mediterranean islands, and thirdly ‘Eidolon’, meaning phantom or ‘idol’.7 The form is derived from terza rima, the two or three stress lines, mimicking the chain rhyming of the classical form. Each poem is introduced by a prose paragraph presented in an italicised voice, a voice in the third person which offers the reader a reflective account of the narrative. The textual ‘I’ of the poetry speaks in the voice of ‘Helen In Egypt’.

---

1 Agamemnon, husband of Clytaemnestra, who agrees to sacrifice their daughter, Iphigenia, to appease Artemis; only then will he be allowed to set sail for War; (Graves, R. 1955 [112-113]; please see discussion on Paint it Today (1921c) as above, chapter five, p.135.

2 This can be compared with the ethics of jouissance, that Lacan refers to in his analysis of the myth of ‘Antigone’, (Lacan, J. 1959-60 pp.243-325) as cited in chapter three, pp. 89-90 and eight, pp.247-78.

3 Graves, R. (1955 163f, 163 o, 164n, 169g).

4 Gregory, E. analyses Euripides’ anti-heroic interpretation of Greek myth, pointing out H.D.’s references in several plays, including Orestes, Iphigenia in Aulis and Electra; (1997 p.220-1).

5 For an account of the complex shifts of narrative in Helen in Egypt (1952-5) please see, Friedman, S. 1990b pp. 337-8; and for an account in terms of myths of the ‘after-life’, Tarlo, H. (1996a).
Stesichorus' account splits the name 'Helen' into three signifying terms, 'Helen of Sparta', the eidolon 'Helen of Troy', and 'Helen In Egypt', who re-constructs the narrative of her life, Pallinode Bk.1, poem 7:

'Helen achieves the difficult task of translating a symbol in time, into timeless-time or hieroglyph or ancient Egyptian time. She knows the script, the says,... the symbol or the "letter" that represents or recalls the protective mother-goddess. This is no death-symbol but a life-symbol, it is Isis or her Greek counterpart, Thetis, the mother of Achilles.

I am instructed, I know the script,
the shape of this bird is a letter,

they call it the hieroglyph ;
strive not, it is dedicate
to the goddess here, she is Isis'';
...
(PP.13-14)

Unlike the profound struggle to find the goddess in, Trilogy 'Helen In Egypt' already knows the significance of Isis. As the prose voice, the interpretant of the poem, tells us, she has already learnt to 'translate' the hieroglyphs, a parallel with the process of psychoanalysis itself. The concept of time shifts from the quotidian chronology to the unconscious association of events, which includes the phenomenon of integrating the memories of the iconic 'Helen of Troy' and her relation to Achilles. H.D.'s Tribute to Freud (1944-'8) revolves around the hieroglyph as the sign of decoding her visions, dreams and ultimately the sign of her self.

Iteration of the hieroglyph forms a transferential identification between 'Helen In Egypt' and the text itself, [P,2,3]:

'... Helen herself denies an actual intellectual knowledge of the temple-symbols. But she is nearer to them than the instructed scribe ; for her, the secret of the stone-writing is repeated in natural or human symbols. She is herself the writing.'

... but when the bird swooped past,
that first evening,

---

1 Hereafter Pallinode, Book 1, poem no. 1 is abbreviated as e.g. [P,1,1].

Contemporary literary critics list an extensive range of personae, identifications and attributes that 'Helen' encompasses in the text. Friedman, S. (1990b) points out the dualities in Helen's identification with goddesses ; Helen=Aphrodite-Adonis ; Helen-Achilles=Thetis ; Helen-Achilles-Dis=Persephone-Koré. Chisholm, D. also recognises that Helen represents binaries, man/woman, masculine subject/feminine object, hero/whore. Helen is never an isolated character but a compound, Helen-Achilles, Helen-Paris or Helen-Thetis. (Chisholm, D. 1992 p.169).

* In relation to HER (1926-'7) as discussed above, chapter five, pp. 142-'4.

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 182
I seemed to know the writing,
...
how did I know the vulture?
how did I invoke the mother?
...
... but with his anger,
that ember, I became
what his accusation made me,
Isis, forever with that Child,
the Hawk Horus.'  (p.23)

Interpreting the appearance of the bird leads to Horus, Horus son of Isis who is also represented as a vulture. 'Helen In Egypt' becomes identified with the function of representation itself through her identification with Isis, who is also known as the Sumerian goddess of writing Ishtar. Isis, who created the iconic phallus for Osiris, is therefore identified with the act of writing: 'She is herself the writing' and the hieroglyph acts as the copula of being:

*Helen In Egypt*  

\[\text{Helen In Egypt} \quad \text{Isis} \quad \text{Ishtar}\]

The beauty of this poem lies in the use of rhyme, assonance and consonance, 'terror, vulture, mother', 'dark, ember, anger', 'forever, Horus' that builds up sonorous emotional interprétants. It is also typical of H.D.'s use of rhyme and alliteration to build the chains of identification and transference that coalesce into images.

'Helen of Sparta' is also identified with the writing of Greek drama in terms of the parallel between the narrative of her life and that of Clytaemnestra [P.6.8]:

'She seems to have identified herself with her own daughter, Hermione, with her sister's daughter, Iphigenia, and with Clytaemnestra, her twin-sister, "one branch, one root in the dark." Now she seems to equate Orestes, her sister's son with Achilles. She had said of Achilles, "let me love him, as Thetis his mother." Now of Orestes, "has he found his mother? will he ever find her? can I take her place?" She would re-create the whole of the tragic scene. Helen is the Greek drama. Again, she herself is the writing.' (p.91)

---

1 Achilles hurls the word 'hieroglyph' at Helen as a term of invective (1952-'5 p. 15).
This identification between ‘Helen of Sparta’ and her twin Clytemnestra, brings into play the other ethical term of the drama of Helen In Egypt: sacrifice. Helen’s position within the ‘oedipal’ drama is not simple. Helen’s identification with Hermione is underpinned by sacrifice - Hermione is to marry Orestes. ‘Helen’ also identifies with Iphigenia, both are the objects of sacrifice in War and both were due to marry Achilles. The identification with Iphigenia’s mother, Clytemnestra is not based on sacrifice but on the ethics of jouissance; Helen deserts Menelaus and her daughter Hermione for the love of Paris, while Clytemnestra, who is betrayed by her husband’s commitment to War, takes a lover and murders her husband.

Helen of Sparta=Hermione; Helen of Sparta=Iphigenia; Helen of Sparta=Clytemnestra

The iconic eidolon ‘Helen of Troy’ is also identified with Achilles as she exchanges a glance with Achilles on the ramparts of Troy. This glance proves to be fatal since Achilles, distracted by his love for Helen, fails to fasten his greaves over his ankle. Within the structure of the narcissistic exchange of look, ‘Helen of Troy’ sees Achilles’ mother, Thetis, in his eyes, [P. 1.4]:

‘How did we know each other?
was it the sea-enchantment in his eyes
of Thetis, his sea-mother?
...’

(p.7)

This extract establishes an iconic identification which includes Thetis, who as goddess of the sea, links to Astarte and Aphrodite.

Helen of Troy=Thetis=Astarte=Aphrodite

Through this iconic identification, ‘Helen of Troy’ disrupts Achilles’ status as War hero and his role within the paternal metaphor. ‘Helen of Troy’ is therefore not an exemplar of the female symbolic Ego-ideal.

---

1 Mss. September 21st. ‘I realise that the Clytemnestra motive in the first section of the book is more important than I had thought.’ (H.D. 1955 p.140)
The previous identifications between Thetis and Isis, and Helen and Thetis, serve to establish an identification between Achilles and Osiris, [P.2.5]:

'... if Achilles has taunted her with her resemblance to Isis, and related the Isis-magic to a Hecate or witch-cult, so she sees clearly the duality of the legendary héros fatal.

... Achilles lorded Simois plain, as Typhon, the Destroyer;

destroyer and destroyed, his very self was lost, himself defeated;

the scattered host (limbs torn asunder) was the Osiris, ...

(p.27)

The significance of these chains of identification is that it establishes a parallel between 'Helen In Egypt' working through of Achilles' life-story, and the role of psychoanalyst. The work of psychoanalytic reconstruction parallels the myth of Isis' reconstruction of Osiris, including her creation of an ersatz phallus, an iconic phallus. As referred to above, Isis is also the goddess of writing, her act of iconic creation is also the act of writing the text, a substitution for the copula of being. The absence of Osiris' indexical phallus is concealed, a concealment represented by the term 'veil' which is recurs throughout the text Helen In Egypt [P.4.4].

The symbolic "veil" to which Achilles had enigmatically referred now resolves itself down to the memory of a woman's scarf, blowing in the winter-wind, one day before he had begun to tire of or distrust the original oracle of the purely masculine "iron-ring whom Death made stronger." Does he blame Helen for luring him from the Command, which had evidently instructed him to follow Odysseus?

... if I remember the veil, I remember the Power that swayed Achilles;

...

(p.56)

1 C.f. Trilogy (1942-6) as above, pp.177,180.
2 This drama revolves around the appearance and disappearance of the phallus, which is signified throughout the text by a specific term, the 'veil'. This can be compared with Lacan's use of the 'veil of the phallus' in the seminars, (Lacan, J. 1956-'7 pp.151-164).
The veil is not a symbol in Peirce’s definition, but a term within the structure of the self as hypoicon that points to the iconic phallus. Helen recognises that the veil conceals the ‘Power’, displacing the phallus from symbolic to iconic signification. Power is, nevertheless, preserved by Isis, who as hypoicon is capable of deflecting away from the symbol Φ and forming new interpretants of self, interpretants of becoming. It is this power of the veil that plays with the iconic phallus as ruse for the symbolic phallus, which challenges Achilles’ masculine identification with the Command and its edict to follow Odysseus to War. The word ‘Command’ signifies also the terminology of WWII and therefore brings the past into the present, [P.4.7]:

*The Command or the adamant rule of the inner circle of the warrior caste...*

The Command was bequest from the past,  
from father to son,  
the Command bound past to the present  

and the present to aeons to come,  
the Command was my father, my brother,  
my lover, my God;  

...  

(p.61)

This Command structure underpins the identification between Achilles and Orestes; the terms of the transferential chain associated with War, includes the ‘iron-ring’ that links Achilles to Agamemnon, Menelaus and Odysseus [P.6.4]:

...  
his [Achilles] was an iron-ring  
but welded to many;  
Agamemnon? Menelaus? Odysseus?  

were they each separately  
encased in the iron-armour,  
was each Typhon, a Whirlwind of War?  

...  

(p.84)

The transference follows Freud’s account of group identification through a leader who represents a common Ego-ideal, that is the Command instigates the symbolic identification:

Achilles \(\text{Sect-ideal} \Rightarrow \text{Orestes}\)  
Achilles \(\text{Sect-ideal} \Rightarrow \text{Agamemnon} \Rightarrow \text{Menelaus} \Rightarrow \text{Odysseus}\)

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry
Achilles’ identification with Orestes is also based on his love for Helen and the transference of love from his mother. Orestes, who in avenging the death of his father, Agamemnon, slays his mother Clytaemnestra is left with a maternal loss which is transferred onto Helen of Troy, in her identification with Achilles’ mother, Thetis.

Achilles, Helen of Troy as mother = Orestes

These opposing chains of identification express the tension between the iconic identification, based on the power of ‘being the mother’, and the symbolic identification that draws Achilles into the structures of War.

The analytic question that faces ‘Helen In Egypt’, is the status of love: is it only illusory love evoked by the iconic eidolon Helen of Troy that is responsible for the disasters of War? or is it her early betrayal of Menelaus in pursuit of her jouissance:

‘... was it a trivial thing
  to have bartered the world
  for a glance?

  but I had not bartered or bargained,
  I had lost
  in a game of chance.’ (p.62)

The bargain, is the bargain of jouissance that always involves the danger of death. In this example, Helen of Troy does not transgress the symbolic law of difference Φ but challenges its consequences, the patriarchal demands of War.

Helen In Egypt, now on the island of Leuké, ‘L’isle blanche’, is trying to work out who is responsible for the Trojan War - is it Helena of Sparta, Paris, or even Thetis? [L.1.2-3]

‘... Was it Paris who caused the war?
  or was it Thetis? the goddess
  married a mortal, Peleus;

  the banquet, the wedding-feast

---

1 As in H.D.’s maternal transference to Freud, discussed above, chapter five, pp. 130–1.

2 The island represents the time Helen spent with Paris on the island of Cranaë on the way to Troy. As a psychic structure, the island represents a ‘fueros’ within the unconscious, c.f. (Freud, S. 1896b. p.175).
lacked nothing, only one uninvited guest,
Eris; so the apple was cast,

so the immortals woke to petty strife
over the challenge, to the fairest;

'... It is true that Love "let fly the dart" that had sent Achilles to her, but it was Paris
who was the agent, medium or intermediary of Love and of Troy's great patron,
Apollo, the god of Song.

but later, a bowman from the Walls

let fly the dart;
some said it was Apollo,
but I, Helena, knew it was Love's arrow;
...

(pp.111-'13)

Another factor underlying the coercion of War is Thetis' marriage to a mortal; Thetis, the Sea-
goddess, identified with Isis as the 'mourning mother' is also capable of precipitating anger,
revenge and strife. Helen In Egypt does not lay out a binary dichotomy between female and
male agency, or a simple ethical reading of War.

Paris' love is based on jouissance, the bargain struck with the goddess Aphrodite for
the hand Helen of Sparta breaking the bond with her husband Menelaus. A bargain struck as a
result of the divisive action by Eris, the golden apple that divided the goddesses on the basis of
beauty. Helen realises that the arrow that killed Achilles, the arrow of Death, is also the arrow
of Love:

Paris  Eros; Paris  Eris
Eros  Eris

The duality of the arrow, as agent of both love and death, is also a representation of the dualistic
principle of structures of negation that form the psyche and ego: how can there be a Helen
without the arrows? [L.5.8; P.7.2]:

... the thunder of battle,
shouting and the Walls
and the arrows; O, the beauty of arrows,
each bringing surcease, release;
do I love War?
is this Helena? (p.177)
the chant, the rhythm, the metre, 
the syllables H-E-L-E-N-A ; 
Helena, reads the decree, 
...

(p.95)

The love of arrows, as a sign of release from guilt at her role in precipitating War, and as a phantasy structuring Helen as eidolon, may be compared with *The Gift* and *Trilogy* in which the wall is also over-determined including forms of negation - repression, disavowal or failure of translation.¹

'H-E-L-E-N-A', spelt out letter by letter becomes an incantation, like the identification with writing and drama, 'Helena', as the iconic play of phonemes and letters slips further from the indexical function of the name as designator of the individual, its haecceity, is lost. The act of chanting draws Helen into the domain of the patriarchal construct. Reflecting on this appropriation of self, Helen realises that her quest for Love has brought her up against Death: Love has been replaced by jouissance.

In Euripides' version of the myth, Helen of Sparta is abducted by King Proteus, who assumes many forms including that of Theseus, Helen's guide in her analysis; Theseus stands in the place of the analyst. The narrator asks if Proteus can also assume the shape of both Paris and Achilles, [L.6.1]:

'Could he [Proteus] "manifest as Achilles" ... could he manifest as Paris? Then, could the two opposites (the slayer and the slain) merge into one, and that One, the Absolute...'

... could Achilles be father of Amor, 
begotten of Love and of War? 
(say the words over and over) ; 
...

(p.179)

Proteus now serves as an image uniting opposites and acting as a term of identification between Achilles and Paris:

Achilles $\overset{\text{Proteus}}{\sim}$ Paris

¹ See reference to letter from H.D. to Bryher, on the dual signification of the weapons of War, as cited above, chapter five, pp. 150, n.i.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 189
Achilles’ identifications reveal that Achilles’ relation to the symbol Φ is insecure, Achilles is therefore an image that signifies both Love and War, a hypoicon Third that clashes together opposites. Underpinning this structure is the homophonie relation that bridges dualities, Amor and War:

\[
\text{Love}_{\text{Achilles}} \equiv \text{War} \\
\text{Amor}_{\text{hypoicon}} \equiv \text{War}
\]

The extreme tension of this hypoicon becomes for Helen a question of balance [L.6.3]:

'So “Eros? Eris?” are again balanced in the mind of Helen, or Eros and Death.'

... Eris is sister of Ares,

his unconquerable child is Eros;
did Ares bequeath his arrows alike to Eros, to Eris?

... (p.183)

\[
\text{Eros}_{\text{hypoicon}} \equiv \text{Eris}_{\text{hypoicon}} \equiv \text{Ares}
\]

As in Freud’s examples of the processes of dream representation, the phonetics are as important as the metonymic relation in forming structures of condensation and identification. Reference to the role of Ares again challenges the split in agency, between male and female, raising the question of the female relation to the ‘ethics’ of War.

Life and Death, the hypoicon of the drives

This final struggle is a struggle with Love. In terms of the War, Helen asks how woman can ever identify with the hero [E.6.3]:

..., could a woman ever

---

1 Please see above, chapter four, pp. 112-’3.

Shifting Eyes  chapter six : The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 190
know what the heroes felt, 
what spurred them to war and battle, 
what fire charged them with fever
...
what can a woman know
of man's passion and birthright?  (p.293)

It is the contemporary experience of WWII that grounds H.D.’s version of Helen’s struggle, Eros versus Thanatos, as H.D writes in *Tribute to Freud*: ‘Eros and Death were the only subjects of Freud’s preoccupation.’ (1944-’8 p.103) In the process of holding together these opposites H.D. uses the image of the wheel of the Zodiac to point to the reconciliation of the Greek and the Trojan through the birth of a child: [E.6.1]

*There is the ultimate experience, La Mort, L’Amour. But Helen “In the new light of a new day,” fully realises the price of that ultimate. Is the price too great? .... The promised Euphorion is not one child but two....*. (1953-’5 pp.289-290)

Helen and Achilles have a child ‘Euphorion’ who is an amalgam of two children - the child in Chiron’s cave and the child that Theseus stole from Sparta. There is then a parallel between the dualistic child and the two terms of Helen embedded in two versions of the myth.

As we have seen all the figures in the text operate as hypoicons, identification that include an other in such a way that traditional myths are re-signified: the myth of Helen of Troy is re-signified through Isis; the Œdipal myth reappears in terms of the Clytaemnestra and Orestes story, bringing in reference to a particular narrative of sacrifice and betrayal precipitated by *jouissance*; the story of Leda and the swan is replaced with the maternal dyad, Clytaemnestra and her cygnet. (p.76) This process of resignification, though emphasising the power of the mother in relation to the ‘great mother’, in particular Isis, does not remove woman from the ethical dilemmas of love and War.

The text of *Helen In Egypt* follows the translation of a particular sign, the hieroglyph of being of ‘Helen’, revealing its semiotic structure as a hypoiconic Third in which the copula is replaced by the iconic phallus.¹ In this schema, Eros and Thanatos are therefore versions of the drive of translation.² Semiosis - the chain of object, sign, interpretant - moves towards the

---

¹ This is categorically opposite to Dianne Chisholm’s argument who writes of ‘H.D.’s tendency to literalize Freud’s metaphors of writing’ as ‘transcendentalist’. (Chisholm, D. 1992 p.43). Writing as the indexical sign of the drive of translation presents a viewpoint that concurs with Peirce’s realism.
² C.f. discussion on Freud’s concept of ‘translation’, (1896b) as discussed above, chapter two, pp. 53-’6.
*Shifting Eyes* chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.’s Poetry 191
final interpretant, the concept which Peirce describes as the abandonment of habit as a result of the formation of radically new logical interpretants. (Peirce, C.S. 1906a 5.491 and 1906b 4.536) As H.D. concludes Helen In Egypt [E.6.8]:

'...
so the dart of Love
is the dart of Death,
and the secret is no secret;

the simple path
refutes at last
the threat of the Labyrinth,

the Sphinx is seen,
the Beast is slain
and the Phoenix-nest

reveals the innermost
key or the clue to the rest
of the mystery;
...'

(p.303)

Peirce's sphinx of, 'A Guess at the Riddle', (1890) is slain in the metaphysical knot of being as it is articulated through the three term of signification; the indexical Helen of Sparta, the iconic Helen of Troy and Helen In Egypt, the interpretant.

---

1 Peirce's concept of the final interpretant is discussed above, chapter three, pp.67,75.

Shifting Eyes chapter six: The Semiosis of Self: Reading H.D.'s Poetry 192
Chapter Seven: Cahun in the Mirror.

"Sous ce masque un autre masque. Je n’en finirai pas de soulever tous les visages."
"Under the mask an other mask. I will not finish lifting up all these faces."

Cahun's publication *Aveux non avenus*, (Cahun, C. 1930 PI. X) is a hybrid text, bringing together fiction and poetry, dream and fantasy, philosophical reflections on art, ethics and politics, into a 'confession' that interrogates the narrative of Narcissus. Each chapter is introduced with a photomontage constructed from self-portrait photographs and other pictures; heads, animals, plants, objects and fragments of text. As the montages lift away from naturalism, so the text avoids the autobiographical by extending the representations of the self using the semiotic structures that Freud coins to interpret dream.

*Aveux non avenus* is characteristic of the range of Cahun's œuvre, work which is simultaneously funny, ironic and transgressive, at once self-obsessive and yet political; a parody of the idea of the 'confessional', it uses the poetics of language and the visual to conjure with love, eroticism, sexuality, pain, loneliness and death. The wild truth of subjectivity is marked out through duplicitous structures - the mirror, the mask and the masquerade. All are strategies for resisting the complicity of social norms. It is an œuvre in which Cahun creates herself, seizing new ideals for her Ideal-ego. The acts of resistance become synonymous with transformation, taking the declensions of social norms as possibilities and playing with signs of sexual difference. From prohibition to the freedom of transgression, these acerbic images tease out desire through shocking the viewer into the frame of identification. If I look like this, do you desire me? Who do you desire?... What gender? sexuality? Who do you think I am? .... Who am I?*

There is no anchoring of the self through the photographic image as index: no safe act of ostentation to pin down the slipperiness of language. The viewer is drawn into the iconic play of mimesis, caught in the paradoxes of the mirror. The self-portraits, dating from 1911 until her death in 1954, build up a portrait of Cahun through contraries and irreconcilables,* from the

---

1 Cahun, C. (1930a) is the subject of the next chapter, chapter eight.
2 Suleiman, S. (1998 p.130), in the context of analysing the complex relationship of women artists to the political tenets of Surrealism, points out how Cahun's self-portraits 'subverts' the male vision of Woman.
3 Only one of the self-portraits was published in her life-time (Cahun, C. 1930b).
preoccupation with the mask during her collaborations in the theatre of the 1920's, to the elongated distorted portraits, dated 1929, and the complex montages of dismemberment of *Aveux non avenus* (1930a); from the dolls that encase the Ego-ideal in the partition of glass, 1932-'36, to the signification of death, 1936 and 1948; such a diversity of imagery represents the carapace of the ego. As the following metaphor by Lacan on the formation of the ego suggests, the deconstruction of the ego in analysis involves tears:

> 'The ego is constructed like an onion, one could peel it, and discover the successive identifications which have constituted it.' (Lacan, J. 1953-'4 p.171)

In parallel with these photographs, Cahun wrote texts which explicitly address the issues implied in her visual work; essays such as ‘Les Jeux Uraniens’, (1916-'19) and ‘Les Paris sont ouverts’ (1934), texts that pose the key questions of the function of art, including the role of the erotic and the status of the free individual, in particular the woman. No contemporary ideas are evaded. Throughout her work Cahun refers extensively to visual artists; de Chirico, Ernst, Man Ray and Bufuel; writers including Breton, Eluard and Oscar Wilde; the theatre of Albert-Birot and ballet of Diagelev; in common with the other surrealists Cahun read Hegel and Freud and in 1929 Cahun made the first translation of Havelock Ellis into French, (Cahun, C. 1929).

A brief biography

A neglected member of the Paris surrealists, Cahun was ‘re-discovered’ by the research of François Leperlier, whose monograph, *Claude Cahun, l’écart et la métamorphose*, (1992) gives an account of Cahun’s life and work in terms of a developmental theory of narcissism.

Born as Lucy Schwob, her father was an agnostic liberal, whereas her mother’s family name, Khaim or Caym, denoted a rabbinical family. Lucy Schwob changed her name twice,
first to Claude Courlis, and then to a version of her mother's name, Cahun.1 After the birth of Lucy, her father Maurice Schwob re-married, this time the mother of Cahun's future partner, graphic designer Suzanne Malherbe, also known as Suzanne Moore. Cahun's uncle, writer Marcel Schwob, who participated in setting up Mercure de France and published numerous stories and articles, gave Cahun an introduction to the literary circle of Paris, including Verlaine, Jarry, Oscar Wilde, Collette, André Gide and Paul Valéry.

Cahun's first publication, 'Vues et Visions', (1914) written under the name Courlis, is formally divided into twenty-five sections, each of which is composed of two parts in which a different subject is described through the same adjectives with the aim of evoking different emotional states:

'1. - HIÉROGLYPHES

Le Croisic. - La mer grise est tachée de signes noirs différents de forme et d'importance....

II. - HIÉROGLYPHES

Vérone. La Renaissance. - La pierre grise est tachée de signes noirs différents de forme et d'importance....'. (1914 pp.271-'2)

In its form, following the principles of symmetry and opposition, contraries and contradictories, the text presents the principle of 'doubling' as an icon of narcissistic identification. As in H.D.'s early Imagist poems, the liminal status of the boundary between self and world is grasped within a semiotic frame; the juxtaposition of different places and times constructs a hypoiconic form, pointing at the self.

The first publication to appear under the name Claude Cahun was the review of Oscar Wilde's La Salomé (1918). In her polemical response to the critical reception of her review, Cahun directly challenges the rhetoric of repressive moralism: 'Mon opinion sur l'homosexualité et les hétérosexuels : tout dépend des individus et des circonstances. Je réclame la liberté générale des moeurs.' My opinion on homosexuality and heterosexuals:


*Translations of Aveux non avenus (1930a) by myself with assistance by Ariane Smart are to be found in Appendix B.

* This quotation bears a parallel to H.D.: '....bird-flight meant something to the Greeks....', (H.D. 1926-'7) as cited above, chapter five, p.142.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 195
everything depends on the individuals and the circumstances. I reclaim general human rights.\(^1\) (1925c in Leperlier, F. 1992 pp.36-'7) This was the political position adopted by the theorist Ulrich, who believed homosexuality to be physically congenital. Cahun’s discourse on love, Jeux Uraniens starts with a section on ‘Eros’: ‘Eros les yeux bandée, parle au hasard ...’; ‘Eros blindfold, speaks of danger ...’. (1914-'16 p.1) Cahun goes on to affirm the value of friendship: ‘Mieux que l’amour, l’amitié est un art.’; ‘Better than love, friendship is an art.’ The drive of this love is towards unity with the other: towards ‘love’ like a perfect sphere in motion. As the text develops, the voice shifts from the third person to intimate dialogue, ‘je’ addressing ‘tu’.

During 1919 Cahun published several articles (1919a, 191b) in the journal La Gerbe owned by Adrienne Monnier under the pseudonym Daniel Douglas. This was a time when Cahun and Moore frequented not only the book shop and library owned by Adrienne Monnier,‘Amis des livres’ but also Sylvia Beach’s ‘Shakespeare and Co.’, central to the circle of modernist women writers. This breadth of modernist influences appears in Cahun’s choice of form, for example the pantoum ‘Chanson Sauvage’ (1921) in which Cahun appeals for the ‘sweetness’ of the child who does not conform to social mores, the ‘wild’ preservation of creativity and the rejection of pervasive social ideals - the Ego-ideal.

This precedes ‘Héroïnes’ (1925a ; mms.1925b) in which Cahun explores female ideals in opposition to the Ego-ideal.\(^2\) The fifteen sections give an account of the ‘heroic’ women in myth and history; Eve the too credulous; Delila, the woman between women, dedicated to Jean Genet; the sadist Judith; Helen the rebel dedicated to the actor; Margaret the incestuous sister; Salomé, the skeptic, which starts with a quotation from Oscar Wilde; Salmacis, the suffragette; and Sappho, the misunderstood, which starts with a ‘quotation’ from Sappho: ‘-Ai-je encore le regret de ma virginité? Je ne sais où je cours, car deux pensées sont en moi.’; ‘Do I still regret my virginity? I don’t know where to run, because two thoughts are in me’. (Cahun, C. mms.1925b p.25). The last section is dedicated to those who are not heroes:

---

\(^1\) Solomon-Godeau, A. (1999 pp.117-119) points out that Cahun, in not explicitly affirming a ‘lesbian identity’ as such, rejects any categorisation of her sexuality through the object choice or identification.

\(^2\) According to Leperlier, Cahun’s disclosures of her personal life to confidante Adrienne Monnier amounted to ‘a confession’; the disavowed confession which formed the basis of Aveux non avenus (1930a).

\(^a\) Cahun made a portrait of Sylvia Beach in 1919. (Leperlier, F. 1992, p.254).

\(^b\) This text appears in translation by MacAfee, N. (Cahun, C. 1925c).

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror

196
This text, implying redress of the female Ideal-ego, is made more complex since it is also a tirade against ‘drawing lines’ between man and woman. The woman’s refusal to conform to the demands of Man, as god, is based on the scandalous idea that ‘she’ has already been ‘deflowered’ in the bosom of mother. Yet this form of castration is signified through the maternal phallus, the iconic phallus, operating through the indices of separation; refusal, weaning, ‘saying no’. The androgyne retains the indices of duality as the ‘bearded woman’, the woman who has not been symbolically castrated, capable of sustaining hybrid terms as an iconic Third.

Sexual duality is also the theme of the section ‘Salmacis la suffragette’, inscribed to ‘Claude’ (mms.1925b p.64). In the account of ‘Salmacis and Hermaphroditus’ by Ovid (1955, pp.101-’2) the nymph is ‘spell-bound’ by Hermaphroditus, the offspring of Hermes and Aphrodite. Hermaphroditus refuses her desire and dives into a stream, followed by Salmacis. Their union, however, serves only to confirm the disparity of male and female. In the section ‘Salomé la sceptique’, addressed to the minotaur, Cahun recognises the play between the animal and the psyche: ‘Tu m’as menti, la Bête : tu n’es pas un monstre. ... Mais avant que je partis, donne-moi, je te prie, l’adresse d’un autre monstre - d’un monstre authentique.’ ‘You have lied to me, Beast : you are not a monster .... But before I leave, tell me, I beg you, the address of another monster, an authentic monster.’ (mms.1925b p.53). But who is really the monster? It is Cahun’s ability to articulate the visceral imagery of the ‘monstrous’, both in her writing and photographs, that presents the shocking alterity of the ‘other’.

After ‘Héroïnes’ Cahun contributed an article for La Disque Vert (1925d) and an essay for Philosophies (1925d), an issue which included texts on Freud and the surrealists Eluard and Crevel; the main article by Lefebvre addressed the role of new mysticism and God. The dialogue with God, is central to Aveux non avenus (1930a) in which the relation between god as ‘other’ and God as absolute ‘Other’ directs the drive of the text.

---

1 For an account of the indexical force of negation in separating the iconic maternal dyad see chapter three, pp. 80-3.

2 ‘Bearded goddesses like the Cyprian Aphrodite, and womanish gods like Dionysus, correspond with these transitional social stages.’ (Graves, R. 1955, 18.8).
The manipulated self-portraits of this period, 1929-1930, were accompanied by experiments with the ‘object’. In 1936, Cahun exhibited assemblages and tableaux in three exhibitions organised by Charles Ratton, in London, Paris and New York. The construction of these ‘surrealist objects’ provided the template for Cahun’s illustrations (Cahun, C. 1937) of Lise Deharme’s children’s book, *Le Coeur de Pic*. The photographs show theatrical tableaux in which ceramic dolls play out fantasy scenes, complementing the anxiety of Deharme’s text. Integrity of the body-image is thrust apart; the tiny figures made from wire, plaster, wood are thrown together with other elements; a flower replaces a head, a body is made of leaves, objects are animated, a fork appears to be personified. Cahun had direct connections with theatre, acting in Albert-Birot’s *Barbe bleue* and *Banlieue*, 1929, in which she appears cross-dressed. This was a theatre of blatant artifice opposed to any notions of naturalism, concentrating on the truth of imagination as real.

Insisting on the rights of the individual, did not mean that Cahun turned her back on political action. In 1932 both Cahun and Moore joined the A.E.A.R. - ‘l’Association des Ecrivains et Artistes révolutionnaires’ - an organisation dominated by the international communist party and therefore committed to the Soviet proletarian revolution. Cahun signed the famous manifesto statements by the A.E.A.R; Protestez! (1933a) and ‘Contre le fascisme mais aussi contre l’impérialisme français!’ (1933b). Both articles identify the cause of fascism as class struggle. Cahun wrote on poetry for their literary section; articles which were to form the basis of *Les Paris sont ouverts* (1934). Cahun’s contemporary importance and historical position derived mainly from this text (1934) subtitled: ‘Quel parti prenez-vous pour en finir, avec L’exploitation de l’Homme par L’Homme avec propre dilemme Exploité Exploiteur? Exploités Exploiteurs, jusque dans l’amour la poésie et la defense de la cause prolétarienne.’

‘What part will you take to end the exploitation of man by man with your own dilemma, Exploiter or Exploited? Exploited Exploiter already in love poetry and the defence of the proletarian cause.’ Dedicated to Trotsky, extracts from Marx, and Lenin are juxtaposed to surrealist and philosophical tracts. Breton’s review of *Les Paris sont ouvert* praises Cahun’s critique of Aragon’s Stalinism, in particular her capacity to situate criticism in a historical context (Leperlier, F. 1992 p.166).
Cahun divorced herself from the A.E.A.R. prior to the split in International communism and its re-grouping as ‘Contre-Attaque.’ In May, 1934, Cahun joined the Trotskyist group ‘Brunet’. Nevertheless, Cahun and Malherbe, together with Breton representing the older generation of surrealists, signed the manifesto statement of the publication of Contre-Attaque, (1936) a text which opposed Hitler and yet was also attached to the fascist model of action, a viewpoint, that as Leperlier points out (1992 pp.206-'7) is either an indication of political ambivalence or naïveté.

In March 1937, Cahun and Moore left Paris for ‘La Rocquaise’ in the bay of St. Brelade, on the island of Jersey. When eventually imprisoned in 1944, Cahun, in considering but rejecting the idea of forming a secret organisation of political prisoners, cites as problematic both class division and : ‘notre tendance’ ; ‘our tendency’. The ‘tendency’ of her relationship with Moore. (Leperlier, F. p.283) Documents and letters from this period convey the absolutely shattering effect of the war on Cahun’s emotional state ; in a letter to Jean Legrand, Cahun writes : ‘...l’intelligence de l’histoire ne prépare pas à la réalité émotive de l’histoire - n’y prépare pas même les imaginatifs.; ‘... the knowledge of history does not prepare one for the reality of the emotion of history - not even imagination prepares one.’ (1992 p.267). Her scrapbook reveals the profoundly shattering effect of racism and Nazi horror, without an other love, without another dream she would have been dead : ‘J’affirme le droit imprescriptible de l’homme à la distinction irrationelle du bien et du mal, à la préférence irrationnelle du bien.’ ‘I affirm the non-prescribable law of man for the irrational distinction between good and evil, for the irrational preference for good.’ (p.270). Cahun affirms her life-long belief in the value of the irrational and la liberté-l’amour above all else. It is a radical ethics, fundamentally oppositional and revolutionary, subjecting any institutional or formal collective to irony, ridicule and critique along the lines of theatre of the ‘absurd’.

Cahun and Moore, not only assisted the Resistance in moving refugees out of France, but also put into practice the principles of ‘indirect action’, the polemical aim of Les Paris sont ouverts : individual acts of resistance, insubordination, and humour. Their actions

--

1 Breton opposed the Stalinism of the A.E.A.R., precipitating a show-down with the stalinist Aragon. This marked the split of those ‘on the left’ between the communists and the Trotskyists. Breton in the late thirties returned to Hegel, in particular his thesis on ‘objective humour’.

2 Leperlier, F. (1992 pp. 206-’7) cites the influence of Bataille’s ambivalent political position.
included throwing requisitioned cars over the cliffs and placing paper butterflies on Nazi tanks. In a strategy of mirroring back the words of oppression, Cahun took the often repeated radio phrase: ‘Schrecken ohne Ende oder Ende mit Schrecken!’; ‘Terror without end or end with terror!’, addressing the rise of Hitler in Germany, and wrote in her notebook: Sieg? Nein: Krieg! ohne Ende!’; ‘Victory? No: War! without end!’. Disobeying the Nazi decree to hand over all wireless sets, Cahun and Moore continued to listen to BBC broadcasts by “Colonel Britton”. Moore translated into German sections of text designed to undermine German moral, ‘signed’: ‘der Soldat ohne Namen’. Handwritten, typed and scrawled onto matchbooks, cigarette packets, any scrap of paper that could be placed surreptitiously in the path of the German soldiers, they inscribed such slogans as: ‘Jesus ist grösster - Aber Hitler ist grösster. Denn Jesus ist für die Mensch gestroben - Aber die Menchen sterben für Hitler.’; ‘Jesus is great - But Hitler is greater. As Jesus died for the People - But the people die for Hitler’, (Leperlier, 1992 p. 278) and ‘HITLER führt uns ... GOEBBELS spricht für uns... GÖERING frisst für uns ... LEY trinkt für uns ... HIMMLER? Himmler emmordet für uns ... Aber niemand stirbt für uns!’ ‘HITLER leads for us ... GOEBBELS speaks for us ... GÖERING eats for us ... LEY drinks for us ... HIMMLER? Himmler murders for us .... But nobody dies for us...!’

The Gestapo finally caught Cahun and Moore, as they returned from one of their excursions to St. Helier to distribute propaganda, on 25th July 1944. For most of the following three and half months they remained in solitary confinement. Having planned to commit suicide if caught, Cahun and Moore took poison, but apart from being violently ill they survived beyond their trial. They were sentenced to death for, ‘Propaganda undermining the morale of the German Forces.’ When presented with the opportunity to sign a plea of mercy, both refused. One of the circumstances which saved them from execution, was that the Nazis could not believe that such actions were perpetrated by two women. As Cahun says, when she complains that the prison plank is so hard, the ‘Gestapo’ Karl replied, ‘You have acted as a man, you must expect to be treated as a man.’ (Cahun, C. 1945).

¹Uncatalogued mms. Jersey Museum.
After the War Cahun briefly visited Paris in 1953, but returned to Jersey where she
died in St. Helier 8th. December 1954. Moore continued to live on Jersey until her own death
in 1972. Their gravestone, in St. Brelade’s graveyard, engraved with two stars of David, bears
the inscription: ‘And I saw new heavens and a new earth.’

Identification and reflection

‘Moment les plus heureux de toute votre vie? -
A - Le rêve. Imaginer que je suis autre. Me jouer mon rôle préféré.’ (1930a p.66)

Disguising the soul is an act which paradoxically reveals the ego as multiple masks of
identification; mask upon mask, until the illusions of the ego give way to the elusive point of
recognition and non-recognition, identifying with the specular image and the shock of seeing
oneself as ‘other’. The above quotation taken from a dialogue with Aurige, *Aveux non avenus*,
(1930a, p.66) provides the subtext for the gamut of self-portraiture that treats the lens as
mirror, representing the act of doubling and the duplicity of disguise.

The title of Cahun’s self-portrait, ‘Que me veux-tu?’, ‘What do you want of me?’,
1928, [illus.1], raises a central question of self-reflection: the status of desire. A double
exposure; one face, eyes wide open, stares out of the frame to the right; the other, head tilted
slightly back, eyes lowered, mouth darkened by shadow as if whispering an intimacy, gives rise
to conflicting identifications and therefore conflicting emotional interpretants. This question
of desire, between the one and the ‘Other’, between the ‘I’ and ‘you’, is also addressed to the
viewer. These nubile heads of uncertain gender draw contradictory identifications. Negation
of the visible codes of the symbol of sexual difference, Φ, displaces its function as binary
operator. Desires in this scenario is not confined to the presentation of narcissism, rather
oscillation in the viewer’s identifications echoes the complex foundation of the self, revealing
the semiotic structure of the self, not as symbol, but as hypoiconic Third. If there is a limit to

---

1 All illustrations are to found in Appendix C, since some of the images are referred to more than once.
3 This interpretation is at odds with that of ‘self-love’ as posed by Lippard, L. (1999 p.38).

*Shifting Eyes* chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 201
this desire, it is the limit of *jouissance*, the point at which the cost, death, is too high a price; death as mortality and death as social exclusion.

Cahun poses direct questions of desire and subjectivity through attempting to evoke the viewer's identifications with an image of ambiguous gender; there is no anchoring of the self through the photographic image as index. Cahun's mimetic play to the lens is the re-staging of the iconic play of the 'mirror stage', an exposé of a specular identification that is never fully subsumed to the demands of the Ego-ideal.

In the same year as 'Que me veux-tu?', Cahun made a self-portrait using her mirror reflection, and two other prints that generate a double through photographic manipulation. The self-portrait, 1928 [illus.2] shows Cahun dressed in a check shirt with cropped hair standing in front of a mirror; the gaze is doubled. Cahun looks straight into the camera lens at the viewer with a challenging, perhaps confrontational stare; the other, the double in the mirror looks askance, out of the frame. With one hand Cahun grasps the collar of her open neck shirt, presenting the possibility of both revelation and concealment. The closed circuit of subject and the plane of the film, is broken by the reflected image that looks away at a third: a break in the iconic dyad, self and double, that points to the force of the existence of an Other, an indexical other.¹

Lacan's (1936) theory of the 'mirror phase' stage of infant development suggests that the psychological 'moment' is not the initial jubilation by which the infant is enmeshed in the joy of specular identifications, but the recognition of the double as 'other'. This is a dialectical formation in which the double upholds an iconic identity relation and yet the two terms, ego and other, maintain a different indexical status. Revelling in the fictional character of the ego, the iconic has its limits, since the mirror reflects other people, objects in the world, the indices of an other's existence, begging the question of the boundary between the specular self and others that provides the differentiation between *Innenwelt* and *Umwelt*. (Lacan, J. 1936 p.4) Lacan points out identification between self and reflection is a spatial and logical

¹ This break in the *iconic* dyad, through the intervention of an 'Other', is based on recognition of the alterity of otherness, through an appreciation of *indexical* difference, as discussed above, chapter four, pp. 96-'9,122-'3.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 202
dialectic, presenting different kinds of images of the self that are irreconcilable: the image I have of myself and the double in the mirror as others see me. This results in a splitting of the logic of the gaze.

The double therefore presents an initial problem of self-recognition and secondly the desire to be recognised by others. The shift from the specular ego of the mirror, to the 'I' of the subject, involves speech. That is, in Lacan’s theory, the subject is organised through speech of the Other. It is the point at which desire, originally directed as the double, 'désir de l’autre', 'desire of the other', is overwritten by the desire of 'l’Autre', the symbolic Other as Ego-ideal exemplifying the organisation according to the symbol, Φ.1 ‘Que me veux-tu?’, 1928, [illus.1] precisely poses the question of desire, addressed both to the specular double, 'désir de l’autre', and through the inscribed question teases the symbolic organisation of desire, 'désir de l’Autre'. The heads spin in a black space, non-anchored to everyday objects and the everyday sense of space.

To consider more what happens in the mirror phase I want to look again at two papers by Lacan; the first, 'Aggressivity in psychoanalysis' (1948) gives an account of the operation of 'imagos', specular identifications which have a dramatic effect on the body image; the second, seminar (1953-’4 pp. 118-142) represents the structuring of the self through the ‘two-mirror schema’.

To be confronted with the exact double brings up anxiety; the rivalrous object of desire, which represents the Ideal-ego, carries a threat to uniqueness. The mirror stage also serves to initiate the subject’s own desire to be ‘the desired one’: mirroring is therefore deeply eroticised. This paper describes the mirror phase in terms of stages, the first acting as a point of ‘captation’ in which: ‘...the first stage of the dialectic of identifications can be discerned...’, (1948 p.18); revolving around the ‘Gestalt’ that governs in the body and in particular the face. The concomitant aggressivity is a measure of the discrepancy between this ideal of wholeness, the Ideal-ego, and the reality. Images of fragmentation, dissolution and transparency of the body easily de-integrate from the fragility of self-control. This is not necessarily a developmental concept. Dany Nobus’ paper, ‘Life and Death in the Glass: A New Look at the Mirror Stage,’ (Nobus, D. 1998),8 stresses that ‘the mirror stage’ persists as permanent psychic

1 Orientation of the subject around Φ, as cited above, chapter three pp.83-91.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror
structure: this is in line with Lacan's emphasis on 'the mirror stage' as a logical structure rather than a developmental phase.

Cahun's self-portrait, 1928 [illus.2] and 'Que me veux-tu?' [illus.1] represent the split in the gaze as the quest for a third term, the index, that can bring about a dialectical identification, rather than an identification which subsumes the 'other' in an incorporative identity relation. These portraits represent narcissism as a dialectic; the double as an indexical other, rather than the assimilation of the iconic 'other' to the self. The kind of emotional ambivalence legacy to that rivalrous double has its counterpart in the Hegelian dialectic: '...the slave being identified with the despot, the actor with the spectator, the seduced with the seducer.' (Lacan, J. 1948 p.19)

Lacan formulates the resolution of the Oedipus complex as substitution of the imago of the parent of the same sex into the place of the rivalrous double of the mirror phase. Whatever the pattern of desire and identification that emerges from the Oedipus complex, aggressivity remains fundamental to the structure of the self:

Such a notion of aggressivity as one of the intentional co-ordinates of the human ego, especially relative to the category of space, allows us to conceive of its role in modern neurosis and in the "discontents" of civilisation." (Lacan, J. 1948 p. 25)

Peirce's differentiation of the iconic and indexical significations of identification allow two formulations of this 'aggressivity'; first of all the double represents the iconic Ideal-ego, an unattainable and therefore unbearable perfection; secondly the indexical difference between self and double causes the friction of that which remains resistant to assimilation. This characterisation of the spatial character of the ego in terms of points is close to Cahun's description of the points of the soul and its correlate with truth.² Lacan goes on to stress the importance of the spatial symmetry of the relation of narcissism; the space in the mirror, the 'other', is an inverted logic of our own. There is a sense in which we inhabit a mirror relation to the world which breaks down the categorical boundary between self and the rest of the world as 'other': there is only the iconic relation of identity, as if the subject operates as one of two interchangeable terms. To say that the self unites the two aspects of the double, however, is to describe the self through the semiotic structure of metaphor, a hypoicon,

¹ Resolution of the Oedipus complex through identification, please see chapter four, as above, pp.98-'9.
² Cahun, C. (1930a) see below chapter eight p. 244-5.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror
bringing together two unlike terms; terms which are hooked by the iconic relation of reflection and yet preserve their haecceity, their individual indexical force. This is an expansion of Peirce’s articulation of the *iconic* character of the self - a movement from icon to hypoicon. It is a geometrical structure which Lacan says he is happy to call *kaleidoscopic*. (Lacan, J. 1948 p.27) Is there therefore a mis-match between the identifications which mark the resolution of the ÒEdipus complex and the instantiation of the symbol, Ò? In this 1948 paper Lacan stresses how the super-ego operates through the imagos of the father, emphasising how this deep split in the subject entails that the self is continually dying in the process of becoming. It is here that Lacan places Freudian death drive.

In both of the Cahun portraits referred to above, the split in the gaze represents the split of the subject between specular identifications in relation to an iconic other and the ‘I’ constructed within the discourse of the symbolic Other. In the negotiation around the Ego-ideal as it is carried by the symbolic Other, the force of the Other as index is absolutely critical. It is this indexical Other that comes into play in these de-stabilising self-portraits.

In the seminar (1953-'4 p.124) Lacan introduced another element into his two-mirror-schema: a convex mirror - which generates an inverted real image - is placed opposite a vase of flowers in such a way that only the vase itself is reflected. The whole scene is viewed reflected in a plane mirror which creates a seamless montage of the virtual reflections of the vase and the real flowers. But the vase is apprehended as a double reflection; it is this virtual reflection which Lacan uses to represent the capacity for the self to accept illusion.

Cahun made two other self-portraits dated 1928, which represent the mirror-double, constructed through splicing images together; [illus.3] shows two full length self-portraits in profile back to back against a wall, one of the figures is inverted and extends an arm to the other. The second [illus.4] shows a Janus-head, with a metallic sheen, the two faces spliced together slightly tilted downwards so that the nose points precisely into the corners of the picture. The mask-like faces are set against rock. In a sense, these photographs refuse the illusion of homogeneity, they refuse to play the charade of the two-mirror schema; they insist on the split self, back to back, facing in opposite directions. In this way Cahun affirms sameness and difference.

---

1 For the capacity of the hypoicon to preserve indexicality of terms, see above chapter four, p.117-'8.
2 Caws, M.A. (1997) looks at separation through doubling as the means of generating the ‘surrealist’ self.
The ‘Ur-Ich’ is the name Lacan gives to the image reflection of self prior to the appearance of the ‘ideals’ which prefigure the development of the ‘Ichideal’, the Ego-ideal, and the relation to, ‘L’Autre’, the Other. Following the work by Callois on the real effects generated on sexual maturation that take place amongst other examples of animals, Lacan realized that the visual world has a critical impact on sexuality and eroticism. Cahun’s images, in displaying the carapace of the ego and playing around with social stereotypes and gendered codes of dress, has a real effect on the viewer.

Lacan’s later paper, ‘Observation on the paper by Daniel Lagache: “Psychoanalysis and the structure of the personality”’ (1960b p.15) puts forward the earlier two-mirror schema with particular attention to the exact positioning of the eye. (Appendix A fig.6) Lacan describes this schema as a ‘parable’ of recognising the body as a ‘partial object’. The hegemony of the reflected image is entirely dependent upon the exact positioning of the eye; a fraction to either side of a designated sight line and the seamless positioning of the eye in relation to the vase and flowers is lost; a loss that shatters the Ideal-ego scattering the shards of corporeal integrity. Unlike the earlier, simpler schematic mirror phase, this model stresses the fragility of the relation of ego to Ideal-ego as a function of perception. It is critical how the eye is placed in defining the relation between self and bodily reflection as unitary.

Since the Other, l’Autre, of discourse is dependent upon the specular relation, the schema offers a presentation of that desire of the Other, on the ‘other side’ of the mirror, behind the mirror, or, as Lacan suggests:

‘... we can either say that the subject accedes to this space by actually moving himself into it, or, if we take the mirror to be unsilvered, and therefore transparent for him, that he does so by fixing his position there on the basis of some I.’ (1960 p.17)

Introduction of a plane mirror into the mirror schema introduces the fundamental Hegelian concept, that ‘man’s desire is the desire of the other: ‘The subject recognises desire through the intermediary, not only of his own image, but of the body of his fellow being.’ (Lacan, J. 1953-'4 p.147). Lacan goes so far as to say that it is this leap of recognising desire in the other that leads to self recognition of her or his own body. Desire, then, is the guarantor of physical existence in this schema that breaks the logic of the mirror and its illusions; desire is the indexical term. In this schema, ‘L’Autre’, the Other appears not with the introduction of
speech - but is here from the beginning in the primary split of the subject - in the subject's 'going over to the other side' in recognition of her or his own desire.

The indexical naming of the subject and the symbolic location of the individual in familial history through the family name follows from the organisation of desire according to the law of sexual difference, Φ: 'For the Other where discourse is located, always latent in the triangulation that establishes this distance, cannot assume this latency without extending into the purest moment of the specular relation ...'. (Lacan, J. 1960b p.17) The imperative that Lacan offers is that the linguistic structure re-orders the earliest reflection in the mirror, as if the Other's symbolic speech necessarily imposes a symbolic order on the iconic.

This version of the two-mirror schema, (fig.6) however, reveals that the edifice of symbolic order is critically balanced on a line of sight, on the extent of illusion dependent upon a viewpoint. Deviation results in the dissembling of the montage, a dissembling of the self.

Cahun's self portrait with mirror, 1927 [illus. no.5] shows Cahun, with shaven eyebrows, hair cut into a widow's peak, looking directly at the camera, holding a convex mirror that reflects a window and a dark shape against the light. The 'other', the world, is turned back towards the camera, constricted again in the plane of the camera; but unlike the seamless montages of reality represented by Lacan's two-mirror schema, Cahun's photograph demonstrates the means of construction. Cahun, as artist, refuses to play the game of the photograph as symbol; Cahun does not enter into the game that conceals the split between the narcissistic self and Other, the difference between the signifying modes of the iconic 'other' and the indexical 'Other'. The pictorial frame which acts to hold together the planes of reality - Cahun who gazes straight out of the frame and the other images reflected in the convex mirror - are clearly separate: the 'eye' of the viewer is not allowed to construct a seamless reality.

The convex mirror and the plane mirror, which in this case is the plane of the camera lens, operate as discrete terms. Cahun's self-portraits demonstrate the hypoiconic structure of the subject, as a complex structure of indices held together within an iconic frame structured

---

1 In a further alteration to the two-mirror scheme, Lacan replaces the fixed plane mirror with a mirror capable of rotating through 90°. This gives a metaphor of how the subject, represented by the 'eye' is able to control the extent of illusion, by controlling the montage between the real and virtual images representing the relation between the Ideal-ego and Ego-ideal. (1960 pp.18-20)

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 207
according to different structures of identifications - with the iconic double and the indexical Other - without re-describing its signifying structure according to the symbol Φ.

Cahun refuses to fall in line with the ‘approval and disapproval’ games of the super-ego as it acts to enforce the Ego-ideal. It is not, however, Cahun’s deconstruction of the logic of identification and the mirror-stage that is exceptional, it is her capacity to lie. It is this capacity for deception that draws the viewer into the erotic qualities of the mirror-stage, as the mirror is always concerned with desire. It is as Hyppolite calls it, an ‘Aufhebung’ of the psyche’s structures of negation - defence, repression, foreclosure and so on.¹ (Hyppolite, J. 1956) This act of revealing the construction of the subject, through playing with terms of signification at the mirror stage, is exploited by Cahun over and over again in her use of masks, cross-dressing, her theatricality and her extraordinary capacity to juxtapose dream, fantasies, fiction, and polemic, that draws us - the reader-viewer - into the images and texts.

The body image

At her most uncomfortable Cahun reveals the truth of the subject’s construction, using the erotic as the means of establishing identifications with the viewer that play into the viewer’s fantasy constructions. The truth of the mirror phase is the contingency of the ‘Gestalt’ and the impossibility of attaining the Ideal-ego of mastery and self-control at the fundamental level of the body.²

The portrait which Caws refers to as, ‘Self-portrait as a Young Man’, 1920, [illus. no.6] shows Cahun in profile, the ‘curlew’ nose linked to one of her adopted names ‘Courlis’, therefore enforces the indexical reading of the image. Caws focuses on the nose as a trait of identification between Cahun and the portrait of her father, also taken in 1920. (Caws, M.A. 1997, p.97) Cahun sits cross-legged with shaven head, eyes lowered. The air of contemplation is accentuated by the half-light which streams from the right, fully lighting the face, of which we are only privileged to a half-view.

¹ Hyppolite, J. (1956) as cited above, chapter two, p.61, n.i.
² Kline K. (1998) in making a comparison between Cahun, and Cindy Sherman’s quest for ‘otherness’ through images of herself that she cannot recognise, Kline uses Kristeva’s concept of ‘abjection’ to analyse this particular form of self-rejection: ‘Abjection, with a meaning broadened to take in subjective diachrony, is a precondition of narcissism. It is coexistent with it and causes it to be permanently brittle. The more or less beautiful image in which I behold or recognise myself rests upon an abjection that sunders it as soon as repression, the constant watchman, is relaxed.’ (Kristeva J. 1982 p.13).
Cahun's shaven head is characteristic of the self-portraits dated 1928 and 1929. Mirroring the profile of the 1920 portrait, the self-portrait, 1928 [illus. no.7] shows a head strangely twisted back over the left shoulder, which produces in the viewer a strange identification with a body-image almost broken, twisted, plastic, as if the head might be facing the wrong way. The scoop of the neckline of her back, suggests an androgynous body, or a body without the markers of sexual difference. This image does not prepare the viewer for the self-portrait of a year later, 1929, which this was published in the journal Bifur, 1930 [illus. no.8]. The title 'Frontière Humaine' raises the question of where we draw the boundary between what is human and what is 'monstrous'. The head is shaven and elongated, with increasing distortion to the top of the picture through manipulation of the paper during exposure. Head and shoulders are cut off at the bottom of the frame by a black wavy line. Severance of head from body is so extreme that it leaves this deformed head and shoulders floating in a black space - nothing anchors the body to the daily life of material object. The viewer is returned to the specular space of the mirror? The emotional interpretants of the image evoke a range of responses, ranging from horror to laughter and including the experience of shock ; a shock not of novelty, but the shock that signifies the disruption of the symbolic construction of reality through the intervention of the index. The index that comes into play in Frontière Humaine, in particular, is the reference to the body, enforcing the indexical function of the photograph.

Following Freud's definition of the ego as a projection of body-surface, Paul Schilder (1935) gives a fascinating account of the development of the internal mapping of the body in relation to interaction with others. By 'body-image', Schilder means the picture we form in our mind of our body, developed through internal sensation as well as what we are able to see of our body surfaces ; that is our body-image is not identical to our optical image of the body. Body-image includes our knowledge of the relative position of parts of the body that is mapped to form the schema that Schilder calls the 'postural model' in which the erotic zones play a

---

1 Caws, M.A. (1997 pp.95-120) situates Cahun in the history of surrealism, emphasising Cahun's difference, her courageous capacity to risk making herself grotesque, her refusal to shy away from the 'monstrous'and her insistence on pointing out her androgyny, risking the general anxiety of dissolution generated in the viewer.


Shifting Eyes chapter seven : Cahun in the Mirror
particularly important role. The postural model becomes then a 'Gestalt', a constructed icon, to which the inchoate uncoordinated sense of self becomes ordered. As evidence of this discrepancy, Schilder cites an experiment in which someone may be able to recognise what spot on the hand is being stimulated in terms of the body-image, without, however, being able to spatially locate the hand itself within the postural model.

Body-image is built up through still images, we build up something static and then dissolve it. In perceiving a movement according to Schilder, we perceive a series of stills. We are not interested in the flow but in those quantum changes from one still to the next. Beauty is especially connected with the body-image at rest. This gives another description of the ideal of body wholeness that underlines primary narcissism, other than the social ideals of beauty and ugliness. Fear of castration, is not only based on a loss of symbolic power, but is also a fear of irregularity as a disturbance of the symmetry of the body. Beauty is connected with secondary characters of sex and therefore involves the postural model of the body.

The Gestalt psychologist, Köhler, W. (1927 p.1) asserts that there is an 'innate' tendency to complete incomplete 'Gestalten'; according to his definition of the 'Gestalt' it is that which includes the force of language, the syntactical unit and the aesthetics of perception as well as the body-image. In Peirce's terminology, Köhler gives primacy to iconicity at the heart of the symbol, the icon that determines our faculty of recognition also provides the template of beauty, and the formation of the Ideal-ego.

Schilder's radical analysis of the body image categorically separates the optical image of the body from the postural model; however, the postural model is built up through the creative Gestalt of the psyche in relation to others. This is a development of Freud's mimesis theory of ego development in relation to the 'Nebenmensch', Schilder describes this in terms of recognition.¹

'Whenever there are disturbances in the postural model of the body, the patients have difficulty in recognising the different parts of the bodies of others.' (Schilder, P. 1935 p.43)

Transitivism, the confusion between, 'my and your hand', that Lacan describes as a characteristic of the mirror-phase, may therefore occur at any time in life when the postural model has been disturbed. Schilder's example of the Japanese illusion gives us an insight into

¹Freud, S. (1895b) as discussed above, chapter two, p. 45.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Calun in the Mirror
the importance of viewing ourselves from the point of view of another, that is an external position.

‘When one crosses one elbow above the other and intertwines the fingers and thumbs around the hands again, one has before the eye another complicated picture of the fingers. If the subject is now ordered by pointing to move a specific finger, he is very often unable to do so.’ (1935 p.54)

The *Gestalt* of the body is then developed through ‘inner’ and ‘outer’ logical interpretants. In this example it is the optical schema which tricks the postural model. As with Lacan’s understanding of the mirror phase, Schilder stresses that the postural model is always in flux, always in the process of construction, always subject to instability. Changes in optical experience fragment the body-image. For example, wearing glasses which optically invert sight leads to an experience of doubling the position of limbs and fragmentation of the body which will eventually be corrected through adaptation, the image. From this it is possible to understand why Cahun’s photographs, which apparently only represent the optical body-image, nevertheless disturb our inherent postural model. The disturbing quality of the emotional interpretants of the photographs, lead to shocking energetic interpretants that shift our model of our body as a stable object.

Schilder gives a second remarkable example of the capacity of the self to imagine the body from an external position, generating an icon of the geometry of the body. In experiment, the head is turned sideways and the face is touched. The resulting sensation is experienced as if the face has been flattened and is facing forwards: ‘For this purpose, we create a mental point of observation opposite ourselves and outside ourselves and observe ourselves as if we were observing another person.’ (1935 p.83) Mental experiments on the perception of the inside of the body gives rise to the sensation that there is a roving imaginary eye that gazes all over the body, either from inside or outside, as if the body is empty or transparent. Cahun’s ability to use this ‘roving eye’ principle is remarkably successful in representing the flux of body-image and drawing the viewer into its interaction.

Schilder cites a further experiment in which manipulation of the body-image produces real effects. Describing in detail the condition of light, or the description of a traumatic scene, can cause an actual physiological response in the pupil of the eye, when a simple command to

---
1 This relates to the break of the specular dyad through intervention of the indexical presence of others, as cited above, chapter four pp. 97-9.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror
change pupil dilation will fail. (1935 p.177) Such a physiological response, in Peirce’s terms the energetic interpretant of the image, is capable of operating as an index. This throws up a physiological basis for emotional and physical reactions to Cahun’s imagery that involve the viewer-reader’s bodily image in the act of interpretation. Response to these images of Cahun’s involves not only emotional interpretants, but also produces energetic interpretants, that manifest as changes in the physiological body of the viewer. That is the complex structure of the photograph, as hypoiconic Third, is signifying primarily as an index.

The body-image of primary narcissism, produces sensations as if the skin feels ‘blurred’. It is then according to Schilder only secondary narcissism, which involves the apprehension of the external world and other objects as the index of the other, that leads to the full construction of the body-image. Prior to secondary narcissism the relation between body and the world falls into what Schilder calls a ‘zone of indifference’ which remains in flux, always subject to change.

The points anchoring the body images between people are the erotogenic points which include the eyes as receptors of sensation. One’s own eyes and those of others thus becomes the tools of the body-image intercourse. Lines of energy connecting these points structure the body-image according to the psycho-sexual tendencies of the individual. The body-image is still an active principle, even for the subject ordered according to the symbol of sexual difference. Schilder describes the relation between body-images as ‘taking parts of the bodies of others into its own body-image’. This kind of incorporation could also be described as collage.

We identify with others by dressing like them and wearing ‘masks’, mimetic behaviour which create changes in the postural model. Transformation through clothing overcomes habitual rigidity. ‘Body-language’, dance and other ritualised physical expressions of the body reveal the changes in the body-image relative to others. Libidinous tendencies are always directed towards the body-image of another, even in narcissism. Desire to see the other is, in this account, a measure of the community of body-image. As the fantasies of one patient involving the various erogenous zones of the body reveal: ‘One may have as many body-images as clothes. One may be enshrouded by various body-images. They cannot form a unit, but they

---

1 The mirror stage remains ‘erotic’ since it signifies the formation of desire, as above, p.206.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 212
may form a sum.’ (1935 p.237) The construction of the body-image is therefore a hypoiconic adhesion of parts of the body-images of others, that includes the postural model.

Nothing is fixed: even the postural model of the body keeps on changing according to life circumstances, through the processes of identification, ‘appersonization’ and projection. ‘Appersonization’ is what Schilder means when the individual does not want to play the role of the other but merely to adopt a part of the emotions and actions of the other. In that extraordinary, and yet eternally ordinary, relation of identification with the loved and desired one, there is a continual unconscious wandering of other personalities into ourselves; this persists throughout life, with the concomitant introjection and projection of body-images:

‘But is there not a stage in which we see body-images everywhere? Is there not a stage where the soul and body-image are practically all over the world? is there not an animistic phase in our human development? ... When we have built up our own body we spread it again all over the world and melt it into others.’ (1935 p.275)

This is not a collective image - or shared body image - but rather group identification of body-images, including identification with objects in the world on the basis that everything is animate. The body-image then transgresses its borderlines in the mirror of the world. This another way of describing the formation of narcissistic identification and the way in which this is also implicated in group identification. In other words, the way in which symbolic, totemic identification occurs also involves specular identifications: as Peirce formulates this transition, the symbolic is only really functional and intelligible through the iconic.

Since every experience of necessity implicates the body-image of an other, an individual’s pain and suffering are the concern of everyone. The motivation to help someone who is in need or hungry is linked in with our own body-image. It is the body-image that leads to our ethical relation to others:

‘The preservation of the body-image of another person is an ethical value in itself. It is true that there is again a tendency to destroy our own body-image as well as the body-image of the other. But is not destruction merely a way of renewed construction, which is, after all, the meaning of life?’ (1935 p.282)

---

1This gives another account of identification in H.D.’s early Imagist poems, Sea Garden, (H.D. 1916) and the perilous boundary between the textual ‘I’ and the ‘natural world’, as discussed above, chapter six, pp. 158-162.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Calun in the Mirror

213
Here is the ethical paradox of identification seen through the body-image. As much as the intermingling and the maintenance of the body image is dependent on others, so is the shared instability of the body-image. It is never a complete structure and therefore never static. Aggression towards the other, as described by Lacan in the tendency to aggressivity in the mirror stage, stems from these identifications of our own body-image: our body-image is torn apart, re-created and torn again. The danger of such instability in the body-image is visible in dramatic form in Cahun’s distorted self-portraits, photomontages and the tableaux bordering on dissolution, signifying a kind of death. Cahun’s mirror-portraits that hold the integrity of the optical image therefore represent the fight against the inherent pull towards dissolution of the body-image.

Failures of identification may therefore disturb the body-image, and lead to a failure of self-recognition and ‘automatic’ responses. Schilder gives a case of ‘borderline phenomena’ in the case of Helen Hoffman:

“When I get into this anxiety state I cannot walk further. I run into myself. It breaks me into pieces. I am like a spray. I lose my centre of gravity. I have no weight. I am quite mechanical. I have gone to pieces. I am like a marionette. I lack something to hold me together. I am not on the earth; I am somewhere else; I am in between.”

(Schilder, 1930 in 1935 p.159)

This moving account of the feelings of dissolution that accompany such deep anxiety, like some of Cahun’s most affecting self-portraits, hook the reader-viewer into that permanent instability that lies just beneath the surface of the skin emphasising the motility of the body-image. This includes a dissipation of the body-image into the world through metonymic residues of the body - nails, hair, shit, the voice and speech. As in the belief in voodoo, the optical manipulation of the body-image has real physiological effects. Objects are both animated and connected with everything else in the universe in what Schilder calls the ‘sphere’. (1935 pp.166-7) This notion that the body-image ‘spreads out’ into the world sheds light on the surrealist animated object as described by both Breton and Cahun.¹

¹ As described above, this chapter, pp.197-8.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven : Cahun in the Mirror

214
The body and surrealist object

Cahun's series of dolls or marionettes under a glass bell jar, 1928-1936 (Leperlier, F. 1992 pp.160-'2, 26-'7) are particularly disturbing representations of how the individual is manipulated by social and political forces that constrain the freedom of the individual, [illus.9]. Detaching the Ego-ideal, leaves the marionette as the representation of the body-image, a wooden disjointed painter's lay figure, onto which has been grafted other elements - feathers, flowers, cloth, buttons, thread, and in the case of the figure, 1936 [illus.10], a single eye and a lock of human hair. The human hair stands in an indexical relation to the body, and within the context of this artefact, provides the shock of Secondness that signifies existence. This heterodox object, like the masks of the Alamba cited in the opening preamble to this thesis, in clashing together of elements - some of which bear an indexical relation to the body - produces a complex semiotic structure that bears an iconic relation to the body, but is not conformable with the symbolic framework of sexual difference. Schilder's theory of the effect of the optical body image on the postural model, and the vulnerability of its stability in identification with others, gives an explanation of the radical unnerving force of these objects by Cahun. In identification with the image, the viewer dismantles not only the cohesion of the structuring of the self through the symbol $\Phi$, but also threatens her or his postural model. The interpetants of these art objects provide a fleeting glance at Firstness through the radical dismantling of the normalising logical interpetants by which we live.

Cahun produced a series of such heterodox objects including a number of transient playful constructions on the beach, for example, 'Entre Nous' 1926 (Ander H. 1997 p.124, 125) in which a masked head emerges from sand smoking a cigarette with a shell for a mouth. Next to the head appears another face with two flowers for eyes and a large feather sticking

---

1 The 'doll' has a particular history in the DADA movement and Surrealism; the staged photographs of manipulations of the female doll by Hans Bellmer and the collages of the automaton by Max Ernst. Ernst writes specifically of the impact of War trauma; sent to the front in 1914 at the age of twenty-three he was wounded twice: 'We young people came back from the war in a state of stupefaction...'. (Foster, H. p.69) Bellmer, whose sadistic imagery appears so blatantly misogynist and sadomasochistic, wrote explicitly of his intentions as an act of resistance against the effects of the state ideology: 'I want to reveal scandalously the interior that will always remain hidden and sensed behind the successive layers of the human structure and its last unknowns'. (Webb, P. 1985 p.11) When making his first doll, 1932, Bellmer affirmed that he would: 'give up all work which, even indirectly, could be in any way useful to the State'. (Webb, P. p.27) See also Krauss, R. (1999 pp. 1-30).

2 I discuss the role of the female ideal during the 1930's Paris and Berlin, 'die Neue Frau', through a comparison between the collage work of Claude Cahun and Hannah Höch. (Morris, S. 1997)
out of the top, around them are matches and a conspicuous little stick with what appears to be a hook. ‘Le Père’, 1932, [illus.11] is another constructed doll laid out in sand made from a spoon, shells and feathers with the head of a bird and an erect phallic twig, legs drawn irreverently akimbo. The image of the phallus becomes both ridiculous and funny, its authority undermined, but not actually castrated. Father, like DADA, becomes a hypoiconic image, in which the icon of the phallus presents a simulacrum, not a symbol. This inaugurates a series of more permanent object, the ‘Poupée’, 1936. (Leperlier, F. 1992 p.224, 154) A newspaper ‘doll’, ‘Poupée I’, wears a peaked uniform cap and carries a gun that rests on his right foot. The words ‘l’Humana’ make up the centre of his body. His epaulettes are arrows that dig into his body - the text refers to the sixth week of liberation of Spain, ‘fascisme hitlérien’. The open mouth contains the word ‘misère’ the word ‘dents’ is repeated over the body - with all the possible significations of being fed up, worn out, nothing to eat, to cut one’s teeth or perhaps to lose one’s grip. The other picture using this doll, Prends un petit bâton pointu, 1936, [illus. 12] shows the ‘Poupée’ severed in half and lying on his back ; the little stick, of so many meanings, has destroyed him.

During 1936, Cahun exhibited in three exhibitions organised by Charles Ratton that took place in London during July, Paris in May and New York in December. At the Exposition surréaliste d’objets, rue de Marignan, Paris, Cahun showed miniature tableaux, the scale echoing childhood. Un air de famille (Leperlier, F. 1992 p.214, 125) is a sculptural tableau, a small bridal bed with a white veil parted to reveal the remnants of clothing, [illus.13]. Above the bed hangs a notice:

’dANGer - manger - m.Ange z - menge - je mens - mange - ge manje ...’.

The androgynous Angel, eaten up, or refusing to eat, conveys a disturbing level of anxiety. The presence of androgyny, presents a challenge to the cœipal order and the instantiation of the symbol, Φ.

The second surrealist exhibition, Souris valseuses, included Cahun’s remarkable construction, Portrait d’André Gide d’après Benjamin Péret, also called. Qui ne craint pas le grand méchant loup remet la barque sur sa quille et vogue à la dérive, 1936. [illus.14] (Leperlier, F. 1992 p 222, 223) These are images which transgress mimetic relationship and

---

1The angel can be compared to the representations of androgyny in ‘Héroïnes’ (1925a, b).

Shifting Eyes chapter seven : Cahun in the Mirror 216
the iconic relation to the body-image. As a portrait the ‘doll’ begs the question of recognition. Like the photomontages of Aveux non avenus (1930a) [illus. nos. 26-35] the face is revealed to be mere skin, an ephemeral deception. The theriomorphic combination of elements - shellfish, face of a clock, a little plaster church, lute, plastic figures, butterflies, leaves, peacock feathers and the head of a dog holding in his mouth a long baguette, break down the boundary of the body, raising the question of how the stability of the body-image is maintained. Cahun refers to: ‘...Troublez l’animarium avec une baguette, le mot agitateur s’impose à vous et vous fait sursauter.’ ‘Trouble the animarium with a baguette, the word agitateur imposes itself on you and you jump.’ (Cahun, C. 1936 p.46) This is precisely the shock of the indexical, enforced by the fundamental disparity between indices that are clashed together into a whole, a hypoicon that refers to the icon of the face.

Cahun’s fascinating Objet, 1936, [illus.15] brings together the physical force of the irrational combination of elements, this time by presenting the intensity of the organ of looking, the eye, rather than the mirror. A disembodied hand pointing to an eye is mounted vertically and fringed with ‘pubic’ hair, such that eye and vulva collapse in an equation similar to Bataille’s Story of the Eye, 1928, and Buñuel and Dali’s Un Chien andalou, 1928. Inscribed on the base of the assemblage is the slogan: ‘La Marseillaise est un chant révolutionnaire. Le Loi punit le contrefacteur des Travaux forcés.’; ‘The Mareillaise is a song of revolution. The Law punishes those that work against hard labour.’ ‘Hard labour’ refers to ‘revolutionary work’, which, in terms of Cahun’s affinity with surrealist values is precisely the creative process of self-analysis. It is the sense of paradox and humour that releases the ‘revolutionary’ force, the force of radical imagination, the primary processes of the unconscious. Cahun’s assemblages combine different kinds of languages to form a visual metaphor that directly challenges Descartes’ equation of vision and knowledge in the rationalist tradition. The eye here is not the voyeurism of the ‘other’, but is situated within the vulva, looking out at - and therefore re-visioning the categorisation of - the world. As a heterodox object, Objet, demands a stripping away of categorisation, forcing a challenge to the seamless construction of self-hood and intimating the kind of radical experience that Peirce
describes as Firstness: ‘What the world was to Adam on the day he opened his eyes to it...’ (Peirce, C.S. 1890 1.357)\textsuperscript{i}

Colliding images together in this way is precisely how Breton writes about the surrealist image and metaphor in the ‘Second manifesto of Surrealism’, 1930.\textsuperscript{ii}

‘Everything tends to make us believe that there exists a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived as contradictions.’ (Breton, A. 1972 p.123)

This is the ‘point’ in which construction and destruction even cannot be opposed to one another. Breton cites Hegel in relation to the ethical role of the artist, that it is the ethical duty of the individual to expose its hypocrisy through the process of negation of the negation, and that this dialectical method need not apply to social problems alone, ‘Surrealism’ provides dialectics with its practical expression. (1972 p.216) Surrealists, through the metaphysics of the object, seek a point of resolution of contraries: ‘... the impassable silver wall bespattered with brains...’. (1972 p.123)

To coincide with the exhibition ‘Souris valseuses’ Cahun contributed an article; ‘Prenez garde aux objets domestiques’ to the special issue of Cahiers d’art, (1936) dedicated to the Surrealist object ‘L’Objet’:


The quotation captures the heterogeneity of the ‘other’ reflected in the mirror and how this reflective gaze fixes the realm of object.\textsuperscript{iii} This is not only the Narcissistic gaze that engenders love of the body, but that which describes the infinite regress of looking. There is an uncomfortable stasis in this kind of gaze that produces alienation and aggressivity. These heterogeneous objects are the indexical others, that introduce the familial structures ordered around the symbol, Φ. In Cahun’s exposition of these mirror portraits, it is the preservation of

\textsuperscript{i} As cited above, chapter one, p.7.
\textsuperscript{ii} As cited above on radical metaphor and the hypoicon, chapter four, pp. 116-120.
\textsuperscript{iii} Leperlier points out that this quotation applies to Aveux non avenus, montage plate III, (illus. no. 28) as discussed below, chapter eight, pp.234-5.

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 218
this disparity of terms that is of key importance: the relation between self and mirror-reflection is a hypoiconic Third that preserves heterogeneity and is not ordered into the seamlessness of the illusion that Lacan describes in his schema of the 'two-mirrors'.

In writing on two 'objects' by Jacqueline and André Breton, Cahun uses the concept of 'paranoiac knowledge': ‘...et nous nous surprenons parfois à ressembler davantage au petit mimétique qu'au grand paranoia.’; ‘... and we find ourselves sometimes resembling more grand paranoia than little mimétique.’ (Leperlier, F. 1992 p.221) The 'paranoiac process' is extolled by Breton quoting Salvador Dali:

'The double image (for example, the image of a horse that is at the same time the image of a woman) can be prolonged, continuing the paranoiac process, the existence of another obsessive idea then being enough to cause a third image to appear (the image of a lion, for example) and so on until a number of images, limited only by the degree of paranoiac capacity of thought converge.' (Breton, A. 1972 p.274)

This precisely falls into Breton's definition of a good metaphor as the clashing together of disparate elements, as in Lautréamont's famous phrase 'As beautiful as the fortuitous meeting of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table.' (Breton, A. 1972 p. 275) It is the quotidian world that is really the place of revolution, providing a new way of re-visioning the world. Breton goes on to describe a classification of the object according to function: 'mathematical objects, natural, savage, found, irrational, ready made, interpreted, incorporated, mobiles ...'. This account of metaphor as the bringing together of names from different classes of object, is the edict which underpins the 'surrealist object'. It is then not only Cahun's heterodox assemblage objects that fall under this definition but also the self-portraits that stress the alterity between self and double, the double in the mirror, and the double formed on the emulsion of the film negative.

The 'madness' of the object, is its ability to expose the construction of, what is called, 'reality'. Breton theorises this viewpoint using Freud as the duty of the artist to make the Pleasure Principle hold sway over the Reality Principle. The predominance of primary

---

1 Lacan's 'two-mirror schema' as described above, pp.202-'8.
2 The concept of 'paranoiac knowledge', that Lacan uses to describe the méconnaissance of the ego, as cited above, chapter four, p.97.
3 It is also Aristotle's definitions of metaphor, Poetics, [1457 b 6-12] (a), and (b), as cited above, chapter four, pp.106-8.
processes holds the key to the dialectic synthesis in Breton’s poetics; surrealism has: ‘...succeeded in dialectically reconciling these two terms - perception and representation - that are so violently contradictory for the adult man, and the fact that we have thrown a bridge over the abyss that separated them.’ (Breton, A. 1972 p.278)

Cross-dressing, parodies of Φ

The double exposure of the photomontage ‘Que me Veux-tu?’ [illus.1], following Breton’s account, is not only an exposé of the construction of reality but presents the construction of the self as a heterogeneous object, a hypoiconic Third. The heterogeneity of the terms explains the dialectical structure of desire.¹

As Lacan points out, initially this is a fragmented desire, for which the ‘other’ holds the ideal of mastery: ‘What he recognises and fixes in this image of the other is a fragmented desire. ... An ideal mastery the Idealich. Both subjects are then involved in the mutual recognition of a fragmented desire and confronted by a specular ideal - forming the dialectic of desire. (Lacan, J. 1953-'4 p.148) The fragmented desire of the other is then a series of part objects. The body of the other is beyond the subject as Hippolyte describes:

“That is what I call the ideal, the statutory body, or statue. As Valéry says in La Jeune Parque - Mais ma statue en même temps frissonne, that is to say disintegrates. Its disintegration is what I call the other body.

... The two project themselves on to each other in the sense that, all at once, it sees itself as statue and dismembers itself at the same time, projecting the dismembering on to the statue, within a dialectic which cannot be brought to an end.’ (Lacan, J. 1953-'4 p.148)

This account of the statuesque character of the body of the other,² throws light not only on the explicit representations of the fragmented body that recurs throughout Cahun’s work, but also adds to the interpretation of the self-portraits in the mirror, in particular ‘Que me Veux-tu?’.

¹ The following section emphasises the performative self as manipulating the codes of sexuality, playing with the phallic term revealing the scarification of the self. Cahun is author of these self-portraits in full knowledge of the symbol Φ, as opposed to acting out a narrative of regression, as proposed for example by Leperlier, F. (1992).
² Relevant for Aveux non avenus, photomontage no. IV. [illus. no.29]

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 220
The ideal, Ideal-ego or Ego-ideal, is always accompanied by its dialectical opposite. Cahun's use of symmetry in her poetry and images is not only the doubling of narcissism but also a representation of the dialectic of desire that characterises the becoming of self. Love then is always accompanied by its opposite, the death drive and the possibility of suicide.\(^1\) Here is the very text of Cahun's *Aveux non avenus*, which in her account of the Narcissus myth emphasises death as opposed to love.

The containment of such dissolution within the dialectic of desire should be accomplished through the re-ordering of the subject around the symbol of sexual difference, Φ. Cahun's series of self-portraits with dumbbells, 1927, [illus.16] and (Ander H. 1997 pl.14-18) shows Cahun wearing a close fitting top with a wildly provocative statement emblazoned across her chest: *'I am in training don't kiss me'*, teasing the viewer-reader with the disjunction between the specular ‘Verliebheit’ and the symbolic prohibition. Such is the sophistication of the image that it appears to act as a parody of stages of sexual development. The tension of the portrait derives from a teasing eroticism which is simultaneously presented and denied. The mask invites the gaze; the written text prohibits; the body confronts. Irrespective of the sexuality of the viewer, the situation is recognisable as seductive. This is another example of Cahun's self-awareness and her understanding of the transparency of the structuring of heterosexual codes, allowing Cahun to play with sexual difference, disavowing\(^2\) the symbol of Φ, in favour of iconic simulacra. The subject that Cahun puts forward follows the complex collage structure of the hypoiconic Third, knowingly resistant to the structure of the symbol.

As in *Héroïnes*, (1925a, b) in which Cahun explores the feisty resistance of women to patriarchal tradition, so Cahun's self-portraits represent a costume parade which refuses to conform to the codes of heterosexuality, in appearance, dress or demeanour. The story cited by Louise Monahan, that Breton was sufficiently disturbed by Cahun to avoid his favourite café on Place Blanche because of 'Cahun-Malherbe' who embarrassed him with their colourful costume and gold streaked nail-varnish. (Monahan, L 1996 p.127) Caws also writes of

---

\(^1\) Cahun in fact made a suicide attempt at the age of 25.

\(^2\) This is precisely Freud's concept of disavowal, 'verleugnung' of the absence of the mother's phallus (Freud, S. 1923c p.235 and 1940 p.204) as discussed above, chapter two, pp. 61-72.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 221
Breton's homophobia: '...Cahun was too much for Breton, who was indeed - as he suspected and said - not up to loving Nadja the mad-woman or Cahun the polymorphous.' (Caws, M.A. 1997 p.101)

The self-portrait, 1920 [illus.17] shows Cahun re-presenting the stereotype of the 'dandy', an arch example of cross-dressing, that parodies the role of the male homosexual. Similarly the face, 1929 [illus.18] conveys a rather sceptical, playful teasing expression, a sophisticated ennui probably drawn from the double portrait of Cahun with the actress Hélène Duthé in the play Banlieue. (Leperlier, F. 1992 p.102) Leperlier makes the point that although Albert-Birot's ethos of metaphor is different from that of Cahun they are united in their belief in theatre as artifice, opposing the conventions of naturalism. This is very much in keeping with Cahun revelation of the ego's méconnaissance through a knowing capacity for deception.

Are these photographs of Cahun in her role as actress, or self-portraits? Appearing in Birot's Barbe bleue, 1929, the photographs which have survived reflect Cahun's choice of theatrical role. (Ander, H. 1997 pls.12, 62, 91) One of the variations of the Banlieue photographs shows Cahun as an angel with wings [illus.19]. As in the portraits that show Cahun as magician and pierrot, Cahun exemplifies the asexuality of the angel; the angel, as the demon of perversity. In Aveux non avenus, Cahun quotes from Artaud: 'Ce théâtre où je mène ma fatalité personelle ...' ; 'This theatre where I take my personal fatal. '(Cahun, C. 1930a p. 118) Cahun's performance transposes the conditional 'as if' into the domain of 'reality': the performance of art becomes indistinct from the performance of life. The œuvre of Cahun's androgynous self-representations refuse the performance of the gender codes of heterosexuality.

A younger impression is made in the portrait of 1920 in which she wears a white hat, hands in pockets under a large white sweater (Ander, H. 1997 pl. 7) suggesting asexuality, as the denial of sexuality, rather than teasing plural sexual identifications from the viewer. Throughout the range of Cahun's self-portraits, the viewer's identification with either Cahun as subject, or with the camera position, produces a conflict of desire. To identify with Cahun

---

1 Benstock, S (1987) gives an account of the function of cross-dresing as an appropriation of the heterosexual masquerade, both 'passing' as heterosexual and a flouting of the laws of convention - which can be compared with the way Cahun and Moore would dress extravagantly and go out walking in Montparnasse.

2 Butler, J. (1990) provides the thesis that heterosexuality necessitates constant performance of the codes of sexual difference.
is to identify with an unknown sexual position, thus raising the possibility of bisexual identification. The precise structure of Cahun’s masquerade in relation to the camera remains unknown: for whose gaze does she present herself? To identify with the desire of the camera is equally problematic, as the structure of desire is only deducible from the masquerade of the self.

Recent essays on Cahun analyse her work in terms of the psychoanalytic concept of the ‘masquerade’ introduced by Joan Riviere; masquerade as the ‘feminine’ clothing of the ego, which on the basis of Freud’s theory of identification is the literal construction of the woman’s ego through an Ego-ideal that bears out male desire and male ideals. (Riviere, J. 1929) The act of ‘dressing up’ is therefore inseparable from ego development and identical with becoming a woman.

The function of the mask

Cahun writes of that state of inner emptiness when the masquerade is recognised for what it is as alienation, when the series of masks alienated from each other. These are not necessarily the masks of Riviere’s ‘feminine masquerade’, but the masks which deny the gaze of the Other, the mask which defies gender placement, the mask that through concealing the markers of the body, paradoxically, reveals the basic bisexuality of psychic structure.

Cahun’s self-portrait, 1927 [illus.20] shows her face with a trace of a smile, hair swept off her brow and behind the ears, scarf tied at the neck and large dark glasses that conceal her eyes: a mask that allows a one-way look. The viewer-interpretant falls back onto the conventions of portraiture and is invited to imagine the reciprocal look. Such denial opens up the space of desire by denying the specular, both the iconic play of narcissism and the indexical surety of eye-to-eye contact is lost, destabilising the body-image of the viewer. The conventions of the heterosexual code are disguised, the logical interpretants of the

---


*Shifting Eyes* chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror
heterosexual frame fail with the result that the structuring 'gaze' that categorises according to O, is denied.¹ Cahun, however, retains her capacity to look through her dark glasses.

The mask extends over the erotic points of the body, as Schilder refers to these markers of the body, including the eyes, that function as the meeting point of the collective body-images,² portrait, 1928 [illus.21] shows Cahun seated on the floor, with legs bent backwards so that her feet are still evident, her arms are turned with hands laid on her shoulders, the place of the eyes is designated by the white shapes of the eyes in a black bandit-mask. This play of concealment also marks the place of the erotic points of on the body, echoing the blocking out of the eyes. As opposed to the dark glasses of the self-portrait, 1927 [illus.20], Cahun’s look is also denied. In this respect this portrait, 1928, [illus.21] represents greater vulnerability. The disturbing quality of the picture derives from the cold alienation that follows cutting off the specular; the viewer-interpreter is therefore forced to occupy a voyeuristic position.³ The face is also concealed to such an extent that recognition of this as a Cahun portrait depends on familiarity with the conventions which she uses to set up her images; there are no references to the indexical characteristics by which the viewer recognises the individuality of Cahun, haeccty.

Self-portrait, 1928 [illus.22] shows a mask that completely obscures the face; Cahun dressed in a cloak, that suggests magic, wears a wig of shoulder length hair. The fixity of the expression on the mask presents a sullen denial of the mobile self-expression that characterises an active socialised being. The mask is not one of social engagement but makes reference instead to the occult, a system of power that has nothing to do with the framework of dominant social laws. Recognition of the individual - Cahun - has now completely broken down through denial of particular characteristics of the face and body.

There is a challenging triumphalism about the portrait dated 1928 [illus.23] in which Cahun gazes straight at the camera from the corner of her eyes, as if daring the viewer to look back. A theatrical mask appears in the top left of the picture. Is this the point that Cahun has hung up her mask? Of course not. The mask must remain [illus. no. 35]: ‘Sous ce masque un autre masque. Je n’en finirai pas de soulever tous les visages.’ ‘Beneath the mask an other

---
² As cited above, pp.209-211.
³ For a discussion on reciprocity in self-portrait photographs based on Levinas’ ethics of the face and Derrida, please see Durie, R. (1998 pp. 34–44).

Shifting Eyes chapter seven: Cahun in the Mirror 224
The function of the mask is to conceal the abyss of nothingness, a defence against the split in the subject based on the heterogeneity between the self and the double:

\[ J'\text{avais pass\é mes heures solitaires \`a d\text{é}guiser mon âme. Les masques en \étaient si pafais que lorsqu'\il leur arrivait de se croiser sur la grand'place de ma conscience ils ne se reconnaissaient pas.} \] (Cahun, C. 1930a p. 15)

Jubilation at the sight of the whole image brings up its opposite - the dissolution and fragmentation of the body: death. Less visceral than the dismemberment signified by the cut of the collage based photomontage plates of *Aveux non avenus* (1930a) Cahun produced self-portrait photographs that oscillate in signification between the erotic and death. Self-portrait, 1939 [illus.24] which shows the upper torso lying amongst plants and flowers, head back, eyes closed and mouth half-open, is a pose suggestive of both ecstasy and death.

A late image of 1947, shows Cahun standing in a cemetery wearing a plain mask over her face, [illus. no.25] She wears one black and one white glove, reinforcing the dualistic meaning of the mask, an image which recurs in *Aveux non avenus* montage plate VII [illus.32].

As Cahun writes, in a letter to Marianne Schwob, 18th. August, 1948, the aim of art has to be to reach the truth of the subject:

\[ '\text{Que je m'exprime objetivement ou subjectivement, c'est toujours cette v\text{éracit\é} exceptionnelle, \`a travers la banalit\é de la condition humaine que je recherche.}' \]
\[ 'Whether I express myself objectively or subjectively, it's always this exceptional truth, cutting across the banality of the human condition that I look for.' \] (Leperlier, F. 1992 p. 131).
Chapter Eight : Cahun Through the Semiotics of the Eye

*Aveux non avenus,* (1930a) *Disavowed Confessions* , “Voided” Confessions or *Confessions not having occurred,* betrays in its title the rhetoric of negation, ‘a’ qualifying ‘veux’. Interpretations of *Aveux non avenus* range from ‘confessions that didn’t happen’ to the juridical meaning of ‘null and void’.

The earliest use of “aveu” expressed allegiance to a fiefdom. By the 17th century ‘aveux’ referred to avowals that were painful and difficult to reveal. *Le Petit Robert* also gives this quotation from Proust : *‘Par un aveu, combien de fautes tu pourrais racheter.’* ‘By a confession you are able to have many faults redeemed.’ Is this reference to Proust close to Cahun’s errant intention?

The term ‘confession’ implies that there has been a transgression of a law - religious, juridical or familial. *Aveux non avenus* is an ethical dialogue with the self, a radical exegesis that seeks the ethics of the self through excess, through an understanding of the erotic body behind the mask. *Aveux non avenus* asserts a different ethics to that of the social code, the ethics of *jouissance.*

The book, *Aveux non avenus,* is itself a collage divided into nine chapters, each introduced by a photomontage assembled from Cahun’s collection of self-portraits and other pictures, [illus.26-35]. Stories, dreams, fragments of autobiography, poems and fantasies are juxtaposed with dialogues that address the ‘other’; intimate others, fictional characters, and God. As a surrealist, Cahun looks for the site of ‘revolution’ within herself, the unconscious as site of desire, love and the erotic. In parallel to the course of psychoanalysis, Cahun sets up

---

1 Kline’s reference to the juridical meaning of *Non avenu,* reinforces the reading of Cahun’s text, not as personal confession, but as ‘invalidating a set of arrangements ... accepted societal expectations.’ (Kline, K. 1998 p.75)

2 (Robert, P. 1967) *Aveux non avenus* could also be read as a form of the ‘Egyptian Book Of The Dead’ and the process of ‘Negative Confession’, also known as ‘The Declaration of Innocence’ : ‘... the deceased declares to the tribunal of forty-two gods that he has not committed a series of specific sins, which in Egyptian eyes apparently covered every conceivable kind of wrong-doing.’ Pursuing this reference would give a different reading of the fragmented body as the body of Osiris, and the ‘eye’ as that of Horus. (Faulkner, R. 1990)


4 Cahun, C. *Aveux non avenus* (1930a) heliographs, by Cahun and Moore, was published by Editions du Carrefour, Paris, 30 May, 1930 ; 237 pages, 10 leaves of plates : ill. ; 22cm., an edition of 500, printed by Aulard, Paris.

5 Adamowicz, E. (1998) does not include reference to Cahun.
a dialogue with ‘the Other’, ‘l’Autre’, as a disquisition with God that takes apart the illusions of narcissism. The ‘eye’ is a term that shifts through three points of signification; the eye in the mirror, the eye of the oedipal God and the eye that is part of the body - the organ of seeing.

Linear narrative is not appropriate in a text that represents, not only the working-through of self-analysis, but the semiotic structure of the self as a complex signifying structure, a hypoicon of becoming, a montage of disparate indices rather than a symbolic structure that upholds the symbol of sexual difference, Φ.

Negation of the eye

The first photomontage I [illus.26] which precedes the text, introduces the key signifying terms of the book; the eye, the mirror, the dissembled body of Cahun, and the pictorial frame.

Central to the picture is a single eye held in the palms of two hands. A bifurcated, symmetrical image, the arms are cut off by lips which eroticise the traumatic edge of the body. This wound is a cut that contrasts the wholeness of the circular images. Two fists, opposite and symmetrical, support a circular mirror that reflects four nubile, foetal and distorted self-portraits, which look down, across, and away from each other. The bottom image combines spheres of glass with a breast, the globe of the world and a veined sphere which echoes the stars that dot the background. The large single eye, in its central position, dominates the picture and stands for the world, the womb, everything.

Though the print is a photomontage, it is based on collage technique; the image is not seamless, the homogeneity of its surface does not ameliorate the sharp execution of the cut-hands, arms, the eye, the insignia of birds, reflect emphatic incisions. Each pictorial element operates as a single, disparate, signifying term floating in a black space; a space that signifies nothingness - the void - rather than allowing the viewer to slip over the surface plane of the photograph. It is as if the viewer is looking into successive ‘pools’ of reflection - the pupil of

---

1 'L’Autre’, as referred to by Cahun (1930a, p.159) is here compared with Lacan’s concept, l’Autre, (1954-'5 pp. 235-247) as introduced, chapter four, p.98.

Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
the eye, the mirror, the globe and ‘outer space’, and like Narcissus, we are invited to see ourselves.

*Aveux non avenus* is also a discourse on the nature of love; a disquisition on self-love, distinguishing between auto-eroticism, narcissism, and love of an other. Cahun cuts straight to the problems of narcissism. When Narcissus falls into the mirror of his own reflection he descends into the abyss that marks the impossibility of locating his desire: the abyss of death.

‘Self-love.
La mort de Narcisse m’a toujours paru la plus incompréhensible. Une seule explication s’impose : Narcisse ne s’aimait pas. Il s’est laissé tromper par une image.’ (1930a p.3)

The release of desire from its entrapment in the illusions of narcissism determines the direction the work, both in terms of subject matter and the formal organisation of the text and image. The ten photomontage plates of *Aveux non avenus* [illus.26-35] reveal the construction of the body image, breaking down the comforting wholeness of narcissism, the *Gestalt* of reflection. Illusions of the ego are dissected, dissembled and laid bare for our examination.

The opening text sets out the problem of making a photographic portrait, the lens substitutes for the eye:

‘L’aventure invisible.
L’objectif suit les yeux, la bouche, les rides à fleur de peau ... L’expression du visage est violente, parfois tragique. Enfin calme - du calme conscient, élaboré, des acrobates. Un sourire professionnel - et voilà!’ (1930a p.1)

*Aveux non avenus* presents the portrait of one who is ‘thin-skinned’, sensitive to everything; who turns the lens onto herself, who turns the ‘eye’ into herself, who turns herself inside out looking for the truth. Beneath the ‘professional’ mask is the dynamic of desire, the erotic body. The composition of the face for the benefit of the ‘other’, is a device, a form of denial that reveals as much as it conceals. A mask, that, like the screen of the confessional, invites disclosure. One of the functions of the mask in this context is to act as a negation of the specular constructions of narcissism:

‘Amour?... Les amants trop heureux forment un couple pareil au monstre hermaphrodite ou encore aux frères siamois. Si l’on ne peut dénouer, il faut couper cet enchevêtrement gordien, ce nœud de serpents...’. (1930a pp.33-34)

---

1 Translations by Morris, S. with assistance from Smart, A. are located in Appendix B.
2 C.f. The identification of the mask as ‘masquerade’, as cited above, chapter seven, p.223.
In narcissistic identification, disparate terms are conflated by an iconic relation. In this case sexual difference collapses in the formation of a ‘hermaphrodite monster.’ The knot of the iconic dyad requires the intersection of a third term for there to be any autonomy or separation and growth. The iconic reflection has to be cut with the force of the index:

‘Nous séparer. Nous masquer. Faire chaque nuit peau neuve et nouveau paysage. ...

Je suis l’un, tu es l’autre. Ou le contraire. Nos désirs se rencontrent. Déjà c’est un effort que de les démêler.’ (1930a p.118)

Fear of narcissism is the fear of losing the difference between the ‘toi’ and the ‘moi’; the mask performs the function of the index, the shutter that cuts off specular identification and cuts across the symmetry of narcissistic desire. The mask creates the self as hypoicon by providing the structure of indexical disparity.

Photomontage IX [illus.34] represents the descent into the mirage of the ego. The image of Cahun is repeated and overlaid so that the central focus of the image becomes a knot of limbs. Her startled expression looks out of the picture plane with an intensity that challenges the viewer’s identification specular identification, with a body image that has lost its principle of unity. The mirror relation that has created the narcissistic double spills out of the bottom of the frame, as if the rectangular geometry of the symbolic frame is insufficient to contain the melange of the body in its excess of doubling.

In a section called, ‘Amertumes’, ‘Bitterness’, Cahun equates the experience of ‘falling in love’ with the loss of self in narcissistic identification:

‘En amour c’est de près que l’illusion pervertit nos sens. A mesure que l’amant s’éloigne de l’aimé, sa pensée décrit autour de l’irréel amour des cercles de plus en plus serrés, - centre enfin, s’immobilise. Alors elle s’aperçoit qu’il n’y a rien, qu’elle tournait autour du vide, et qu’elle existe seule.’ (1930a p.91)

Separation throws the self into the abyss of emptiness, the void that is the iconic mirage in which the indexicality of the terms, the separate selves with the capacity to say ‘I’ and ‘myself’, have been annihilated in symmetry. The mask is then only a temporary defence against the anxiety of love which revolves around the void: death.
Falling in love, according to Freud, is the mistake of substituting the Ideal-ego in place of the Ego-ideal, the ideals of the self formed in the resolution of the Œdipal family drama. The ‘family’ structure of photomontage II [illus.27] shows a layering of figures, centred around the child. Ideals are clashed together, images of classical figures and heroes, as in the earlier text ‘Héroïnes’. (1925a,b) There is no central organising principle. The last plate, photomontage X, [illus.35] however, represents the tension between the dyad of narcissism and the triad of the family - child, mother and father - drawing an equation between the personal father and God as Œdépal father. The geometry of the triad is repeated; the first triangle holds the family who are joined to the mother by a strange phallic protuberance, the inverted second triangle binds the three faces of Cahun, one of which is masked. The left side of the picture shows a series of eleven faces dominated by eyes and lips. The first face, wearing a blindfold, is counterposed to the last, which holds a ‘phallic’ cigarette between the lips. Written around the heads: ‘Sous ce masque un autre masque. Je n’en finirai pas de soulever tous ces visages’. ‘Under this mask an other mask. I will never be finished uncovering [raising] up all the faces.’ Bottom right is the self-portrait with dumbells, 1927 [illus.16] in which the eyes invite an iconic identification while the text prohibits.

The visual elements of the montage signify the play of terms, the iconic against the symbolic law of sexual difference as it appears here both in reference to the Œdipal family, ‘La Sainte Famille’, and the prohibition against desire: ‘I am in training don’t kiss me.’ The mask, in this instance, protects narcissism and acts as a defence against the shaming effect of the super-ego as it asserts the Ego-ideal. Beauty is an insufficient mask for this level of pain:

‘C’est ennuyeant de ne pouvoir offrir que ce qu’on a, que ce qu’on est. Mais...
On a beau se couvrir et recouvrir de masques, les farder, on ne peut peut-être que grosir la ressemblance, qu’accentuer les imperfections du visage caché... Pourtant nous nous lasserions vainement de ces jeux : plutôt surenchérir!
Ailleurs aussi le maquillage est de rigeur.’ (1930a p.135)

To offer what one has, instead of what one is, inverts the dictum of Lacan that accounts for sexual division as either ‘being’ or ‘having’ the phallus; the woman who lacks possession of the phallus is the phallus for the other. Make-up, like the veil, acts as the mask of the

---

1 Freud (1921b p.117) as cited above, chapter three, pp.82-'3.
2 As discussed above, chapter seven, pp.193-'4, 223-'5.

Shifting Eyes chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 230
phallus. In this instance the mask paradoxically reveals what it tries to hide, not the phallus but the face; the face which signifies the haecceity of the individual. Cahun describes the exhaustion engendered by this game when it is played for protection against the enforcement of the super-ego, when the mask adopts the traits of the Ego-ideal as a means of survival.

Photomontage IV [illus.29] introduces chapter III, titled: 'E.D.M. (sex)' 'Tu n'as pourtant pas la prétention d'être plus pédéraste que moi?', 'Yet don't you have the pretension to be more homosexual than me?' (p.41) Based on the self-portrait, 1928, 'Que me veux tu?', 'What do you want of me', [illus.1] the distinctive montage of shaven heads is inverted and doubled according to a mirror relation. Breaking out of the top frame a single head with wings, like the androgynous angel, hangs upside down. The central quadrupled self-portrait is supported by Cahun in theatrical head-dress and flanked by female classical statues, ideals of classical beauty which have had their arms chopped off. Here again the terms of narcissism and homosexual desire are played off against the representation of the Ego-ideal, the classical ideal of beauty, which is here a broken Gestalt.

The mask, the specular version of the Ego-ideal as it supports the law of sexual difference, Φ, is a tenuous structure that only barely conceals the transgressive and the carnivalesque of desire: this form of 'beauty' is only skin deep. Characteristic of the exuberance of Aveux non avenus, its transgressive content leaps across the sexual and political mores, throwing together elements into a collage structure with the indexical force of the hypoicon, gathering interprétants that shift in the direction of desire; careering into the walls of social ideals and laws towards an, as yet, unknown final interprétant of being. 'Carnival' exemplifies the transgression of the law of sexual difference, the repressed of religion:

'Carnival keeps the rituals of the irrational. Death and sexuality are linked, not necessarily in the moment of extinction of the ego through orgasm, but through the excess of pleasure which becomes the means of purifying the soul. Removing the masks of social interaction is also an

Shifting Eyes chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 231
attempt to evade the internalisation of the Ego-ideal. These masks, which preclude self-reflexivity, are the residues of conflicting iconic narcissistic identifications, identifications that build up a paradoxical anonymity: repetition of the mask re-iterates the search for desire.

Photomontage VII [illus.33] represents the break-down of the homogeneity of the facade of the body, the Gestalt is broken down through metaphoric substitution. The 'mirror' no longer operates as the organising principle of the picture; the logic of symmetrical reflection is broken. Cahun's profile is set in opposition to the beak of a Curlew, playing with the transitive name adopted by Cahun - Courlis - signifying the relation between the beak and her nose. The beak is also substituted into the place of the phallus. This montage contains the most visceral imagery of all the photomontages; the face is stripped bare of the mask of skin, breaking the visage; the specular Gestalt formed through the iconic eye of reflection is abandoned; parts of birds are substituted for parts of the body. The 'masculine' faces of the top right, represent a slippage in the mask: the mask of narcissism based on the 'look' at the mirror-stage, cannot be sustained. The presence of the scissors indicates the construction of the elements through the act of cutting: the photomontage makes seamless the indexical cut of collage.

Cahun's montages, though they signify dismemberment of the Gestalt and drastic distortion of the body-image, do not bleed, rot or decay. The cut is adjoined into the seamless surface of the montage; the traumatised edge of the body operates as defined part-body that signifies the desire for completion. The cut signifies the intervention of the desire of the Other, the erotic.

Cutting across the mirage of narcissistic love is the experience of suffering: 'L'amour est-il autre chose qu'une souffrance exaltée?', 'Love, is it anything other than an exalted suffering?' (p.92) Peeling off the mask, the thin skin of the face, reveals the visceral, the tumescence that is indexical of the body:

'Précautions inutiles ...
Un masque contre les gaz (odeurs trop personnelles ou parfums asphyxiants). ...
Alors, en détournant un peu la tête...'. (1930a pp.187-'8)

---

1 'Body-image' as defined by Schilder, P. (1935) as cited above, chapter seven, pp.209-212.

Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 232
The mask is a useless precaution against a certain kind of desire, the indexical force of the Other, represented through bodily smell. *Aveux non avenus* un_masks the possibilities of desire through the confessional dialogue with God, negotiating the difference between desire for the narcissistic other, 'desir l'autre', and desire directed to the Other of dialogue itself, ‘L’Autre’.

**The index of desire ; the desire of the Other**

Lacan (1953-'4) in discussion with the Hegelian, Hyppolite, about the implications of the ‘two-mirror schema’ places desire in the context of Hegel :*

‘... the fundamental Hegelian theme - man’s desire is the desire of the other.’

‘The subject originally locates and recognises desire through the intermediary, not only of his own image, but of the body of his fellow being. ... It is in so far as his desire has gone over to the other side that he assimilates himself to the body of the other and recognises himself as body.’ (1953-'4 p.146-'7)

Lacan makes a distinction between ‘body’ and ‘image’ that points to the difference between the iconic mirror reflection and the indexical body, the body of the other who can maintain difference and who exists according to their own desire. This separation of the terms as indices allows the subject to recognise the body as the site of her or his own desire; in other words the body is organised and eroticised according to the desire of the other.

In the seminar of the following year (1954-'5), Lacan shows how the shift of desire underwrites the introduction of the Other of speech, “l’Auteur”, as true subject:

‘In other words, we in fact address $A_1, A_2$, those we do not know, true Others, true subjects. ... The subject is separated from the Others, the true ones, by the wall of language.’(1954-'5 p.244)

In ‘The subversion of the subject and the dialectic of desire in the Freudian unconscious’, (1960a) Lacan gives further emphasis to the role of desire in the formation of speech; to the

---

*i*L’Autre*, Cahun (1930a p.159).


*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
formulation, the unconscious is *discours de l'Autre* must be added, that man's desire is the *desir de l'Autre*:

“That is why the question of the Other, which comes back to the subject from which he expects an oracular reply in some such form as "Che vuoi?", "What do you want?", is the one that best leads him to the path of his own desire - providing he sets out, with the help of the skills of a partner known as a psychoanalyst, to reformulate it, even without knowing it, as "What does he want of me?"” (1960a p.312)

In a narcissistic object relation, the alterity of the other is lost in iconic identification, or in other words the Other is mis-recognised in the fantasy of self-reflection. The Other as the locus of desire, bears a separate existence, a bodily other from which the subject draws a mimetic relation. It is the symbolic Other, constituted around the symbol of sexual difference, who poses the verbal question of desire, ‘*Che vuoi?*’ that demands an answer in accord with the Ego-ideal.

Cahun takes the reader-viewer on a roller-coaster ride through a dialogue addressed to God; God who appears as both ‘toi’, l’autre, and ‘vous’, l’Autre. This is paralleled by a series of identifications between the self and God. With the reiteration of her montage, ‘Que me veux-tu?’, in Plate IV [illus.29] Cahun establishes that God is also a part of the specular relation, God is the iterative eye that sets up an infinite series of reflections:

‘La boîte contre l’ombre.
Je suis (le “je” est) un résultat de Dieu multiplié par Dieu divisé par Dieu:
\[
\text{Dieu} \times \text{Dieu} = \text{moi} = \text{Dieu}.
\]

(DIEU

(En voilà des façons de traiter l’absolu! On voit que ... etc. ...)' (1930a p.34)

The conclusion of the equation creates an identification between ‘me’, the ‘ego’, and the God of this Trinitarian division. GOD, suggests the Oedipal God, that delivers the Law to Moses. The GOD of the Law, that splits up the infinity of specular identification, releases the ‘moi’. The formula is itself an icon, comparable to Peirce’s example of an algebraic array.¹

The ‘repetition’ of God, represents the principle of reflection that is signified by the mirror, as it appears in photomontage III [illus.28] which precedes chapter II, ‘Moi-Même

¹ (Peirce, C.S. 1893 2.282)

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 234
(faute de mieux), 'Self-love (for want of something better).’ The montage is dominated by the tension between two terms; the eye which mirrors an inverted head of Cahun and a circular mirror which reflects a portrait of Cahun with a veil over her mouth, while her eyes look straight at the viewer. There are therefore two mirrors, the hand-held glass and the ‘eye’. Symmetry dominates the organisation of the image, holding together the disparate terms - the eye, legs and knees, shoulders and hands - disconnected from the body. These part objects of the body float in a black space as terms of desire, rather than signifiers of death. The abstracted hand that breaks the circle of the mirror carries the above matheme, signifying the interruption of God. In this instance, God is not necessarily the signifier of the Law that includes the symbol of sexual difference, Φ, but plays between the iconic God of narcissism and the third term, the index that interrupts the circle of primary narcissism. The image is organised by the iconic identification between the specular ‘eye’ and the mirror.

In the final chapter of Aveux non avenus, Cahun spells out the complexity of the Narcissus myth, demonstrating the parallels between the reflection of God and self:

‘Eloge des paradoxes
Les beaux proverbes sont de l’écriture au miroir, des lits de milieu, des statues parfaites. Jouons à tourner autour. Chaque fois qu’on invente une phrase, il serait prudent de la retourner pour voir si elle est bonne. C’est plus facile que la preuve par neuf.

La nymphe Echon voulant plaire à Narcisse autant que la fontaine lui renvoyait ses paroles, face à face, à l’envers.
L’écho, celui qui vient de Dieu retourne ma pensée (sujet, complément interchangeable, verbe intact - le verbe étant le Verbe.)
L’écho, celui qui vient de ma pensée, retourne Dieu comme un miroir mon corps (droite et gauche interchangeable - et milieu ressemblant, me dit-on.)’

L’âme et la vérité n’ont-elles donc pas de points cardinaux?’ (1930a pp.215-6)

Echo plays the ‘other’ of the mirror relation, mirror-writing; but the echo which comes from God returns the thoughts, showing the subject and ‘remainder’ object clause to be interchangeable: the agency of the verb remains intact. This describes a relation of symmetry around the copula, ‘is’, of being, as if the subject-predicate relation is re-described as an identity statement. Similarly the body is a body-image revolves around a mirror relation. The points, the terms of the relation, remain the same. In other words self and other are mistakenly locked in an identity statement that does not respect their indexical differences.
The self is thus reflected through the iconic eyes of God. As Cahun’s playful attitude to language reveals, language can fall under the same principle of iconic identification, as words form neologisms under the influence of the primary processes of dream. Not only does God perform the role of the other in the mirror relation, God is also a narcissist:

‘L’insensé

Dans un miroir complaisant, Dieu sourit à sa bouche qu’il farde... J’entre. Je m’interpose. Jamais plus il n’oubliera que Méduse elle-même fut faite à son image.’

(1930a p.190)

God is wrapped up in his own self-image, his own reflection: God is the absolute Narcissist. Photomontage III [illus.28] offers a different interpretation; it is the ‘I’ which interposes into the self-satisfying cycle of God’s narcissism, with the proviso that the paradox of identification entails that the negotiation of the God’s narcissism is also Cahun’s narcissism.

God is also the representative of the Òedipal father, the God who upholds the law of sexual difference as the symbol, Ð, as Other, l’Autre:

‘L’éternité a fait ce monstre triple face. Bouquet de dieux. Trinité pour tréteaux. Père, mère et fils (esprit, cœur et corps) soudés par ces bras de chair, ces charnières grinçantes...
Et la famille française prend modèle là-dessus.’ (1930a p.223)

God is split in the Trinity according to the division of the Òedipal family, a metaphysical split which signifies the division, ‘mind, heart and body’. The metaphysical divisions of ‘God’ are also semiotic; the iconic God that reflects the possibility of Firstness; the indexical God of Secondness and the symbolic God, the constructed Third. ‘Flesh’ signifies the breakdown of the body-image, the intervention of the indexical God, the Other, the guarantee of existence and therefore, death.

This text falls under photomontage X [illus.35] which links the triads, ‘mind-body-soul’ with the dynamic of the Òedipal family, emphasising the symbolic function of God, through the formal repetition of the triangle. The ‘Self-portrait with dumbbells’ [illus.16] is juxtaposed to the head of a classical figure, signifying resistance to the Òedipal Ego-ideal. In

---

1 For example Freud’s analysis of the ‘autodidasker’ dream, Freud, (1900b, pp.298-302) as cited above, chapter four pp. 103-’5.

Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
the following section, entitled: "I OWE YOU", Lâcheté métaphysique, *Metaphysical cowardice*, Cahun refuses any form of obeisance to god, both the determining symbolic God and the insidious narcissistic god; Cahun demands separation:

‘I am in training, don’t kiss me
S’il m’arrive de croire en un dieu hors de moi, à certains moments il me semble qu’il a
la partie belle : ayant l’éternité devant lui. ...
Qui sait s’il n’est pas parti de bien plus bas que moi?’ (1930a p.214)

This montage expands on the text of the self-portrait, ‘I am in Training Do not Kiss me’. [illus.16] God cannot be a mere part of herself, God has to be the indexical Other, with his own desire. God in his eternal being, as a symbolic function, is transgressive of the limits of mortality, he does not have to face death as there are no limits on his presence:

‘Le papier tournesol
Il faut se méfier des réactions bleues de l’âme. S’il est plus facile de s’entendre sur des
négations, cela ne mène [lead] pas loin. Les ennemis de nos ennemis ne sont pas nos amis...
... Dieu lui-même a-t-il jamais pu vous parler autrement?’ (1930a p.215)

The soul, in its act of discrimination from God, operates as a series of negations after negation. This theme of negation that runs through *Aveux non avenus* from the title to the split of God and self, is critical in instigating the separation of the self from the desire of the Other. The title page shows the text crossing over each other, meeting around a central ‘non’. The participle of negation, the ‘a’ of ‘avenus’ is another negation, the ‘not appeared’. Negation is the act of splitting God and self - mind, heart or soul and body. The negations which set the boundary of the self - masks, acts of forgetting and sexual difference - are all forms of negation, that in Cahun’s confessional dialogue with God are dependent upon God as the Other. This is the symbolic Other, the truth of the Other that supports the syntax of language.1

The subject positioned within the ëdipal family structure is ‘condemned’ before birth, born into that position:

‘L’aveu de ma honte :
Accuseraï-je les circonstances, mes contemporaines? Ce ne sont pas les circonstances
de ma vie, ce sont ses causes, qui l’ont dévoyée. Avant d’être née, j’étais condamnée.
Exécutée par contumace.’ (1930a p.167)

1 In Lacan’s two-mirror schema, (1953-‘4) the plane mirror represents speech of the other, as cited above, chapter four, pp. 97-‘8.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 237
What choice is there? We who are all positioned before birth are effectively judged in absence. Shame, is the emotional interpretant of failure to realise the Ego-ideal as it is performed by the superego. The subject is presented with the 'choice' of conformity to the structure of gender, race, culture and class, or to be cast out of society for transgressing social laws. The emotional concomitant is alienation, the dramatic outcome of the consequent choice that Lacan calls the vel:

'Alienation consists in this vel, which - if you do not object to the word *condemned*, I will use it - condemns the subject to appearing only in that division which ... appears on one side as meaning, produced by the signifier, it appears on the other as *aphanisis*.' (Lacan, J. 1964-'5 p.210)

Cahun sees through the shimmering mirage of the ego, the méconnaissance of the ego, to the truth of existence, as, paradoxically, the capacity to lie. This is comparable to Peirce's argument that it is 'error' that acts as the truth of the self. Peirce's self as a type of sign is structured as an iconic Third, the hypoicon; 'the glassy essence' being the iconic centre of that structure.\(^1\) It is this fundamental iconicity that guarantees intelligibility, not its supposed structure as rational argument. Cahun knowingly plays with the signs which uphold the symbolic construction of the subject knowing that the ego revolves around a hall of mirrors, searches for the indexical as the guarantor of being. This entails separating the indices of her own desire from that of the Other.

This is not the same as the negotiation of the self in relation to the symbol of sexual difference, φ, the organisation of desire around the ideals the Ego-ideal - hero, professional, redeemer, the good little girl or boy. The role that Cahun chooses, is that of the artist and writer, negotiating a path of irony and double-entendre; a path of political resistance. Cahun is caught between the iconic God, as specular mirage on the one hand, and the heavy hand of the symbolic Œdipal father on the other. The aim of 'confession' is not to absolve the sins of the flesh, but rather to find the flesh as index of her desire, and therefore guarantor of existence, through differentiation from the indexical Other:

'Moisissures
Me voici. On m'a mise au pied du mur, en pénitence ...
Un déplacement d'âme insaisissable a troublé le mystère. L'homme a trompé l'image avec sa propre surimpression.'

\(^1\) Peirce, C.S. (1868 5.317) as cited, chapter four, p.122.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
Monstres changeants (que dis-je?), décor où la peau de Dieu colle, où traîne sa sueur sombre, poignante empreinte, unique, irrefutable attestation digitale.' (Cahun, C. 1930a p.200)

There is a difference between the narcissistic superimposition of the iconic reflections of self, ‘surimpression’, the photographic montage,¹ and the physical sweat of God, which acts as the irrefutable finger-print, the indexical. God as Other, ‘l’Autre’, then carries the index of ‘existence’:

Toi : C’est pour Claude. Ça lui fera plaisir et moi je n’y tiens pas.’ (1930a p.123)

The crisis point is reached in this distinction between God and ‘L’Autre’. The index appears later in the text as a change of name; the symbolic God, begetter of the sign of the phallus - the Serpent - changes name:

‘Le n…ième jour Dieu regretta d’avoir créé le Ciel et la Terre.
Il voulut détruire son œuvre. Mais elle était tombée dans le domaine public.
Alors il descendit en lui-même, se divisa par trois pour atténuer sa responsabilité, inventa le Serpent - et changea de pseudonyme.’ (1930a p.234)

God divides, into the metaphysics of signification, the iconic, indexical and symbolic, as if the symbolic structure of the self is taken apart when the phallus is ‘invented’, as if the term of unification, Φ, is expelled from the Godhead.² The pseudonym, the name, is another index, a way of designating individual existence, haeccty, paralleled by Cahun’s change of name, from Schwob to Courlis then Cahun, that represents severance from the paternal name.³

* * *

Jouissance of the Other

‘Mais Dieu connaît les préservatifs de la bonne conduits. Il a recours aux mythes, et se console avec un symbole (comme vous ou moi). Pas la même :
L’homme a créé le paradis - mais le paradis de Dieu, c’est l’enfer.

¹ (Robert, P. 1967 p. 1722)
² C.f. Lacan’s use of the phallus to signify the unification of the drives, as cited above, chapter two, pp.60–1, chapter three, pp.88-91.
³ There is a parallel between the appearance of the indexical name of the author and the use of the third person ‘her’ in H.D.’s HER (1926–7), as discussed above, chapter five, pp.141–8.

Shifting Eyes chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
Libre jouissance de ses privilèges. Torture à discrétion. Sa toute-puissance enfin s’exerce dans l’infini.’ (Cahun, C. 1930a p.218)

As God exceeds the limits of negation so God’s ‘pleasures’ have absolutely no limits. Unlike the God made in the human image and according to moral codes, this God does not make the bargain of his jouissance: there is no Other to define the limits of his desire. In this description God’s jouissance is sadistic and symptomatic. Lacan in the Rome Discourse (1953) describes the point at which the subject only experiences jouissance as that of the Other, which is by definition inaccessible. The infant is therefore at the mercy of this Other, the parent who puts her or his jouissance before the interest of the child as a subject. There is then a thin line between participating in the pleasures of the Other and experiencing their jouissance as torture.

Photomontage VI [illus.31] breaks both the symmetry of narcissism, the order of iconic mirror-reflection, and the symbolic ordering of Φ as a binary logical operator. Heads are defaced, wrapped and tied; hands grip the neck or hold the head in agony. One of the heads is placed on a pedestal, the place of the female Ego-ideal, which is veiled as the disappearing phallus, or crossed out behind the bars of a prison. Overall the imagery is of torture: ‘Ici le bourreau prend des airs de victime. Mais tu sais à quoi t’en tenir. Claude.’ ‘Here the torturer takes the form of the victim. But you know what it holds for you. Claude.’ The relation between the self and Other takes the Hegelian form of the master-slave dialectic that underpins Lacan’s reading of the self at the mirror-stage.

The ordinary mortal self has to strike a balance between jouissance and desire; the self and the desire of the Other:

‘Equilibre est notre loi.
Dieu, en créant la matière, lui fixa pour dot une certain part d’âme. Mais trop de corps aujourd’hui se disputent l’héritage.’ (1930a p.198)

This sense of balance as a law, is the bargain or ‘cost of the social, it is the sacrifice of jouissance that God requires.” Extending Freud’s analysis of sublimation and sacrifice of

---

1. C.f. the use of the ‘veil’ in H.D.’s Helen in Egypt; as above chapter six, p.185.
2. Lacan, J.: ‘A law is imposed upon the slave, that he should satisfy the desire and the pleasure [jouissance] of the other. It is not sufficient for him to plea for mercy, he has to go to work.’ (1953–’4 p.223) [Not my insert].

Shifting Eyes chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 240
instinct in the creation of society, Cahun combines the excess of *jouissance* with the surpluses of capitalist production.¹

'L'offre impose la demande. Les articles en série deviennent des objets de première nécessité. Les prostitués, certes! ont la partie belle. (Peut-être y a-t-il aussi place pour vertu ...) ... L'amour pour l'amour, c'est dégoûtant. C'est bien là ce luxe, le seul qu'on dit infâme.' (p. 186).

There is then a relation between capitalism and *jouissance* of the body in the sale of sex, prostitution.² The implication is that *jouissance* of the self becomes an object of exchange, becomes the property of the social Other, the symbolic Other who props up societies 'morality' through the duplicity of prostitution. This is betrayal which Cahun expresses as: 'Vendre son âme à Dieu : c'est trahir l'Autre.' *'Selling one's soul to God : is to betray the Other.'* (1930a p.159) Selling out to God, the symbolic God who extracts the bargain of *jouissance*, is to betray 'l'Autre', the guarantor of existence through the indexical. The desire of the indexical Other exacts a different price. Freedom of the individual in the drama of *Aveux non avenus* is the assertion of *jouissance*, a refusal to sacrifice oneself for 'civilisation', and a reclamation of *jouissance* from the indexical Other.³ The erotic body must be preserved at all costs, including the cost of suffering. The photomontages, in particular, point to the default to the indexical body in the full acknowledgement of the artist-poet's use of irony and duplicity.

In raising the question of the relation between love and suffering, Cahun rejects 'God'. Sin, confession and penitence are posed as the possibilities of redemption from illusion. In a dream, her rejection of God, involves the body, however repulsive:

'Dieu : Il est vraiment trop bête! Cette fois je m'en désintéresse complètement.

Mon corps humiliait bien souvent ma pensée, mon corps mal construit aux révoltes sans grâce. Elle se vengeait à l'occasion des miroirs, qu'elle recherchait, amoureuse, sadique - et toutefois s'y torturant soi-même.

Elle amène ce corps rétif devant son reflet, l'y retient ; affecte surprise et de ne pas d'abord le reconnaître, le critique, le juge - le juge indigne d'elle - l'endort enfin

¹ Cahun's expression could be compared to Lacan's use of the term *plus-de-jouir* (1969-’70 p.18) to designate the excess of *jouissance* that is left over in cultural sublimation, which Lacan links to Marx's concept of surplus value.
³ This follows Freud statement that something must be 'given up' in the formation of society (Freud, S. 1908 pp. 186-‘9) as cited above, chapter three, p.89.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 241
In this encounter with the mirror, Cahun gives an account of the judge, the introduction of the symbolic law $\Phi$ which comes through the super-ego, and battles with her narcissism. The mirror is involved in the shift from the iconic to the symbolic. God is banished, since, in his tripartite division God is as fallible as the self; the torturous relation between ‘thought’ and ‘body’ is therefore the action of the symbolic judgement on the body. The body in its visceral, physicality acts as the index of being.

This *jouissance* cuts across the biblical temptation of Eve: ‘Eve: Le bien, le mal, que de complications! Je n’ai pas faim de la pomme. J’ai faim de ta peau.’ (1930a p. 85) Eve: *good and evil - what complications! I’m not hungry for an apple. I am hungry for your skin.*

The dialogue is concerned, not only, with ‘Good and Evil’, but also with the role of the erotic body in anchoring reality and locating desire, freeing desire from the demands of the super-ego and separating desire from the *jouissance* of the Other:


It is the soul which instigates the ‘plurality’ of loves, the purity of the body, distinct from the body-image, is the *indexical* body of flesh: beyond Good and Evil, the flesh has its own ethics, the ethics of *jouissance*. This is Cahun’s last resort in her tussle with the tripartite God: ‘E- In his place I wouldn’t search far for my Judas - there is no greater traitor than oneself.’ It is méconnaissance and the structure of the ego. Recognition of the capacity for deception and betrayal is the first step to freeing desire from the *jouissance* of the Other. The second step is to own the erotic body through auto-eroticism.

---

1 (Evans, D. 1998 p.27. n.52) discusses Lacan’s theory of the ‘sinthome’ as the deal between *jouissance* and symbolic identifications.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 242
Shifting eyes, jouissance

The mirror performs the organising principle of the body in reflection. Within the terms of narcissism, the mirror presents the body as that desired by the ‘other’, the double of iconic reflection. Photomontage III [illus.28] represents two forms of reflection, the look that reflects back from the mirror and the inverted head at the centre of the eye. The logic of the mirroring relation governs the photomontages I [illus.26], IV [illus.29] and IX [illus.34]. Mirror symmetry is an organising principle of the body-image. From the outset of the text Cahun writes of limits of self-reflection in a mirror:

‘L’abstrait, le rêve, sont aussi limites pour moi que le concret, que le réel. Que puis-je? Dans un miroir étroit, montrer la partie pour le tout? Confondre une auréole et des éclaboussures? Refusant de me cogner aux murs, me cogner aux vitres? Dans la nuit noire.’ (1930a p.2)

Acknowledging the limitations of dream and abstraction is also an acknowledgement of the limits of the imaginary, the fantasmatic character of the iconic relation. The mirror is always too ‘narrow’ to reflect adequately the self.1 Cahun’s ‘two-way mirror’, offers another metaphorical schema of the self:

‘Fenêtre à guillotine.

Une feuille de verre. Où mettrai-je le tain? En deçà, au delà ; devant ou derrière la vitre?

Devant. Je m’emprisonne. Je m’aveugle. Que m’importe, Passant, de te tendre un miroir où tu te reconnais? Fait-ce un miroir déformant et signé de ma main?... Attractions repoussantes pour la grande foire à la chair humaine ...

Derrière. Je m’enferme également. Je ne saurai rien du dehors. Du moins je connaitrai mon visage - et peut-être me suffira-t-il assez pour me plaire. ...’. (1930a p.29)

Silvering the external surface of the glass produces a distorted image for the passer-by, like the portrait 1930 [illus. 8] the elongated head points to the erotic, to the ‘fun-fair of human flesh’. Silvering behind the glass produces a mhror, a ‘loss of face’, a loss of the mask of the Ego-ideal. Cahun is left with her own reflection, the narcissistic other, the double in the mirror. To lose that social demand is a kind of freedom, a retreat into the pleasure of the flesh, suggesting

---


*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye

---

243
an auto-eroticism that needs no Other, a *jouissance* that turns away from the demands of relating to the symbolic side of the mask.

Photomontage I [illus.26] gives absolute importance to the function of the single eye, the eye that holds a catch light, a reflection of window with possibly a figure in silhouette. The eye that in its identification with the globe, reflects the world, the stars of the universe:

‘Je suivrai le sillage dans l’air, la piste sur les eaux, le mirage dans les prunelles.’ (1930a p.2)

This description of narcissistic identification through the pupils of the eye is primarily to be misled by a mirage, an illusion; however, the act of looking in the mirror is also a way of training the eye:

‘Qui, se sentant armé contre soi, fût-ce des mots les plus vains, qui ne s’efforcerait, ne fût-ce que de mettre en plein dans le vide?
C’est faux. C’est peu. Mais ça exerce l’œil.’ (1930a p.2)

The eye stands for the act of looking, not only in narcissistic reflection, but also the eye that searches for the indexical traits of the body through the photograph as index. The photograph based on the chemistry of silver halides that acts as the indexical guarantor of existence, like the testimony of touch: ‘Les talons éculés, la boue, le saignement de pied - humbles et précis témoignages - sauraient toucher quelqu’un.’ *The down at heel, mud, bleeding foot - humble and precise testimony - would touch someone.* (1930a p.1)

In the last chapter of *Aveux non avenus* the confrontation with the self takes place as a split between the function of the left and right eye:

‘Il faut en finir.
Frapper en plein visage, en plein centre de l’âme, au coeur de l’œil - du seul qui compte (mon œil droit, de naissance, est un miroir sans tain.) Frapper au plus visible ; en plein noir de la pupille dilatée. Et pour ne pas rater mon coup, devant la glace grossissante...

L’intensité, la honte, pouvaient suffire : s’il n’est pas mort, il n’en vaut guère mieux. L’œil droit dédaigné, rageur, jette son encre sympathique - et l’œil gauche renonçant à soi-même, à la pourpre, aux prodiges, n’ose enfin se regarder.’ (1930a p.230)

The right eye, like all two-way mirrors, is capable of looking or reflecting, depending upon the intensity of light; the right eye is capable of discriminating between the gaze of the symbolic

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 244
Other, the gaze which discriminates according to the Ego-ideal, and her own index of desire. The left eye dare not look at itself, the left eye experiences the shame of not living up to the Ego-ideal. The logic of the mirror-relation has therefore been broken: the two eyes, the two sides of the body are not the same. The rageful right eye and the shamed left eye perform different significations of the self.

To get out of traps of looking, eliminating the specular is achieved by quite simply closing the eyes, a negation of the eye. This not only avoids the capturing by the other through of narcissistic identification, but also cuts down on the excesses of the Other’s desire. The self can withdraw around an ‘imaginary centre’:

‘Je ferme les yeux pour délimiter l’orgie. Il y a trop de tout. Je me tais. Je retiens mon haleine. Je me couche en rond, j’abandonne mes bords, je me replie vers un centre imaginaire...’.

‘Je me fais raser les cheveux, arracher les dents, les seins - tout ce qui gêne ou impatient mon regard - l’estomac, les ovaires, le cerveau conscient et enkysté. Quand je n’aurai plus qu’une carte en main, qu’un battement de cœur à noter, mais à la perfection, bien sûr je gagnerai la partie.’ (1930a p.35)

Cahun’s withdrawal is not only a defence against the judgement of the symbolic gaze, through the denial of the female characteristics of her body, but it is also how Cahun sets a boundary against orgy, thus defining the limit of the jouissance of the Other. Cahun’s course of action is, however, drastic; acting on the body to remove these traits that mark the desire of the Other leaves only one heartbeat. To preserve her own desire, Cahun dices with death.

The subtext of chapter VI, ‘X.Y.Z.’ is ‘lying’, ‘Ne jamais lâcher l’ombre pour la proie.’ ‘To never release the shadow for the prey’. (1930a p.113) Photomontage VII [illus.32] shows a chess game - checkmate Black captures White? A gloved right hand, on which rests the left hand with a ring on the ‘married’ finger, reaches in from outside the frame on the left. A shadow of a man’s head across the right side indicates the smoke from his cigar. A small inverted man on a chess pedestal, in the manner of the Venus de Milo, has lost his lower right arm. Two playing cards show the younger man, the king or jack of hearts with a feathered crown; LAHIRE is written on the top right. The other is an older man, the king, smoking a cigar is labelled PALLAS. The left arm in both cases comes in from outside the picture upside down. In the centre of the chess board is a playing card shown face down. Under the heading

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 245
‘SINGULAR PLURAL’ Cahun seeks a way through the follies of social expectation:
‘L’egoïsme absolu est une sécurité.’ ‘Absolute selfishness [egoism] is [a] security.’

‘Amour. L’acte même est œuvre de chair - éclair de chaleur, étoile si brève qu’on n’a pas le temps de former un vœu, à peine la certitude qu’elle nous a frôlé l’œil - mais tout ce qui l’engendre, mais tout ce qu’il implique, toutes les bonnes vieilles ficelles théâtrales sont œuvre d’esprit.’

‘L’acteur peut user de son partenaire, mieux : de son adversaire, comme de lui-même ; et réciproquement.’ (1930a p.118)

‘Love’ is now placed in the register of the indexical, the guarantee of existence, a love that is not part of the social game but exists as the jouissance of the erotic body. The direction of Aveux non avenus is to affirm indexical signification in order to build a sense of self. Though the overall structure of the self is a complex structure, such as a hypoiconic Third, Cahun’s strategy is to affirm the indexical signification of the self through the erotic body. The second part of the quotation acknowledges that the actor, who consciously takes on a fictional role, is better able to sort out the complexity of the adversarial role in relation to the mirrored other. Similarly, it is the writer and the artist who are able to manipulate the three registers of signification and are better able to avoid the trap of sincerity, the fantasy of an integral authentic self, that is the soul:

“‘Ame’. J’ai abusé du mot. Superstition, manie, de l’inconnaissable. Ce que je ne puis mâcher, voilà ce que j’aime à me mettre sous la dent. “Amour”, “conscience”, “Dieu”, “désintéressement”! ... Moi, juive au point d’utiliser mes péchés à mon salut, de mettre en œuvre mes sous-produits, de me surprendre continuellement, l’œil en crochet, au bord de ma propre poubelle!’ (1930a p.31)

The eye, as the hook and eye, catches the ‘sins’ at the edge of the rubbish bin, the fertile seat of the unconscious, which also relates to jouissance as a surplus product, a waste product in relation to the social order. The eye is that which can recycle the self, the agency of ‘seeing’ into the unconscious, retrieving what is of value and sustaining suffering:

‘SALOMÉ VAINCUE
Maison hantée.
‘Un regard? - On voudrait. Non, des yeux seulement, des yeux froids, se multipliant parce qu’ils me font souffrir. Immenses : jamais je ne traverserai ce désert. Glace, que je sens d’autant plus cruelle que je brûle, et qui refuse jusqu’à l’adoucissement pour moi de mon reflet. ... (De quoi tu parlais?... J’ai fort bien écouté. - L’océan? Moi, de même. - L’océan c’est toi, toi qui m’engloutis.)...’. (1930a p.166)
The eyes that instigate such suffering are that of ‘toi’ ‘you’, the eyes of the iconic other that reflect with the vast depths of the ocean, the all engulfing, in which the ‘me’ disappears. The mirror relation subsumes the indexical difference between self and ‘other’; instead of heterodox identification, the self and other are subsumed under a mistaken identity relation. This passage could also represent the way in which individual identity is subsumed to the Ego-ideal.

There is no insurance against the risks of this kind of life that affirms the indexical of jouissance - the way of life that refuses to conform, the kind of life that loves in excess. The extraordinary eroticism of the text and the photomontages represents jouissance. The pain of cutting across both the iconic logic of narcissistic love and desire in the service of the symbolic Other, of exceeding the logic of Good and Evil, exacts its price: the price of jouissance. To the extent that this is transgressive of the symbolic as it plays out in juridical law, excesses of pleasure may be ‘criminal’. But within the radical ethics of jouissance, crime itself creates new values:

"Faute de mieux:
Faut-il que le monde soit mal fait pour qu’un être dépareillé, mais sexuellement sociable, soit contraint de se réfugier dans le crime comme dans un couvent, non seulement pour y vivre, même pour créer ses valeurs nouvelles!
Mais de quel crime?... Qu’importe! une impasse." (1930a p.167)

Lacan, in the seminars (1959-'60) gives an account of jouissance as the foundation of an ethics at odds with that upheld by the social and juridical. In Sophocles’ Antigone, Antigone refuses to obey the law of her father Creon who forbids the state burial of her brother Polynices, on the basis that Polynices has betrayed his country. Antigone, in burying her brother chooses instead to obey her love for her him, stressing that her brother is unique, that is Antigone privileges his haecceity, over and above the law of the land. As Lacan interprets Antigone’s speech to Creon:

"’My brother may be whatever you say he is, a criminal. he wanted to destroy the walls of his city, lead his compatriots away in slavery. he led our enemies on to the territory of our city, but he is nevertheless what he is, and he must be granted his funeral rites. ... As far as I am concerned, the order that you dare refer me to doesn’t

---

¹ As explained above, chapter seven, pp.204-’5.
Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
mean anything, for from my point of view, my brother is my brother.”” (Lacan, J. 1959-'60 p.278)

Antigone’s transgression of juridical law makes her a criminal by virtue of her jouissance. The ethics of jouissance exact a cost, not only the sacrifice of pleasure, but death: Antigone hangs herself.

This leads into a more complex understanding of the function of the eye in Cahun’s poem, ‘The Target’ which draws an equation between the eye and a prison. It is the eye of the Other which controls and exacts the cost of its jouissance:

‘Carton de tir

Libéré de l’anneau (cette prison, l’orbite), peut-être le globe de l’œil se mettrait à tourner ... Il évoluerait dans le ciel, se peuplerait de mes créatures, adorable monde!’

... Devenir au lieu d’être. Il se sent aliéné. Autant dire : vendu.’ (1930a p.229)

The eye is identified with the prison. The price of becoming is alienation. There is no easy way out of the circle, no escaping the eye. Change has its limits. The limits of the self are then the limits of excess - and even excess itself has a limit, it is not infinite. The limit of jouissance is death: the limits of conforming to the desire of the Other is alienation that operates as the bar on the indexical subject.¹

The erotic eye: the monstrous body

Cahun chooses the path of jouissance, as opposed to alienation, an ethics that refuses any form of enslavement, including the social bond when that bond is a coercive enslavement. The dialogue between, A, ‘Aurige’, B, the ‘owner’ of Aurige, and C, the poet, represents the different demands of social bondage:

‘EXPLICATIONS
A - ... Ce n’est pas lui que j’aime assez pour te quitter ...

¹ Lemaire, A. (1977, p.176) describes alienation as dispossession of the being from itself, imprisoned within the frame of the gaze of the Other.
Aurige, wants it all, to sleep with both the master and the poet and to refuse to make a choice. The dialogue with the poet takes the form of letters in which Aurige fears giving away her soul to an other; in this dialogue the 'you' is ascribed to the 'vous' of the Ego-ideal. When A 'falls in love', she opens herself to criticisms of the Other, the power of the symbolic Other to judge her life against the Ego-ideal. Aurige retreats from this potential alienation, by withdrawing into herself, into her indexical body through affirming its eroticism:

‘Pourquoi préférez-vous votre propre personne à toute autre?
A - Qu'elle est la plus proche, l'instrument que j'ai sous la main. Parc que je sens, parce que je suis, parce que je ne peux pas faire autrement.’ (1930a pp.66-'7)

This devolution of eroticism onto the self poses the question of auto-eroticism. The quotation is taken from chapter IV, headed (vanity and sex). The preceding photomontage V [illus.30] plays with pictures of cacti to represent genitalia. A cactus in the shape of a glove is held by ‘feminine’ hands decorated with nail varnish. Montaged into the centre of the ‘glove’ is a small image of Cahun. Head, knees and feet are condensed into one image, as if she rests symmetrically at the centre of her own body, producing a vaginal image, in which her head stands as clitoris. The cactus emphasises the thumb as a ‘phallic’ protuberance. The hands hold this ‘phallic image’ which combines the genital characteristics of both sexes. It is an image that implies both hermaphroditism and auto-eroticism. The monstrous and exquisite body is also the hated, abjected indexical body, since it doesn’t conform with either the iconic Ideal-ego or the symbolic Ego-ideal. The section which describes making a portrait of Aurige, Aurige in the mirror, is subtitled ‘a monstrous egotism’:

‘Des seins superflus ; les dents irrégulières, inefficaces ; les yeux et les cheveux du ton le plus banal ; des mains assez fines, mais tordues, déformées. La tête ovale de l’esclave ; le front trop haut ... ou trop bas ; un nez bien réussi dans son genre - un genre affreux ; la bouche trop sensuelle : cela peut plaire tant qu’on a faim, mais dès qu’on a mangé ça vous écoeure ; le menton à peine assez saillant ; et par tout le corps des muscles seulement esquissés.’ (1930a p.57)
Once again the reflection in the mirror brings shame, self-hatred and physical revulsion at the capacity of the body to be sensual. The 'oval head of the slave' implies the dialectic of master-slave relation that determines the conceptual framework of personal relations within the social order. *Aveux non avenus* typically shifts from the extremes of self-love to self-hatred; eulogising about the flesh is counterposed with utter disgust. The route of *jouissance*, a flagrant display against the 'master-slave' dialectic of particular social orders, hits the internal boundaries of the self. Such a radical ethics demands transgression of internal boundaries. The 'narrative' of *Aveux non avenus* repeatedly asserts and denies, moving back and forwards through contradictory feelings thought and beliefs.¹

As cited previously, Lacan introduces the term *jouissance* within the context of the master-slave dialectic: 'A law is imposed on the slave, that he should satisfy the desire of the other and the pleasure [*jouissance*] of the other.' [not my insert (1953-'4 p.223)] The *jouissance* which Cahun asserts in this photomontage V [illus.30] is grounded in the indexical female body, the indexical term that undermines the ordering of the female body under the symbol, Φ, as Lacan describes in the seminars of 1972-'3:

'... she has various ways of taking it on, this phallus, and of keeping it for herself. Her being not all in the phallic function does not mean that she is not in it at all. She is in it *not* not at all. ...

There is a jouissance, ... a jouissance of the body which is, if the expression be allowed, beyond the phallus.' (1972-'3a p.145)

Lacan goes on to describe this jouissance as the only 'substance' that the body recognises, pointing to the index as that which escapes the categorisation of what is relevant to the symbolic definition of the body, that is the body as defined through the symbol of sexual difference, Φ. Hermaphroditism and androgyny affirm the erotic body as it defies Φ, the unitary organisation of the partial sexual drives.² The photomontage puts forward an icon to holds together the body as defined through partial sexual drives - the frame of the picture. This pictorial frame represents the extension of the hypoicon of the self, the symbolic code of the

¹ This movement through contraries accords both with a dialectical process of self-analysis and the hypoiconic structure of the self, which doesn't privilege causality or the symbolic unification under Φ, above the flux of signifying terms of the self. The internal boundaries of the self can also be compared with H.D.'s use of the image of the 'wall' in *Trilogy*, (1942-'6) as discussed above, chapter six, p.168.
³ The substitution of the symbol of the phallus, Φ, as that which organises and unifies the partial sexual drives, as introduced, chapter two, pp.60-'1.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 250
artwork does not wholly define what happens between terms and doesn’t repress the appearance of the erotic. The montage shows the unique organisation of the subject’s *jouissance*.

The direction of the text, *Aveux non avenus*, is towards the discrimination and retrieval of the subject’s desire from the *jouissance* of the Other. This breakdown between body and soul is the break-up of society: ‘Société! tout est bien fini entre nous. Abats la bête!’ ‘Society! it’s all over between us. Slaughter the animal!’

To choose between desire and love is equated with the political. It is a choice: desire or the social structures around love. The truth of the flesh, of *jouissance*, is counterposed to the desire of the Other exposing the hypocrisy of the social game:

‘Car les règles du jeu social (que je voudrais changer) ne sont pas ainsi faites que je puisse parfois gagner la partie contre le reste du monde, et qu’il ne m’arrive jamais de la gagner sans tricher, contre toi - contre nous - contre le meilleur de moi même. Je voudrais...Je veux.’ (1930a p.113)

The conundrum of freedom and desire - that there should be an ethics of desire capable of seeing through the immediate ideology - points to the *jouissance* of the body as the basis for recognising that the social game is one of trickery and illusion. The body, however, is at the mercy of suffering from two directions, not only the coercion to conform to the Ego-ideal, but also *jouissance* itself:

‘Mourir de faim

... Si je renaissais de tels évanouissements, dans ma chair dévouée à tant de martyrs plus subtils, je souffrirai d’ineconforts indécibles ; enfin de froid, de faiblesse ... et l’insomnie me dégoûtera de toute nourriture. Chacun porte en soi des conclusions inattendues, parmi lesquelles, pour faire face à la grand angoisse, il ne faut pas oublier le grand désir.’ (1930a p.204)

To be disgusted by nourishment is a particular kind of *jouissance*, a denial of desire that is a way of dealing with the anxiety generated by discriminating between one’s own desire and the desire of the Other: *jouissance* appears as the symptom ‘to die of hunger’. Lacan’s seminars, (1972-’3b) theorise the symptom, not only as a ‘linguistic’ structure, but involving *jouissance*:

‘It is no longer simply a case of *ça parle* (it speaks) ; it is now also necessary to state that *ça jouit* (it enjoys).’ (in Evans, D. 1998 p.12). According to Peirce’s semiotics, the phenomenon
of jouissance is not extra-semiotic, but as index signifies the existence of the body as opposed
to the body image; the body image that is initially formed through an iconic relation to an
other, though subjected to the scrutiny of the symbolic eye of the Other. Aveux non avenus
shows how this encounter with the law of Φ need not necessarily re-order the indices of the
body, in particular jouissance. Cahun’s retreat into the martyrdom of the flesh, the flip-side
of jouissance, is her means of discovering desire as indexical guarantor of existence and
anchoring the mirage subject of narcissism.

A concluding moment: the splitting of the eye

‘Accommodements du poète avec son infirmité.
S’aveugler pour mieux voir. Faire jaillir des étincelles en frappant sur les
ténèbres. Frapper sur le silence assourdissant pour s’en faire un ami malléable.
Frapper la syntax et le rythme et le verbe un grand coup pour en tirer l’eau de mort.’
(1930a p.176)

Blinding, the negation of the eye, paradoxically allows the subject ‘to see better’. The
text expresses a paradox: the relation between hitting against silence with the rhythm of the
poet or to hit against the grammar of syntax, the symbolic of speech. In the latter case, it is as
if blinding represents the eye’s ability to ‘see through’ the registers of order that follow the
acceptance of Φ.

The blind eye represents ‘seeing’ as opposed to looking; the ability to produce, in
Peirce’s semiotics, energetic interpretants that lead to new logical interpretants, new ways of
thinking and new conditionals of becoming. Although the iris of the eye may change colour,
that is the eye can adopt the reflection of the iconic or symbolic Other, the eye is also the
agency of seeing:

‘L’iris que je me puis farder.
Mémoire? Morceaux choisis. Mon âme est fragmentaire. Entre la naissance
et la mort, le bien et le mal, entre les temps du verbe, mon corps me sert de transition.’
(1930a 202)

If the iris is a part of the mask, then the pupil of the eye signifies the space of seeing new
possibilities, as Cahun calls the ‘two-way mirror’ of the right eye; this eye looks inward. The
eye is a part of the indexical body, guaranteed through a jouissance that survives the ‘tenses of
Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye
the verb', the demands to conform to the Ego-ideal. The soul, on the other hand, is the body image, capable of being bought and sold, disguised and masked, to be owned by an other. On the other hand, it is the excess of the body that resists ownership.¹

The final photomontage X [illus.35] shows a tree growing out of the navel of a body lying flat on the ground. The tree bears a single flower and the images of sensory organs - eye, mouth, ear and hand - representing the borders of the body that are also the erogenous zones.² As signs of jouissance, these part objects represent disparate terms - indices - freed from unification according to Φ. Interpreted as a representation of the structure of the self, the body parts function as terms of a transferential relation between each other, leading to a complex signifying structure closer to the form of a hypoiconic Third, than an argument or symbol that sustains binary logic.

These body parts also signify the terms of communication - the visual and aural - the signs of speech and writing. The key concept here is that the semiotic self engages with the superfluity of the erotic body, jouissance, as the terms of communication. It is a self crucially centred on the process of signification, the relation between the signs of the body and the signs of speech, the primary relation between words and things.³ Cahun’s montage, gives another schema of the signification of the psyche, as addressed by Freud (1891b pp.213-'4 and 1895b p.390),⁴ demonstrating that the indices of jouissance also signify as the terms of communication. The ‘Thing’ of Freud’s schemas, the not yet known of the object associations or the ‘subject’ of the subject-predicate relation, is represented by Cahun as that which is signified by the navel.

Photomontage X [illus.35] shows the tree of jouissance and signification growing from the navel. In an earlier passage of Aveux non avenus, Cahun places the eye in an interpretative relation to the navel, as if the eye is its interpretant:

¹ This may be compared with the dialogue, ‘A, B, C,’ between Aurige and her owner, and Aurige and the poet (1930a pp.57-68) as cited above, pp 248-'9.
² In Lacan’s terms (1972-'3b p.21) and Schilder, as the points of captation between body-images, as cited above, chapter seven, pp.209-' 14.
³ This is distinct from Lacan’s conceptualisation of signification as : ‘Thus the symbol manifests itself of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject the externalisation of his desire.’ (1953 p.104)
⁴ Freud’s word-thing relation as discussed above, chapter two, pp.36-'8 ;  46-'7.
Shifting Eyes  chapter eight : Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 253
"En regardant par le trou du nombril:
Ce n’est pas seulement le sien propre dont l’enfant fait le centre du monde.
N’importe quel noyau tient sa chair concentrée. Le mystère, c’est la serrure à laquelle
un œil, faute de mieux, sert de passe-partout...". (1930a pp.147 -148)

The navel is not only an indexical sign of parturition, but in Cahun’s exegesis the navel is
‘unlocked’ by the eye: in other words the eye functions as logical interpretant and the image
as a whole represents signification. The terms of the triad of are; the navel as sign; the ‘not
yet known Thing’ occupies the position of object; and the ‘eye’ acts as interpretant.

As noted previously, the photomontage repeats the triadic form; the triad of the family
placed inside a triangle, the triadic flag bearing the text ‘La Sainte Famille’ and the triangle
holding Cahun portraits. Counterposed to this, however, is the detachment of the letter ‘œ’, ‘e
dans l’o’, the ‘œ’ of the oedipal family that now floats as a single term in the ambiguous space
of the picture plane. The oedipal structure is further dissected in the text:

‘MOI - L’une : Quelle vie! ce n’est pas la mienne.
-L’autre : L’intonation est juste. Un peu plus de conviction et je viendrais à
ton secours.
Œ - En vain j’essaye de remettre mon corps à sa place (mon corps avec ses
dépendances), de me voir à la troisième personne. Le je est en moi comme l’e pris
dans l’o.’ (1930a p.236)

The unity of the letter is broken apart, shattering the basic constituency of the written letter, œ,
‘e dans l’o’, into the terms ‘e’ and ‘o’. With the splitting of ‘œ’ the subject is not sustained by
the inheritor of oedipal conflict, the symbol of sexual difference, Φ.

Words which fall into a transferential iconic chain starting with oedipus include ‘œil’,
eye, ‘œuvre’, work and ‘nœud’, knot:

œdipus ≈œl, œil ≈œuvre, œuvre ≈nœud

The splitting of ‘œ’ also signifies the splitting of ‘œil’, the eye, re-signifying the previous
condensation of eye and navel. ‘Œ’ also occurs within the term ‘nœud gordien’, Gordian knot,
which as the knot of serpents Cahun uses to signify the inseparability of the narcissistic
relation. (1930a pp.33-34) Splitting the letter ‘œ’ becomes the means of both separating the

---

1 As above, p.230.
2 As above, p.228.
Shifting Eyes chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 254
indices locked into an iconic identification through narcissistic love and also detaching an ‘œdipal’ order from the structure of the subject.

Splitting ‘œ’ within the word ‘œuvre’ re-signifies the overall structure of *Aveux non avenus*. The principle of collage that organises the book draws the reader-viewer into the cut between the borders of text and image, the cut which is the splitting of the letter ‘œ’. The pictorial photomontages present the illusion of the seamless surface, even though the indexical cut into the iconic flow of imagery is made visible. The artist, the poet, is the consummate manipulator of these registers of signification and self.

In contradistinction to the resolution that H.D. puts forward in *Helen in Egypt* (1952-'5), which concludes by giving primacy to the iconic phallus as represented by the goddess of writing, Isis-Ishtar, Cahun’s version of the signifying self, the self as author, splits the letter of Œdipus. The phallic terms as they are organised according to the symbol Φ, are therefore released, as iconic or indexical signs of the phallus. H.D. draws the reader through a series of identifications which culminate in complex hypoiconic figures of transformation, including Isis, enforcing H.D.’s identification with the text itself and the hieroglyph in particular.¹ Cahun, however, ruptures symbolic signification through the excess of the body. To split the symbolic eye, œil, is to access both the agencies of *jouissance* and signification: Cahun’s identification with the text is founded on the indices of the erotic body.

Both H.D. and Cahun produced works that throw the relation of words and images into the continuum of semiosis without losing the sensory qualities of embodiment. As representations of the self, they evoke identifications that call forth experiential responses, emotional interpretants that precipitate the need for new logical interpretants, the possibility of a new conceptual framework for experiencing and thinking about the self.

Engaging in the work of Cahun brings me back to the opening anecdote of this thesis, the encounter face-to-face with the artefacts of the Alamba people. There is a similar disturbing effect on my subjectivity that calls for the dismantling of myself as symbolic subject, a displacement of the importance of Φ in order to be able to look around the phallus. The shock of what I see, the Secondness of the release of ‘œ’, ‘e dans l’œ’, results in a

¹ As cited above, chapter six, p.182.

*Shifting Eyes* chapter eight: Cahun through the Semiotics of the Eye 255
suspension of self consciousness that allows a brief glimpse of the experience which Peirce attempts to describe through his concept of Firstness: ‘... before he [Adam] had become conscious of his own existence - that is first, present, immediate, fresh, new, initiative, original, spontaneous, vivid, conscious and evanescent.’ (Peirce, C.S. 1890 1.357).

The semiotic self, conceived as hypoiconic Third, allows the force of these images and texts to challenge us, the viewer and reader, with a version of Cahun’s question of desire: ‘Que me veux tu?’ [illus.1].

***
Appendix A.

chapter two p.35¹

fig. 1. (Freud, S. 1891a p. 79; 1891b p. 214)

p. 50

fig. 2. (Freud, S. 1896a p. 186)

chapter three p. 67

fig. 3. after Peirce

¹ All page numbers refer to main thesis.

Shifting Eyes : Appendix A

257
p.68

\[ O, \]
\[ S_1 \quad I_1 \text{[first]} \quad S_2 \text{[hard]} \]
\[ O_d \quad I_d \text{[seconds]} \]

fig. 4 after Peirce

p.72

\[ O_1 \text{[percept]} \]
\[ S_1 \quad I_1 \text{[first]} \quad S_2 \text{[hard]} \]
\[ O_d \text{[percept]} \quad I_d \text{[seconds]} \]

fig. 5

chapter seven, p.205

[Diagram of Miroir and shifted eyes]
(H.D. 1911-2 p.67)

Shifting Eyes: Appendix A
Appendix B: Translations from *Héroïnes* (Cahun, C. 1925b) *Aveux non avenus* (Cahun, C. 1930a) and ‘Prenez garde aux objets domestiques’ (Cahun, C. 1936) as found in chapters seven and eight of the main text.

Chapter seven:

p.195

'I - HIEROGLYPHS
Le Croisic - The grey sea is stained with black signs, different in form and importance... II. - HIEROGLYPHS
Verona. The Renaissance. - The grey stone is stained with black signs, different in form and importance... (1930a pp. 271-2)

p.196

'I was incapable of appreciating it - and understanding it: passionate, almost hysterical, indignant... and with further envy, hating especially all the serenity of the world! *The Androgyne*...'. (1925b p.67)

p.200

The happiest moment of your life?
A - Dream. Imagining that I am other. Playing my favourite role.' (1930a p.66)

p.218

'Take a mirror, scratch the silverying at a height of several centimetres above the eye; pass behind that lightened spot a strip on which you had fixed little heterogeneous objects, and look at yourself at the point of the cross-over, eyes in the eyes.' (Cahun, C. 1936 in Leperlier, F. 1992 p.217)

p.224

'I had spent my solitary hours disguising my soul. The masks were so perfect that when they came to cross each other on the main square of my consciousness they didn't recognise each other.' (Cahun, C. 1930a p.15)

Chapter eight:

p.228

Self-love.

*The death of Narcissus always appeared to me the most incomprehensible of all. Only one explanation becomes evident: Narcissus didn't love himself. He let himself be mistaken by an image.* (1930a p.3)

---

1 All page numbers refer to the main text of the thesis.

*Shifting Eyes: Appendix B* 260
"The invisible adventure.

The lens follows the eyes, the mouth, just brushing the skin-deep wrinkles ... The expression on the face is violent, at times tragic. Calm at last - with the conscious, studied calm, of acrobats. A professional smile - and voilà!' (1930a p.1)

‘Love? The excessively happy lovers form a couple similar to a hermaphroditic monster or Siamese twins. If it’s not possible to untie them, one has to cut this Gordian tangle, this knot of serpents [snakes]...". (1930a pp.33-34)

‘To separate us. To mask us. To begin again each night [to make a new skin] and a new landscape. ...

I am one, you are the other. Or the contrary. Our desires meet. Already it’s an effort to untangle them.’ (1930a p.118)

‘In love, it is when near, that illusion perverts our senses.

The more the lover moves away from the beloved, his thought describes tighter and tighter circles around the unreal love - centres at last, immobilise itself.

Then [it] realises that there is nothing, that it was turning around the void, and that it exists alone.’ (1930a p.91)

‘It is maddening only to be able to offer what one has, rather than what one is.

But ...

As one might cover and re-cove with masks, painting [make-up] and re-painting, one can only perhaps enlarge a resemblance, accentuate the imperfections of the hidden face ...

We would exhaust ourselves in vain by these games though: rather outbid!

Elsewhere too, make up is compulsory.’ (1930a p.135)

‘As I remember it was the Carnival. I had passed my solitary hours disguising my soul. The masks were so perfect that when they came to cross each other on the main square of my consciousness they didn’t recognise each other. Tempted by their comical ugliness, I would try the worst instincts; I would adopt, I would raise in myself some young monsters. But the make-up that I used seemed indelible. I rubbed so much to clean myself that I peeled off the skin. And my soul like a skinned face, bled [open-wound], was no longer a human form.’ (1930a p.15)

‘Useless precautions

A mask against the gasses (too personal scents or asphyxiating perfumes).... Then, turning the head a little away from them...’ . (1930a pp.187-'8)
‘shadow boxing

I am (the “I” is) a result of God multiplied by God divided by God:

\[ \text{God} \times \text{God} = \text{me [ego]} = \text{God} \]

(What a way to treat the absolute! One sees that ... etc...)’ (1930a p.34)

‘Eulogy of paradoxes

The beautiful proverbs are writing to [within] the mirror, the beds of the middle, perfect statues. Let’s play turning around. Each time that one invents a phrase, it would be wise to turn it around to see if it’s good. It’s easier than to cast out nines.

The nymph Echo wishing to please Narcissus as much as the fountain returned him his words, face to face, inverted.

The echo, which comes from God returns my thought, (subject, complement [object] interchangeable, verb intact - the verb being the Verb.)

The echo, which comes from my thoughts, returns God like a mirror my body (left and right interchangeable - and the middle resembling, I am told.)

So, the soul and truth do they not have cardinal points?’ (1930a pp.215-'6)

‘The madman

... In an indulgent mirror, God smiles at his mouth that he makes up ... I come in. I intervene [interpose] myself. Never more will he forget that Medusa herself had been made in his image.’ (1930a p.190)

‘Eternity made this triple faced monster. Bouquet of gods. Trinity for support .... Father, mother and son (spirit [mind], heart and body) bound by these arms of flesh, these discordant joints.

And the French family takes this as a model. (1930a p.223)

‘I am in training, don’t kiss me

If I come to believe in a god outside myself, at certain moments it seems to me that he has the ball at his feet : to have eternity in front of him ...

Who knows if He has not left from far lower down than me?’. (1930a p.214)

‘The paper sunflower

It’s necessary to beware of the blue reactions of the soul. If it’s easier to agree on these negations, it doesn’t lead far. The enemies of our enemies are not our friends.

Has God himself never been able to speak with you differently?’. (1930a p.215)
p.237

'Confession of my shame:
Will I accuse circumstances, my contemporaries? It is not the circumstances of my life, it is its causes, which have led it astray. Before being born, I was condemned. Executed in my absence [in absentia].'' (1930a p.167)

pp.238-9

'Mildew/mould
Here I am. I have been placed with my back against the wall, in penitence. ...
An imperceptible displacement of the soul has troubled the mystery. Man has mistaken [deceived] the image with his own superimposition. Monsters changing (what am I saying?), the stage set where the skin of God sticks, where his sombre sweat trickles, poignant imprint, unique, irrefutable fingerprint [certificate].'. (Cahun, C. 1930a p.200)

p.239

'Me : I'm not stooping [that low]to buy anything like that God. It's not him I wait for, it is the Other. (God leaves, I felt him leave) Moment! Catch him again. I was not ready to receive, I'm unworthy of him. Let him come back : I love him.
You : It's for Claude. That would please him, and as for me, I don't care.' (1930a p.123)

p.239

'The n...th day God regretted having created the Heaven and Earth.
He wished to destroy his work. But it had fallen into the public domain. So he descended into himself, divided himself into three to lessen his responsibility, invented the Serpent - and changes his pseudonym.' (1930a p.234)

pp.239-40

'But God knows how to preserve good conduct. He has recourse to myths, and consoles himself with a symbol (like you or me). Not the same:
Man has created paradise - but the paradise of God, it is hell.
Free jouissance of his privileges. Torture at one's own discretion. His total-drive at last exerted in infinity.' (Cahun, C. 1930a p.218)

p.240

'Equilibrium [balance] is our law.
God, in creating matter, fixed a certain part of the soul as his dowry. But too many bodies today fighting over this heritage.' (1930a p.198)

p.241

'Supply imposes demand. Mass produced goods become indispensable articles. Prostitutes, indeed! are sitting pretty. (Perhaps there is also the place for virtue ...). Love for love, it's disgusting. It's indeed this luxury, the only one that is said to be infamous.' (p. 186.)
'God: He is really too stupid!  
This time I take no more 
interest in him.  

My body quite often humiliated my mind, my body badly constructed for 
revolts without grace. It [my thought] gets revenge on the occasion of mirrors, that 
it looked for, in love, sadistic although torturing itself there [through it].

It brings this rebellious body in front of its reflection, keeps it there; affects 
surprise, not recognising it at first, criticises it, judges it - judges it unworthy of it 
thought] - brings it to sleep like a warden to escape from this sordid prison. Sometimes it lets itself be caught in the trap if it [the body] has to chink and drink 
drugs together.' (1930a p.92)

'I love you. This should become enough for the whole solar system. I love you 
[plural]. Oh! this shameful plural, little prostituted soul. Does it [the soul] imagine 
that the verb acquires there more numerous force through conviction? She [the 
soul? Bitch! It is less pure than my body ... (You have already arrived at this 
conclusion. Excuse me: I have a slow mind ... and the strong flesh!), and more 
feminine. What can I do about it? Ah! [the soul] exhausting it.' (1930a p.8)

'The abstract, the dream, are as limit for me as the concrete and the real. What can I 
do? In a narrow mirror, show the part for the whole? Confuse an aureole for the 
spatters? Refusing to smash myself against walls, to smash myself against the 
window pane? In the black night.' (1930a p.2)

'Sash window.  
A sheet of glass. Where will I put the silvering? On this side, or the other; 
in front or behind the glass? 

In front: I imprison myself. I blind myself. What do I care, Passer by, I 
offer you a mirror where you would recognise yourself, even a deforming mirror and 
signed by my hand?... Repulsive attractions to the great fun-fair of human flesh ... 

Behind: I equally enclose myself. I will know nothing of the outside. At 
least I will know my face - and perhaps it will be enough to please me. ....'. (1930a 
p.29)

'I will follow the slipstream in the air, the wake on the water, the mirage in the 
pupils of the eye.' (1930a p.2)

'Who, feeling armed against oneself, even with the most futile words, who would not 
try only, to reach right in the middle of the void? 

It's false. It's hardly anything. But it trains the eye.' (1930a p.2)
'Who, feeling armed against oneself, even with the most futile words, who would not try only, to reach right in the middle of the void?

It's false. It's hardly anything. But it trains the eye.' (1930a p.2)

'One has to get over it.
To hit full in the face, fully in the centre of the soul, at the heart of the eye - of the only one which counts (my right eye, from birth, is a two-way mirror.) To hit at the most visible ; in the full black of the dilated pupil. And to not fail in the attempt, in front of the enlarging mirror ...
The intensity, the shame, could be enough : if it is not dead, it nearly is. The scorned right eye, rageful, throws its invisible ink - and the left eye renouncing itself, to purple, to the marvels, at last dare not look at itself" (1930a p.230)

'I close my eyes to limit [define the boundaries of] the orgy. There is too much of everything. I keep silent. I hold my breath. I curl up, I abandon my edges [borders], I withdraw towards an imaginary centre ....'.

'I have my hair shaven, have my teeth, my breasts out - to tear out everything that obstructs or annoys my gaze - the stomach, ovaries, the conscious and tumoured brain. When I will have no more than one card in hand, one heartbeat to note, but to perfection, then surely I will win the game." (1930a p.35)

'Love. The act itself is a work of flesh - flash of heat, star so brief there is no time to make a vow, scarcely the certainty that it skimmed our eye - but everything that, all that it is, it implies, all the good old theatrical tricks are the work of the mind [spirit].

'The actor can make use of his partner, even : his adversary, as himself ; and reciprocally.' (1930a p.118)

"Soul". I have used the word too much. Superstition, habit, of the unknowable. What I can't chew, that is what I like to eat. [I can't mince my words, here what I love gives me nothing to eat]. "Love", "conscience", "God", "disinterested-ness"!... Me, a Jew to the point of using my sins for my salvation, to bring these by-products into action, to catch myself, the eye [look] as a hook, at the edge of my own rubbish bin!" (1930a p.31)

'SALOMÈ DEFEATED
The haunted house :
A look? - One would wish. No only eyes, cold eyes, multiplying because they make me suffer. Vast : never will I cross this desert. Ice [mirror], which I feel even

Shifting Eyes : Appendix B 265
more cruel because I am burning, and which refuses even the soothing that is for me
my reflection. ... (What were you talking about? I listened very carefully. The
ocean? Me, too. - The ocean is you, you who swallows me up)." (1930a p.166)

p.247

'Nothing better:
So the world is badly made that an incomplete [odd] being, yet sexually
sociable, is forced to take refuge in crime as in a convent, not only to live there, even
to create its new values!'.

p.248

'Target

Freed from the ring (this prison,
the orbit), perhaps the globe of the eye
would start to turn [revolve] ... It would evolve
in the sky, would be people with
my creatures, adorable world!

... To become instead of being. It feels alienated. In other words: sold.' (1930a p.229)

p.248-9

'EXPLANATIONS
A - It's not him whom I love enough to leave you --
B - So, Aurige - if it's me you love, after all you have to be honest and stop lying.
C - Stay with your Master Aurige but sleep with me ....
A - But why, why? since I feel strong enough to sleep with you both." (1930a 67-'8)

p.249

'Why do you prefer your own person to all others?
A - Because it is the nearest, the tool that I have in hand. Because I feel, because I
am, because I cannot do otherwise.' (1930a pp.66-'7)

p.249

'Superfluous breasts; irregular, ineffective teeth; eyes and hair of the most, banal
shade; fine enough hands, but twisted, deformed. The oval head of a slave; the brow
too high ... or too low; a nose well created of its kind - a hideous kind; the mouth
too sensual: this can please as long as one is hungry, but of which that having eaten
you are disgusted; the chin is prominent enough; and all through the body only
stretched muscles." (1930a p.57)
Because the rules of the social game (that I would like to change) are not made so that I can sometimes win the game against the rest of the world, and I never win without trickery, against you - against us - against the better part of myself I would like... I want." (1930a p.113)

To die of hunger

... If I am born again from such black-outs [disappearances], in my flesh devoted to so many more subtle martyrs, I will suffer from unspeakable discomforts; in the end from cold, from weakness ... and insomnia will disgust me with all nourishment. Each one carries in oneself these unexpected conclusions, amongst which, to face up to the great anxiety, one must not forget the great desire." (1930a p.204)

The poet's arrangements with his disability.

To blind oneself to see better. To make sparks fly up and hit against the darkness. To hit the deafening silence to make of it a malleable friend. To hit syntax and rhythm and verb [to do something memorable] to draw the water of death [from it]." (1930a p.176)

The iris that I can make up to myself.

Memory? Selected extracts. My soul is fragmentary. Between birth and death, good and evil, between the tenses of the verb, my body serves the transition." (1930a 202)

In looking through the hole of the navel:

It's not only his own that the child makes the centre of the world. Any nucleus holds its flesh as concentrated. The mystery, is the lock to which an eye, for lack of anything better, serves as the master-key [pass-key]." (1930a pp.147-148)

ME - The one: What a life! it's not mine.
- The other: The intonation is correct. A little more conviction and I would come to your help.
CE - In vain I try to replace my body in his place (my body with its dependencies [subordinate parts]), to see me in the third person. The I is in me as the e is taken into the o." (1930a p.236)
Appendix C: Claude Cahun, Illustrations

1 'Que me veux-tu?' 1928 (A&S '97 pl.69)\(^1\) 23 × 18 cms. Private collection, Paris.

---


Illus. no. 2

Illus. no. 3

SShifting Eyes : Appendix C

Illus. no. 4
Illus. no. 6
Self-portrait 1927 (A&S '97 pl.36) 11.7 x 8.9 cms. The Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit.

Illus. no. 5

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C
Illus. no. 8

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 7

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 9

Shifting Eyes : Appendix C

Illus. no. 11

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 10

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

277

Illus. no. 13

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 14
Illus. no. 15

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 16

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C 283

Illus. no. 17

Illus. no. 18

Shifting Eyes : Appendix C
Self-portrait 1928 (A&S '97 pl. 44) 11.5 x 8.5 cms. Jersey Museum.

Illus. no. 23

Illus. no. 25

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C

Illus. no. 24

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C
Aveux non avenus (Cahun, C. 1930a pl.II) (A&S '97 pl. 227)

Illus. no. 27
Aveux non avenus (Cahun, C. 1930a pl.I) (A&S '97 pl. 226)

Illus. no. 26

Shifting Eyes : Appendix C
Illus. no. 29

*Shifting Eyes*: Appendix C
Illus. no. 28
Illus. no. 30

Shifting Eyes : Appendix C

297
Aveux non avenus (Cahun, C. 1930a pl. VII) (A&S ’97 pl.232)

Illus. no. 32

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C
Illus. no. 31
Aveux non avenus (Cahun, C. 1930a pl. IX) (A&S '97 pl.234)

Illus. no. 34

Shifting Eyes: Appendix C
Aveux non avenus (Cahun, C. 1930a pl. VIII) (A&S '97 pl.233)

Illus. no. 33
Illus. no. 35
Bibliography


Breton, A. 1972 *Manifestes du surréalisme*, trans. Seaver, A. and Lane, S., Michigan, Ann Arbour MUP.


2000a Burgoyne B. and Leader, D. ‘Freud’s Scientific Background’, *in* Leader, D.


Where appropriate the date of writing is shown in parenthesis.

*Shifting Eyes*: Bibliography

1918 ‘La “Salomé” d’Oscar Wilde le Procès Billing et les 47 000 pervertis du Livre Noir’, Mercure de France, no. 481, July, 1.


1919b (Douglas, Daniel), La Machine magique’ La Gerbe. no. 12, September 1919.


1925d ‘Meditations de Mademoiselle Lucie Schwob’, Philosophies, no. 5/6, March.

1925d ‘Réponse à l’enquête de la revue Inversions’, L’Amitié no.1, April.

1925e ‘Recits de rêve’, Le Disque vert, series 4, no. 2.


1930a *AVEUX NON AVENUS.* Paris, Editions du Carrefour.


1936 ‘Prenez garde aux objets domestiques’. L’Objet, Cahiers d’art I, II.

**illustrations**

1930b ‘Frontière Humaine’ : autoportrait photographique, Bipir no. 5 April 1930.


**manuscripts**


**declarations**


1933b ‘Contre le fascisme mais aussi contre l’impérialisme français!’, (A.E.A.R.), Feuille Rouge no. 4, May.

1935 ‘Contre-Attaque’, Union de lutte des intellectuels révolutionnaires, October 7.
translations
1929 Ellis, H. *La Femme dans la société, I. L’Hygiène sociale*, trans. Schwob, L.,
Paris, Mercure de France.

interview
1945 ‘Sentenced to Death by Island Nazis’, *The Jersey Weekly Post*, Saturday, July

Caws, M. A. 1997 ‘Doubling : Claude Cahun’s Split Self’, *The Surrealist Look : an Erotics of


Damisch, H. 1978 ‘Five Notes for a Phenomenology of the Photographic Image’, *October,*
no.5, pp.70-’2.

Damourette, J. and Pichon, E. 1928 ‘Sur la Signification Psychologique de la Négation en
Francais’, *Journal de Psychologie Normale et Pathologique*, no. 25.
pp.228-254.


Dodd, E. 1992 *The Veiled Mirror and The Woman Poet, H.D., Louise Bogan, Elizabeth

University Press.

Duplessis, R. and Friedman, S. 1981 ‘“Woman is Perfect” : H.D.’s Debate with Freud’,
*Feminist Studies*, vol. 7, part 3, Fall, pp. 407-’16.

Durie, R. 1998 *Face to Face, directions in contemporary women’s portraiture*. London,
Scarlet Press.

*Shifting Eyes* : Bibliography 305
Evans, D. 1998 ‘From Kantian Ethics to Mystical Experience’ : An Exploration of Jouissance’.  


Follain, C. 1997 ‘Constructing a profile of resistance : Lucy Schwob and Suzanne Malherbe as  
paradigmatic résistantes’, University of Sussex, (unpub).


Freud, S. 1924-’34 Gesammelte Schriften. Liepzig/Vienna/Zürich, Internationaler  
Psychoanalytischer Verlag. 12 vols. Abbr. as G.S.


(1871-1881) 1990 The Letters of Sigmund Freud to Eduard Silberstein 1871-1881.  

University Press.


(1887-1902b) 1954 The Origins of Psycho-Analysis, Letters to Wilhelm Fliess, Drafts  
and Notes : 1887-1902, trans. Mosbacher and Strachey, (ed) Bonaparte,M.,  

(1887-1904) 1985 The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887-  

University Press.


Frankfurt, Fisher Verlag.


(1924c) ‘A Note Upon the “Mystic Writing Pad”’. S.E., Vol., XIX. pp.225-’32.
(1931a) 'Über die Weibliche Sexualität'. G.S. Vol. 12, pp. 120-’40.
(1931b) 'Female Sexuality'. S.E. Vol. XXI, pp. 223-243.
1990 Penelope’s Web, Gender, Modernity, H.D. ’s Fiction. Cambridge, University of Cambridge Press.
Friedman, S. and Duplessis, R., 1990a (ed.) Signets Reading H.D. Wisconsin. University of Wisconsin Press,
(1921b) Hymen, in H.D. 1912-'44 pp. 99-143

Shifting Eyes : Bibliography
(1958) 1979 End to Torment. New York, New Directions.

manuscripts


Shifting Eyes : Bibliography
Kuhn, T. 1962 The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.


1996 *H.D. and the Victorian Fin de Siècle, Gender, Modernism, Decadence*. Cambridge, C.U.P.


*Shifting Eyes : Bibliography*

papers
(1867a) ‘On a New List of Categories’. *C.P.* [1.545-559 except 549n1].
(1867b) ‘Upon Logical Comprehension and Extension’. *C.P.* [2.391-426].

*The order of citation of the references to *The Collected Papers, CP*, follows the chronology of the manuscripts.

*Shifting Eyes*: Bibliography 312
(1868) ‘Some Consequences of Four Capacities’. C.P. [5.264-317].
(1885b) ‘One Two Three : Fundamental Categories of Thought and of Nature’. C.P. [1.369- 1.372 and 1.376-8].
(1895a) ‘That Categorical and Hypothetical propositions are one in essence, with some connected matters.’ C.P. [2.332-339, 2.278-280, 1.564-567, 2.340-356].
(1896) ‘The Logic of Mathematics ; An Attempt to Develop My Categories from Within’. C.P.[1.417-520]
(1897) ‘A Fragment on semiotics’. C.P.[2.227-229, 2.441n1]
(1902b) ‘Minute Logic’, chapter one. C.P. [2.1-118]
(1903a) ‘Lowell Lectures’, a series of lectures delivered at Harvard University.
(1903d) Lectures on Pragmatism, Harvard University. March-May.
(1905a) ‘Phaneroscopy or the Natural History of Concepts’. C.P.[1.332-336].
(1905b) ‘The Relation of Betweenness and Royce’s O-Collections.’ C.P. [1.336].
(1906a) ‘Pragmatism.’ C.P. [5.11-.13, 5.464-496].
(1906b) ‘Prolegomena to an Apology for Pragmaticism’. C.P. [4.530-572].

manuscripts
(1857) ‘The Synonyms of the English language classed according to their meaning on
a definite and stated philosophy’ Oct. 13th. IB2 Box 8.
(1861b) ‘Principles’, August 21st. IB2 Box 8.
(1861c) ‘Modus of the It’, IB2 Box 8.
(1865a) ‘New List’ Nov. 14th. draft D4.
(1865b) ‘Logic’.

correspondence
Princeton, Princeton University Press.
Maya Deren, Cindy Sherman Cambridge, Mass. MIT/ N.Y., New York
University/Miami, Museum of Contemporary Art. pp.3-26.
Ricoeur, P. 1977 *The Rule of Metaphor*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press.

Riviere, J. 1929 ‘Womanliness as Masquerade’, *JAPA*, X pp.303-313.


Stewart, D. 1818 *Philosophical Essays*. Edinburgh, A. Constable.


