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# Modern Fools:
# An Errant Journey
# from the Quixotic to the Kafkaesque

A thesis submitted to the School of Languages, Literatures and Cultural Studies, University of Dublin, Trinity College for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in May 2013

Michael Pyper

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# SUMMARY

The work of Cervantes and Kafka would appear to have little basis for comparison on initial inspection. However, by means of a very close reading of, and dialogue between, Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka's *Das Urteil* and *Der Proceß*, I set out in this study to illustrate a very substantial narrative that is shared between both authors' work. The basis of our juxtaposition is the short aphorism, "Die Wahrheit über Sancho Panza", which proves Kafka's familiarity with Cervantes' novel and, it is argued, his understanding thereof. This aphorism is brought into dialogue with psychoanalytic theory, with a particular emphasis upon Norman O. Brown's reinterpretation of the Oedipus complex as the fantasy of being the father of oneself or *causa sui*. In addition, through a similarly close reading of selected theoretical texts, with a particular emphasis on the work of Michel Foucault, it will be argued that this shared narrative is an excellent allegory for the narrative of 'modernity', that is: for the 300 years of European intellectual and cultural developments that separate Cervantes and Kafka.

This dissertation's contribution to knowledge consists in illustrating the intersection between Cervantes' and Kafka's primary texts to an unprecedented degree. As such, it builds upon and is complementary to the one existing monograph that specifically juxtaposes Cervantes and Kafka: Marthe Robert's *The Old and the New: From Don Quixote to Kafka*. Where Robert focuses primarily on meta-literary issues (the correspondence of literature and life since the advent of the novel, the status of literary truth), the present dissertation will take one of Robert's more pressing concerns, the passage from the epic to the modern world, and reframe it as a more general crisis of subjectivity.

At issue in all of our texts is the modern form of subjectivity that we will characterise as 'errant'. The principal characteristics of the 'errant' subject are its fantasy of self-causation and unreal mastery on the one hand, and its inherent regressiveness and morbidity on the other.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Caitriona Leahy, without whose outstanding supervision this project would not have been possible. Dr. Leahy has overseen this project since its infancy as an undergraduate dissertation in 2006. In that time, she has been a tremendous source of insight, encouragement and invaluable feedback, giving generously of her scarce time.

I would also like to thank Ritchie Robertson and Peter Arnds for their initial feedback when the project was at its early stages. Thanks are also due, of course, to my examiners, Prof. Bernard McGuirk and Dr. Barry Murnane, for their kind words and invaluable feedback.

I would particularly like to thank the Irish Research Council for Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) for its extremely generous support of my research. The IRCHSS funds leading-edge research in the Humanities and Social Sciences, including Law and Business Studies. Its primary strategic objective centres on building an expertise-driven research system in order to enhance Ireland's innovation capacity and skills base in a rapidly-changing global environment where knowledge is key to economic, social and cultural development. IRCHSS is further committed to facilitating the integration of Irish researchers in the humanities and social sciences within the European Research Area.

To my wife Laura, thank you so much for your patience.

Finally, I would like to thank my mother and father, to whom I owe my very existence. To my mother, for passing on the language gene, to my dad for all the encouragement and support he gave me throughout the years. I will be eternally grateful.

# CONTENTS


ABBREVIATIONS v

INTRODUCTION 1

*Comparing Cervantes and Kafka: Aims* *1*
*The Precedent: Marthe Robert's The Old and the New: From Don Quixote to Kafka* *2*
*A (Conditional) Defence of Theoretical Approaches to Literature* *8*
*The Errant Path: A Circular Outline* *14*
*Norman O. Brown: The Causa Sui Project* *15*
*Jouissance: Super-ego and Mother* *20*
*Susan Bordo: The 17th Century Scientific Revolution as Causa Sui Fantasy* *24*
*Chapter Structure* *31*

I: APROPOS OF DON QUIJOTE'S 'FLIGHT FROM THE FEMININE' 33

*Cultural context: Ruth El Saffar and the Evolution of Modern Consciousness* *33*
*Idealized Femininity and the Flight from the Feminine* *36*
*A Fight from Death or a Death Wish?* *37*
*From the Procreating Earth to Immaculate Conception* *38*
*A Flight from Fatherhood* *42*
*Self-causation and Mastery as 'Masculinisation'* *45*
*Hubris and God as Punishing Super-ego* *51*
*Exception: Don Quijote as Law unto Himself* *52*
*Justice as Self-Punishment* *59*
*The Idealised Woman as Mother in disguise* *65*
*Oedipal Idolatry* *68*
*Woman and Self-Constitution* *71*
*Woman and the Death Wish* *75*
*Arcadia Revisited* *78*
*Don Quijote Part II: A Journey to the "Realm of the Mothers"* *80*
*The Scholar as Knight: Samsón Carrasco as Don Quijote's Double* *82*
*White Moons and Mirrors: Don Quijote's self-defeat* *86*
*The Cave of Montesinos:Return to the Womb and Return of the Repressed* *89*
*Deathbed Repentance and Reconciliation with Name* *93*

II:"*DER PROCEß* GEHT INS *URTEIL* HINÜBER" ERRANT RETURNS IN KAFKA'S *URTEIL* AND *PROCEß* 96

*Aims and Outline* 96
*The "Unsalvageable" Self and Crisis of Language* 98
*Ghosts and Shadows* 100
*Chivalric Romance and Romanticism: Don Quijote as prototypical "Shadow of Modernity"* 103
*Homesick in Prague* 108
*The difference between Sancho Panza and Georg Bendemann* 111
*Georg Bendemann's Flight from the Feminine* 114
*"Das besondere Korrespondenzverhältnis":The Friend in Russia* 119
*Causa Sui: Georg Bendemann, the Self-made Man* 127
*Guilty Patricide* 128
*Father and Friend: The Return of the Repressed* 134
*Compelling Jouissance: The Judgement reads: "Enjoy!"* 138
*Unschuldiges Kind* and *Teuflischer Mensch* 142
*Narrative Perspective* 143
*Das Urteil geht in den Proceß über: Arrested Development* 144
*Uncanny Returns: The Trial and the "Journey to the Mother"* 146
*The Court and Indirect compulsion* 155
*Delusions of Agency?* 157
*Errancy and Self-defeat* 160
*Delusions of Victimization* 170
*Beyond Morality* 173
*The Guilt of Innocence* 175
*Agency Before the Law* 183
*Justice: The Reward for K.'s Folly* 186

III: THE JUDGEMENT ON MODERNITY 192

*Foucault's Renaissance: A Maternal Utopia?* 194
*Continuity of Man with the Universe* 198
*The Whole as Jouissance* 199
*The Renaissance approach to signification and its relationship to the semiotic modality* 201
*God as Name: Linguistic mediation and prohibition* 203
*The change of Episteme: The Crisis of the Renaissance Subject and the Fall into Modernity* 210
*Don Quijote as Foucault's Shadow of Modernity* 212
*Enlightenment and the 'Father of Oneself' project* 220
*"Das besondere Korrespondenzverhältnis": the Dialectic of Myth and Enlightenment* 224
*Justice: The self-constitution of the Sovereign Subject as Homo Sacer* 226
*Irresistible Return* 229
*The Errant Path of Enlightenment* 233

CONCLUSION 236

BIBLIOGRAPHY 245

# ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| BON | Kafka, Franz. *Blue Octave Notebook*, Cambridge, Mass: Exact Change, 1991. |
| CMT | Bordo, Susan R. "The Flight from the Feminine and the Cartesian Masculinisation of Thought" in *Signs* Vol. 11: 3 (Spring, 1986), pp. 439-456 |
| DE | Horkheimer, Max, Theodor W. Adorno, and Gunzelin Noerr. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2002. |
| Diar | Kafka, Franz *Diaries 1910-1923* New York: Schocken, 1976. |
| DP | Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison*. 2nd Vintage Books ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1995. |
| DQj | Cervantes, Miguel de. *El ingenioso hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Paris: Feedbooks, 1605/1615. |
| DQx | Cervantes, Miguel de, and Edith Grossman, *Don Quixote*. London: Vintage, 2004. |
| EB | Hofmannsthal, Hugo von. *Gesammelte Werke* in *Einzelausgaben. Prosa II.* Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer,1976, pp. 7-20 |
| J | Kafka, Franz. "The Judgment" in *The Complete Stories* New York: Schocken, 1971, pp.101-113 |
| MC | Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: a History of Insanity in the Age of Reason.*. London: Routledge, 1995. |
| OHG | Kafka, Franz. Oktavheft G, http://www.kafka.org/index.php?ohg |
| ON | Robert, Marthe. The Old and the New: from Don Quixote to Kafka. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977. |
| OT | Foucault, Michel. *The Order of Things: an Archaeology of the Human Sciences.*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994. |
| P | Kafka, Franz. *Der Proceß. Kritische Ausgabe* New York: Schocken, 1990. |
| Tag | Kafka, Franz. *Tagebücher 1909-1923*. Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1997. |
| T | Kafka, Franz. *The Trial: A New Translation Based on the Restored Text* (Trans: Breonn Mitchell). New York: Schocken, 1998 |

U Kafka, Franz, *Sämtliche Erzählungen* Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer, 1970, pp.23-32

# INTRODUCTION

*Comparing Cervantes and Kafka: Aims*

*Quixotic* and *Kafkaesque*: besides being arguably the two most evocative and commonly employed adjectives of literary extraction, taking inspiration from unarguably two of the most important authors within the Western literary canon, little would appear to unite them. *Quixotic* signifies the quality of heroic foolishness, lofty idealism leading inevitably to failure. The *Kafkaesque*, by contrast, refers to madness of an altogether different kind: the vision of a world gone mad; rational, quotidian reality transformed into bureaucratic nightmare. Little would appear, at first glance, to unite Cervantes' and Kafka's oeuvre thematically: on the one hand, an impoverished country gentleman of around fifty reads too many chivalric *romances* and metamorphoses into an idealistic knight errant, battling giants, serving damsels and trying in vain to restore the fallen present, the "Age of Iron", to the Golden Age, when all was peace and harmony; and on the other hand, a young businessman, chief bank-clerk or travelling salesman find their routine lives turned upside down by extraordinary revenant interventions, whether through the nightmarish resurgence of an elderly father, arrest by a mysterious officialdom or metamorphosis into vermin. Little would appear to connect the authors: an unambiguously Spanish, patriotic war veteran writing from his prison cell, and a lawyer/insurance clerk of liminal German-Jewish-Czech identity pursuing his literary obsession in his free time. Furthermore, little would appear to connect Cervantes and Kafka as far as time and place are concerned: Spain at the turn of the 17$^{th}$ century and Prague in the early years of the 20$^{th}$.

Nonetheless, the principal aim of this dissertation is to demonstrate the existence of a substantial thematic intersection between Cervantes' Don Quijote and Kafka's *Das Urteil* (*The Judgement*) and *Der Proceß* (*The Trial*). This intersection will set out from the limited available proof of Kafka's familiarity with Don Quijote: his brief aphorism entitled "Die Wahrheit über Sancho Pansa" ("The Truth about Sancho Panza"). In addition, it will be argued that the narrative that Cervantes' and Kafka's texts have in common is an excellent allegory for the narrative of 'modernity', that is: for the 300 years European intellectual and cultural developments that separate Cervantes and Kafka.

At issue in all of our texts will be a form of subjectivity that we will characterise as 'errant'. The principal characteristics of the 'errant' subject are its fantasy of self-causation and unreal mastery on the one hand, and its inherent regressiveness and morbidity on the other. This dissertation's contribution to knowledge consists, firstly, in illustrating the intersection between Cervantes' and Kafka's primary texts to an unprecedented degree. As such, it builds upon and is complementary to the one existing monograph that specifically juxtaposes Cervantes and Kafka: Marthe Robert's *The Old and the New: From Don Quixote to Kafka.* Where Robert focuses primarily on meta-literary issues (the correspondence of literature and life since the advent of the novel, the status of literary truth), the present dissertation will take one of Robert's more pressing concerns, the passage from the epic to the modern world, and reframe it as a more general crisis of subjectivity.

Nonetheless, the basis for their juxtaposition is stronger than one might initially suppose. For a start, Kafka's intriguing aphorism on Don Quijote "Die Wahrheit über Sancho Pansa", to be discussed in more detail later in this introduction, leaves us in no doubt about Kafka's familiarity with Cervantes' novel. Furthermore, neither the association nor the juxtaposition of Cervantes and Kafka are without precedent. Both Ritchie Robertson and Marthe Robert have written on Kafka's affinity with Don Quijote (rather than with Cervantes the author, it should here be emphasised). Beginning briefly with Robertson's brief article, Don Quijote serves Kafka on various levels as a figure with which he identifies his own literary calling. As the 'daemonic' counterpart to Sancho Panza, Robertson suggests that Kafka sees in Quijote's quest the dangerous and possibly futile attempt to gain access to the spiritual world, with which he evidently identifies his own situation as a writer:

> Die Gestalt Don Quixotes dient Kafka als ein Mittel, eine Gruppe quälender Probleme, die ihm sehr am Herzen lagen, zu veranschaulichen: vor allem die Frage, ob er sein Leben einem Ziel widmen sollte, das ihm vielleicht von einer hoheren Macht auferlegt worden war und sich doch als Täuschung entpuppen konnte.[1]
>
> The figure of Don Quijote serves Kafka as a means of illustrating a number of problems that weighed heavy on his heart: in particular, the question of whether he should dedicate his life to what might have been a calling from a higher power, but could yet turn out to be an illusion.

*The Precedent: Marthe Robert's The Old and the New: From Don Quixote to Kafka*

The more substantial and more daring attempt to juxtapose Cervantes and Kafka, however, comes from Marthe Robert, author of what is, to my knowledge, the only comparative

[1] Robertson, Ritchie. "Kafka und Don Quixote", *Neophilologus,* 69 (1985), pp.17-24

monograph published to date. The English translation of Marthe Robert's *The Old and the New: From Don Quixote to Kafka* appeared in 1977,[2] following the publication of the original French title *L'ancien et le nouveau, de Don Quichotte à Franz Kafka* ten years earlier. From the book's title, we can already note that Robert is juxtaposing Don Quijote and Kafka, rather than Cervantes and Kafka as authors. Kafka's affinity, Robert claims, is with the project of Quixotism, her concept of which will be expounded shortly, rather than with Cervantes as an artist. Where the matter of influence is discussed, it is in relation to influences that are common to both authors' oeuvre, specifically: their inspiration by the Homeric epic. Just as for Horkheimer and Adorno in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, the adventures of Odysseus serve as the common framework for illustrating the survival of the epic in the modern age of literature, the degraded epic (ON,1).

Juxtaposed in the book are Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka's *Das Schloss*, a juxtaposition that Robert more than succeeds in justifying as the book progresses, for reasons to be explained. Underpinning Robert's analysis of both novels is a "Quixotism" that consists of two overarching concepts. Firstly, there is a doubling, or "functional identity" (ON,13), of the author and his protagonist, who are somehow engaged in the same mission, Consequently, Robert's reading of both novels has a heavily meta-literary focus and the quest of both protagonists is conceived as a literary one. This task is the second pillar of Robert's Quixotism: the interrogation of literary truth, the justification of literature, the testing of literary truths against life itself and, perhaps most pertinently, a common nostalgia for the age of the epic, a mythical prehistory in which absolute order prevailed, in which literature and life coincided perfectly and in which literary truths guided the real lives of men with authority.

This being so, we cannot fail to note the similarity between Robert's discourse on the degradation of the epic world to novel modernity, directed specifically towards her comparative project, and the manner in which Mikhail Bakhtin and, in particular, György Lukács, treat the origins of the novel out of the epic world. György Lukács has explicitly located *Don Quijote* at a similar historical-epistemological juncture, reflected at the level of genre in the shift from the epic to the novel, of which *Don Quijote* is generally regarded as marking the advent. For Lukács, the novel is "an expression of transcendental homelessness" reflecting an age in which "the extensive totality of life" that was expressed by epic forms is no longer given.[3]

Through exploration of the novel's evolution as a genre between Cervantes and Kafka and the aspirations of both authors to restore, to varying degrees, the unity of literature and life,

---

[2] Robert, Marthe. *The old and the new: from Don Quixote to Kafka*. Berkeley: University of California Press (1977)

[3] Lukács, György. *The Theory of the Novel; a Historico-philosophical Essay on the Forms of Great Epic Literature*, p.46

Robert explores the specifically aesthetic dimensions of a more far-reaching and multidimensional problem. This problem will also be a constant of the present dissertation and will be explored more generally, from a number of different perspectives. We will consider it as a persistent, time- and place-transcending (if not absolutely universal, then at least fundamental to the European tradition) aspect of the human character and the human experience, and one which has underpinned modernity since its inception: the problem of "transcendental homelessness" and consequent *Heimweh*, which will later reach the peak of its expression in Josef K.'s longing return to his mother's "unchanging village". It is this "Quixotic" desire itself (rather than just its literary implications – for its implications reach far beyond the aesthetic), that is under scrutiny in this thesis, albeit with a very different emphasis and from a rather different perspective.

This Quixotic project of imitation forms the axis of Robert's comparison and, whilst the similarities are not initially obvious (one would not expect Cervantes' and Kafka's work to contain overly obvious affinities), they are amply reflected in Robert's analogies between the two protagonists. Like Don Quijote, K.'s project is one of imitation. K., in Robert's view, is a surveyor of books and literary precedents, just as Quijote is a literary knight errant. Like Don Quijote, the thoroughly modern and uprooted K. is engaged in an impossible quest in which he inevitably fails. On the one hand, he seeks to obtain access to the mysterious Castle, a symbol of the Absolute, of which many different versions exist. On the other hand, he pursues the equally elusive goal of recovering a *Heimat*, of blending into, gaining acceptance within and deciphering the archaic system of power relations and social cohesiveness within an uncanny village.

However, the differences between the two protagonists' imitative projects is also marked, belonging as they do to differing stages in modernity or, we could express it otherwise, to different stages in the cycle of homelessness and homesickness. On the one hand, *Don Quijote* heralds the transition from the old to the new order, as Lukács had already identified, from imitation to representation. Quijote attests to the loss of an epic recent past, reflected however imperfectly in the tales of Amadis and those of his ilk, and inaugurates the troubled, "modern" era, an era of unbridled individualism in which Quijote himself is implicated, "the era, simply, of literature" (ON,1). Quixotic imitation, in Robert's view, serves a mediating function between the old and the new orders and is compared to the mimicry of elders that is practised by children on their passage to adulthood. As such, it is internally divided in Robert's view. On the one hand, Quixotism is a childlike, Romantic nostalgia, the dream of restoring the lost Golden Age, of recovering the "epic norm" that once sustained literature and life, "and for Cervantes is now a distant memory" (ON,153). This corresponds to the more conventional understanding of the Quixotic project, and Robert duly notes the Romantic legacy left by Don

Quijote in modernity. However, Robert also finds an opposed facet of the Quixotic impulse, a more self-critical one that recognises the project's limitations:

> ... a recognition that its irresistible nostalgia has no legitimate force in real life ... For him ... antiromanticism is not a matter of conviction, but an unfathomable internal debate that he can settle only by allowing himself to speak as the romantic that he is without restraint or dissembling. (ON,43)

Now, this version of "Quixotism" may very well reflect an internal romantic/antiromantic division on the part of Cervantes the author, but where does the protagonist Don Quijote himself express this self-critical attitude? Marthe Robert does not furnish any solid proof to support such an unconventional claim which, in my view, constitutes one of the main limitations of *The Old and the New*: bold, highly suggestive claims and frequently brilliant insights are rarely justified by detailed reference to the primary texts. This may reflect an 'older' approach to literary criticism more common at the time of writing but, considering the boldness of her claims, the results are not always convincing. The juxtaposition of Cervantes and Kafka would hence benefit from a more detailed textual explication. Granted, Robert makes reference, in this case, to Don Quijote's individualism, ironic self-consciousness and notes that these qualities make him "the negation of all the Ithacas" he would like to restore (ON,153). However, she does not provide a convincing basis for concluding that Don Quijote himself shares Cervantes' self-critical, ironic attitude, nor does she succeed in convincing the sceptical reader that Cervantes does not teach these critical lessons at his protagonist's expense.

Robert alludes to, but does not articulate thoroughly, the fact that there are two distinct objects of nostalgia that come into conflict (though only superficially) in the Quixotic project, two distinct Golden Ages. Even the age that is object of nostalgia itself has its antecedent. The first is a state of things mirrored, however poorly, in the outdated romances of chivalry – an age in which heroic action is possible, in which an absolute, epic order prevails and in which the earthly order is made to conform to the order of the Gods (ON,133). This is not an ideal, morally exemplary order by any means, but an order that *just is*. To express this order is to express an absolute truth: a descriptive statement of an order, both mundane and divine, that simply *is* rather than a prescriptive order of how things should be *ideally*. Set against this, however, is another Golden Age, a utopia that, as Marthe Robert herself only briefly observes, is an anterior object of nostalgia even for the epic age itself (ON,101). This is a pre-Olympian age prior to any order, an age as idyllic as it is monstrous, and embodied in the form of the Sirens and Cyclops. Now, Robert does note the correspondence of this particular nostalgia to *Don Quijote* but understands it as an occasional aberration, one that, for example, motivates Quijote's desire to become a shepherd. Our analysis will demonstrate that Robert overlooks the

role that Don Quijote's departure from, and return to, the (imitation of a) Golden Age idyll plays in structuring the novel as an imaginary paradise lost and to be regained.

Where our analysis will also differ markedly from that of Robert is in the degree to which the project of Quixotism is actually endorsed. Despite acknowledging the misguidedness of his actions, Robert remains sympathetic not merely to Don Quijote the human being, but to Quixotic desire itself. "It would be wrong," Robert writes, "to assume that Don Quixote is mistaken in his desires" (ON,161). Don Quijote's foolishness consists, in her view, merely in pushing his idealism too far, in the extent to which he insists upon *right* principles and *fine* ideas to which everyone else merely pays lip service (ON,159). Robert thus appears to endorse, or at least fails to criticise sufficiently, the notion of one man coercively passing off his own ideas of the Good, as absolute. For all the theological implications of his quest,[4] Don Quijote's desires constitute the height of *hubris*, as we will argue in the first chapter. Granted, Robert does acknowledge the complicity between epic totality and totalitarianism, which reaches its peak in the work of Kafka (ON,251). She even recognises that Don Quijote would have been downright dangerous had he possessed any genuine wealth or power. However, the knight is saved (or: the world is saved from him) by a combination of his essential benevolence and, even more significantly, his fundamental impotence (ON,140). However, what happens if Quixotic desire is *not* constrained by goodness and impotence and does not remain merely an innocuous presence at the margins of the social order? The answer, as we will argue, is modernity. Furthermore, whilst Don Quijote's impotence may spare the world from major consequences, what of the consequences for Don Quijote himself? As will become apparent in our discussion, if Cervantes sets out to portray an absolute order (however fragmented and only to the best of his considerable ability) then it is an order that makes of Don Quijote its scapegoat. However, criticising Quixotic desire need imply neither viewing Quijote as a figure of fun, nor standing over him in judgment and condemning him. If we are to take Cervantes' novel as a substantially tragic tale, as I will maintain we should, then surely this cautionary end would not be served anywhere near as effectively if Don Quijote and Sancho Panza were to be stripped of their humanity and reduced to stock figures representing, for example, archaic theological dogmatism and Enlightened humanism respectively. The story could have nowhere near the same impact if the reader could not identify with the humanity and essential goodness that are Don Quijote's redeeming features, in other words: if good people did not see themselves implicated in Don Quijote's self-defeat. Even then, the glorification of such self-defeat itself persists in some quarters. Marthe Robert's analysis allows us to formulate a tentative answer to

[4] Robert goes as far to claim that the theology and religious practice of Cervantes' time is implicated in Quixotism, such that if we conclude that if Cervantes was criticising Quixotism, we must conclude he was also attacking the religious establishment of his time

the problem posed by James A. Parr in *Don Quijote, Don Juan and Related Subjects*: how to explain the fact that a novel that, in his view, warns "so clearly" against the dangers of utopian desire continues to spawn such a litany of idealistic interpretations some 400 years later. "It is difficult," writes Parr, "to explain such a signal failure on the part of a master narrator to communicate a fairly transparent message to otherwise perspicacious readers."[5] The provisional answer to be offered here and substantiated by the rest of this thesis, is as follows: Parr fatally underestimates the compelling power of the Quixotic impulse itself. [6] Quixotism itself has an appeal that is impervious to mere dissuasion, such that it can arouse the sympathy and admiration of even some of the novel's very best interpreters. For the Quixotic impulse is one that renews itself with each childhood and is overcome to varying degrees in each.

Robert begins her analysis of Kafka's *Das Schloß* by drawing broad similarities between its protagonist, K., and Don Quijote, as already outlined above. However, the differences are, as one might expect, considerable. This is where Robert most clearly addresses the pressing matter of accounting for the 300 or so years dividing *Don Quijote* and *Das Schloß*. Whereas the recently foreclosed Don Quijote can content himself with a singular imitative model in his pursuit of epic order, Kafka's protagonist is far more 'homeless' and far more disinherited, living in a world in which these qualities have become the rule rather than the exception. Furthermore, he has far more freedom to choose his imitative model and his choice of precedents has grown exponentially with 300 years of literary history behind him. This is reflected, according to Robert, in "an endless journey through centuries of books" (ON,202). K.'s imitative quest self-consciously transcends many different genres by taking as its object a motif shared by all: a castle. Thus Kafka's *Das Schloß* tries on for size not only the chivalric novel but also the fairytale, the grail quest, the novel of manners and the scientific novel, amongst others. Like Dulcinea, the object of Don Quijote's impossible quest, the symbolism of this castle has been subject to various ephemeral interpretations, generally some figuration of the Absolute, Divine Grace and Justice being two well-known variants.

However, for all the dabbling in more contemporary genres, Robert insists that the epic remains Kafka's preferred imitative model in *Das Schloß*, not merely for the purpose of "paying homage", but in a similar quest to harmonize books and life, "to articulate a universal truth" (ON,222). Inevitably, K. is no more successful in his futile quest to obtain access to the castle

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[5] Parr, James A. *Don Quijote, Don Juan and Related Subjects*, p.127

[6] Another, more obvious answer, of course, is that people read texts heterogeneously, will not necessarily accept a book's 'message' uncritically and might simply not accept the authority of Cervantes' appraisal of his hero. Miguel de Unamuno is one well-known example that Marthe Robert cites of a critic who praises the hero over the author. Unamuno attributes the creation of *Don Quixote* to the genius of the Spanish spirit rather than Cervantes' own creativity, even going so far as to accuse the author of being too mean-spirited to comprehend his protagonist's genius.

and uncover the primitive order of things governing social intercourse in the uncanny, pre-modern village than Don Quijote is in trying to disenchant Dulcinea. However, the conclusion drawn here is not simply the incommensurability of the epic and the Modern. K's adventures do not succeed in the impossible task of uncovering the hidden, archaic order – instead, they reveal the extent to which the Modern world never truly abandoned the old in the first place:

> The spell of the old transforms laws, ideals and pragmatic goals of the past into a legitimate order, while the problems of the present are thought to follow this well-known models and so to be solved in advance ... Throughout Kafka's work, the latent power of the old, the survival of archaic, hidden laws ... intervenes to distort life in the present and drive the individual to despair. (ON,276)

What Kafka does succeed in uncovering, through K.'s futile quest, is the dialectical relationship between the old and the new that bears striking resemblance to that drawn between Enlightenment and classical myth by Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.[7] Just as Horkheimer and Adorno use the figure of Odysseus to illustrate modern man's dialectic of progress and regression, so Robert notes that K. is "infinitely closer to Odysseus and the great Homeric figures than to the bourgeois hero who is always representative of his kind" (ON,224). Just as, for Horkheimer and Adorno, progress reverses into regression, so Robert writes that Kafka portrays a present merged with the past. Central to Robert's insight is the making sacred of profane people and objects, just as Horkheimer and Adorno wrote of the persistence of animism in Enlightenment, the belief in magical *mana*, in the commodity fetish.[8] Her analysis begins from the presumed separation of the Castle and the village, corresponding to an opposition of the divine and the human. However, she does this precisely for the purpose of subverting any such opposition. For K.'s adventures reveal that the castle and the village follow a similar hierarchy and order, thus resembling one other uncannily: "The castle and the village are not opposed like heaven and earth, but rather, like the old and the new, they are strikingly familiar, forever trying to disentangle themselves and remaining inextricably entwined" (ON,246). Divinity gives way to the diffusion of the sacred, such that the conflation of sacred and profane in the Modern era gives rise to a new form of Quixotic vision: "By treating the most ordinary places like sacred shrines ... the most degraded women like queens, the most bourgeois gentlemen like Gods, K. reveals one of the latent realities of his time" (ON,248). Whereas Don Quijote takes inns for castles, K. takes inns for what they are, but elevates them to the aristocratic dignity they possessed long ago: "Kings are created from functionaries" (ON,248).

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[7] Adorno, Theodor W. and Max Horkheimer. *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments*, p.12
[8] Adorno & Horkheimer, p.12

In her juxtaposition of Don Quijote and K., then, Marthe Robert traces the passage from the old to the new, which turns out to be a journey from "epic totality to modern totalitarianism, from Olympian order to bureaucratic tyranny." (ON,251) As this play on words suggests, this is a circular quantum leap: at once irreconcilably alienated from the old world, while maintaining one foot stuck therein.

*A (conditional) defence of theoretical approaches to literature*

Besides contributing to this dissertation the only (to my knowledge) monograph juxtaposing Kafka and Cervantes, Marthe Robert's *The Old and the New* provides us with a very useful preface to our methodological discussion. This discussion will focus upon the problem of relating literature to what is beyond itself – the matter of "interpreting". In a subchapter on previous interpretations of Kafka's *Castle* (those chosen being of an overwhelmingly theological orientation), Robert proclaims the futility of "interpreting" Kafka's work, meaning by this the choice of a theological, psychological or metaphysical framework to explain what Kafka 'really meant' by his allegorical novel (ON,192). For one thing, Robert writes, such approaches fall into a "trap of meanings" that Kafka deliberately sets for the reader (ON, 192). The reader falls into this trap by inevitably attempting to interpret the object of K.'s quest in terms of one discourse or another that is incapable of providing a key to the literary work in its entirety. In this sense, it has been suggested, the reader finds him- or herself in the position of K., engaged in a quest for meanings that must remain as incomplete as K.'s quest and, indeed, the novel itself. "[The] most ingenious explanations are false and the most honest are simply useless" (ON,192). Robert declares herself in favour of discarding all such allegorical approaches in favour of those that focus exclusively on the text, its content, its form and the unity between the two. Furthermore, she insists, to "translate" Kafka's writing into another "language", whether theological, psychological or sociological, is to do injury to his literary creativity by reducing him to "a thinker who had to clothe his ideas in novelistic garb" (ON,193).

Writing more than 50 years ago in 1961, Marthe Robert foreshadows a conflict in the study of literature that remains topical to this day. Theoretical approaches have enjoyed periods of greater and lesser popularity and over the last half century and have equally provoked hostility in some quarters. To cite a well-known example: in *The Western Canon*, written during a period in which theoretical approaches to literature seemed to enjoy an unprecedented level of popularity, Harold Bloom memorably coined the term "Flight from the Aesthetic" to refer to a tendency in literary criticism to substitute theoretical interpellation for philology, deeming

critics who engage in such approaches to belong to a "School of Resentment".[9] Where an interpreter seeks to advance a particular psychoanalytic or philosophical concept as the allegorical key to understanding an author's work, or, as is frequently the case, seeks to reduce an author's work to an ideology or school of thought, then such hostility is quite understandable.

However, the question of authorial intention, and to what extent this must be the object of critical enquiry, is crucial here. Robert quite clearly takes the author-centric view that the task of the literary scholar is to uncover the author's artistic intention and expound both the truth and aesthetic value of the work. Robert's objection to reducing Kafka to a mere thinker appears to be premised on a major assumption that is open to question and has indeed been vigorously questioned since Robert first wrote *The Old and the New*. This assumption is that all interpretations presume to be statements of what the author intended in writing the literary work and, as such, exclude all competing interpretations. Hence a psychoanalytic interpretation necessarily assumes that the author intended that his or her work be thus understood and excludes the possibility of, for example, a theological or biographical reading. A view such as Robert's leaves no room for the more humble project of considering the literary work from a mere *perspective*, which does not claim to be any more than a mere perspective. Nor do her charges of reductionism leave room for the possibility of a comparative *dialogue* between theoretical and literary treatments of certain problems, which may be mutually illuminating whilst respecting the difference between the two.The implication of this defence, however, is that theoretical approaches to literature must practice self-limitation and not presume to account for the literary work in its totality. Being specifically interested in the intersection of a novel with a certain other form of expression needs to be differentiated from the reduction of the literary work to abstract concepts.

Robert's objection to "interpretations" is founded on her concern to preserve the unity of form and content, which constitutes the beauty of the work. This, she insists, is "shattered" in the act of such translations (ON,193). This does not mean, however, that she is not, herself, choosing an interpretative framework in her own study. Robert does indeed interpret both Cervantes' and Kafka's work in such a way that preserves the unity between form and content. She accomplishes this by choosing to focus on meta-literary aspects of the works' content. The works in question undoubtedly invite such an approach, and Robert does achieve very admirable results. However, it strikes me as no more satisfactory to *reduce* either author's work to 'literature about literature', as Robert appears to do through her hostility to "translations", than it does to reduce it to an allegory for a specific idea.

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[9] Bloom, Harold. *The Western Canon*, p.4

Just as one might compare how two authors treat a particular aspect of the human experience,[10] might one not also compare how fictional and non-fictional texts do the same? Whilst I concur fully with Robert's objection to *reducing* a fictional work to a particular theoretical concept or, even, worse, interpreting a work as a simple and intentional allegory for such a concept, might not the similarities yet somehow be revealing? Given Robert's own expressed commitment to uncovering the truth of Kafka's and Cervantes' fiction, might she not acknowledge the potential fruitfulness of exploring, through intertextual dialogue, the existence of so many 'cognates' between the various discourses or "languages"? Concerned as she is with restoring the harmony between literature and life, why would she so jealously guard *l'art pour l'art* instead of testing it against discourses aimed at apprehending non-fictional life? Might not the reading of fictional with non-fictional discourses reveal how both, in differing ways, establish a shared truth by locating the point at which fictional and worldly truths intersect?

It is for this reason that Thomas Anz's proposition of a "Kooperationsmodell" between literature and psychoanalytic theory lends itself attractively to a defence of the dialogue between theory and literature, especially comparative literature. His excellent discussion also helps us to establish and legitimise the relationship between literature and theory as interlocutors that is proposed in this dissertation.[11] As Anz notes, psychoanalytic interpretations of literature are as old as psychoanalysis itself, since literature played a prominent role for Freud in illuminating his theoretical concepts. Crucial here is Freud's designation of the writers whose work he analysed as "... Vorläufer der Wissenschaft und so auch der wissenschaftlichen Psychologie" (forerunners of the sciences and thus also of scientific psychology) and "wertvolle Bundesgenossen" (valuable allies) who are, as Anz expresses it "... [beteiligt am] gemeinsamen Projekt der Erkündigung des Seelenlebens" (engaged in the shared project of investigating inner life).[12] Literature and psychoanalysis then are, in differing ways, engaged in the task of exploring the human character. If one accepts this claim, then it surely follows that both disciplines can be enriched by their mutual cooperation, as long as neither presumes to encroach fully on the other's territory. Furthermore, as to the question of authorial intention, Freud takes the position that the literary author's appropriation of psychological material is implicit or intuitive. Of his interpretation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, for example, he writes: "Ich denke nicht an Shakespeares bewußte Absicht, sondern glaube lieber, daß eine reale Begebenheit den Dichter zur Darstellung reizte, in dem das Unbewußte in ihm das Unbewußte im Helden

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[10] Using the example of Robert's own study, how Cervantes and Kafka treat the problems of imitation

[11] Anz, Thomas. "Praktiken und Probleme psychoanalytischer Literaturinterpretationen - am Beispiel von Kafkas Erzählung Das Urteil" in *Kafkas Urteil und die Literaturtheorie: Zehn Modellanalysen*, pp. 126-151; see in particular p.129. Anz's notion of cooperation could surely be extended to include theology, sociology or any other discourse that enquires into the human character at an individual or collective level

[12] Anz, p.130

verstand" [13] (I am not thinking of Shakespeare's conscious intention, but believe, rather, that a real event stimulated the poet to his representation, in that his unconscious understood the unconscious of his hero.[14]) However, just as Anz contends that we cannot presume to know what Kafka had in mind specifically when he cited his "Gedanken an Freud" (thoughts of Freud) in relation to the writing of *Das Urteil*, we certainly cannot hope to document falsifiably the contents of either Cervantes' or Kafka's unconscious based on their writing. For instance, does Kafka's *Brief an den Vater* document his own, biographical Oedipus complex or, bearing in mind his probable familiarity with Freud and the Oedipus complex, might such a portrayal have been just his intention? If the author's conscious thoughts in the act of writing are, as Anz claims, ultimately beyond our ken, then how can we presume to access his unconscious through his writing?

The more modest goal to be proposed here is one that Anz regards as the most common approach among scholars with psychoanalytic knowledge: to juxtapose one's own psychoanalytic knowledge with "... mehr oder weinger bewußten, der Psychoanalyse ähnlichen Wissen des Autors ..." (the author's more or less explicit knowledge that is similar to psychoanalysis).[15] Again, we encounter here the metaphor of translation, of literary psychology into the parlance of Freudian or Lacanian psychoanalysis. Kafka's *Das Urteil*, the object of both Anz's and our analysis, lends itself particularly well to such an approach since: "... die Themen, Motive und Konstellationen, für die sich die Psychoanalyse bevorzugt interessiert, hier leicht zu finden [sind]" (The themes, motifs and constellations that are of particular interest to psychoanalysis are easily found here)[16] The same, it will be argued in this dissertation, applies to *Don Quijote*, if much more diffusely and less obviously so. However, while Anz attributes this to the daydream-like narrative structure of Kafka's story, the same cannot be said of the mimetic *Don Quijote*. Nor can we ground a psychoanalytic reading of Cervantes' novel on some the other criteria laid out by Anz. In Kafka's case, both the extent of the author's conscious incorporation of psychoanalytic knowledge into his writing and the 'historical comparison' of his writing with Freudian thought are justifiable pursuits, since both arose more or less simultaneously and within broadly the same milieu. These approaches clearly do not get us very far with Cervantes, however.

It is here that we return to the status that Freud accorded to writers who preceded him by hundreds of years as "Vorläufer" and "Bundesgenossen".[17] Does Cervantes rank among

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[13] Anz, p.130
[14] Translation courtesy of: Masson, J.M. (1985) (Ed.) *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess, 1887-1904*
[15] Anz, p.131
[16] Anz, p.132
[17] Anz, p.130

these fellows? At least brief studies have commented on Freud's professed enthusiasm for Cervantes' work, including the eminent *Cervantista* Edward C. Riley, who suggests that this passion was the reason behind Freud's command of the Spanish language. Leon Grinberg and Juan Francisco Rodríguez, on the other hand, suggest that the knight's hallucinations and inner conflicts may have inspired Freud's thought, while even going so far as to suggest that he identified with Quijote in his mission to restore the subjective to a post-Cartesian world.[18] These testimonies establish beyond reasonable doubt that Freud was at least familiar with *Don Quijote* and more than likely read it. What did Freud take from Shakespeare and what did he take from Cervantes? If we accept that various Early Modern authors were his "Vorläufer", can we disentangle what he took from each author if he does not tell us explicitly? Short of a positive proof of the precise extent to which Cervantes inspired Freud, we are left with a scenario in which Freud *may* have drawn ideas from Cervantes and more than likely was consciously appropriated by his contemporary Kafka (though too what extent we cannot know exactly) who *may* also have been influenced directly by Cervantes.

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to disentangle whether the affinities between Cervantes and Kafka reveal a direct influence or simply a shared understanding of a particular set of relations or phenomena of the human character. It strikes me as a futile exercise in this case to locate the exact point at which influence ends and shared understanding or knowledge of certain relationships begins. Nor is it my intention to speculate on how Cervantes may have influenced Kafka artistically. Robert has already answered the question of the authors' aesthetic intersection with aplomb. Her thesis is that their aesthetic nexus lies in the imitation of epic models, that is: in a common imitative model rather than direct influence. Beyond Robert's focus on the problems of writing itself, this dissertation will further reveal the authors' common preoccupation with one particular dimension of the human condition. However, it does not follow that *Don Quijote* influenced Kafka's understanding and literary treatment of this problem. Indeed, the fact that Kafka can interpret *Don Quijote* with such a blend of authority and economy points towards his drawing upon other sources of wisdom and applying them to Cervantes' novel. This is not to deny that Kafka drew inspiration from the tale of *Don Quijote*. It is not difficult to understand the inspiration that the doubling of Don Quijote and Sancho Panza might have held for a personality as divided as Kafka, who claimed to consist of nothing but literature, but who equally lived as a modern Sancho Panza in the rational world of economic realities. The *Oktavheft* leaves us in little doubt as to which of the doubles Kafka identifies himself with more closely: "Das Unglück Don Quichotes ist nicht seine Phantasie,

[18] Riley, E.C.. "Cervantes, Freud, and Psychoanalytic Narrative Theory" Grinberg, Leo and Juan Francisco Rodriguez, "Cervantes as Cultural ancestor of Freud"

sondern Sancho Pansa"/ "Don Quijote's misfortune is not his imagination, but Sancho Panza." (OHG;[19] BON,15)

Our task will be rather to expound and validate his (our interpretation of his) understanding of *Don Quijote* through our own analysis. Kafka's aphorism about Don Quijote and Sancho Panza is much less an acknowledgement of influence by Cervantes' novel than it is an expression of his understanding. My chapter on Don Quijote aims to illustrate that Kafka understands *Don Quijote* very well indeed. This reading, in fact, provides the groundwork of our theoretical framework. My approach to both Cervantes and Kafka, will be to highlight a common narrative composed of problems and constellations that are similar, as suggested by Anz, to psychoanalytic theory and can be apprehended through that medium. Implied, of course, in this 'similarity' is that such problems and constellations are not the exclusive preserve of psychoanalytic discourse. For example, in *Don Quijote*, the mother and father figures concerned are not Alonso Quixano's biographical parents, about whom we are told next to nothing. Nor is the object of our enquiry Quixano's actual infancy and psychogenesis, about which we could at best resort to "ingenious extra-textual speculation."[20] Rather, the principles of motherhood and fatherhood are present in *Don Quijote* in more abstract terms. Motherhood is present (and absent) in an idealised, all-providing Great Mother (Earth) who presided over a Golden Age of peace and harmony, as well as her necessarily cruel and grotesque obverse. 'She' appears through the lens of a particularly deformed brand of subjectivity rather than as a figure in her own right. The father figure, meanwhile, is God Himself. Hereby accomplished is a triangulation that blurs the distinction between the 'family romance' and the spheres of mythology and religion, as we will also encounter in Susan Bordo's thesis, to be analysed below.

*The Errant Path: A circular outline*

Having outlined and justified the manner in which we intend to read the literature of Cervantes and Kafka with psychoanalytic theory, let us now establish in more detail the specific contents of the theoretical framework against which we will be placing our texts in dialogue with one another. We will begin with a concise outline of this framework in general terms, before introducing individual theoretical concepts and their interrelation in more detail. The basic coordinates of the 'errant path' and the basis for our dialogue between Cervantes and Kafka are, in fact, provided by Kafka's most substantial reference to *Don Quijote* in the aphorism "Die Wahrheit über Sancho Pansa":

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[19] http://www.kafka.org/index.php?ohg

[20] Parr, James A.. *Don Quixote: An Anatomy of Subversive Discourse*, pp.85-86

> Sancho Pansa, der sich übrigens dessen nie gerühmt hat, gelang es im Laufe der Jahre, in den Abend- und Nachtstunden, durch Beistellung einer Menge Ritter- und Räuberromane seinen Teufel, dem er später den Namen Don Quichote gab, derart von sich abzulenken, daß dieser dann haltlos die verrücktesten Taten ausführte, die aber mangels ihres vorbestimmten Gegenstandes, der eben Sancho Pansa hätte sein sollen, niemandem schadeten. Sancho Pansa, ein freier Mann, folgte gleichmütig, vielleicht aus einem gewissen Verantwortlichkeitsgefühl dem Don Quichote auf seinen Zügen und hatte davon eine große und nützliche Unterhaltung bis an sein Ende. (OHG)
>
> Sancho Panza, who, incidentally, never boasted of it, in the course of the years, by means of providing a large number of romances of chivalry and banditry to while away the evening and night hours, succeeded in diverting the attentions of his devil, to whom he later gave the game Don Quixote, from himself to such an extent that this devil then in unbridled fashion performed the craziest deeds, which however, for lack of a predetermined object, which should, of course, have been Sancho Panza, did nobody any harm. Sancho Panza, a free man, tranquilly, and perhaps out of a certain sense of responsibility, followed Don Quixote on his travels and had much and profitable entertainment. (BN,18)

While this aphorism purports to reveal a truth about Sancho, what interests us more at ths juncture is what is written about Don Quijote himself, his errant "Zügen" and what he embodies for Sancho. About Sancho's relationship to this daemon we will comment further both as a preface to our study of Kafka and in our conclusion. This, however, does not end Kafka's brief but extraordinarily rich thesis on Cervantes' novel. The continuation of the aphorism, not conventionally included as part of "Die Wahrheit über Sancho Pansa", but which directly follows it in the *Oktavheft II* and has received less critical attention, offers up the following:

> Eine der wichtigsten Don Quichotischen Taten, aufdringlicher als der Kampf mit der Windmühle, ist der Selbstmord. Der tote Don Quichote will den toten Don Quichote töten; um zu töten, braucht er aber eine lebendige Stelle, diese sucht er nun mit seinem Schwerte ebenso unaufhörlich wie vergeblich. Unter dieser Beschäftigung rollen die zwei Toten, als unauflöslicher Purzelbaum, durch die Zeiten. (OHG)
>
> One of the most important quixotic acts, more obtrusive than fighting the windmill, is: suicide. The dead Don Quixote wants to kill the dead Don Quixote; in order to kill, however, he needs a place that is alive, and this he searches for with his sword, both ceaselessly and in vain. Engaged in this occupation the two dead men, inextricably interlocked and positively bouncing with life, go somersaulting away down the ages. (BON,18)

In many ways, Kafka's aphorism on *Don Quijote* penetrates to the very core of my interpretation of both his and Cervantes' work. Let us here separate out the various implications about the errant path traced by Don Quijote. We do not need to penetrate too far below the surface of this short text to establish that Kafka views Don Quijote as the daemonic

part of Sancho Panza that the squire has cast out from himself. From a Freudian perspective, the idea of the daemon evokes uncanniness, and is consistent with both the ideas of doubling and repetition that are to the fore in the aphorism. Since Sancho himself ought to have been the target of the daemon's crazy deeds, we can deduce that this daemonic part of Sancho's self is of a self-destructive disposition. The link between Don Quijote, as daemon, and self-destructive impulses is strongly reinforced in the continuation of the aphorism, as Kafka claims that the essence of Quixotism is the death wish. There is even more than this to Quijote's daemonic disposition. As well as appearing to suggest that Quijote is a double of Sancho, Kafka the proceeds to divide Quijote himself into two warring, dead *Doppelgänger* fighting to the death. Furthermore, Quijote emerges from a lifeless state for the sole purpose of killing himself. The final point to emphasise is circularity of this daemonic self-destruction, its repetition, ad infinitum, throughout the ages.

Our immediate task is to translate the above, Kafka's reading of *Don Quijote*, into a substantial theoretical framework upon which to also base the proposed dialogue between Cervantes' and Kafka's writing. The core of my argument in this dissertation is that a broadly similar narrative drama is played out not only in Cervantes' and Kafka's literary works, but also, in differing forms, in the cultural and historical background. This will become most apparent in the final chapter, "The Judgement on Modernity", which theorises the 'bigger picture' of modernity from c.1600 to c.1900, but will also be demonstrated with reference to the more immediate contexts in which Cervantes and Kafka wrote.

*Norman O. Brown: The* Causa Sui *Project*

Mainstream psychoanalytic theory, whether Freudian or Lacanian (or a derivative of either), insists on the necessity of differentiating from the mother in order to become a subject. Both Freud and Lacan, in varying tones, emphasise the agency of the father in effecting the infantile subject's separation from the mother as an outcome of the Oedipus complex. According to Freud, to provide a brief outline, the child experiences sexual desire towards the parent of the opposite sex and enters into rivalry with the parent of the same sex, in which he or she inevitably comes off worse. In the case of males, the fear of castration at the hands of the father forces him to renounce his desire.[21] Lacan, in turn, systematically modifies the Oedipus complex to conceive of it less as a crisis that must be resolved in order for the child to enable 'normal' psychosexual development, but as a triadic structure into which he must enter and remain to enable both adult sexuality and symbolic exchange through the medium of

[21] Freud, "A Seventeenth-Century Demonological Neurosis" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Vol. XIX*, p.90

language.[22] The father acts as the third, mediating term that intervenes in the imaginary 'dual relation' between mother and child, that prohibits incest. Castration, in the Lacanian account, refers less to the fear of losing the organ than to the impossibility, imposed by the accession to language, of succeeding in the project of being the phallus for the mother. Where Freud and Lacan emphasise the father's role in enforcing the child's separation from maternal plenitude and prohibiting the incestuous relationship, Kristeva re-evaluates the role attributed to both mother and father. For Kristeva, the formation of the subject and its accession to the symbolic order of language and culture requires a violent rejection from consciousness of the child's bond to the mother. In constituting itself, the subject establishes the boundary that separates the self from the Not-I, which, strictly speaking, is the part of the self that is rejected.[23]

In *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History*, Norman O. Brown offers yet another possibility.[24] Brown's key concept is a realignment of the subject's self-constitution with the Oedipus complex itself, rather than its resolution. For the purposes of this dissertation, Brown's revision of the Oedipus complex as the fantasy of self-causation is particularly attractive for a number of reasons. For one thing, an unrealistic claim to autonomy immediately strikes one as more recognisably ubiquitous than a secret longing to sleep with one's mother.[25] Furthermore, it broadens the scope of the Oedipus complex by releasing it from the narrow confines of the 'family romance' into more general concepts that are more obviously relevant to our primary texts. This is particularly important in relation to *Don Quijote*, from which the protagonist's actual parents are absent, as it legitimises our more abstract concepts of mother and father. The *causa sui* formula establishes a correspondence between psychoanalysis and religion, since desiring to be the father of oneself is correlated with the desire to be God (who, in the Christian tradition, has the prerogative of being both father and son, hence also 'father of himself'). Furthermore, placing the emphasis on a more general project of self-causation and denial of death, of which hostility to the father and desire for the mother are implicit by-products, opens up a potentially very significant thematic correspondence between Oedipal desire and the modern project of self-fashioning. Another desirable consequence of Brown's formulation, in my view, is that it opens up a possibility of moving beyond conceiving of the development of the subject in terms of a gender conflict, a dualism of father versus mother, as is very common in critical applications of psychoanalytic theory. This dissertation's analysis of Cervantes' and Kafka's work will seek to undermine this opposition by portraying

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[22] Lacan, Jacques, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book 4*, pp.240-241
[23] Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, p.1
[24] Brown, Norman O.. *Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History*
[25] While the emphasis is here shifted from incest to self-causation, it should also be recognised that in each of the instances of the *causa sui* fantasy presented in this dissertation, the implication of incest with a mother figure is easily found.

motherhood and fatherhood as simultaneous casualties and, without subscribing to the overall agenda set out in *Life Against Death*, Brown's analysis of the *causa sui* will help us greatly.

The Oedipus complex is neither explicitly about sexual love for the mother, nor about eliminating the father as a rival for her love, but rather the pursuit of a radical autonomy:

> The Oedipal project is not ... a natural love of the mother ... but the product of the conflict of ambivalence and an attempt to overcome that conflict by narcissistic inflation. The essence of the Oedipal project is the project of becoming God – in Spinoza's formula, *causa sui* ...[26]

The project of self-causation, in Brown's view, results from a conflict of ambivalence between omnipotence and impotence that is uniquely generated by the human family. On the one hand, the family shelters the child in a prolonged infancy, freed from the exigencies of reality, fostering a narcissistic sense of its individual omnipotence. On the other hand, the child is maintained in a state of objective dependence on its parents, which creates the opposed, passive desire to be sheltered and loved. This dialectic of interdependence and individuality produces an anxiety that reflects, paradoxically, both a flight from death and a desire to die: "The human child, which at its mother's breast experiences a new and intense mode of union, of living, and of loving, must also experience a new, intenser mode of separation, individuality, death."[27] Unable to accept its separation, the child denies its dependence on all external care, converts its objective dependence and passive desire into an assertion of radical independence in the "father of oneself" or *causa sui* project.[28]

As a reinterpretation of the Oedipus complex, Brown's theory perhaps constitutes an even more radical challenge to psychoanalytic convention than he himself claims, particularly as far as the role of the mother and father in the crisis is concerned. For a start, Brown insists that the Oedipal crisis is not a matter of falling in love with the mother, nor of a desire to remain in blissful dependence upon the mother. In fact, it is a reaction against any such dependence, arising out of the child's ambivalence towards the maternal body upon which it is so objectively dependent. The other potentially revolutionary insight in Brown's account concerns the role of the father, the significance of whom he explicitly seeks to minimise. It is not the father who violently separates the child from the mother, nor is the father the repressive agency that enforces the repression on which the ego is grounded. This version of the Oedipus complex differs markedly from those of Freud and Lacan, who in differing ways emphasise the role of the father as superior rival and agent of separation. The rejection of the mother, Brown explains

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[26] Brown, p.118
[27] Brown, p.115
[28] Brown, p.118

manifests itself in "... horror, terror, contempt" on the child's part.[29] In this regard, his theory foreshadows to some degree Kristeva's account of abjection. However, whereas Kristeva views the paternal function as an indispensable support for the vital function of liberating the child from the all-powerful pre-Oedipal mother, Brown strives to minimise the role of the father in a flight from the mother by emphasising its autonomy. Brown is quite insistent on the point that the rejection of the mother takes place on the child's own terms and that the primary repression is a self-repression. Adopting Brown's *causa sui* paradigm does not, however, necessitate discarding altogether the idea of the father as the agency prohibiting the 'incestuous' relationship and providing the symbolic support for the subject. Lacan's and Brown's accounts may not be as incompatible as they appear upon initial inspection. However, it does provide for a striking reinterpretation of that prohibitive, mediating role suggested by Lacan and, even more so, by Freud. Brown recognises the dialectical nature of the child's contradictory desires that stem from ambivalence towards the pre-Oedipal mother: the desire for separation and independence on the one hand and the desire for fusion on the other. What he is not quite so explicit about, however, is the point that his reinterpretation of Oedipal desire involves a shift to the dialectical opposite of the conventional Freudian tenet of 'desire for the mother'. For the counter-intuitive revelation in Brown's analysis is that the 'incestuous' wish implicit in the *causa sui* project manifests itself *as a radical rejection of the mother's body, rather than the immediate fantasy of fusion with it.* This opens up the possibility of casting the child's separation from the mother in an entirely new light, particularly as far as the role of the father is concerned. The hypothesis to be stated emphatically here is that the child's *causa sui* fantasy represents a rejection of the maternal body that *does not correspond to paternal prohibition*, as one might all too easily assume, but is in fact anathema to paternal prohibition. For it initiates the circuitous path back towards fusion with the mother, a *progressive regression.* The child hereby circumvents paternal mediation by opting for the dialectical opposite of the explicitly incestuous union. Instead of 'desiring the mother' *per se*, the child fantasises about being the 'father of himself'. Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine how emphatically separating from the mother on such terms could constitute part of the *causa sui* project: if the essence of the paternal function is the separation of the infantile subject from maternal gratification for the purposes of growing up, then the same subject's renunciation on his *own terms* logically renders that function quite superfluous.

What emerges from Brown's analysis, then, is a dialectical model of Oedipal desire in which opposites correspond: the overtly regressive, nostalgic fantasy of restoring the pre-Oedipal relation to the mother, unmediated by the father; and the progressively-regressive

[29] Brown, p.123

father of oneself fantasy, in which all dependence on the mother is denied, but in which the circuitous restoration of intra-uterine fusion is proposed. It is at this point, however, that we must firmly part company with Brown, for the simple reason that Brown's theory effaces the all-important distinction between genital union with the mother and with another woman. Brown associates the circular restoration of the intra-uterine situation with the "tyranny" of adult genital sexuality itself, hereby placing himself in close proximity to Herbert Marcuse.[30] He maintains that the *causa sui* project results in a concentration of libido in the genital region, at the expense of pleasure in the other regions of the body. Genital sexuality aims at restoring the intra-uterine situation, as Freud hypothesised in commenting that "all love is homesickness".[31] Hence, the reproductive drive is viewed as a morbid symptom of the regressive death instinct. The drive to pass on one's genes is viewed as part of the fantasy of immortality inherent in the *causa sui* project, the desire to be a father being nothing more than a sublimation of infantile narcissism. It is for this reason that Brown proposes as the way out of this morbid dialectic the 'resurrection of the body', the restoration of the unrepressed, "polymorphously perverse" childhood capacity for pleasure that, in his view, is sacrificed in the name of genital sexuality.

Indeed, throughout our analysis of the primary texts, we will see the *causa sui* project correlated not with adult sexuality but with psychosexual arrest, in which fusion with the mother is implicit. This is at odds with Brown's view of a dialectic between life and death instincts in which adult sexuality is simply the outcome of repression and sublimation of the infantile complex, (that is: in which adult sexuality is not substantially different from infantile sexuality) and in which, as Freud claimed, the goal of all life is to die. Brown's argument implies that the dialectic of life and death that begins with the *causa sui* project is a universal aspect of 'civilised' human existence that is not, strictly speaking, overcome, but merely repressed and sublimated. However, the present study of various fantasies of self-causation aims to suggest that there is more to the *causa sui* project's flight from death than a universal dialectic of life and death that is universal and unsurmounted. In fact, Brown proposes that the death instinct could potentially provide a way out of the impasse, by reconciling us with our mortality. Here, however, Brown neglects to distinguish between accepting finitude, as making peace with the idea of death, which is obviously valuable since everyone must die, and the self- and other-harming death wish. On the one hand, all human life is, by definition, finite, leads back towards death and is, in this respect, also circular. However, in this dissertation, we will illustrate that the 'errant journey' of the *causa sui* fantasy implies an even more active morbidity, while at the same time refusing to accept mortality. The *causa sui* fantasy eroticises

[30] C.f Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, pp.21-54.
[31] Freud, "The Uncanny" in *Standard Edition Vol XVII*, p.244

death while fearing it. The fantasy implies an added dimension of self-destruction goes beyond the limitations imposed by human finitude and expedites death by taking flight from it. Throughout this dissertation, we will consistently illustrate that this dialectical opposite of 'desire for the mother' reverses into the desire for another type of symbiosis. However, this is not with the biological mother herself, nor is it procreative sexual relations with another woman, but death, the return of the body to its inorganic origins.

To review the alteration that Brown proposes to the Oedipus complex, we see that:

i. The essential desire is not a love of the mother (Although this incest is implicit in the very idea of being the 'father of oneself'), but to be independent of her

ii. The father is not the agent behind this radical rejection from the mother – it is on the child's own terms.

iii. It is in this radically autonomous gesture, in becoming the 'father of oneself', that the father is implicitly supplanted, even though the father himself may not be the direct target of hostility. In other words, the usurping of the father is simultaneous with the rejection of dependency on the mother. By asserting independence from the mother and presuming to be the father of oneself, the child effectively denies its parentage *per se*.

*Jouissance: Super-ego and Mother*

This relationship between 'desire for the mother' and 'father of oneself' can be further illuminated through discussion of the super-ego. Here, we will find reiterated that relationship between incestuous desire and its repression by the super-ego is a dialectical unity of opposites: direct regression on the one hand and circular, progressive regression on the other. Incest with the mother and obedience of the super-ego correspond to the two sides of this dialectical unity. The guilt inflicted by the image of the father image promotes regression and infantilism, as Brown suggests. This is a tendency most clearly demonstrated in this dissertation by Georg Bendemann's father, who sentences his son to a regressive death. A crucial point that Brown makes about the *causa sui* fantasy, and one that we will highlight time and again throughout this dissertation, is that it constitutes an unreal attempt at asserting independence and, consequently, this adult independence is never achieved. This, essentially, is the trajectory followed by all of the protagonists under investigation in this dissertation, including

'modernity' in the final chapter. The 'errant path' is one that sets out boldly from the anterior paradise lost, only to follow a circuitous and expedited route back 'home', that is: to death. The result is an ego that, contrary to all intentions to obtain separation and independence, remains childish and regressively oriented. Furthermore, Brown links this perennial immaturity to the *causa sui* project to the super-ego: "Through the institution of the super-ego, the parents are internalized and man finally succeeds in becoming father of himself, but at the cost of becoming his own child and keeping his ego infantile."[32]

This marks a subtle but highly significant re-evaluation of the relationship that Freud posits between the Oedipus complex and the super-ego, an evaluation that Lacan and Žižek will turn even more decisively on its head. Brown appears to regard the institution of the super-ego as a continuation, indeed the culmination, of the *causa sui* project. According to Freud, on the other hand, the super-ego is the "heir to the Oedipus complex", arising in lieu thereof and playing the decisive role in repressing Oedipal desire.[33] The super-ego (or ego-ideal) is thus understood as an internalisation of paternal authority, as a prohibition (upon the incestuous relationship) on the one hand and an ideal to be emulated on the other. On the one hand, the boy should strive to be like the father (as ego-ideal), but not to the point of trying to take his place (through the incestuous relationship to the mother).

> ... the ego-ideal had the task of repressing the Oedipus complex; indeed it is to that revolutionary event that it owes its existence. Clearly the repression of the Oedipus complex was no easy task. The child's parents, and especially his father, were perceived as the obstacle to a realization of his Oedipus wishes; so his infantile ego fortified itself for the carrying out of the repression by erecting this same obstacle within itself. It borrowed strength to do this, so to speak, from the father, and this loan was an extraordinarily momentous act. The super-ego retains the character of the father, while the more powerful the Oedipus complex was and the more rapidly it succumbed to repression (under the influence of authority, religious teaching, schooling and reading), the stricter will be the domination of the super-ego over the ego later on in the form of conscience or perhaps of an unconscious sense of guilt.[34]

On the one hand, then, the super-ego plays a decisive role in repressing the Oedipus complex, while on the other hand, there is a direct correlation between the intensity of the Oedipus complex and the strength of the super-ego, which suggests a continuity that is at odds with the prohibitive function. As the internalisation of paternal authority, Freud associates the super-ego with both moral conscience, at an individual level, and with societal norms at a collective level, which censures transgression through the production of guilt. Does the super-ego repress the Oedipus complex as Freud claims, or is it the culmination of the fantasy, as Brown would

[32] Brown, p.129
[33] Freud, *Standard Edition*, p.36
[34] Freud, *Standard Edition*, p.32

appear to suggest? Or, might we reconcile their views by suggesting that this repression constitutes a continuation of the fantasy, by transforming 'desire for the mother' into 'father of oneself'? Lacan's understanding of the super-ego seems to point towards continuity, suggesting that the repression of the regressive wish for incest is simply substituted by a dialectically opposed compulsion to enjoy (that is, to go 'beyond the pleasure principle') by other means. This would explain Freud's above observation of a correlation between the intensity of the Oedipus complex and the extent of later domination by the super-ego.

The complicity between 'desire for the mother' and the repression of this desire by the super-ego can be further illustrated with reference to Lacan's enigmatic concept of *jouissance*, which refers to an extreme, sexually connoted, by definition unpleasurable and, in fact, deadly form of 'enjoyment' (the closest English translation).[35] Both the unmediated relationship to the mother and submission to the super-ego are variously viewed as a source of *jouissance*. On the one hand, *jouissance* is blocked by language in the same way that the father intervenes to make the unmediated relationship to the mother impossible. The unmediated relationship with the mother thus corresponds to an original experience of unbridled gratification or *jouissance*. What must be emphasised here in relation to Lacan's account is the interdependence between the prohibition of incest and the mediating function of language. It is for this reason that Lacan exploits the French homophony between *Nom-du-Père* (Name-of-the-Father) and *'Non'-du-Père* (the 'No!' of the father, his prohibition of the incestuous relationship).[36] Just as the Name mediates the subject's relationship with the world, substituting for pre-linguistic immediacy, so the father's prohibition limits *jouissance*. Lacan thus reformulates the Freudian pleasure principle to bring it into line with the paternal incest prohibition: "Enjoy as little as possible!" Of the role of language in this prohibition, Lacan tells us that "*Jouissance* is forbidden to him who speaks, as such."[37] A subtle but highly significant change in Lacan's evolution of Freudian thought concerns the purpose of the father's prohibition of incest. In Freud's account, incest was merely forbidden, as the social taboo that marked the foundation of civilisation. Lacan, however, lays greater emphasis upon the consequences for the subject itself - the avoidance of unpleasure. The incestuous *jouissance* with the mother, which goes beyond the pleasure principle and is hence unpleasurable, is off limits due to its inherent, traumatic unpleasure. It is for the subject's own good, rather than a prohibition for its own sake. For the Lacanian subject, it is no longer simply a question of obeying and disobeying, provoking and avoiding social censure, but of seeking pleasure and avoiding the unpleasurable pleasure of *jouissance*.

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[35] Evans, Dylan. *An Introductory Dictionary of Lacanian Psychoanalysis*, p.91
[36] Evans, p.122
[37] Lacan. *Écrits: A Selection*, p.319

While *jouissance* pertains to the unmediated relationship to the mother on the one hand, Lacan also associates it with the super-ego. The super-ego, in Lacan's view, stands in a thoroughly ambivalent relationship to the Law. On the one hand, it seemingly provides the Law with its imperative force. On the other hand, Lacan suggests that the super-ego arises from a misunderstanding of the Law and promotes an 'anti-legal' guilt.[38] What is meant here by anti-legal? In order to explain this, we need to highlight Lacan's most explicit departure from Freud with regards to the super-ego. Whereas Freud viewed the super-ego as an "introjection" of the father that reinforced the prohibition of the incestuous wish through repression, Lacan reinterprets it as a command to "Enjoy!" The super-ego, Lacan insists, is precisely the obverse of the father's mediating, prohibitive role as Law/Name. We have hitherto conceived of the paternal function as a prohibition of *jouissance* to the end of taking one's place in the socio-symbolic universe and enabling the sexual instinct. Lacan's super-ego, by contrast, is conceived both as a guilt-ridden compulsion to obedience, but also, paradoxically, as the compulsion to transgress, to enjoy: "Nothing forces anyone to enjoy except the super-ego. The super-ego is the imperative of *jouissance* - Enjoy!"[39] As the imperative of *jouissance*:

> ...The super-ego is at one and the same time the Law and its own destruction. As such, it is speech itself, the commandment of Law, in so far as nothing more than its root remains. The Law is entirely reduced to something, which cannot even be expressed, like the "You must", which is speech deprived of all its meaning.[40]

However, it is not disobedience of that order that causes guilt. Guilt is *jouissance* itself. This accounts for the baffling paradox that the more one submits to the super-ego's imperative to obey, the guiltier one becomes since, by obeying the Law, one transgresses the Law of desire. This apparent contradiction becomes somewhat more comprehensible in light of Slavoj Žižek's elaboration upon the counterintuitive nature of the *jouissance* derived from the super-ego. Enjoyment, Žižek explains, "... is not a matter of following one's spontaneous tendencies; it is rather something we do as a kind of weird and twisted ethical duty".[41] *Jouissance*, then, is compulsion, hence its association with the super-ego. He explains elsewhere: "Super-ego is the revenge that capitalizes upon our guilt - that is to say, the price we pay for the guilt we contract by betraying our desire in the name of the Good."[42] This is to say that the super-ego's guilt stems not, in fact, from a failure to do good, such as the transgression of some moral Law, but from giving way on what we want. This compulsive *jouissance*, Žižek explains, is merely the dark, compulsive side of the "reasonable" socio-symbolic Law that "leads to moral growth and

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[38] Lacan, Jacques. *The Seminar. Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique, 1953-54*, p.102
[39] Lacan, *On Feminine Sexuality: The Seminar, Book XX*, p.3
[40] Lacan, Jacques, *The Seminar. Book I: Freud's Papers on Technique*, 1953-54, p.102
[41] Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.80
[42] Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.80

maturity." What Žižek's understanding of the paternal Law likewise assumes, however, is that 'moral growth' and 'doing good' are to be viewed as ends in themselves, since he dissociates this Law from the "Law of desire" – an agency that is also complicit, however, in the father's castrating function. Castration, Lacan writes, "... means that *jouissance* must be refused so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder of the Law of desire."[43] The 'Law of desire' is ultimately oriented not towards foregoing enjoyment for its own sake, because it is the 'right' thing to do according to an arbitrary set of societal norms (as a 'moral Law' might suggest), but towards the achievement of a similarly deferred fulfilment of desire. Žižek emphasises the distance between the Law of desire and the "the network of social-symbolic norms and ideal that the subject internalises in the course of his or her education," the latter of which promote obedience and 'the good' as ends in themselves.

On the one hand, then, the substance paternal Law prohibits *jouissance*; on the other hand, the internalisation of the father as super-ego, the pure compulsion that is the force behind the Law, compels *jouissance*! It stands to reason, hence, that the internalisation of the paternal super-ego as pure compulsion to enjoy constitutes an *illegal* internalisation of the father and of the Law, which demands the renunciation of *jouissance*. To comply fully with the Law does not simply require obediently foregoing the complete instinctual gratification (that, in any case, is repressed but unconsciously still desired), but to actually overcome it and pursue instead the deferred, limited gratification associated with maturity, the pleasure that is actually pleasurable. The obedience the super-ego's command to enjoy, on the other hand, constitutes a continuation of *jouissance* by means other than maternal fusion. In other words, the relationship of the super-ego imperative to the Law is such that its blind obedience is inherently transgressive! By submitting unquestioningly to this compulsive force behind the Law, one transgresses against the substance of the Law itself, since the Law forbids any such compulsive *jouissance*, which constitutes an abdication of the agency. This is to say that the Law and the father himself are subverted in the infantile act of introjection, a relationship that will be illustrated all the more clearly in Kafka's *Das Urteil*.

### *Susan Bordo: The 17th Century Scientific Revolution as* Causa Sui *Fantasy*

As indicated above, part of the appeal of Norman O. Brown's *causa sui* concept is that it lends itself to a more general understanding than as a drama that occurs strictly within the confines of the family. The appropriation of Brown's concept of Oedipal desire as a *causa sui* fantasy to an extra-familial context has, in fact, already been explicitly attempted by Susan Bordo, but with

[43] Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, p.324

results that merit critical reappraisal. Significantly, for this dissertation, Bordo invokes the *causa sui* project to discuss the epistemological revolution that started around the turn of the 17th century and gave rise to the modern, rational, autonomous subject, the *cogito*, and the 'scientific' worldview associated with it. This period has a twofold significance for the present dissertation. On the one hand, this period marks the emergence of *Don Quijote*, Part I being released in 1605 and Part II following ten years later. Hence Bordo's analysis gives us some insight into the general historical conditions in which *Don Quijote* emerged. On the other hand, the turn of the 17th century, as Bordo argues, marks the emergence of modern consciousness, under the particular influence of the thought of Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes. In addition to analysing in depth the 'errant' *causa sui* project of Cervantes' and Kafka's protagonists, this dissertation will also highlight the manner in which modernity (another protagonist in this dissertation) follows the same path. Modernity, as we read it, begins around the turn of the 17th century, corresponding approximately to Foucault's transition between the Renaissance and the Classical *episteme* (of which more in Chapter 3).

Bordo, in effect, invokes Brown's account of the *causa sui* project, an account of the individual subject's formation, to discuss the historical formation of a particular mode of subjectivity. Her analysis also considers the implications of the *causa sui* fantasy for gender relations. Thought provoking and relevant to this dissertation though that question is, Bordo provides no shortage of scope to question this aspect of her analysis. While we are on the subject, we should note here also how this account of a seismic epistemological shift echoes Marthe Robert's location of Don Quijote at the edge of the epic order in the transition to the prosaic world of the novel. As such, the thesis of a 'flight from the feminine' is of considerable importance for this dissertation and will here be considered in some detail. Bordo appropriates psychoanalytic thought for her characterisation of the Early Modern intellectual and cultural context by means of a triangulation: earth, nature and cosmos as 'mother', God as 'father' and Early Modern man as subject. The cosmos in which the pre-modern subject saw himself located was a mother-cosmos (CMT,451). The pre-modern subject thought in terms of an organic unity between humanity and the cosmos, of continuity between the human and physical realms, prior to the metaphysical separation that followed between self and world, subject and object. The transition from the Middle Ages to early modernity constitutes a "protracted birth from which the human being emerges as a decisively separate entity, no longer continuous with the universe with which it once shared a soul" (CMT,448). Extending this birthing metaphor, then, the pre-modern experience of self as *located within* the cosmos corresponds to an experience being *in utero*. This characterization of the advent of modernity as a 'birth' is, in fact, highly problematic because it risks being read as an endorsement of nostalgic fantasies that equate the pre-modern worldview with an undifferentiated uterine state. By positing naive union with nature as the

preferable state that came before the modern condition of absolute separation and alienation, Bordo risks being understood as endorsing the dialectical opposite of the modern condition: recovery of the lost union or symbiosis. We will explain the problems with such a position in the next chapter when we consider Don Quijote's discourse on the Golden Age.

While Bordo conceives of the advent of the scientific revolution as a 'father of oneself' fantasy, under the explicit influence of Norman O. Brown, she places excessive emphasis on the role of the father in the separation. As such, she appears to lose sight of Brown's attempt to play down entirely the role of the father and of his insistence that infantile repression is a self-repression. Let us restate here the radical and paradoxical alteration to Oedipal desire implied by Brown's formula: the incestuous wish manifests itself as separation from the mother. The child's rejection of the mother in the 'father of oneself' project marks not the child's identification with the father, but the Oedipal attempt to take his place; not the reconciliation between father but precisely the moment the child attempts to step into his shoes. However, Bordo continues to emphasise the role of the father, hereby maintaining 'mother' and 'father' in a dichotomy akin to 'masculine' and 'feminine':

> The Cartesian reconstruction may ... be described in terms of a separation from the *maternal* – the immanent realms of earth, nature, the authority of the body – and a compensatory turning toward the *paternal* for legitimization through external regulation, transcendent values and the authority of law.[44]

Bordo's reading of Descartes' 6th Meditation, on the external world and the existence of God, is consistent with this view. Bordo reads God's guarantee as "a principle of continuity and coherence for what is experienced by Descartes as a disastrously fragmented and discontinuous mental life", that bridges the gulf between inner and outer reality. "Reunion with the (mother) world is now impossible; only God the father can provide the (external) reassurance Descartes needs" (CMT,446). Hence we can understand why the turn towards the paternal is described as compensatory. The father is cast here as the familiar principle of separation and regulation that substitutes for the immediacy of dyadic relations with the mother. According to this view, God as paternal function is necessary in order to approximate inner life to outer reality through a mediated relationship, which is very much analogous to the role of Lacan's Symbolic father in inducting the infant into the intersubjective Symbolic Order of Law, culture, language and temporality: "The Symbolic Order is what substitutes for the loss of the immediacy of the world and it is where the void of the subject is filled in by the process of subjectivization."[45] Bordo, then, essentially reads the Meditation as arising out of an anxious void that can only be filled in

[44] Bordo, Susan. *The Fight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture,* p.58
[45] Žižek, *Cogito and the Unconscious* cited in Tony Myers, *Slavoj Žižek*, p.45

through the mediation of God the father, meaning that, on the one hand, God comes to appear as the agent of Cartesian subjectivization and, as such, the enforcer of separation from the maternal origin.

We see, then, that Bordo seeks to set up the advent of Modern consciousness as an induction from the immediate maternal realm to the regulated world of paternal mediation through law, language and so forth. However, it will be argued presently that this is contradicted by Bordo's appropriation of the 'father of oneself' fantasy, not just nominally but also conceptually. As such, Bordo's analysis proposes a solution to the problem of separation anxiety that, far from taking solace in paternal legitimisation, seeks to circumvent it through an act of self-constitution in which the incestuous relation is already implicit, one that aims 'beyond the pleasure principle' towards the unpleasurable enjoyment that Lacan calls *jouissance*. Bordo's ingenious thesis is that the anxiety of separation and death to which Brown refers in *Life Against Death* can also be seen to reverberate at a cultural level at the onset of modernity. The "intellectual beginnings, fresh confidence, and ... new found belief in the ability of science ... to decipher the language of nature" heralded by Descartes, she suggests, had a dark underside:

> Looking freshly at Descartes' Meditations, one cannot help but be struck by the manifest epistemological anxiety of the earlier Meditations and by how unresolute a mode of enquiry they embody: the dizzying vacillations, the constant requestioning of the self, the determination, if only temporary, to stay within confusion and contradiction, to favour interior movement rather than clarity and resolve. (CMT,440)

Just as, for Brown, the *causa sui* project asserted independence from and mastery over the pre-Oedipal mother in an unrealistic project of individuation, so the philosophical innovations of the early 17$^{th}$ century emphatically renounce any dependence on the earth as mother. Hence, parallel to the *causa sui* model borrowed from Brown, the shift is also compared to the Freudian Fort-Da game, in which the 'maternity' of the earth is denied altogether through objectification:

> For Plato and Aristotle, and throughout the Middle Ages, the natural world has been "mother" – passive, receptive *natura naturata* to be sure, but living and breathing nonetheless. Now ... the formerly female earth becomes inert *res extensa*: dead, mechanically interacting matter ... "She" becomes "it" – and "it" can be understood. (CMT,452)

Increasingly aware of being separated from 'her', the involuntary loss of the sense of "being one with the world", early modern man casts the mother-cosmos from his field of cognition by devising an epistemological framework which cannot account for 'her', thereby making himself the author of her disappearance from view. Because the mother qua cosmic order of 'meaning'

cannot be accommodated within the Cartesian epistemological framework, beyond those aspects that can be proven by measurement and mathematical relationships, her 'maternity' must inevitably be subject to doubt and discarded.

This leads us on to the specifically epistemological dimensions of this shift. Bordo writes of the death of another "feminine principle" with the Cartesian rationalization project, those epistemological values that she associates with "feminine consciousness" – sympathetic thinking, connectedness or union, "participating consciousness", bodily and emotional response and so forth.[46] Such an epistemological stance is contrasted directly by Bordo to the "hyper-masculine" scientific attitude that she claims is instituted by the Cartesian reconstruction of the world, one which emphasises secure boundaries and rejects any commingling of subject and object, self and world (CMT,449). Hence, an opposition is set in place with respect to gendered epistemology whereby 'masculine' connotes reason and 'feminine' connotes heart, body and emotion.

Just how problematic this terminology is when applied to the 'Other' epistemology discarded by the Cartesian subject can be effectively argued with reference to Julia Kristeva. Viewing the Cartesian reconstruction of knowledge in the light of the Kristevan 'abject' will allow us to illuminate more fully the status of the 'Other' epistemology. What I would like to suggest here is that the discarded epistemology can only be designated as 'feminine' to the same extent that it is, from the Cartesian perspective, abject, in the sense that what was once an undifferentiated part of the same epistemological framework is now irredeemably Other. For Kristeva, the abject is 'feminine' not in the sense of any "primeval essence" (the eternal feminine and so forth), but rather as an "unnameable" alterity having to do with the mother or, more specifically, the mother as a former part of the self.[47] According to that interpretive framework, it makes sense to think of the rejected epistemology as the "impurity" that is cast out in infancy along with the mother. There is sufficient basis in Bordo's essay to sustain this view – in fact, this is more consistent with Bordo's overall thesis than simply and unproblematically describing the excluded epistemology as 'feminine'. An alternative view, one that is more consistent with Bordo's overall analogy, can hence be constructed if we begin to view this discarded epistemology as 'abject' and therefore as primarily infantile rather than feminine, or as being 'feminine' only in the sense of Kristeva's 'abject'.

More specifically, we can make sense of the 'Other' epistemology by thinking of it as those practices that made "union" with the mother possible by facilitating the sense of "Being

[46] Bordo, *Feminist Interpretations of Rene Descartes*, p.64
[47] Kristeva, Julia, *Powers of Horror*, p.6

one with the world" (CMT,451). We can deduce this, firstly, from the temporal correspondence of the separation from the mother-world and the "flight from the feminine" in Bordo's account. Support for the view that this 'feminine' way of knowing stands in such an 'abject' relation to the Cartesian reconstruction of knowledge can be further obtained from a quotation from James Hillman that Bordo uses to support her masculinisation thesis: "The specific consciousness we call scientific, Western and modern is the long sharpened tool of the masculine mind that has discarded parts of its own substance, calling it 'Eve', 'female' and 'inferior'" [48] (CMT,441). Hillman does indeed decisively characterise the scientific consciousness as masculine, but there is an implied criticism in nomenclature given to the discarded parts. What Hillman suggests about these discarded parts is that they have (erroneously) been characterised as 'feminine' by that 'masculine' consciousness.

We can see, then, that even though Bordo specifies that the gendered terms refer to intellectual stance rather than biological qualities, the duality of 'masculine' and 'feminine' in her discussion is rather problematic. 'Femininity' appears to have much less to do with anything female than it does with the 'masculine' subject's infancy. 'Masculinity', for its part, is tied to the Oedipal project in a way that views the Oedipal crisis, with its rejection of all things maternal, as essential and enduring characteristic that is never overcome. Furthermore, Bordo does not entirely dissociate the categories 'masculine' and 'feminine' from men and women after all, noting the manner in which women themselves, in the latter half of the 20th century, have come to be viewed as the bearers a more humane, sympathetic relationship to the world. Undoubtedly, the binary division into 'masculine' and 'feminine', 'father' and 'mother', is sustained through reference to the concrete and indisputable cultural consequences of the 'masculinisation of thought', the principal one being, unsurprisingly, widespread misogyny perpetrated by men (CMT,453). We are not seeking for one moment to deny or diminish the reality of those consequences, perpetrated by men and suffered by women. Nonetheless, it does not strike one as a particularly constructive approach to the subject to imply that this gynophobia is the essential and universal characteristics of an inherently misogynistic 'masculinity' presided over by 'the father', rather than characteristic of a specific subjective dysfunction that might be overcome.

As Bordo herself seems to recognise, rather than being rooted in notions of male superiority, which if anything appear as the effect rather than the cause, the specific object of phobia is female generativity and the function of motherhood (CMT,453). Why, though, should maternity be perceived as such a threat? As with Kristeva's notion of the abject, motherhood is feared due to the perceived threat to subjectivity. The reasons are also rooted in the reaction

[48] Hillman, James, *The Myth of Analysis*, p.250

against objective dependency explained by Brown. The function of motherhood, for the infantile subject, evokes its childhood, the state of objective dependency that the *causa sui* project seeks to escape. On the one hand, Bordo ties the proliferation of misogyny primarily to the child's ambivalence towards the mother, an ambivalence that, Brown had already stressed, does not require reference to the father. On the other hand, however, by characterising the turn as the ascendancy of the paternal, she holds fast to the view that this misogyny reflects the ascendancy of fatherhood and that the father has ultimately presided over the marginalisation of the feminine and of women in general.

Further evidence of this can be found in the Cartesian emphasis upon revoking childhood. Descartes views the commingling between subject and object, characteristic of childhood, as an epistemological threat and it is precisely this threat that, in Bordo's view, he seeks to negate with the revocation of childhood: "The state of childhood can be revoked through a deliberate and methodical reversal of all the prejudices of childhood and ... [beginning] anew with reason as one's only parent" (CMT,449). This is the philosophical revocation that is effected by the *Meditations*, consisting in purging the mind of the "bodily" confusion of subject and object, and obeying reason alone. What is not explicitly spelled out by Bordo, but can be readily inferred by the reader, is that this philosophical revocation corresponds, at a more concrete cultural level, the "flight from the feminine". Having seen, with the help of Kristeva, how the "feminine" epistemology corresponds, in Bordo's analogy, to the *abject* substance of the infantile union with the mother-world, we also see these qualities associated with actual childhood in her discussion of Descartes.

"The project of growing up" Bordo writes, "is primarily a project of learning to deal with the fact that mother and child are no longer one" (CMT,451). Even though Bordo views the aforementioned denial of separation anxiety as a strategy for dealing with the fact of individuation, its outcome, revocation of childhood, is a very different one from growing up and reaching adulthood, just as the repression of the desire for union must be differentiated in the strongest possible terms from an attempt to overcome (implying to *outgrow* or *resolve*) it. Furthermore, it makes sense that one might regard it as superfluous to grow up once one has revoked infancy. The clearest difference between the two, using the criteria set out in Bordo's essay, is that whilst an adult perspective is to see oneself as both fully in the world, yet basically separate, the Cartesian movement delivers *only* radical separation. Furthermore, the revocation of childhood implies reducing childhood and adulthood to another binary opposition, whereby adult = not-child. The Cartesian reconstruction seeks an instant and binary conversion of longing into denial, anxiety into confidence and helplessness into mastery. This is quite different from growing up as a *process* in which adult boundaries are *developed*. We can say,

then, that the Cartesian reconstruction differs from a simple and necessary "individuation" both in its instantaneity and its radicalism. Whilst the "flight from the feminine" may have its roots in an attempt to deal with no longer being one with the mother-world, we can say, just as Kristeva says of abjection, that it goes well beyond what is a necessary separation from the mother for the purpose of growing up. As we will illustrate in the course of this dissertation, it actually sabotages the process of growing up.

The matter of 'dark undersides' provides us here with an ideal opportunity to reiterate the essential dialectical feature of this model of Oedipal desire, one that emerges even more clearly than in Brown's original proposal of the *causa sui*. Bordo draws the opposition between the desire for reunion with the mother, which may persist throughout life, and the 'flight from the feminine', which is a strategy for *denying* any such desire. Here, we see for the first time in her analysis the opposition of two opposed tendencies that constitute a dialectical unity. On the one hand, the explicit desire to be reunited with the mother, with the world, with nature, which may manifest itself at many points beyond childhood and may persist indefinitely; on the other hand, a denial of any such longing, expressed in the 'father of oneself' fantasy, the scientific revolution. However, the 'father of oneself' fantasy remains an implicit fantasy of restoring union with the mother, thus anathema to the paternal function. Hence we can understand that, in Bordo's model, an implicit form of Oedipal desire, one that confidently and independently expresses itself in the revolutionary progress of the Cartesian reconstruction, arises out of the repression of a directly regressive Oedipal desire to restore union with the mother-world. The denial and repression of the overt desire to reunite with the mother precipitate a 'father of oneself' or *causa sui* project that finds its epistemological expression in the fantasy of an equally utopian, equally unproblematic and equally 'fatherless' relationship to the object world – the "flight to objectivity", as Bordo's subsequent monograph is entitled.[49] Paradoxically, it is not the overt desire for union with the mother, but the repression of that desire, that gives rise to a turn against the father. Indeed, it is not difficult to imagine how emphatically separating from the mother on one's own terms could be construed as Oedipal: if the essence of the paternal function is the separation of the infantile subject from maternal gratification for the purposes of growing up, then the same subject's renunciation on his own terms logically renders that function utterly superfluous. Accordingly, how can we expect that the incestuous desire for union would be outgrown or resolved? Desire for union with the mother, for an immediate relationship with the natural world, cannot be overcome if it cannot even be acknowledged.

The preceding discussion of Susan Bordo's thesis of the 17th century 'flight from the feminine' is important to this dissertation for a number of reasons. It serves a dual purpose in

[49] Bordo, Susan. *The Fight to Objectivity: Essays on Cartesianism and Culture,*

enabling our transition from theoretical discussion to an analysis of *Don Quijote* itself. On the one hand, her analysis served as an existing appropriation of our theoretical framework for the purpose of theorising modernity, which we are claiming to begin at the turn of the 17th century. On the other hand, *Don Quijote* also emerged at the turn of the 17th century. Hence, Bordo's reading was invoked to describe the broadly European intellectual and cultural context in which *Don Quijote* was written. However, we have taken care in our reading of Bordo's article to undermine the opposition of the maternal and the paternal, the masculine and the feminine, by suggesting that what is primarily at issue is infancy and its revocation. What Bordo does not tell us, furthermore, is how this 'flight from the feminine' narrative of self-causation proceeds to its logical conclusion, with the 'father of oneself' fantasy initiating the circuitous trajectory of the 'errant path', which ultimately leads back to the origin in death. In order to demonstrate this, let us proceed to the first chapter to consider the case of *Don Quijote*.

*Chapter Structure*

This dissertation will be divided into three main chapters. One chapter each will be dedicated to Cervantes, Kafka and theoretical modernity. In our first chapter, on *Don Quijote*, we will find Kafka's understanding of Don Quijote (the character) substantiated by a close reading focused primarily on *Part I*, but also devoting significant attention to *Part II*. We will begin by commenting on the historical and cultural context within which *Don Quijote* is located from the perspective of the cultural 'flight from the feminine'. We will then consider Don Quijote's career in knight-errantry as a 'flight from the feminine' and *causa sui* fantasy, in which he becomes the father of himself and the author of his adventures and flees from maternal generativity towards the ever-elusive goal of an idealised femininity. We will discover that Don Quijote's *causa sui* project is a self-punishing transgression and that therein lies justice. Finally, we will consider how *Part II* sees the 'errant path' turn full-circle and lead back to death.

In the second chapter, we will undertake a similarly close reading of Kafka's *Das Urteil* and *Der Proceß*, teasing out the affinities between Kafka's own work and our "Kafkaesque" interpretation of Cervantes' novel as we go and building upon Kafka's ideas on Cervantes as a framework for interpreting his own work. In so doing, we will trace Kafka's own version of the 'errant path' in his stories. As should become clear throughout this thesis, the intersection is very substantial indeed. We will consider, firstly, the historical and cultural context in which Kafka wrote from the perspective of (uncanny) return, focusing in particular upon the proliferation of homesick desire in Habsburg Vienna and Prague, on the one hand, and upon the rational self's *revenants* on the other, as exemplified in Barry Murnane's study of the Gothic. We will preface our close readings with a brief consideration of the significance of Sancho

Panza himself and how he marks a contrast with Kafka's heroes. We will find presented in *Das Urteil* with maximum economy Georg Bendemann's own tale of errancy: self-fashioning by disowning the original self, denial of mourning for the loss of his mother, taking his father's place and regressive death. In *Der Proceß*, we will read Josef K.'s trial as a tortuous return on the 'errant path' towards death. We will build upon the insights of John Zilcosky into the significance of the fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter"/ "Journey to his Mother" while posing a strong challenge to his interpretation. We will suggest that, since his ordeal is ultimately self-inflicted, Josef K. displaying a penchant for victimhood, the justice he receives from the court is of the same type as that visited upon Don Quijote.

In the third chapter, "The Judgement on Modernity", we will consider theoretical modernity, primarily through the writing of Foucault and Horkheimer and Adorno, as a circuit of the 'errant path'. Immediately preceding the onset of modernity, it will be argued with reference to Foucault's account of the Renaissance in *The Order of Things*, was harmony with both mother and father; nature, cosmos and God. This is not, however, a naïve, original unity as Bordo's analysis suggests but, rather, a unity under construction. Modernity 'errs' in the constitution of the rational, thinking subject, which excludes its previous connectedness to the world and universe, its epistemology of similitude (which is comparable to Kristeva's account of the semiotic modality) and of the insane, who had previously been accepted as part of Renaissance society. The price of the modern subject's self-constitution in this manner is laid bare with reference to Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, Agamben's *Homo Sacer* and Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: the modern, liberated subject becomes, in Foucault's words, the "principle of its own subjection" (DP,202) while regressing to the barbarism under which it had sought to draw a definitive line. Furthermore, as this dissertation proceeds towards its conclusion, our focus will turn to 'errant path' itself and the possibilities of escaping it.

# I

# APROPOS OF DON QUIJOTE'S 'FLIGHT FROM THE FEMININE'

In the introduction to this dissertation, we introduced Susan Bordo's concept of a 'flight from the feminine' in early-modern European epistemology, which provides us with both the beginnings of a conceptual framework for our understanding of modernity, on the one hand, and a "psychocultural context" within which, in the course of this thesis, we will attempt to locate *Don Quijote* – at the moment of the emergence of the modern idea of the self. We will consider in the current chapter how the concepts of a 'flight from the feminine' and 'masculinisation' of culture, as a repression of 'homesickness', are reflected in the novel, with particular reference to the characterization of Don Quijote himself, but also dealing with Grisóstomo, Anselmo and Sansón Carrasco as his doubles in various guises.

*Cultural context: Ruth El Saffar and the Evolution of Modern Consciousness*

Firstly, however, let us consider how the cultural 'flight from the feminine' is reflected more locally within Spain. Ruth El Saffar largely accomplishes for us the task of localising to Spain (albeit implicitly, for she does not cite it) Susan Bordo's thesis of a 17$^{th}$ century 'flight from the

feminine' and suggesting, tentatively, its pertinence to *Don Quijote*.[1] Where Bordo gives us the "flight from the feminine", El Saffar discusses Spanish culture's alienation from the "realm of the mother" at the turn of the 17th century. El Saffar explains that these changes were experienced at a (Western) European rather than a national level, but maintains that Spain was at both the forefront and epicentre of the cultural shift. This is explained as the consequence of the empire-building aspirations of the Habsburgs on the one hand, and of Spain's early industrialisation on the other. Both of these factors, in differing ways, precipitated a "rejection of the realm of the mother",[2] experienced both as a forced alienation from one's home and own mother, from the social collective and as an alienation from the earth/nature as mother. Echoing Marthe Robert, it is this evolution of modern consciousness that makes impossible, amongst other things, the epic form.

On the one hand, boys and young men experienced forced dissociation from "childhood, the emotions, the mother, the body, and home ..." as the military and colonial aspirations of the Habsburgs in the 16th Century demanded their service.[3] Fostered in this emerging imperial culture was "an adventuring, outward bound, home- and woman-denying spirit."[4] This separation from the maternal further expresses itself in processes of urbanisation (i.e. separation from the land) and industrialisation, "the use of machinery to harness the forces of nature".[5] Although generally much more sparing than Bordo in her invocation of psychoanalytic theory,[6] El Saffar does invoke the "primary mother-child symbiosis" and its disruption by the "masculine, the world of the father" as a trauma experienced in both individual and collective psychological development.[7] Although she does take care to differentiate abstract "masculine" (= "writing, separation, the mind, technology, directed activity, individuality and consciousness") and "feminine" qualities (= "oral culture ... environment, the body, nature, silence, anonymity, the participatory, and the unconscious) from the general qualities of male and female human beings, she does broadly equate "masculine" qualities with the "world of the father" and "feminine" qualities with the "realm of the mother."[8]

El Saffar situates *Don Quijote* (along with *Lazarillo de Tormes*) within this crisis by reading its content as "[a reflection] of the crisis in the unfolding of the Western European

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[1] El Saffar, Ruth. "The Making of the Novel and the Evolution of Consciousness" in *Oral Tradition* 2/1 (1987): pp.231-48
[2] El Saffar, p.233
[3] El Saffar, p, 233
[4] El Saffar, p.234
[5] El Saffar, p.234
[6] She will, however, publish *Quixotic Desire,* a landmark edited volume of psychoanalytic studies on Cervantes, six years after this article
[7] El Saffar, p.233
[8] El Saffar, p.233

psyche – a crisis that results when masculine energies break free from their moorings in the feminine..." Furthermore, the alienation from the feminine reflects Don Quijote's own marginalization from his previous privilege of nobility in a new social order dominated by industry and commerce:

> Unlike the chivalric heroes whom *Don Quixote* hopes to emulate, the male characters of the early seventeenth century novel carry within them, in their own economic and social marginalization, the image of the rejected feminine they are seeking to redeem. The very technology that produced this combative hero has also marginalized him, and rendered insignificant his ancestral home and the class of the landed nobility from which he sprang. His longing for mother earth's all-giving bounty is therefore an expression of his own sense of loss in the face of urbanization and industrialization.[9]

On the one hand, she sees in Don Quijote's quest an attempt to "... recover through language and the imagination the power over their lives that economic and social forces have conspired to deny [him]".[10] At a more fundamental level, El Saffar recognizes Quijote's crisis as pertaining to the Oedipal stage of development: the imitation of, and conflict with, a superior male figure such as Amadis (This is mentioned only briefly in connection with Rene Girard's landmark study on "Mimetic Desire") and, even more painful in her view, "the rejection of the all-nurturing body of the mother."[11] This is reflected most clearly in Don Quijote's yearning for the Golden Age, but also, more generally, in what El Saffar interprets as an attempt, from an overly "masculinised" alienation, to re-establish some sort of connection with the lost feminine: "Crazy as Don Quixote is shown to be ... his concern for the feminine in two of her archetypal aspects, mother and virgin, represents a cry for balance in a world clearly alienated from the feminine."[12] In the course of this dissertation, we will take issue with the notion that this is a matter of scale – of the "balance" in male subjectivity tipping too far to the "masculine" side. Instead, we will point towards a fundamentally dysfunctional subjectivity that, while unmistakably male, is neither necessarily universal. El Saffar does not account for how the idealised memory of 'innocence' as a mother-child symbiosis unhindered by the father might be the distorted product of the nostalgic and indeed 'homesick' mind. She likewise ignores the manner in which Quijote's idealization of the all-nurturing mother is distorted. What her argument most clearly overlooks, however, is the way in which Don Quijote is also, to borrow Bordo's terminology, in 'flight from the feminine', as James A. Parr has already argued. At the same time as he is in search of the mythical, idealized and ethereal femininity of a Dulcinea, we will find him in flight from the "less than poetic", bodily aspects of femininity most closely associated with motherhood.

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[9] El Saffar, "The Making of the Novel and the Evolution of Consciousness", p.237
[10] El Saffar, p.234
[11] El Saffar, p.237
[12] El Saffar, p. 235

Now, whilst El Saffar recognizes the separation from the maternal and the conflict with the superior male figure as elements of Don Quijote's Oedipal crisis, she does not expand on the relationship between them. However, the overall thrust of her argument points towards Don Quijote's separation from the "realm of the mother" as an induction into the "world of the father", the father being the agency who intervenes in the symbiosis. Again, we ask: does the conflict with the father precipitate the separation from the mother, or does rejection of the mother precipitate the conflict with the father? Or do cultural circumstances perhaps precipitate a vicious circle in which fatherhood is reduced to the principle of its own negation, in which fathers themselves self-destruct, perpetuating the Oedipus complex qua *causa sui* by forcing their sons to renounce the mother so emphatically? The irony of the alienated "world of fathers" appears to be that it functions according to rules anathema to the principle of being either fathered or mothered.

*Idealized Femininity and the 'Flight from the Feminine'*

Let us proceed now from the cultural 'flight from the feminine' to a more detailed consideration of its reflection in Cervantes' novel itself. We should begin by noting that the notion of a 'flight from the feminine' has been developed with reference to *Don Quijote* by James A. Parr in his essay "Cervantes Foreshadows Freud: On Don Quijote's Flight from the Feminine and the Physical".[13] Whilst the title is almost certainly not a direct allusion to Bordo's essay, since it is not cited at any point, it is not unrelated by any means. Although Parr's emphasis is quite different from Bordo's, centring as it does not upon the parturition from the mother but rather upon Quijote's flight from "the less poetic aspects of femininity" and, more generally, from the "backside of reality",[14] it can nonetheless be seen to pertain to the 'father of oneself' project, as described by Bordo, since it is no less a flight from maternal generativity and death (two of the less poetic aspects of the feminine), for reasons to be outlined currently.

Parr's notion of a 'flight from the feminine' could be more properly described as a flight from one aspect of femininity towards another, focusing on Don Quijote's idealizing vision that expresses itself in the 'dulcineation' of the base (and even masculine) women he encounters: a process by which the bodily, generative, maternal feminine is recast as the disembodied, non-existent 'eternal feminine' or *Ewig-Weibliche*, the apotheosis of which is Dulcinea herself. The proliferation of masculine women in *Don Quijote*, has informed a substantial volume of criticism, as is pointed out in what is, to my knowledge, the most recent

[13] Parr, James A.. "Cervantes Foreshadows Freud: On Don Quijote's Flight from the Feminine and the Physical" in *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 15.2 (1995), 16-25
[14] Parr, p. 18

by Sherry Velasco.[15] To illustrate our point, we can note the masculinity that is strongly implied of his 'source material', the real flesh-and-blood women out of whom he constructs his idealised maidens, which is a considerable source of humour within the first novel. This tendency is first witnessed in the case of Maritornes, the servant at the inn and a woman of reportedly loose morals, whom Quijote takes to be an enamoured daughter of the castle making an advance on him. Maritornes, as introduced to the reader, cuts a distinctly masculine figure with her broad face, snub nose and hunched back. Moreover, she very adeptly demonstrates her fist-fighting skills after Sancho inadvertently strikes her several blows. In Don Quijote's imagination, Maritornes loses her physical masculine characteristics, but is nonetheless left in possession of the 'phallus' (i.e. the active role), which manifests itself in the fantasy of her initiating a sexual encounter with him. Don Quijote's own Lady Dulcinea is revealed to be the output of a similar transition from brawny masculinity to idealised femininity in chapter XXV, when Sancho realizes that Dulcinea of Toboso, the descriptions of whom he had hitherto mistakenly taken at face value, is none other than Aldonza Lorenzo. Sancho intrudes into his imagination with a description of Dulcinea's flesh and blood counterpart, Aldonza Lorenzo who, as described by Sancho, could not be further from Quijote's sublime feminine ideal. Her physical strength ("sé decir que tira tan bien una barra como el más forzudo zagal de todo el pueblo"/ "She can throw a metal bar just as well as the brawniest lad in the villaje ..."), her physique ("que es moza de chapa, hecha y derecha y de pelo en pecho"/ "She's as sturdy as a horse", her booming voice and her coarse demeanour conspire to give the impression of a woman who is, in essence, masculine (DQj,195; DQx, 199-200 ). Nonetheless, she is taken to be the apotheosis of a femininity that, according to Lacan, does not exist: Woman, the feminine essence, *das Ewig-Weibliche*.

*A Fight from Death or a Death Wish?*

Bordo's 'flight from the feminine' was rooted in a fear of female generativity.[16] Parr, however, is not explicitly interested specifically in female generativity, despite his invocation of Bakhtin's "lower bodily material stratum" as that of which Don Quijote lives in denial.[17] For Bakhtin, the lower stratum, which encompasses both the nether regions of the human body and "Mother" Earth, has the double aspect of birth and generativity on the one hand, and death and engulfment on the other, like the archaic mother of psychoanalytic discourse. Bakthin himself explicitly recognises the "degrading" role of this generative and deathly layer within *Don*

[15] Velasco, Sherry. "Marimachos, hombrunas, barbudas: The Masculine Woman in Cervantes" in *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 20.1 (Spring 2000), 69-78
[16] Bordo, p.452
[17] Parr, p.18

*Quijote* and, in identifying the knight with an "abstract and deadened idealism" to be buried therein, he implicitly recognises Don Quijote's flight from the same.[18]

As both generativity and death, the archaic mother marks the extremes of life – the beginning and the end – and thus the finitude of mortal existence. Indeed, various notable critics have recognised Don Quijote's struggle against these constraints of mortal existence. Helene Deutsch, in her 1937 study "Don Quijote and Don Quixotism", identifies in Don Quijote's rebirth an attempt at immortality: "In fantasy, that activity which causes reality to disappear, there is born in place of the mortal Alonzo the immortal Don Quijote."[19] Harold Bloom echoes the idea of Don Quijote's seeking immortality as war on the reality principle. For Bloom, this war consists of a refusal to "make friends with the necessity of dying".[20] Parr concurs with the idea of Don Quijote being at odds with Freud's reality principle, this being most explicit in his discussion of Don Quijote's discourse on the Golden Age, which he describes as "a state that prevailed before the reality-principle reared its ugly head."[21] The reality-principle being most readily correlated with the father, we find implicit support here for our observation, developed from our reading of Bordo, that the 'flight from the feminine' simultaneously constitutes a rejection of the paternal function. In fact, our reading of Bloom's and Parr's contrasting analyses of Don Quijote's war on the reality principle present us with the beginnings of a paradox that we will seek to illuminate, if not resolve, within the course of this thesis. For Bloom, Don Quijote attempts to circumnavigate the reality-principle by refusing to accept the necessity of death. For Parr, Don Quijote's attempt to restore, at a phylogenic level, a time before the reality-principle leads him to the conclusion that: "'Quixotic desire'...in the final analysis...goes beyond the pleasure principle, transmuting itself into a death wish."[22] Don Quijote's flight from death, then, appears at once to constitute a death wish.

*From the Procreating Earth to Immaculate Conception*

Nowhere is the archaic-maternal dual aspect of the Earth pointed to by Bakhtin more apparent, of course, than in the pastoral interlude of chapters XI-XIV, including both Don Quijote's discourse on the Golden Age, the interpolated tale of Marcela and Grisóstomo. Indeed, Bakhtin here assists us in forging further links between the thesis of Susan Bordo that we have just presented and questioned, as the intellectual and epistemological context against which *Don*

[18] Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Rabelais and His World* (Trans. Hélène Iswolsky), p. 22
[19] See Deutsch, Helene. "Don Quijote and Don Quixotism" *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 6: pp.215-222.
[20] Bloom, Harold. "Cervantes: The Play of the World" in *Bloom's Modern Critical Interpretations: Don Quijote*, New York: Infobase Publishing (2001), p.147
[21] Parr, p.21
[22] Parr, p.23

*Quijote* is written, and the pastoral interlude in *Don Quijote Part I*. In our review of Bordo, we discussed early modern man's separation from a previous unity with the maternal cosmos. This "drama" finds its echo in Bakhtin's thought as the context for his discussion of the material bodily principle in Renaissance literature, in "the drama that leads to the breaking away of the body from the single, procreating earth."[23] In fact, Bakhtin also recognises that this is a process that is just beginning in *Don Quijote*, and the casting of the Earth as the lost mother in Don Quijote's Golden Age discourse, along with the process of differentiation that we witness unfold in the interpolated pastoral tale, quite clearly bears witness to Bakhtin's claim that I am seeking to echo in the strongest possible terms and substantiate in the present chapter.

Two differences, however, are immediately striking between Bakhtin's discourse of man's breaking away from the procreating Earth and Don Quijote's melancholic nostalgia for the Golden Age: "Todo era paz entonces, todo amistad, todo concordia; aún no se había atrevido la pesada reja del corvo arado a abrir ni visitar las entrañas piadosas de nuestra primera madre" /In that time, all was peace, friendship and harmony; the heavy curve of the plowshare had not yet dared to open or violate the merciful *womb of our first mother*" (DQj,74; DQx,76). Firstly, that time of communalism and oneness with Mother Earth refers, in Don Quijote's discourse, not to a recent past, fresh in memory (since the process of separation, according to Bakhtin, had just begun in Cervantes' novel), but to a mythical prehistory of man. A second difference of considerable importance is that Don Quijote's first mother is not a procreating Earth like Bakhtin's, but evidently an 'immaculately conceiving' one. On the one hand, the first mother's womb has not yet been "violated" or forcibly opened, suggesting either her virginity, or possibly that the child remains therein within the original uterine symbiosis. On the other hand, she has apparently borne children, whom she nurtures with the offerings of her "broad and fertile bosom" – the maternal breast also being the (part-) object of nostalgic desire (DQj,74; DQx,76). Furthermore, this conception has evidently taken place without the benefit of a male progenitor, since none is acknowledged in his discourse.

Miriam Yvonne Jehenson, in her study of the pastoral interlude, comments in passing that the Golden Age seems to correspond, at a psychological level, to the psychoanalytic notion of a pre-verbal union with the mother, an interpretation that I would entirely agree with and will seek to substantiate here.[24] Quijote's speech posits a symbiotic relationship between children and mother, focussing, in so doing, on the parts of her 'anatomy' that provided for this immediate satisfaction of desire. The symbiotic relationship with the first mother permits a passive, effortless approach to the satisfaction of desire, in this case the oral gratification of

[23] Bakhtin, p.23

[24] Jehenson, Yvonne. "The Pastoral Episode in Cervantes' *Don Quijote*: Marcela Once Again", in *Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 10.2 (1990), p.19

feeding, as is evident from the lack of effort required to obtain sustenance, which is freely (and actively) provided by the first mother. Fatherhood, then, is retrospectively written out of Don Quijote's Golden Age – and not just to the extent that there is no mention of it. The absence of any paternal constraint upon enjoyment is also quite evident, for the first mother's gratification is instant and without lack: "... que ella, sin ser forzada, ofrecía, por todas las partes de su fértil y espacioso seno, lo que pudiese hartar, sustentar y deleitar a los hijos que entonces la poseían" / "... for she, without being forced, offered up everywhere across her broad and fertile bosom, whatever would satisfy, sustain and delight the children who then possessed her (DQj, 74; DQx, 76).." Quijote confirms the lack of work required to achieve gratification in his fantasy by aligning oak trees and bees with the first mother as the providers of instant gratification: "... a nadie le era necesario, para alcanzar su ordinario sustento, tomar otro trabajo que alzar la mano y alcanzarle de las robustas encinas, que liberalmente les estaban convidando con su dulce y sazonado fruto" / "... no one, for his daily sustenance, needed to do more than lift his hand and pluck it away from the sturdy oaks that so liberally invited him to share their sweet and flavoursome fruit." (DQj,74; DQx,76). Bees, fountains and rivers similarly offer up their infinite bounty in exchange for no activity whatsoever.

Quijote's descriptions of the Age lend further support to this thesis of pre-linguistic bliss prior to the father's intervention. Commenting on the communitarian nature of the Golden Age, Quijote alludes to the absence of private property, claiming that the Age was ignorant of the words "mine" and "thine". The absence of this opposition is also suggestive of the I/You Self/Other, Subject/Object dichotomies having not yet been formed. His discourse also alludes to an original pre-linguistic immediacy, truth and justice that precedes the mediation of language: "Entonces se decoraban los concetos amorosos del alma simple y sencillamente, del mesmo modo y manera que ella los concebía, sin buscar artificioso rodeo de palabras para encarecerlos. No había la fraude, el engaño ni la malicia mezcládose con la verdad y llaneza / Amorous concepts were recited from the soul simply and directly, in the manner in which the soul conceived them, without looking for artificial or devious words to enclose them. There was no fraud, deceit or malice mixed in with honesty and truth." (DQj,75; DQx,78) Needs are expressed and met immediately, therefore language is not required to mediate desire and negotiate lack. Describing the ease with which sustenance was found in the Golden Age, Quijote refers to the "las solícitas y discretas abejas"/ "clever and diligent bees" that "ofrec[ían] a cualquiera mano, sin interés alguno, la fértil cosecha de su dulcísimo trabajo/ freely offered to any hand the fertile harvest of their sweet labour." (DQj,75; DQx,76) Bees being matriarchal animals par excellence, Don Quijote's choice of creature with which to illustrate Golden Age man's symbiosis with nature is hardly coincidental. The fact that the "first mother", as the Earth

is characterized, stands as synecdoche for the idealised age only serves to confirm the reader's suspicion that the lost age is one of matriarchy.

The absence of active male sexual pursuit in the Golden Age, the freedom from the "amorous pestilence" that dishonoured women, would certainly indicate that paternal Law does not hold sway. Rather, the prerogative (or burden) of the active role belongs to the shepherdesses, the Amazon figures who fell only "de su gusto y propria voluntad / "through their own desire and will" (DQj,75; DQx,77). As Rikke Schubart says of the Amazon woman, "She cannot be won, owned or seduced, but takes what she pleases."[25] Don Quijote's ideal of passive satisfaction of desire, expressed in relation to the first mother, is thus repeated. It would appear that female desire, in Don Quijote's fantasy, has the privilege of actively asserting itself, whereas masculine desire does not (need to) assert itself in pursuit. In light of this nostalgia for such a state of non-differentiation from the first mother, it is hardly surprising, then, that there is no reference to the First father, who would logically be God the father, in Don Quijote's discourse.

Beyond a strictly psychoanalytic interpretation, what we see in Don Quijote's discourse, we should note parenthetically, is an idiosyncratic version of a myth of origin that is common to many discourses – that of an original, primitive Golden Age of matriarchy prior to patriarchy, a mythical time of plenty. Hesiod's Ages of Man constitutes perhaps the best known example from Greek mythology, although the tendency to posit the prehistoric origin as an idyll has undoubtedly persisted long into modernity. Marxism, for example, posits a matriarchal age of primitive communism as the state of origin, and indeed it would not be unreasonable to actually interpret Don Quijote's discourse as an espousal of precisely this, as James Iffland has already done.[26] Certainly, the evidence is there to invite that view, for example: labour is minimal and invested entirely in one's own sustenance, and the commodity gold has not yet come to be fetishized as it is in the present "Age of Iron."

Tempting as it may be, however, to view this idiosyncratic Golden Age fantasy as a personal Eden, reflecting its analogy to the Judeo-Christian account of the original paradise, the absence of fatherhood, and with it the absence of lack and any constraints upon gratification, mark a very clear point of difference. The discourse on the Golden Age recalls absolute, unbounded enjoyment without a father and without prohibition. This differentiates Don

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[25] Schubart, Rikke. "Woman with a Gun does not Signify Man with a Phallus: Gender and Narrative Change in the Action Movie" in *Nordicom Review: Special Issue, vol.19, no. 1,* June (1998), p. 211

[26] Iffland, James. "On the Social Destiny of *Don Quijote:* Literature and Ideological Interpellation: Part II" *in The Journal of the Midwest Modern Language Association*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (Autumn, 1987), p.18

Quijote's myth of pre-lapsarian origins from its Judeo-Christian counterpart, in which enjoyment of Eden's abundance was limited by paternal prohibition of eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Present in the Garden of Eden, it will be recalled, was a prohibiting Law issued by God the father, albeit that it was fairly minimal prohibition of enjoyment: it stated no more than that Adam and Eve were at liberty to enjoy everything except the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17) Furthermore, it was upon transgression of this singular prohibition, and the obtainment of a forbidden Knowledge, by which Adam and Eve sought to attain the status of divinity, that they were expelled from paradise: "And the Lord God said: Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" (Genesis 3:16). From this we can deduce that, unlike Don Quijote's Golden Age, the Garden of Eden did not constitute an origin of entirely unbounded gratification. Rather, Don Quijote inverts Eden's relationship with enjoyment, for Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden, and thus further alienated from the possibility of paradisiacal enjoyment, *on account of* transgressing and achieving the complete gratification that was forbidden.

*A Flight from Fatherhood*

Having witnessed Don Quijote's fantasy of an idealised prehistory at one with the Virgin Earth-mother in an analogy to Eden without the father, it is hardly surprising to learn that his goals are "chaste" rather than explicitly sexual. We should be specific, here, about what we mean when claiming that Don Quijote is afraid of sex – genital and procreative, or at the very least, adult sexual relations. Arthur Efron, after all, accuses Quijote of a "drastic idealization of sexuality" in his idealisation of Dulcinea – a claim that can only be supported with the caveat that this idealization of sexuality is thoroughly anathema to procreative sex with a real woman. James Parr, in his comparative study of the figures of Don Quijote and Don Juan, notes that both oppose "the repressive order of procreative sexuality," as Herbert Marcuse calls it.[27] The irony here, however, is that Don Quijote chooses voluntarily a code of conduct that is far more unnecessarily repressive again! Quixotic desire remains, however, in the broadest sense sexual if not erotic, since, as will be argued, it is impelled by eros' counterpart. On what basis can we point to Don Quijote's rejection of procreative sex, and how can we explain it? To begin with, we can note that it is a well-worn argument in *Quijote*-criticism. Indeed, Helene Deutsch, in her

[27] Marcuse, Herbert. *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*, cited in James A. Parr, *Don Quijote, Don Juan, And Related Subjects: Form And Tradition In Spanish Literature, 1330-1630*, , p.133

1937 'diagnosis', sees Don Quijote's socially aggressive "most valiant and forthright proofs of his masculinity" as the "substitute for his obviously severe disturbance of potency" which,[28] if not physical, is to be inferred from the fact that he has shown himself incapable of approaching Aldonza Lorenzo, let alone have his 'love' of her requited. John G. Weiger likewise devotes considerable space to an analysis of Quijote's fear of sex, beginning with the knight's name, *quijote* – a piece of armour covering the thigh. According to Weiger:

> Don Quijote's very name suggests sexuality and the fact that the author allows the recently-turned knight to so name himself would support the notion that our hero is trying to cover and protect his sexuality. This is not to say that he is attempting to deny his masculinity but that his manliness will assert itself on the battlefield of knighthood rather than in that other possible assertion of manhood, namely sexual intercourse.[29]

A turn to violence, then – or, more specifically, unnecessary and unsolicited violence which, as will be argued in the course of this chapter, is invariably self-defeating – constitutes Don Quijote's "masculinisation." Just as we did in our discussion of Susan Bordo, let us pause here to consider Deutsch's employment of the term "masculinity", for it appears that we are dealing here with a similar brand of 'masculinisation' – one that is, at its core, compensatory rather than virile. The "masculinisation of culture" of which Bordo wrote was correlated with the father-of-Oneself fantasy, that is: with a usurpation of, rather than identification with, the paternal function. Identification with the paternal function being, according to Lacan, a prerequisite for acquiring the "title to virility", we argued that the 'masculinisation' of thought should logically be considered fundamentally impotent. In the case of Don Quijote, we once again witness the correlation between a 'flight from the feminine', a rejection of fatherhood and a fundamental lack of virility.

Fairly clear-cut evidence of this timidity on the part of Quijote is provided as early as chapter I, as the narrator recounts how Don Quijote's fantasy of Dulcinea came into being: "Y fue, a lo que se cree, que en un lugar cerca del suyo había una moza labradora demuy buen parecer, de quien él un tiempo anduvo enamorado, aunque, según se entiende, ella jamás lo supo, ni le dio cata dello / It is believed that in a nearby village there was a very attractive peasant girl with whom he had once been in love although she, apparently, never knew or noticed" (DQj,22; DQx,23). The most blatant evidence, however, is given in chapter XXV Quijote himself explains to Sancho:

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[28] Deutsch, p.215

[29] Weiger, John G. *The Individuated Self: Cervantes and the Emergence of the Individual.* Athens : Ohio University Press (1979), p.35

> ... porque mis amores y los suyos han sido siempre platónicos, sin estenderse a más que a un honesto mirar. Y aun esto tan de cuando en cuando, que osaré jurar con verdad que en doce años que ha que la quiero más que a la lumbre destos ojos que han de comer la tierra, no la he visto cuatro veces; y aun podrá ser que destas cuatro veces no hubiese ella echado de ver la una que la miraba (DQj, 195)

> ... my love and her love have always been platonic, not going beyond a virtuous glance. And even this was so infrequent that I could truly swear that in the twelve years that I have loved her...I have not seen her more than four times; and it may well be that with regard to these four times, she might not have noticed the one time I looked at her (DQx, 199)

In addition to documenting in crystal clear fashion his infatuation with a woman whom he has seen barely four times and only had the courage to look at once, let alone the possibility of engaging with her, we also see laid bare Don Quijote's strategy for rationalizing his flight from procreation – the elevation of celibacy to "virtue" in the form of platonic love. Hence we see a twofold flight – both from feminine generativity (the mother) and procreative sexuality (the father). One can well imagine that a feminist such as Bordo might condemn him for the former, a left-leaning critic such as Marcuse might praise him for the latter – for taking part, alongside Orpheus and Narcissus in what he terms the "Great Refusal."[30] Whichever of these views we subscribe to, however, we admit that Don Quijote is in flight from procreation, generativity and death – that is: from both its maternal and paternal dimensions. The evidence cited thus far supports our argument that Don Quijote's 'flight from the feminine' (the maternal) and his flight from "the repressive order of procreative sexuality" (fatherhood) are no more than two sides of the same coin.

If the denial of humankind's paternity in the Golden Age was to be inferred primarily from its omission, then the coveting of God the father's place becomes much more explicit when Don Quijote comes to explain the advent and purpose of knight errantry. Lest any doubt remain as to whether the omission of a First father from Don Quijote's utopia is meaningful, the discussion that takes place between Quijote, the goatherds and some travellers two chapters later, but during the same pastoral interlude, reveals more substantial evidence of Don Quijote's Oedipal revolt against Him. As the discussion turns to the practice of knight errantry, those assembled realise that Don Quijote is mad and wish to encourage him to further discussion for their own entertainment. His response to Vivaldo's comment that the knight seems to have chosen a profession even more austere than that of a Carthusian friar reveals how Quijote views himself in relation to God. He compares and contrasts himself to the religious orders by pointing out that, whereas the latter pray to God in tranquillity for the well-being of the world, knights actually deliver what they pray for, since they are "... ministros de Dios en la tierra, y

[30] See Marcuse, Herbert. *One-dimensional Man: Studies in Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*, p.64

brazos por quien se ejecuta en ella su justicia" /... ministers of God on earth, the arms by which His justice is put into effect on earth" (DQj,86; DQx,88-89). The crucial distinction to be drawn here is between praying, which implies supplication and submission, and Don Quijote's identification with Divine deeds themselves, the answering of prayers. By declaring knights-errant, and therefore himself, to be the arms by which God's justice is delivered, Quijote identifies his own violence with the Divine. As if to confirm the effacement of hierarchy between himself and God, Quijote further claims that "si va a decir verdad, no hace menos el soldado que pone en ejecución lo que su capitán le manda que el mesmo capitán que se lo ordena" /... if truth be told, the soldier, when he carries out his captain's orders, does no less than the captain who issues the orders (DQj,86; DQx,88). What we see in this comparison, then, is a usurpation of Divine violence, of the place of God on earth. We see, then, in Don Quijote's account of the passing of the Golden Age (separation from the first mother and the absolute predominance of the Maternal) both a retrospective and a progressive attack on fatherhood – a twofold expression of the *causa sui*.

Having considering Don Quijote's *causa sui* project thus far specifically as coveting the place of God the father, let us here note that the coveting of God's place forms part of a broader motif of attack on paternity in general within *Don Quijote*. That fatherhood is frequently denied and disavowed in Don Quijote, it should be noted parenthetically, is already hinted at by the prologue to the first novel, in which Cervantes himself denies his own paternity of the novel: "Pero yo, que, aunque parezco padre, soy padrastro de Don Quijote" / But though I seem to be the father, I am the stepfather of Don Quijote..." (DQj,7; DQx,3). Is he a knight without a father, then? That there is no father in the Golden Age, but an unmediated dyad between the first mother and her "children" who "possess" her raises the very obvious question about the paternity of the children. The combination of the child's "possession" of the mother and his "fatherless" conception suggest, as in the case of Bordo's 'flight from the feminine', an autonomous conception in which, as per Norman O. Brown's formulation, the child is the father of himself. Alternatively, if we are to interpret that birth as being virginal, the implications are quite clear: to be the 'father of oneself' is to be God. God the father's asexual impregnation of the Virgin Mary, Christian orthodoxy holds, causes the birth of Christ who is no less than God himself. To fantasise about virgin birth, then, is to covet the place of God or, more obviously in this case, God the Son. In this precise respect, we can acknowledge that the litany of interpreters, most famously Miguel de Unamuno, who see in Quijote the image of Christ have a point, although quite possibly not the point they intended.[31] Furthermore, the coveting of the place of Christ is only part of the story, because what Quijote covets even more strongly is the

[31] See Unamuno, Miguel de. *Our Lord Don Quijote: The Life of Don Quijote and Sancho*

place of God the father. Don Quijote's later service of the Virgin Mary with both prayers in the Sierra Morena and a botched quest for her 'liberation' would further document Quijote's love of the notion of virgin motherhood and simultaneously reinforce the idea that his desire is to displace God, this time in his capacity as God the father rather than 'Baby Jesus'.

*Self-causation and Mastery as 'Masculinisation'*

We have just started to outline Don Quijote's *causa sui* fantasy by pointing to the manner in which he appears to covet divinity on Earth, recalling that Norman O. Brown defined the project as the desire to become God. The fantasy of self-causation, however, is apparent in a much more literal sense in Don Quijote's own self-invention. Quijote's 'father of oneself' project, then, begins at the very moment of his own inception, his moment of self-creation or: the moment that Alonso Quixano goes mad.

At this point, it should be emphasised that Don Quijote's going mad can by no means be described as a genuine descent into hallucination, nor of a loss of his faculty for reasoning, as a Classical understanding of madness, such as that described by Foucault, might indicate. His erudite discourse, for example, on Arms and Letters leave the reader in no doubt as to his capacity for lucid reasoning. However tempting it may be to follow the other characters in the novel in attributing such well-reasoned speeches to sporadic outbreaks of lucidity amongst a broader context of chivalric madness, we can demonstrate that Don Quijote's knighthood is characterised absolutely by its intentionality from the outset. It is not that he simply hallucinates that he *is* Amadis de Gaul, as if he did not know otherwise, which would constitute a genuine, involuntary delusion. Rather, Don Quijote makes a *decision* to *become* a knight errant and thereby mad, based on reasoned consideration. This can be seen from the juxtaposition of the language of madness and the language of moderation and reason in the explanation of his going mad:

> En efeto, rematado ya su juicio, vino a dar en el más estraño pensamiento que jamás dio loco en el mundo; y fue que le pareció convenible y necesario … hacerse caballero andante… (DQj,21)
>
> The truth is that when his mind was completely gone, he had the strangest thought any lunatic in the world ever had had, which was that it seemed reasonable and necessary to him…to become a knight-errant… (DQx,21)

Furthermore, this act of going mad, far from being a spontaneous loss of faculties, demands a painstakingly slow and deliberate inventiveness. The narrator reveals Quijote to be quite mindful of the fact that this is a becoming, when he thinks about what to name his trusty steed. "pues estaba muy puesto en razón que, mudando su señor estado, mudase [el caballo] también

el nombre" / he was determined that, as the master was changing his condition, the horse too would change his name ..." (DQj,21;DQx,21). Don Quijote's going mad, then, is manifestly an act of self-fashioning, a rupture from his previous self, the almost fifty-year-old hidalgo of La Mancha, Alonso Quixano. In this sense, Don Quijote's self-creation could justifiably be described, using Susan Bordo's terminology, as a *rebirth on his own terms.* Thus we see already in his inception Quijote's inner contradiction – regressively oriented towards the archaic and epic, towards the discernment of meaning and the interpretation of signs, yet exercising the radical freedom of self-definition that characterises the modern subject. It is in this act of self-fashioning that Don Quijote first indulges in the fantasy of being the father of himself, by usurping the creative power of God to refashion self and world according to his own intention.

"In the beginning was the Word." (John 1:1) Similarly, the antecedent to Don Quijote's madness is too many a sleepless night spent reading romances of chivalry and, furthermore, these words form the substance of his new world. We can join James A. Parr, then, in describing the books of chivalry as the "Logos" from which Quijote enacts the Genesis of both himself and his imaginary chivalric universe. However, we must part company with Parr when he interprets this Logos as Don Quijote's "symbolic father" or, at the very least, add a number of caveats.[32] Whilst the reborn Don Quijote is undoubtedly "conceived" in the act of reading and this Logos becomes his substance (reminding us of how Kafka described himself as consisting of nothing but literature) this does not suffice to shift the focus from the autonomous inventiveness of his enterprise. His genesis makes quite clear that he is the author of himself.

Perhaps Don Quijote most clearly enacts his "father of oneself" project in the act of renaming himself, the provision of first names being the prerogative of God and, more generally, of fatherhood. As Vassilis Saraglou explains in *Paternity as Function*, "one of the first operations of the paternal function is the gift of a name."[33] The nexus between this act of self-fashioning, naming and fatherhood in Don Quijote has been recognised by Robert A. Erickson, who writes: "Don Quijote must refashion a new identity as a knight errant, and a large part of the task lies in devising names for his horse, for himself and for his lady." In this creative act, Don Quijote becomes what Erickson calls a "namefather",[34] following the example of Adam of naming his animal Rocinante, but going beyond the privilege extended to Adam by renaming himself. That this act of naming is preceded by the destructive reversal of what it has taken a week to create, when Quijote anticipates Anselmo's "impertinent curiosity" by putting

[32] Parr, "Cervantes Foreshadows Freud: On Don Quijote's Flight from the Feminine and the Physical," p.22
[33] Saroglou, Vassilis. *Paternity as function: structuring the religious experience,* p.49
[34] Erickson, Robert A. " 'Tis "Tris": Something": fatherhood and Naming in *Don Quijote* and *Tristram Shandy*", *Pacific Coast Philology*, Vol. 21, No. 1/2 (Nov., 1986), p.55

his helmet to the test, might be viewed as an allusion to his undoing God's work. What God had accomplished in a week, however, takes Quijote considerably longer to refashion in his own image. His renaming of his horse Rocinante alone, which is certainly creative and in no way arbitrary (since, in calling it "workhorse before" he takes pains to ensure that it reflects what it was and what it will become) – takes four days. His own renaming, in turn, takes eight days. The opening chapter of *Don Quijote* thus identifies the hero's madness as the enactment of a 'father of oneself' or *causa sui* fantasy – a rebirth on his own terms.

Thus analysed, then, is Don Quijote's rebirth on his own terms. We can recall, also, that in Bordo's description, the father of oneself fantasy or 'masculinisation' constituted a "self-repression whereby all dependence upon the mother (and the instinctual gratification associated with her) was denied and passive helplessness was transformed into extreme activity, in a process that Parr identifies as "obsessional neurosis" on the part of Quijote.[35] Furthermore, in the case of Don Quijote, then, the 'father of oneself' fantasy likewise entails a radical repudiation of the maternal metaphor, a rejection of all comfort and easy living, everything that the first mother represented for him. Again we are faced with the paradox of a simultaneous rejection of maternity and paternity. This repudiation of all comfort, safety and provision is expressed most clearly in his enthusiastic embrace of suffering and his determination to actively seek out danger. His worth as a knight errant is based on the degree of suffering that he must endure:

> No quiero yo decir, ni me pasa por pensamiento, que es tan buen estado el de caballero andante como el del encerrado religioso; sólo quiero inferir, por lo que yo padezco, que, sin duda, es más trabajoso y más aporreado, y más hambriento y sediento, miserable, roto y piojoso; porque no hay duda sino que los caballeros andantes pasados pasaron mucha malaventura en el discurso de su vida (DQj,86).

> I do not mean to say ... that the state of a knight errant is as virtuous as that of a cloistered religious; I wish only to suggest, given what I must suffer to suggest that it is undoubtedly more toilsome and more difficult, more subject to hunger and thirst, more destitute, straitened and impoverished, for there can be no doubt that knights errant in the past endured many misfortunes in the course of their lives (DQx,89).

What is not quite so clear from this discourse on the virtuous suffering of the knight errant is precisely why his profession necessitates such suffering, leaving the impression that the renunciation of safety and comfort is an end in itself for Don Quijote. It is at this point, the point at which Don Quijote renounces maternal gratification, that we must take some effort to distinguish this renunciation from separation that is effected by paternal intervention, for it is at

[35] Parr, p.19

this point, perhaps, that the two are most easily confused. It should be emphasised here that this absolute self-denial is not mandated by any power-bearing social authority except an entirely fictional code of chivalry that Quijote imposes upon himself. We took care to emphasise the autonomy of his self-invention. Here, by contrast, we witness the claim that Don Quijote is compelled to the harshest conditions by his office – an office that he created for himself with the utmost autonomy. His is a compulsion on his own terms (a precedent for the *vorauseilender Gehorsam* of Josef K. in *Der Proceß*). That is to say: he parts from maternal plenitude on *his* terms, *not* the terms of the Name-of-the-Father. However, these terms are far more punishing. For the instinctual renunciation demanded by the Name-of-the-Father is not an end in itself, as it appears to be for Don Quijote, but rather a means to an end. The ideal outcome of the intervention of the Name-of-the-Father in the relationship to maternal *jouissance* is the virility required for adult sexuality, a 'masculinisation' to be sure, but a quite different one from that previously described. For as we have already argued, Don Quijote's "masculinity" is expressed through his sword and his compensatory valiant deeds, including the defence of maidens from 'lascivious' erotic intent, betraying, consistent with his strategy of violence in lieu of sexuality, the assumption that 'maidens' would never be interested in sex and therefore require such a defence (88). The intervention of the paternal metaphor demands the renunciation of *jouissance* or complete satisfaction in order to make possible the sexual experience of (genital) sexual gratification. The end, then, is not renunciation itself, but a pleasure that is both deferred (since it is not experienced until adulthood) and diminished (Since Freud suggests: "... we must reckon with the possibility that something in the nature of the sexual instinct itself is unfavourable to the realization of complete satisfaction.").[36] Not to be overlooked in the aforementioned exchange, furthermore, is the context in which this pride in suffering and danger is expressed: in the same exchange with the travellers in which Don Quijote stakes his claim to divinity on Earth. Unlike the cloistered religious, knights errant are:

> ... no debajo de cubierta, sino al cielo abierto, puestos por blanco de los insufribles rayos del sol en verano y de los erizados yelos del invierno. Así que, somos ministros de Dios en la tierra, y brazos por quien se ejecuta en ella su justicia (DQj,86).

> ...not protected by a roof but under the open sky, subject to the unbearable rays of the sun in summer and the icy blasts of winter. In this way [i.e. through the condition of martyrdom], we are the ministers of God on earth, the means by which his justice is put into effect on earth. (DQx,88-89)

[36] Freud, Sigmund, "On the Universal Tendency to Debasement in the Sphere of Love" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XI*, p.187

Thereby established in this exchange is the immediate link between the *causa sui* project of being God, the claim to the Absolute (being an agent of Justice) and the desire for punishment, through the paradox of a voluntary compulsion to suffer.

The combined developments in chapters XI-XIV, in fact, serve to illustrate the dissonant unity between dialectical opposites in *Don Quijote*: the simultaneous claim to absolute mastery and the idealization of egalitarian communalism in Don Quijote's discourse on the Golden Age. Don Quijote's oscillation between the practice of mastery amongst men on the one hand and the ideal of pseudo-egalitarian submission to maternal rule on the other comes clearly into focus during his preface to his discourse on the Golden Age. He implores Sancho:

> Porque veas, Sancho, el bien que en sí encierra la andante caballería, y cuán a pique están los que en cualquiera ministerio della se ejercitan de venir brevemente a ser honrados y estimados del mundo, quiero que aquí a mi lado y en compañía desta buena gente te sientes, y que seas una mesma cosa conmigo, que soy tu amo y natural señor; ... porque de la caballería andante se puede decir lo mesmo que del amor se dice: que todas las cosas iguala. (DQj,73)

> So that you may see, Sancho, the virtue contained within knight errantry, and how those who practise any portion of it always tend to be honoured and esteemed in the word, I want you to sit here at my side...and be the same as I, who am your natural lord and master...for one may say of knight errantry what is said of love: it makes all things equal. (DQx,77)

When Sancho declines, Quijote seizes his arm, obliging him to sit beside him. From his position as natural lord and master over Sancho, he uses an act of physical violence to enforce egalitarianism, the submission to maternal order that he practises and in turn demands of other men as their superior. We see him paradoxically assume the peak of hierarchy in order to enforce egalitarianism, the alpha-male position of mastery in the imposition of maternal egalitarianism.

We can illustrate that Don Quijote and the Pastoral imitators, in fact, form one such dissonant pair of dialectical opposites: they represent two binarily opposed, but equally 'unlawful', possibilities of denying the reality of lack and maintaining the claim to complete satisfaction: Don Quijote represents, as we have just argued, what could be called the dominant, active or 'masculine' solution and Grisóstomo and company the submissive, passive or 'feminine' solution. The pastoral lifestyle represents another strategy for dealing with the passing of the imagined Golden Age – denial. This denial consists in indulging in the fantasy of never leaving the Golden Age by inhabiting the make-believe Arcadia or *locus amoenus*,

thereby maintaining the utopian fantasy of complete satisfaction associated with it. Indeed, throughout the course of chapters XI-XIV, the reader witnesses a process of differentiation that results in gendered opposites through a narrative process of activization and passivization. Underpinning both the Quixotic and the Pastoral narrative is a sense of loss for a common lost object of desire, the Golden Age of complete instinctual gratification. We can deduce, therefore, that Grisóstomo and Don Quijote are doubles in the sense that they are fundamentally motivated by a common romantic goal. Their interaction begins from the position of undifferentiated, communitarian egalitarianism lauded by Don Quijote in the form of a communal meal evoking the Golden Age (of complete satisfaction) for which they share the same melancholy nostalgia, and proceeds to an opposition between dominant aggression and submissive obedience as Don Quijote warns off Marcela's would-be followers at the end of chapter XIV. That Don Quijote is to be seen as the active counterpart to the goatherds can be inferred from his pledge of "service" of Marcela, this representing a more heroic, active form of submission than the self-pitying victimhood of Grisóstomo. Don Quijote's paradoxical mantra would seem to be: mastery amongst men, submission to women. Take, for example, his warning to the assembled onlookers at Grisóstomo's funeral not to follow Marcela. After Marcela has finished delivering her erudite self-defence, the assembled shepherds watching in awe of her are "... [heridos] de la poderosa flecha de los rayos de sus bellos ojos" / "... pierced by the powerful arrow of the light in her beautiful eyes" (DQj,98; DQx,101).

Having listened to Marcela's defence of her character, and seeing some of those present intending to follow her, Don Quijote places his hand on the halter of his sword, symbolizing his intention to exercise his "phallic" power, and warns all present against following her. However, having succeeded in dispersing the crowd of mourners, he then resolves to follow Marcela and "serve her in any way that he could" and spends two hours searching for her in vain (foreshadowing, perhaps, the perennial unattainability of his own idealised Woman, Dulcinea). As Jehenson expresses it, having resisted being cast, according to the conventions of pastoral romance, in the role of the disdaining mistress, she finds herself pushed towards the equivalent idealization in chivalric romance, the damsel in distress.[37] Having interrupted one form of submission to Marcela, he then resolves to exercise his own, more active variation: 'service'. Don Quijote's warning, therefore, constitutes an assertion of his activity. The passivity of the pastoral, by contrast, is symbolized by the goatherds' undergoing repeated penetration throughout the episode. In the first instance, they are spared the trouble of drawing straws to decide which of them will stay behind, since one member of their group has stepped on a sharp branch and is unable to walk.

[37] Jehenson, p.28

*Hubris and God as Punishing Super-ego*

We drew the distinction above between the mediation maternal *jouissance* effected by the Name-of-the-Father and the far more radical and autonomous separation enacted by Don Quijote himself, noting that, for Quijote, abstinence from pleasure appeared to be an end in itself. Among the more puzzling and troubling paradoxes surrounding his character, to be illuminated in the course of this chapter, is that his absolute refusal of pleasure derives from a continued demand to *jouissance* or complete instinctual gratification, a refusal to accept the deferred and lesser pleasure. For a start, Don Quijote pledges to restore paradise lost in the form of the Golden Age, indicating that its associated pleasure has not been renounced at all. Furthermore, the evidence presented thus far indicates that the separation from pleasure belongs to the Oedipal project of becoming the father of oneself, as it did in Bordo's analysis.

With Don Quijote's predilection for self-punishing *jouissance* now established, the current juncture would be an appropriate one to pick up on a dimension of the father that we have not yet discussed: the internalised father as self-punishing super-ego. Whilst the super-ego and the Name-of-the-Father appear entangled in Lacan's concept of super-ego, the compulsion to enjoy being the shadowy reverse of the Law, the relationship presented in *Don Quijote* points towards the possibility of disentanglement. To be sure, Don Quijote is thoroughly bound to the laws of chivalry and, as the aforementioned exchange with the travellers already indicates, is compelled to punish himself through this obedience. However, let us remind ourselves once more of the autonomy of his "law" – his obedience, and his separation from an imagined plenitude that never was, are on his own terms, not on the terms of any paternal agency. Furthermore, as we have argued above, he acquires the super-egoic desire for self-punishment in direct correlation to his *refusal* of God as Name-of-the-Father. In order words, invoking the religious equivalent (since God is, after all, the father in question), and entirely in line with the concept of the *causa sui* as the desire to be God, Don Quijote's transgression is hubris. We must again resist, however, the temptation to conclude that Don Quijote's self-punishment results from any kind of unconscious guilt at this fundamental transgression. Instead, let it here be argued that his hubris *is* self-punishment. In Don Quijote's hubristic folly, God is internalised as punishing super-ego, as *jouissance* by other means (presuming to be His agent of justice on Earth at the cost of martyrdom) – not, however, as his Name and most certainly not as an agent of castration that limits enjoyment. But whereas *jouissance*, as compulsion, might suggest something that cannot be helped, that is we have already outlined the intentionality of Don Quijote's *jouissance*.

*Exception: Don Quijote as Law unto Himself*

In the preceding paragraphs, we read of Don Quijote's voluntary compulsion to punish himself. However, at the same time as obeying his own super-egoic Law's compulsion to enjoy by punishing himself in lieu of maternal *jouissance*, Don Quijote transgresses against paternal Law in far more fundamental ways. Hans Jorg Neuschäfer's *La Ética del Quijote*, which indeed focuses on the question of Don Quijote's hubris, unites under this rubric the twin offences of trying to do the "redeeming" work of God and trying to impose his will on the outside world without recognition of the will of others. On the former, Neuschäfer writes that Quijote's madness is:

> ... una locura que consiste en querer mejorar el mundo, incluso en querer redimirlo. Se arroga, pues, don Quijote – aunque no sea intencionadamente – casi un papel de redentor divino, lo cual es, en el Siglo de Oro, un pecado grave, pura soberbia y pura arrogancia, pues no le concierne al hombre entrometerse en lo que es de Dios[38]

> a madness that consists of wanting to improve the world or even redeem it. Don Quijote hereby arrogates to himself, though not necessarily intentionally, almost the role of divine redeemer which, in the Golden Age, is a mortal sin. This is pure hubris and pure arrogance, for it is not man's place to meddle in God's affairs – my translation

Quijote's presumption in trying to impose the ill-fitting framework chivalry on the outside world, invariably with negative consequences, is outlined in detail by Neuschäfer with reference to Quijote's first two adventures with Andres and with the merchants from Toledo. He observes the analogy between Quixotism and "...todo dogmatismo idealógico que tiende a exigir la aceptación sin crítica de sus princípios..." [all ideological dogmatism that tends to demand uncritical acceptance of its principles] and responds to reasoned criticism by attempting to negate it, in the belief that one is acting heroically.[39] Neuschäfer's latter accusation is echoed by Parr, who points to Quijote's desire to "impose [his] will upon [his] surroundings to make them conform to some delusional notion" and,[40] reading this against Bordo's and Lacan's accounts of fatherhood, we can appreciate how this imposition of the internal on the external constitutes a transgression against the father. Bordo showed us how, for Descartes, God the father's guarantee was the principle that bridged the gap between inner and outer reality, allowing Descartes to come to the conclusion that he could trust his senses. For Lacan, the Name-of-the-Father likewise connects inner consciousness to the outside world – the Symbolic is the Order of language and hence intersubjectivity. Saraglou likewise describes the act of naming as the

[38] Neuschäfer, Hans Jorg. *La ética del Quijote: función de las novelas intercaladas,* p.42
[39] Neuschäfer, p.42
[40] Parr, *Don Quixote, Don Juan and Related Subjects*, p.123

insertion of the subject into an "intersubjective universe".[41] The self-named Don Quijote, however, does not dwell in this intersubjective realm of shared meanings. Nor, however, is he merely content to inhabit his own mental world, a pre-social, make-believe world of chivalric romance. Rather, Don Quijote's order of chivalry is an order of language and signs superimposed *upon* the intersubjective realm and to which he attempts to force that realm to conform. This amounts to an attempt to refashion the symbolic order of language, law and culture entirely on his own terms. The paradoxical nature, and sheer perversity, of Don Quijote's character is hereby further illuminated: as was argued above, he renounces maternal gratification by adhering obediently to an exaggeratedly harsh fictional code of conduct, or set of laws, that are entirely self-imposed, thereby continuing to enjoy. Set against this, it will be argued presently, he regards himself as exempt from the most fundamental requirements of intersubjective existence.

As an intersubjective space, the social realm is necessarily a heterogeneous one in which the subject's desires, needs and values interact with, and must negotiate, those of other subjects. Now, this interaction of desires may, for example, be mimetic (Rene Girard has famously studied the role of mimetic desire in Don Quijote's imitation of Amadis),[42] competitive, for example, in the case of ideologies; or reciprocal, as in the case of sexual or romantic desire, where the satisfaction of desire is contingent upon its reciprocation – a problem Grisóstomo and friends struggle to grasp in the pastoral interlude. These few examples provide a simple explanation as to why entry into an intersubjective space necessarily requires the deferral of gratification that is demanded by the reality principle. The demands of the reality principle to defer gratification in this sense, are indeed the demands of society and culture. However, in order to explain this fully, it will be important here to scrutinize a crucial semantic ambiguity inherent in the idea of societal and cultural constraints. On the one hand, we might understand these, as above, referring to a homogenising demand for conformity to a specific set of symbolic or socio-cultural norms. However, prior to a homogenized concept of a society as a reified set of cultural norms, does not 'society' refer to something far more minimal and basic again: people living together? Thus understood, the demands of society, at their most basic, are no more than the constraints imposed upon one's desires by occupying a social space with other needs and desires and, more than conformity, demand the recognition and acceptance of the heterogeneity of desires and values. At this point, it should be stressed that this is much less an ethical commentary on the problem of expecting society to conform to one's own values than it is on the "Reality" of such a desire. The single individual's needs, desires and values cannot be the privileged centre of the heterogeneous social space. Therefore the socialised individual can

[41] Saraglou, p.50
[42] See Girard, Rene, *Violence and the Sacred*

only "realistically" expect society to conform to their vision of how it should be to the extent that they can persuade others of that vision, make common cause with other individuals who share that vision and compete successfully with other visions. The distinction must be drawn here between an ethical conviction and the elevation of one's ethical values to the status of an Absolute, as Anthony Cascardi attributes to Don Quijote. The former is compatible with the principle of intersubjectivity, while the latter position presumes that the ethical superiority of one's own convictions justifies the negation of otherness – a thoroughly totalitarian position.

By this logic, then, utopian visions such as Quijote's are radically incompatible with the principle of intersubjectivity. Don Quijote's madness, as a transgression of paternal Law, is not so much a reflection of his refusal to adapt to the norms of his culture, in the sense that he deviates radically from a set of sociocultural norms specific to early 17th century Spain society (that he is a "social deviant" in this sense is surely quite self-evident), but of his refusal of the fundamental demands of the very minimum *concept* of society itself as a social space – the demands for recognition of the other and acceptance of the heterogeneity of desires, values and needs. Don Quijote, by contrast and by virtue of his attempt to force the outside world to conform to his chivalric notions, denies the subjectivity of other members of society (needs, values, agency) while presuming himself to be a martyr on behalf of its collective Good.

Corresponding to our thesis that Don Quijote's Order of Chivalry is a linguistic Order of his own creation that he superimposes on the world, it is not merely his idiosyncrasy but *how* his discursive position is fashioned and *how* it is related to others that renders him mad (and not simply another voice within a polyphonic reality). For a start, Don Quijote's Order of chivalry differs from a mere perspective within an intersubjective symbolic order not just in its idiosyncrasy, but also in its artifice. Its linguistic system is fully intentional, invented as it is by Don Quijote, as we have witnessed in his initial acts of (re-)naming in Chapter 1. In this sense, the Order of chivalry is an order of meaning in which Don Quijote is lord and master or, indeed, father. Accordingly, his interpretive practices show absolutely no self-limitation. If, consistent with the idea of *Don Quijote* as a polyphonic novel,[43] we are to consider Quixotism as a discourse or ideology in competition with others, then we must recognise that the hero himself certainly does not see it that way. If, in the spirit of Cervantes' alleged relativism, we might allow him his point of view, on the basis that windmills as giants, inns as castles and so forth constitute his reality, it is difficult to imagine Don Quijote returning the favour.

[43] C.f. Mancing, Howard, *Cervantes'* Don Quixote*: A Reference Guide*, p.130

Where Don Quijote transgresses against the father qua the principle of intersubjectivity, then, is in the refusal to negotiate meaning. He elevates his subjective stance to the level of an Absolute – one that is above the necessity of negotiation, or even competition, with other ethical claims, constituting a norm from which deviance is punishable by the sword or the staff, particularly where confessions of Dulcinea's beauty are concerned. It is this forceful superimposition of the internal, idiosyncratic and self-created upon the social and intersubjective that, in my estimation, undermines the 'perspectivist' or relativist critical approach to *Don Quijote*, at least to the extent that this view considers the knight's 'reading' of reality to be simply one of many and therefore just as valid as the rest. This can all be particularly well documented with reference to the sequence of the novel that would most readily point towards a perspectivistic construction of truth: the matter of the *baciyelmo*. Two passages in particular concerning the disputed object lend themselves to reading as an endorsement of the relativist view. In chapter XXV, Don Quijote himself justifies defining the object as the helmet of Mambrino with an apparent appeal to the relativity of things: "y así, eso que a ti te parece bacía de barbero, me parece a mí el yelmo de Mambrino, y a otro le parecerá otra cosa / … what seems to you a barber's basin seems to me the helmet of Mambrino, and will seem another thing to someone else." (DQj,191; DQx,195). However, as Parr again correctly observes, the context of this appeal rather undermines the credibility of any such appeal, not least Don Quijote's attribution of this nominal instability to the work of enchanters.[44] Furthermore, he does not, for a single moment, extend to others the same noumenal freedom that he exercises himself and, upon closer inspection, his apparent invocation of perspectivism is no such thing. What "verdaderamente" / "really and truly" (DQj,191; DQx,195) *is* the helmet of Mambrino for Don Quijote merely "seems" (due to the work of enchanters) a basin to everyone else so that they do not covet it as he does. Don Quijote adamantly claims for his interpretation the status of an absolute truth, as opposed to what one might expect if this appeal to relativity were genuine – at the very least an acknowledgement that this is his conviction and that there may be other valid points of view, however stridently he may disagree with them. When the status of the *baciyelmo* is later (in chapters XLIV-XLV) contested at the inn, Don Quijote is no less resistant to opposing interpretations. What merely appears to others to be a brass basin "fue, es y será yelmo de Mambrino / "was, is and will be" – i.e. has the enduring essence of – the Helmet of Mambrino (DQj,383; DQx,390). Any view to the contrary is not merely incorrect, but a lie punishable with the sword. At the beginning of chapter XLV, Quijote makes the promise to any would-be dissenters that: "le haré yo conocer que miente, si fuere caballero, y si escudero, que remiente mil veces /… if he is a gentleman I shall show him that he lies, and if he is a squire, that he lies a thousand times over" (DQj,385; DQj,391).

[44] Parr, James A. "On the Rhetoric Within and Without Don Quijote" in *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*, 26.1 (2006 [2008]) pp. 219-235.

Furthermore, the implied threat of violence in this "demonstration" of the truth is backed up with violent deeds when an officer of the Holy Brotherhood offers his contribution to the less pressing harness-packsaddle dispute. Not only is Don Quijote's order of chivalry entirely idiosyncratic, then, but thoroughly totalitarian as well. Inner meanings, values and desires are imposed upon world that must conform to it, deviance being punishable by violence.

Given Quijote's perception that he is exempt from the constraints of paternal Law and intersubjective existence, it is fairly predictable that he should also see himself as exempt from the laws of the land. If Cervantes' juxtaposition of Pastoral and Chivalric Romance in chapters XI-XIV created a certain dissonance between coinciding opposites, then his use of the Picaresque creates another, as Roberto González Echevarría has noted in his excellent essay "The Knight as Fugitive from Justice: Closure in *Don Quijote Part One*".[45] According to Echevarría, the dissonance produced by the juxtaposition of the starkly opposed chivalric and the picaresque reflects "... the clash between the feats that Don Quijote thinks that he is accomplishing and the criminal acts that he is really committing."[46] Echevarría's analysis proceeds to express this dissonance in terms of *exception* to the law, hereby revealing a paradox that has informed, in the present day, the thought of Giorgio Agamben, to take one notable example. Don Quijote, Echevarría argues, considers himself, by virtue of his profession of knight errantry, to be *above the law*. Just as he presumes to be the father of himself, he presumes to be the law unto himself. However, as Echevarría points out, the knight's pursuit of chivalric adventure leads him, at the outset of the novel, almost immediately into the picaresque setting of the first inn. The picaresque world of rogues, outlaws and prostitutes is situated *outside* the law, a site of "collective rejection of society's norms and the state's laws."[47] The novel's juxtaposition of the knight's lofty status with the lowly outlaws or *pícaros* amongst whom he moves, particularly during his stays at the inns, reveals the "... disparity between the justice that he plans to dispense and the series of injuries, torts and damages that he causes",[48] a dissonance which, Echevarría suggests, is crucial to understanding Don Quijote Part 1. Don Quijote's claim to exceptionality, to a place above the law, thus immediately precipitates in his habitation of a quite different realm of exception, that is: the outside of the law.

Don Quijote's status of legal exception expresses itself in both the presumption of immunity (from judicial punishment and standard legal obligations such as payment for goods and services) and entitlement to dispense his own brand of summary justice. His assertion of

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[45] Echevarría, Roberto González. "The Knight as Fugitive from Justice: Closure in Don Quijote Part One" in *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*, 25.2 (2005 [2006]): pp.119-36.
[46] Echevarría, p.122
[47] Echevarría, p.120
[48] Echevarría, p.123

exemption is most clearly evident in his defiance of arrest by the Holy Brotherhood in chapter XLV:

> Venid acá, ladrones en cuadrilla, que no cuadrilleros, salteadores de caminos con licencia de la Santa Hermandad; decidme: ¿quién fue el ignorante que firmó mandamiento de prisión contra un tal caballero como yo soy? ¿Quién el que ignoró que son esentos de todo judicial fuero los caballeros andantes, y que su ley es su espada; sus fueros, sus bríos; sus prematicas, su voluntad? ¿Quién fue el mentecato, vuelvo a decir, que no sabe que no hay secutoria de hidalgo con tantas preeminencias, ni esenciones, como la que adquiere un caballero andante el día que se arma caballero y se entrega al duro ejercicio de la caballería? ¿Qué caballero andante pagó pecho, alcabala, chapín de la reina, moneda forera, portazgo ni barca? ¿Qué sastre le llevó hechura de vestido que le hiciese? ¿Qué castellano le acogió en su castillo que le hiciese pagar el escote? (DQj,390-391).

> Come, you brotherhood of thieves ... come and tell me who was the fool who signed an arrest warrant against a knight such as I? Who was the dolt who did not know that knights errant are exempt from all jurisdictional authority, or was unaware that their law is their sword, their edicts their courage, their statutes their will? Who was the imbecile, I say, who did not know that there is no patent of nobility with as many privileges and immunities as those acquired by a knight errant on the day he is dubbed a knight and dedicated himself to the rigorous practice of chivalry? What knight errant ever paid a tax, a duty...a tariff or a toll...What castellan welcomed him to his castle and then asked him to pay the cost? (DQx,397)

His liberation of the galley slaves in chapter XXII, furthermore, serves as a particularly vivid example of his exercise of super-legal powers against the Crown, since the sovereign sanctioning of the men's punishment is repeatedly emphasised. The criminals, prisoners of the king, are being forced to go to the galleys, much to Quijote's incredulity that the king would do any such thing. Sancho cautions his Master that the king himself is justice and that, as such, "no hace fuerza ni agravio a semejante gente, sino que los castiga en pena de sus delitos." /"...does not force or do wrong..." but himself punishes wrongdoing (DQj,160; DQx,164). This office already places the sovereign at odds with Don Quijote since the knight regards himself in precisely the same terms – agent of Justice and righter of wrongs. When Quijote finally makes his demand explicit, the guards are suitably dismissive, reminding him that the men are the "king's prisoners" and that they would not have the authority to let them go, even if they wanted to. The freeing of the galley slaves, then, constitutes not merely an offence against the King but a fundamental challenge to his sovereign authority.

Having arrogated to himself this sovereign, exceptional position above the law in his injudicious liberation of the galley slaves, Quijote does indeed find himself again acting within a space outside of the law, but not in the sense that he had intended. It is highly appropriate that, immediately following the galley slaves episode, Don Quijote's and Sancho Panza's flight

from the legal repercussions of their actions (naturally, it is the latter rather than the former who is concerned by these) in the form of arrest by the Holy Brotherhood should lead them into the Sierra Morena, due to the legal significance of this region outlined by Echevarría, which we will now consider more closely.[49] According to Echevarría, the Sierra Morena is "true *despoblado*". He interprets the Spanish *despoblado* as: "a barren place, a place without "pueblo", without people, outside the town... the uncivilized, literally that which is not within the political because it is not in the *polis* or city."[50] We should pause here momentarily to consider Giorgio Agamben's account of the legal significance of the *polis* in *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. The *polis* was the sphere of inclusion in legal and political life. The punishment for offences against the Sovereign was to be abandoned to the outside of the *polis* – to be excluded from political life but included precisely by this exclusion.

Now, Echevarría notes that the crime of releasing the galley slaves was itself committed in *despoblado*, and was consequently all the more serious in the eyes of the law, since it was committed on the open road. However, the Sierra Morena is "true *despoblado*" in the extent to which it fits both Echevarría's and Agamben's definitions of being outside the *polis* in a truly political sense. Evidence for the association of the Sierra Morena with this form of liminality in the novel itself comes in the form of its repeated association with animality. When Sancho reports on his fabricated encounter with Dulcinea/Aldonza Lorenzo to deliver Don Quijote's letter, he claims he told her that his master was doing penance "metido entre estas sierras como si fuera salvaje" / "... in this sierra like a savage" (DQj,252; DQx,259). Don Quijote, encountering his fellow madman Cardenio, asks him "que os ha traído a vivir y a morir entre estas soledades como bruto animal, pues moráis entre ellos tan ajeno de vos mismo cual lo muestra vuestro traje y persona /"... what has compelled you to live and die in this desolate place like a wild animal, for you dwell among the beasts estranged from your true self, as demonstrated by your dress and your person" (DQj,179, DQx,183) *Despoblado*, by Echevarría's definition, is "a place outside the reach of the law and of justice."[51] Given the liminality that we have just illustrated, the Sierra Morena certainly appears to be outside civilization and thus outside the law, but only beyond *justice* in its 'fallen', legally mediated form. Richard L. Kagan (cited by Echevarría) makes the observation that the knight represents a mythical age in which Justice was possible "without the mediation of lawyers and without a bevy of legal briefs" (that is to say: when an absolute, unmediated Justice was possible) at a time when justice was more readily associated with "the world of lawyers, judges, and other

[50] Echevarría, p.126
[51] Echevarría, p.126

"men of law" (that is, with its legally mediated form).[52] Moreover, Quijote considers it his rightful position, as knight-errant, to dispense this immediate form of Justice.

The consequence of rising above the law and directly challenging sovereign power, however, is a self-imposed exile from the *polis* as refugee, as opposed to the sovereign banishment described by Agamben in which the *homo sacer* is abandoned by law to its outside. In close analogy to the view of the Sierra Morena as being outside the law as *despoblado*, Carlos Feal has recognised the region as being outside the law in the psychoanalytic sense – beyond society, hence outside the Symbolic Order and in the "maternal, natural world", hence beyond paternal law in the domain of the mother.[53] Yet this maternal domain is no *locus amoenus* – there is nothing of the Golden Age of complete satisfaction about it. It is precisely its correlate opposite in fact – a purgatorial, barren, desolate place beyond civilisation, at the mercy both of the elements and of highwaymen. In fact, it would appear to constitute the polar opposite of the Arcadia or *locus amoenus* – the *locus horrendous/horribilis*. However, this Godforesaken place is no less outside the law and maternally connoted than its utopian counterpart.

*Justice as Self-Punishment*

Hereby revealed the pattern in *Don Quijote* by which transgressions are voluntarily self-punished. In chapter XVII, he had similarly exempted himself from the legal obligation to pay the innkeeper for his lodgings by reference to the laws of chivalry, which supersede the former and state that knights are entitled to free lodging. Don Quijote justifies this exemption on the basis of the hardships of knight-errantry: "... se les debe de fuero y de derecho cualquier buen acogimiento que se les hiciere, en pago del insufrible trabajo que padecen buscando las aventuras de noche y de día" /"... whatever welcome they receive is owed to them as their right and privilege in return for the unbearable hardships they *suffer as they seek* adventures by night and day ..." (DQj,120; DQx,121) I have employed italics here to emphasise that these "unbearable hardships" that justify his sense of entitlement are not forced upon him (i.e. necessary or unavoidable hardships) but are actively embraced as the knight's lot as he searches for adventures. Let us recall, furthermore, the pride he expresses to the travellers in chapter XII in the suffering endured while presuming to administer God's justice on Earth. We noted above Don Quijote's voluntarily compulsive self-punishment. We should note here its pairing with absolute entitlement and claim to exceptional status – a pairing which, this chapter is arguing,

[52] Kagan, Richard L. *Lawsuits and Litigants in Castile: 1500–1700*, p. 127 cited Echevarría, p.128
[53] Feal, Carlos, "Mad Lovers in Don Quixote" in El Saffar and de Armas Wilson (eds), *Quixotic Desire*, p.180

structures Don Quijote's relationship to the law and justice. However, unlike Echevarría, this thesis does not consider law and justice to be synonymous with one another.

For there is another form of immediate (legally unmediated) justice, anterior to arbitrary punishment, in operation throughout *Don Quijote* and that is none other than the fulfilment of self-punishing, self-defeating wishes. In Lacanian terms, this is the drive for *jouissance*. Hence the Law that is repeatedly transgressed in *Don Quijote* is one that carries with it the automatic, self-inflicted penalty of unmediated Justice without judgement, dispensed in the form of self-punishing *jouissance*. *Jouissance* consisting as it does of an inseparable combination of illicit pleasure and pain, we can already hypothesise that the pain is the immediate punishment for the illicit enjoyment. Our concept of Justice can be well illustrated using the story of the Fall to which we earlier referred as a model. Let us recall the paternal prohibition that existed in Eden: "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17). On the one hand, we can comment upon the mutual dependency of the Law and transgression: we have previously explained that the Law is founded upon the desire to transgress. We can cite Žižek also in explaining how, in turn, the Law as command *gives rise to* the desire to transgress: "... it is the Law that not only opens up and sustains the domain of sin, of sinful impulses to transgress its prohibitions, but also finds a perverse and morbid satisfaction in making us feel guilty for such transgressions."[54] Would Adam and Eve, for example, have even known of such a tree had it not been for this explicit prohibition? On the other hand, let us consider the expulsion. While the Bible portrays the expulsion of Adam and Eve as God's punishment, it is arguably unnecessary to conceive of God as an agent in this punishment. Question: were Adam and Eve expelled from Eden as punishment for defying God's prohibition, or as a direct result of obtaining knowledge of Good and Evil? By transgressing against God's prohibition upon eating the apple, Adam and Eve obtained Knowledge of Good and Evil, i.e. the ability to *judge*, making their habitation of a state that is by definition anterior to such knowledge logically impossible. This would imply, in turn, that the Law prescribed what it did in order to ensure that Adam and Eve could continue to inhabit paradise – it was to protect them from unwitting self-expulsion. The punishment, then, was the unintended consequence of the transgression itself, which was the acquisition of Knowledge of Good and Evil. In the Judeo-Christian story of origins, then, we see for the first time the operation of Justice as the immediacy of transgression and punishment, a punishment that has already been arranged by the one who is to suffer it. The dialectic of obedience and

[54] Žižek, "Psychoanalysis and Post-Marxism The Case of Alain Badiou" in *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 97:2 Durham (Spring 1998), p.248

transgression of the Law conceals a far simpler issue of actions and their consequences, which is what is at stake in our concept of Justice.

Furthermore, the role of the idealised Woman on a pedestal, played most prominently (but not exclusively) by the imaginary figure of Dulcinea, is that of giving form to this prohibited, self-punishing desire and, furthermore, as a cipher of this unmediated 'Justice'. Don Quijote's profession of Chivalry centres on fantasy of the all-powerful Woman on a pedestal, most apparent in his worship of Dulcinea. As such, it is fitting that his "initiation" into that profession, his baptism (following the rebirth on his own terms) into his new "religion", is consummated in the act of being girded by a sword-wielding woman after his long vigil at the inn in Chapter III. Of all the idealised Women, the fact that one particular "Woman with a Sword" resides in Don Quijote's Golden Age fantasy is surely significant: *La Justicia* – Dike-Astraea (in Greek mythology) or Justitia (in Roman mythology). Justice, as Lady, exists as an independent, unmediated Thing that has not yet been adulterated by the arbitrariness of subjective (Linguistic and legal) influence: "La justicia se estaba en sus proprios términos, sin que la osasen turbar ni ofender los del favor y los del interese, que tanto ahora la menoscaban, turban y persiguen / "Justice [or Justitia – *La justicia*] stood on her own ground, and favour or interest did not dare disturb her as they so often do now ... Arbitrary opinions formed outside the law had not yet found a place in the mind of the judge, for there was nothing to judge and no one to be judged" (DQj,75; DQx,77). The presence of Lady Justice as the Goddess Dike/Astrea (as Yvonne Jehenson and Carolin A. Nadeau have recognised her) corresponds to Hesiod's account of the Golden Age, in which she had not yet left the Earth.[55] This unmediated, absolute, pre-linguistic, pre-subjective concept of Justice – surely a utopian fantasy in a 'fallen' world mediated by language and the point of view – places her, in Lacanian terms, firmly within the Real/Imaginary dichotomy and anticipates, furthermore, modern and post-modern "messianic" formulations of justice as an extra-linguistic domain, such as Derrida's "ghost of undecideability" and Walter Benjamin's insistence upon Justice belonging to a "purer sphere" beyond Law: "Justice is the principle of all divine end making, power the principle of all mythical lawmaking".[56] That sphere is the domain of the Absolute.[57] Contrary to Hesiod's myth, however, it will here be argued that the unmediated Justice of Dike-Astraea, as one variant of the sword wielding, punishing Woman, is made present throughout *Don Quijote* in the persistence of the 'Woman on a pedestal' fantasy and its self-defeating consequences.

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[55] See Jehenson. p.18 and Carolyn A. Nadeau. "Evoking Astraea: the Speeches of Marcela and Dorotea in Don Quijote I" in *Neophilologus 79.1* (1995), pp. 53-61

[56] Benjamin, Walter. "Critique of Violence" *in Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, p.295

[57] Derrida, Jacques and John D. Caputo. *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation With Jacques Derrida*, p.278

The Sierra Morena, that liminal region beyond legal mediation, is the site of one particularly vivid instance of *Justitia* in action. This is entirely appropriate, for the Justice visited upon Don Quijote stands in the same relation to his own idealised concept of immediate justice from the Golden Age as the barren, purgatorial *locus horrendus* of the Sierra Morena does to that *locus amoenus*. As though exile from the *polis* were not punishment enough, the Sierra Morena becomes the site in which Justice is served in the form of Don Quijote's 'penance', carried out, crucially, as a lamentation in the name of Dulcinea. Echevarría is quick to note the irony of Don Quijote's self-consciously motiveless penance: it is "a punishment without crime",[58] but this innocence is, in turn, counterbalanced by the very real nature of his crimes against the Crown and the necessity of his flight. Thus he views Don Quijote's penance in the Sierra Morena as an expiation or "rustication" of guilt.[59] However, this would presume a poetic or even an unconscious causal relationship between Don Quijote's transgression of the law and his self-flagellation, for example: the expiation of unconscious guilt. We are suggesting, on the contrary, that the link between transgression and punishment is even more immediate again. For a start, and as Echevarría himself points out, Don Quijote remains utterly oblivious to any motive or necessity for such expiation of guilt. Furthermore, in the context of our analysis to date, does not this 'penance' in the Sierra Morena itself constitute another transgression *qua* enjoyment? This is underlined by Quijote praying the *Ave Maria* to the Virgin Mother instead of any prayer directed at God Himself, the full significance of which will be discussed below. Secondly, there is not the slightest suggestion of any reluctance on Quijote's part to perform his penance. Indeed, as Sancho informs the priest and the barber, Quijote is as happy as can be.

The transgression of Law represented by Don Quijote's *causa sui* project and his claim to be an agent of Justice is thus punished without the mediation of an external punitive agency. A few fisticuffs in the second inn in chapter XLV notwithstanding, the Holy Brotherhood, as representatives of state power, never truly hold Don Quijote to account for his crimes against the Sovereign. Might this not be because (Lady) Justice is already served in Don Quijote's self-punishment and flirtation with death through his determination to seek out danger at any opportunity? Quijote waxes lyrical about an immediate, absolute order of Justice without judgement, figured as a Woman, and purports to be the agent of this Justice by elevating his own ideals to an absolute Good. However, the 'penance' in the *Sierra Morena* witnesses him being punished without being judged, because he is punished by his own hand, in the name of idealised femininity. Lady Justice, then, precisely as in Don Quijote's fantasy, acts immediately

[58] Echevarría, p.132
[59] Echevarría, p.132

and anterior to the arbitrary judgement of Good and Evil through the infliction of *jouissance* – since *jouissance* is simultaneously a transgression and its punishment.

Thus far we have focused on Don Quijote's presumption of being an exception to the law. However, we can now witness the ironic twist by which this radical freedom is accompanied by voluntary submission to bondage. Slavoj Žižek, although not writing specifically about *Don Quijote*, has advanced ideas on the matter of courtly love that are particularly pertinent to our interpretation of *Don Quijote*. Firstly, he has characterised the practise of courtly love as exhibiting the "libidinal economy" of Masochism *avant la lettre*: "The knight's relationship to the Lady is ... the relationship of the subject-bondsman, vassal, to his feudal Master-Sovereign, who subjects him to senseless, outrageous, impossible, arbitrary, capricious ordeals."[60]

Based on our reading of *Don Quijote* and the knight's penchant for self-punishment to date, the label of 'masochist' could not fit any better. Recall what we have written about Quijote's first mother fantasy and his refusal of the paternal metaphor.[61] Deleuze explains that the masochist desires a rebirth as a "new, sexless man" – we have already discussed Quijote's asexuality at length.[62] As a means to his end, the masochist identifies with, and takes as love object, an all-powerful mother in union with whom he conspires to cast the father from the symbolic order. Masochism, he explains, entails a disavowal of the Law of the father and investment of all law in the mother.[63] The restoration of the Golden Age, which Don Quijote later declares to be his mission, implies the fulfilment of the incestuous, Oedipal wish, of regaining possession of the mother and returning to the womb in preparation for a rebirth on his own terms without the father. Our discussion of the punishing Woman, and her relevance to Don Quijote's masochistic project, is enhanced by Deleuze's elaboration upon the masochist's ideal woman qua mother-substitute. Deleuze distinguishes three variants in *Coldness and Cruelty*:

> ...the first is the primitive, uterine, hetaeric mother... the second is the Oedipal mother, the image of the beloved who comes to he linked with the sadistic father as victim or as accomplice; and in between these two, the oral mother ... who nurtures and brings death.[64]

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[60] Žižek, Slavoj. "Courtly Love, Or Woman as Thing" in *The Metastases of Enjoyment: Six Essays On Women And Causality*, p.151
[61] See, in particular: Combet, Louis. *Cervantes, ou, Les incertitudes du désir: une approche psychostructurale de l'œuvre de Cervantes*
[62] Deleuze, Gilles, *Masochism. Coldness and cruelty*, p.33
[63] Deleuze, p.55
[64] Deleuze, p. 55.

Deleuze's masochistic trinity of mother-substitutes thus includes the primordial, all-providing mother of *Mutterrecht* (Deleuze gives explicit mention to Bachofen here), the punishing mother who is complicit in the overthrow of the father, and the ideal – the "oral mother" who combines the dialectical opposites of instant gratification and cruel punishment and hence corresponds most closely to our analysis of Woman in *Don Quijote*.

It is on grounds of her (solicited) capricious tyranny that Žižek has elsewhere made the argument that "Woman is one of the names-of-the-father." Žižek argues this on the basis that the knight's lady on the pedestal is homologous with the obscene *pere-jouisseur* or father of enjoyment, the one who compels enjoyment:

> As the exemplary case of the exception constitutive of the phallic function, one usually mentions the fantasmatic, obscene figure of the primordial father-*jouisseur* who was not encumbered by any prohibition and was as such able fully to enjoy all women. Does, however, the figure of the Lady in courtly love not fully fit the determinations of the primordial father? Is she not also a capricious Master who wants it all, i.e. who, herself not bound by any Law, charges her knight-servant with arbitrary and outrageous ordeals?...In this precise sense, Woman is one of the names-of-the-father. The crucial details not to be missed here are the use of plural and the lack of capital letters: not Name-of-the-Father...but one of the nominations of excess called the primordial father. In the case of Woman – the mythical She...as well as in the case of the primordial father, we are dealing with an agency of power which is pre-Symbolic, unbridled by the Law of castration...What the notion of Woman (or of the primordial father) provides is the mythical starting point of unbridled fullness whose "primordial repression" constitutes the symbolic order.[65]

Žižek's analysis thus gives the impression that the super-egoic, primordial father-*jouisseur* is more or less interchangeable with the figure of Woman as the compulsion to "Enjoy!" What he does not make explicit about the fantasy of Woman, however, is a point noted by Henry Sullivan – the connection between Woman and "the illicitly possessed mother."[66] The Woman fantasy thus betrays the continuation of desire for the mother, of the will to *jouissance*.

Now, where things get even more complicated again is that Žižek, within his vast array of publications, conceives of the super-ego variously as maternal and paternal, both of whom conspire to block "normal" i.e. adult sexual relations. In its maternal aspect, it is described thus:

> ... the father is absent, the paternal function (the function of pacifying law, the Name-of-the-Father) is suspended and that vacuum is filled by the 'irrational' maternal super-

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[65] Žižek, Slavoj. "Woman is One of the names-of-the-father, or How Not to Misread Lacan's Formulas of Sexuation"in *Lacanian Ink* 10 (1995) http://www.lacan.com/zizwoman.htm

[66] Sullivan, Henry W.. *Grotesque purgatory: a Study of Cervantes's Don Quijote, Part II,* p.30

> ego, arbitrary, wicked, blocking the 'normal' sexual relationship (only possible under the sign of paternal metaphor).[67]

Žižek also insists, however, upon an anal-sadistic, paternal version the super-ego, the aforementioned father-*jouisseur* that prevails in lieu of the symbolic authority of Name-of-the-Father. This figure is the double, what is "in the subject more than subject himself",[68] who likewise hinders the adult sexual relationship while enjoying and compelling enjoyment. According to Žižek, this father-*jouisseur* is the object of primal repression, the part of the self that must be renounced to enable adult sexuality. Even here, we see this figure described in terms usually reserved for the maternal, e.g. the abject, the archaic mother. This appears utterly bewildering until we think of it thus: if we renounce the mother, it stands to reason that we also renounce the part of ourselves that lays claim to the mother. That part, for Žižek, is the primordial father as double. In terms of the argument that Woman constitutes precisely this name-of-the-father, who commands all kinds of danger and suffering, we can suggest the following: even if Woman existed and commanded these things, there would be no obligation to obey, were it not for a colluding agency that acquiesced to this compulsion and was hence complementary to Woman within the same agency. That figure is the father-*jouisseur* or double.

As *causa sui*, we can assert that Don Quijote is the double of the primordial father-*jouisseur* who compels enjoyment. Living in denial of the reality of the castration that makes unbridled fullness impossible, he aspires to the same position as the exception to castration, who is entitled to complete satisfaction. However, since the primordial father is the complement of the Woman/mother who is the source of *jouissance*, taking his place thus logically carries with it the compulsion to "Enjoy!" Hence we can further our association between the idealised Woman and the super-ego as pure, irrational compulsion: Dulcinea gives form to Don Quijote's enjoyment, which conspires with his super-egoic compulsion to punish himself by enjoying. Hence we can say that she acts as a cipher for *Justitia* because the punishment and the transgression are identical, *jouissance* being inherently self-punishing.

*The Idealised Woman as Mother in disguise*

Thus far, then, we have considered Don Quijote's 'flight from the feminine", his fantasy of self-causation, his claim to the divine role on Earth and his claim to sovereign exceptionality. In the preceding paragraphs, we tied the knight's self-punishing martyrdom on behalf of his non-

[67] Žižek Slavoj. *Looking Awry*, London: MIT Press, (1997), p.99
[68] Žižek Slavoj. "Grimaces of the Real" in *October, Vol. 58, Rendering the Real.* (Autumn, 1991), p.54

existent lady to the concept of immediate justice without the intervention of a judge – self-punishment as the immediate consequence of the transgression. We will now elaborate further upon the self-punishing dimensions of the lady on a pedestal fantasy.

In our discussion of James A. Parr's notion of the 'flight from the feminine', we mentioned Woman's emergence as a denial of the less than poetic aspects of femininity and noted, furthermore, the masculine characteristics of some of the flesh-and-blood women, particularly Aldonza Lorenzo and Maritornes, who underwent 'dulcineation'. However, Dulcinea, Marcela and the other "dulcineated" Women in *Don Quijote Part I* retain a highly significant residue of their masculine and maternal origins: activity or, at least, the fantasy of feminine activity in the 'dulcineated' mind, which we have already encountered in relation to the shepherdesses of the Golden Age. For the fantasy of feminine activity allows the male infantile fantasy of passive and instant gratification, the mode of enjoyment associated with the Golden Age, to persist. Henry Sullivan has already advanced the thesis in *Grotesque Purgatory*, his study of *Don Quijote Part II* with a significant Lacanian focus, that Dulcinea, constitutes an example of the Woman fantasy, since her defining characteristic is that she *does not exist.* Consistent with his 'diagnosis' of an infantile foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father that has developed into full-blown psychosis in adulthood, Sullivan points out, furthermore, that this fantasy is "constructed out of the illicitly possessed mother".[69] Sullivan's focus being the second novel, he misses the opportunity to demonstrate how this relationship is apparent in the first novel and thereby avoid the accusations of "naked psychologism" levelled at him on account of speculatively linking Quijote's psychosis to Alonso Quixano's own infantile mother-bonding, when virtually nothing of his prehistory is given in the text.[70]

We are arguing, then, that the fantasy of the non-existent Woman is the mother in disguise, the continuation of *jouissance* by another means. As such, it is imperative to explain, at this juncture, how this psychosexual orientation differs from that of the "normative" subject. Freud, after all, commented of the adult male sexual instinct, all love is homesickness. The desire for sexual union with a woman represents, according to his thesis, a displacement of the infantile uterine fantasy or desire for the mother, following the resolution of the infantile Oedipus Complex. Lacan, in close analogy, holds that desire for the mother (with the accompanying demand for instant gratification) is renounced upon acceptance of the Name-of-the-Father, a process by which the infant renounces the mother and aspires to one day enjoy another woman as the father does. However, as I will endeavour to prove in this chapter, this

[69] Sullivan, *Grotesque Purgatory*, p.130
[70] Sullivan, Henry. "Don Quijote de la Mancha: Analyzable or Unanalyzable?" in *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 18.1 (1998) p.15

inversion does not occur in the cases of Don Quijote, Grisóstomo and the latter's fellow faux shepherds. Instead, the idealised Woman will serve as a cipher of both complete satisfaction and self-punishment, in other words, as a route back to the first mother. As such she and the other 'dulcineated' Women do indeed constitute a 'Symptom',[71] as Lacan suggests: a symptom of the never relinquished demand for complete gratification, a symptom for the failure of paternal prohibition; a symptom of the fantasy of the existence of a sexual relationship, not as bodily, genital procreation (Entailing limited gratification) but as the promise of wholeness and a return to the lost, pre-Symbolic state of complete gratification without lack. The dulcineated Woman, then, embodies (Without a body, however!) this unattainable 'complete satisfaction', a pleasure beyond the pleasure principle. She is simultaneously the imaginary bearer of a lost, self-completing gratification and an imaginary agent compelling cruelty and pain. Her non-existence is a reminder not merely of the 'transgressiveness' of such a desire, but its outright impossibility and the self-punishment entailed by trying to fulfil it. For Don Quijote, the *jouissance* obtained from the pedestal worship of Dulcinea fills in for that provided by the first mother imagined to have been lost with the passing of the Golden Age. The idol thus substitutes for the idyll.

The idealised Woman in Don Quijote, we have just argued, is both impossible gratification (transgression) and (self-)punishment and, as such, a cipher for Justice. Melancholy at the imagined loss of the age of complete satisfaction with the first mother, then, will be repeated as a masochistic pursuit of another imaginary Woman, not as a means of satisfying a (procreative) sexual desire, but as a continuation of complete *jouissance* or instinctual gratification by other (super-egoic) means. Let us now illustrate how the idealised Woman represents a continuation of *jouissance* in *Don Quijote*. The connection between Dulcinea and this form of suffering, of course, is nothing new. The German Romantic interpretation of Don Quijote, for example, sees service to Dulcinea as exemplary of the knight's "martyrdom on the altar of the Absolute",[72] an interpretation that is entirely consistent with my own, even if I would in no way share the Romantics' notion that such martyrdom makes him a hero. Likewise, for Arthur Efron, Dulcinea represents Don Quijote's indulgence in the "spurious cult of suffering and denial of the body".[73] Consider the following lines that Don Quijote writes to her during his self-imposed penance in the Sierra Morena: "¡oh bella ingrata, amada enemiga mía!, del modo que por tu causa quedo. Si gustares de acorrerme, tuyo

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[71] Lacan. *Seminar XXII: RSI* http://www.lacaninireland.com/web/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/Book-22-RSI-updated-24-7-2011.pdf , p.62

[72] Close, A. J.. *The romantic approach to Don Quijote: a critical history of the romantic tradition in Quijote criticism*, p.37. Hereby underlined is the inspiration that Quijote held for many of the German Romantics

[73] Efron, Arthur. *Don Quijote and the Dulcineated World*, p.47

soy; y si no, haz lo que te viniere en gusto; que, con acabar mi vida, habré satisfecho a tu crueldad y a mi deseo / "Regarding the state in which I findeth myself for thy sake: if it be thy desire to succour me, I am thine; if not, do as though pleaseth, for by ending my life I shall have satisfied both thy cruelty and mine own desire" (DQj,197;DQx,202). On the one hand, Dulcinea is made to play the maternal, nurturing role in providing succour to Don Quijote, a request which is echoed at various points in the novel when the knight commends himself to her in the face of danger. As he rages at Sancho in the face of a slight against Dulcinea: "¿Y no sabéis vos, gañán, faquín, belitre, que si no fuese por el valor que ella infunde en mi brazo, que no le tendría yo para matar una pulga?" /"Do you not realize, you coarse, contemptible ruffian, that were it not for the valour she inspires in my arm, I should not have the strength to kill a flee?" (DQj,249; DQx,255), hereby declaring her to be his primary source of strength and sustenance. The other, crueller side of Dulcinea is also in evidence in Don Quijote's lamentation, to the point where he invests in her the power over his life and death, as one on whose behalf he suffers. The undertaking of penance in the Sierra Morena, as we have argued, is an absurd act of self-flagellation in her name. While Quijote punishes himself on her behalf, Dulcinea's imaginary punishing function is also pressed into service, for example, when Don Quijote sends his vanquished enemies to El Toboso to place themselves at her disposal.

Dulcinea is certainly not the only Woman imagined in such terms, however. We underlined above the doubleness of the chivalric and the pastoral in relation to the Golden Age, and we can here illustrate that Grisóstomo and friends manufacture their own mother-substitute by elevating Marcela, a real woman of exceptional beauty who, unlike the perennially absent Aldonza Lorenzo we do meet in the text, into the punishing, mother-substituting idealised Woman. In the figure of Marcela, we see juxtaposed the ideas of instant gratification and cruelty, the contradictory good and bad qualities of the "oral mother," hereby confirming the doubleness of Quijote and Grisóstomo. Like Don Quijote's imaginary first mother, she is fantasized as automatically reciprocating desire, albeit this time of an amorous nature. This fantasy is manifest in a sense of entitlement, the assumption of some correlation between the "virtuousness" and honesty of an expression of desire for her, and the obligation upon her to reciprocate this desire. The pastoral subject's claim to instant gratification manifests itself in the sense of entitlement that their 'love' be automatically requited. This expectation is laid out explicitly in Antonio's song:

> Porque sé que eres sabida,
> en que me quieres me afirmo;
> que nunca fue desdichado
> amor que fue conocido. (DQj,76)

Since I know that you are clever
that you love me I do claim
for ne'er was love unrequited
if it has been proclaimed. (DQx,79)

Furthermore, this sense of entitlement is heightened in the claim that this "love" is "virtuous" rather than "sinful": "I love no one but you, yet/ I don't court you sinfully;/ there's more virtue in my plea." Conveniently, sexual attraction is decried as "sinful", while their own, supposedly nobler brand of "romantic love" (which demands complete gratification) is cloaked in the language of virtue. The expectation of instant gratification and the imagination of cruelty when their sense of entitlement is not satisfied that suggest that their Woman fantasy is indeed fashioned from "the illicitly possessed mother", as Henry Sullivan claims.[74] Zoraida, in the interpolated *Captive's Tale*, represents another combination of nurturing and punishment. Her maternal, providing dimension is in evidence in her continuous gifts of money to the Captive in order to fund their escape. She is also, however, clearly another example of a phallic woman within the novel. Consider the following lines from her correspondence with the Captive: "... y mira que has de ser mi marido, porque si no, yo pediré a Marién que te castigue" /"... remember that you must marry me, because if you do not, I shall ask Leila Marién to punish you" (DQj,344; DQx,350). Here we see the threat of cruelty, of punishment, a role that is invested within her revered Leila Marién, the Virgin Mary (This alliance will be discussed in greater detail below). The fact that this threat of punishment backs up her taking the initiative of demanding marriage serves to further underscore her activity.

*Oedipal Idolatry*

Thus far, then, we have considered the idealised Woman as a cipher for (Lady) Justice, since she is the figure of enjoyment – hence both impossible pleasure and the self punishment that proceeds from its pursuit. Consider, for instance, his exchange with the travellers concerning the matter of chivalry. The traveller comments that he finds it objectionable that knights errant, before commencing battle, instead of commending themselves to God, as every good Christian is obliged to do, "se encomiendan a sus damas, con tanta gana y devoción como si ellas fueran su Dios / "... commend themselves to their ladies with as much zeal and devotion *as if those ladies were their God*" (DQj,87; DQx,88, my emphasis). Don Quijote responds that asking for his lady's favour and protection in battle is an essential practice for a knight, but that one should not, therefore, assume that he does not also commend himself to God, since there is time to do that in battle. In this accusation and defence, we see an act of submission to the lady, once more casting her in the role Jocaste, the occasion for God the father's negation, or at best

[74] Sullivan, *Grotesque Purgatory*, p.130

relegation to afterthought. From the conversation in chapter XIII, then, we can see that Don Quijote has firstly identified himself with the paternal 'phallus', with Divine Justice and violence, and then proceeded to commend himself to, and place this purloined power, in the possession of the idealised Woman. Don Quijote's aspiration, then, is to be the phallus of the mother-substitute qua phallic Woman, the instrument of her authority and violence, her *jouissance*, something that is quite clear from the many instances of him committing or threatening violence in the name of Dulcinea and other women. Defence of maidens was, after all, one of the reasons cited by Don Quijote for the institution of knight errantry after the supposed passing of the Golden Age and the proliferation of male erotic "pestilence". The passing of the Golden Age gives rise to the proliferation of the male sex drive, in response to which the practice of knight errantry is instituted, in order to "defend maidens". Nowhere is Don Quijote's self-identification as Dulcinea's sword more succinctly declared than when he hears his lady Dulcinea "blasphemed" by Sancho's negative comparison of her with Dorotea:

> Decid, socarrón de lengua viperina, ¿y quién pensáis que ha ganado este reino y cortado la cabeza a este gigante, y héchoos a vos marqués, que todo esto doy ya por hecho y por cosa pasada en cosa juzgada, si no es el valor de Dulcinea, *tomando a mi brazo por instrumento de sus hazañas*? Ella pelea en mí, y vence en mí, y yo vivo y respiro en ella, y tengo vida y ser. (DQj,249, my emphasis)

> Tell me, insidious viper's tongue, who do you think has won this kingdom and cut off the head of this giant and made you a marquis, all of which I consider already accomplished, concluded and finished, if not for the valor of Dulcinea, *wielding my arm as the instrument of her great deeds?* In me she does combat, and in me she conquers, and I live and breathe in her, and have life and being. (DQx,255, my emphasis)

Here we see expressed by Don Quijote himself, then, the understanding that his violent deeds are in fact committed by Dulcinea, with him as her instrument of violence. No sooner has Don Quijote pretended to usurp divine power than he has ceded all power to the lady who compels him. This underscores the impotence behind Don Quijote's acts of violence. And, as we have discovered by now, it is invariably Quijote who comes off worse from such outbreaks. Hence the paternal potency placed in the Woman's hands is to be used, ultimately, against himself.

It can be shown, furthermore, that the specifically father-defeating dimensions of the Dulcinea fantasy form part of a wider trend. Taking firstly the example of Marcela just discussed, we only see an allusion to her Oedipal role, which is clearly subordinate to her role as the bringer of Grisóstomo's death. Reiterating the accusation that Marcela is responsible for Grisóstomo's death and derives some sort of sadistic pleasure in it, Ambrosio asks: "¿O vienes a ufanarte en las crueles hazañas de tu condición … o a pisar, arrogante, este desdichado

cadáver, como la ingrata hija al de su padre Tarquino? /"... do you come to gloat over the cruelties of your nature, or ... in your arrogance, to tread on this unfortunate corpse, as the ungrateful daughter of Tarquinius did to the body of her father?" (DQj,96; DQx,98). If this reference is no more than an allusion to Marcela's imagined Oedipal role, then the complicity of the phallic woman in the overthrow of fatherhood is much more apparent elsewhere in the novel. By far the most vivid example offered by Cervantes is that of Zoraida, whom we have already characterized as phallic above, and her role in the plot against her own father, Agi Morato. While his kidnapping is not envisaged by her own plan, which consists simply of escaping from Algiers to Spain with the Spanish captives, she nonetheless willingly goes along with it, albeit not without a degree of remorse and compassion. The true inspiration for her escape, however, and thus the reason for her consenting to the humiliation of her father, is another Woman whom she desires not only to see and to worship, but to become. That woman is Leila Marién, the Virgin Mary, who is the alpha and the omega of her escape. Her desire to escape is awoken by a Christian slave woman once kept by her father, who urges her to one day go to Christian lands to see the Virgin. Thus it can be said that the Virgin Mary is ultimately the occasion for the overthrow of her father. Furthermore, Leila Marién herself is adopted as a co-conspirator in the escape, as Zoraida asks her to reveal an escape plan, and the captives respond to her instructions by commenting that her advice is as good as if Leila Marién had dictated it. As we have just noted, Zoraida invests in Mary the power of punishment over the captive, ensuring that she obtains as the outcome of her help the marriage that she demands. Finally, the overthrow and humiliation of her father is fully realized in the act of her renaming, a metamorphosis, mirroring that of Alonso Quixano into Don Quijote, into *Maria* herself. In the figure of the Virgin Mary, then, we see quite clearly the culmination of an attack on fatherhood – a woman, invested with the power of punishment over men, who is solicited in the Oedipal act. It is surely significant that the metaphor of fusion with the mother also recurs in the context of their conspiracy, when the captive's Moorish renegade friend and translator expresses his longing to be "reducirse al gremio de la Santa Iglesia, su madre, de quien como miembro podrido estaba dividido y apartado por su ignorancia y pecado"/ "... reunited with the body of the Mother Church, from whom, like a rotten limb, he had been separated and severed because of his ignorance and sin." (DQj,342; DQx,348)

However, this is not the only instance of Mariolatry, of the Virgin Mary being cast in the role of the Oedipal mother, as she features twice in Don Quijote's own disavowal of the father. In Don Quijote's case, the father who is conspired against is God Himself, the ultimate father, as I will seek to demonstrate clearly in the following paragraphs. Let us consider now the specifics of Don Quijote's implicit transgression against God the father, beginning with his invocation of the Virgin Mary. Let us recall for a moment Don Quijote's decision to take

Amadis as his model for imitation when performing his penance in the Sierra Morena. Noting that Amadis commended himself to God during his penance, however, Don Quijote imitates him entirely faithfully by praying Ave Marias.

Don Quijote's apparent piety turns out to be Mariolatry, a displacement of God the father as the recipient of prayer and self-commendation by the Virgin Mother. Now certainly, the *Ave Maria* being a staple Catholic prayer as it is, its recitation instead of, say, the Our Father, cannot, of itself, reasonably be taken as evidence of an attack on God the father. However, placed within the wider context of virgin motherhood and negated fatherhood in the novel, the chances of it being coincidental appear ever more remote. The final chapter of the first novel will again see Don Quijote coming to the service of the Virgin, this time through the medium of violence rather than language. His attack on the religious order carrying the statue of the Virgin might be construed, on the one hand, as a direct attack on God Himself, although the fact that this religious order is also punishing itself with whips while carrying the image of the Virgin might also suggest that they have more than a little Quixotism about them. Thus far, then, we have evidence of the Virgin Mother cast in multiple situations as the Oedipal mother, the woman in whose name the masochist undertakes his revolt against the father, firstly against Agi Morato and then against God the father Himself – the one responsible, indeed, for the Virgin Mother's immaculate conception. Aside from the specific aforementioned attacks on fathers, however, the Virgin Mary is particularly apt for the role in which Don Quijote imagines her. For the very notion of virgin maternity, the possibility of conception without sex, constitutes a denial of paternity per se, as we already pointed out with reference to the similarly virgin first mother. It makes the father obsolete, while fantasising that the Virgin Mother, like Don Quijote's first mother, is self-sufficient. In the figure of the Virgin Mother, then, we see Woman *par excellence*, the very embodiment of a disavowal of the principle of fatherhood and, furthermore, the ideal complement to the *causa sui* project, since it was through Mary that God the father begot himself as God the Son.

*Woman and Self-Constitution*

In the preceding paragraph we considered how the figure of Woman served the negation of fatherhood, we can also illustrate here the role she plays in relation to the *causa sui* as self-invention. Furthermore, we can reveal that Don Quijote appears quite aware that Dulcinea is his invention: "Y paraconcluir con todo, yo imagino que todo lo que digo es así, sin que sobre ni falte nada; y píntola en mi imaginación como la deseo, así en la belleza como en la principalidad, y ni la llega Elena" / "And to conclude: I imagine that everything I say is true, and I depict her in my imagination as I wish her to be in beauty and distinction, and Helen

cannot approach her ..." (DQj,197; DQx,201). Quijote admits that, just as the great poets' ladies are not real but are invented "porque los tengan por enamorados y por hombres que tienen valor para serlo" /"... so that people will think of them as lovers and as me who have the capacity to be lovers" (DQj,197; DQx,201). Dulcinea's essence lies in his imagination of her as he wishes her to be, in order to construct his own ideal ego. We see, then, that Dulcinea exists entirely as Don Quijote's self-projection, and that the characteristics with which he imbues her thus derive from his project of self-invention. That is to say, the lady as idealised love object is essential to the constitution of the knight's ideal self. This is already apparent from the conversation between Don Quijote and the travellers in chapter XIII. When one of the travellers expresses disbelief that all knights errant could be in love, Don Quijote insists that there cannot be a legitimate knight errant without a lady.

Just as Don Quijote needs Dulcinea in order to constitute his ideal, complete self, Grisóstomo and the other shepherds also have need of a cruel mistress in order to fashion their pastoral selves. For Grisóstomo and the shepherds, that cruelty is elicited in their masochistic pursuit of a manifestly unavailable *mujer esquiva* whose previously declared resistance to marriage makes rejection inevitable. Those tempted to valorise masochism for its marginal, subversive qualities against an Oedipal norm,[75] based on Deleuze's observation that the masochist seeks liberation from the rule of the father, would be well advised to read chapters XI-XIV of *Don Quijote* in order to see the misogyny that ensues when male masochistic tendencies meet gender relations. In this interpolated tale we can observe that the idealization of femininity, which Bordo neglected to discuss, and the misogyny that was the focus of her discussion, belong to the same tendency. For the elevation of Marcela to her pedestal is simultaneous with her character assassination as a human being, forcing her unwillingly into the role of the female torturer. In order to illustrate this, we can point to the obvious conflict between her acknowledged nature on the one hand and her projected nature from the masochistic perspective that requires her cruelty on the other. On the one hand, the testimonies of those who narrate Marcela's story go out of their way to emphasise her affable disposition and virtuous reputation. The first of those to narrate Marcela, Pedro, begins with what seems to be an honest account of how this problem of representation arises and even offers a defense of her conduct which is argued to be beyond reproach, as Pedro emphasizes that she does not provide false encouragement:

> Y no se piense que porque Marcela se puso en aquella libertad y vida tan suelta y de tan poco o de ningún recogimiento, que por eso ha dado indicio, ni por semejas, que venga en menoscabo de su honestidad y recato;... que de cuantos la sirven y

[75] See, for example, "Masochism and male subjectivity" in Silverman, Kaja, *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*. New York: Routledge, 1992, pp.185-213

> solicitan ninguno se ha alabado, ni con verdad se podrá alabar, que le haya dado alguna pequeña esperanza de alcanzar su deseo. (DQj,82)
>
> And don't think that, just because Marcela took on the liberty of a life that's so free, with so little seclusion ... that she gave any sign or suggestion that would damage her modesty or virtue...of all the men who woo and court her, not one can truthfully claim that she's given him any hope of achieving his desire. (DQx,84)

Pedro's speech even offers up honestly an account of how such representations of Marcela arise, explaining that, faced with her rejections, they "don't know what to say" except call her cruel and ungrateful. Thus we have an admission from his own mouth that such representations arise from frustrated desire, as though he wished to explicitly exonerate her before accusing her. It is through this lens of inevitably unrequited desire, and seemingly entirely self-consciously, that Marcela is transformed into the cruel woman who is blamed for Grisóstomo's death. Nonetheless, the accusations of her cruelty, and her guilt at Grisóstomo's death, are adamant. Pedro proceeds to declare uncritically that such representations "que bien la calidad de su condición manifiestan" / "plainly show the nature of her disposition" (DQj,83; DQx,85). Despite having just noted her affability and friendship, Marcela's "disdain" manifests itself, once her friendly but chaste conduct, hitherto a virtue, is viewed, quite self-consciously, through the lens of a rejection that was pre-ordained. Amidst the accusations that Marcela bears the guilt for Grisóstomo's death, Ambrosio makes her an offer that seems a very unusual one to make towards the alleged killer of one's friend: "que, por saber yo que los pensamientos de Grisóstomo jamás dejaron de obedecerte en vida, haré que, aun él muerto, te obedezcan los de todos aquellos que se llamaron sus amigos (96)/ "since ... Grisóstomo's thoughts never failed to obey [Marcela]...those who call themselves his friends will obey you as well" (DQj,96; DQx,98). This projection of sadistic cruelty, along with the desire to obey, point to the simultaneity of idealisation and defamation. We see, then, that the representation of Marcela, self-consciously born of an inevitably frustrated amorous desire, projects a cold and cruel Woman who, by virtue of her coldness and cruelty, is accused of causing the death of Grisóstomo. Rather than being a mere defence of her own will, her rejection is represented as a sadistic victory over Grisóstomo that culminates in his death. But what is it that the shepherds are trying to achieve with this attribution of cruelty that is so detrimental to Marcela's freely acknowledged good name? These willfully false accusations of cruelty and the seemingly deliberate courting of rejection would seem that the perverse aim of Grisóstomo and his cohorts is to actually *become* a scorned lover. At stake in the charade with Marcela is the self-constitution of the pastoral subject and the enjoyment that this entails.

How does Woman serve the project of self-invention? The figure of Woman serves the project of self-creation through her inevitable absence! The key to understanding the role of

Dulcinea and Marcela as Women in the self-formation of the masochistic subjects Don Quijote and Grisóstomo, I would like to argue here, is to be found in their very absence. Considering firstly Dulcinea, let us recall how Don Quijote rationalizes his penance to Sancho and to himself in the Sierra Morena. When Sancho protests that Quijote has no reason to go mad, unlike the knights that he is attempting to imitate, Quijote responds that being absent from Dulcinea is more than enough reason. This is henceforth taken to be the primary motive for his melancholy, instead of her supposed cruelty. She will no longer inflict suffering on Don Quijote by her imagined cruelty, but rather by her absence. He proceeds to write a melancholy poem of three verses, each of which ends "aquí lloró don Quijote/ ausencias de Dulcinea/del Toboso" / "... Don Quijote here shed tears/ for his absent Dulcinea/ of Toboso." (DQj,202; DQx206-207). In the case of Grisóstomo, we witness even more blatantly that the disdaining Woman is deliberately made absent. Grisóstomo, seeking inspiration in order to write his final poem, had absented himself from her voluntarily, "por ver si usaba con él la ausencia de sus ordinarios fueros ... como al enamorado ausente no hay cosa que no le fatigue ni temor que no le dé alcance" / "to see if absence would have its customary effects on him... since there is nothing that does not vex the absent lover ..." (DQj, 96; DQx,98) It would appear that his professed desire for Marcela is ultimately subordinated to his desire to write pastoral poetry, to constitute himself as a writing subject, necessitating the pursuit of grief and rejection in order to follow his chosen literary code. The fact that the unattainable Women, the projection of whom is constitutive of Quijote's and Grisóstomo's own aspirational selfhood, are 'made absent', puts us in mind, in particular, of the *Fort!-Da!* game. According to Freud, the game of *Fort!-Da!* was aimed at coming to terms with the absence of the mother by achieving mastery or agency over it.[76] He achieves this through the invention of symbolism, using the spool in order to represent her. Lacan's interpretation of the game, whilst conceding that it does indeed attempt to achieve mastery, subordinates this function to what he regards as its main achievement, which is the entry into language and hence self-constitution of the subject, since "the signifier is the first mark of the subject."[77] The subject constitutes itself in opposition to the reel being thrown away. Rather than being a mere embodiment of his mother, the object, according to Lacan, is in fact part of the subject that detaches itself from him while still remaining his, thus resonating with our analysis of Dulcinea and Marcela as constituents of the subjects Don Quijote and Grisóstomo.

In Susan Bordo's account of the 'flight from the feminine", let us recall, early modern man separated from the "mother-world" even more emphatically than necessary in order to

[76] Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle. Standard ed.* New York: Norton, (1989), p.15
[77] Lacan, Jacques, "Tuché and Automaton" in *The Seminar XI, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, p.76

pretend to make himself the architect of that separation, thereby voluntarily foregoing a union that was, in any case, impossible. This impression is strengthened when we consider the following relationship between Dulcinea and the maternal Golden Age suggested by John G. Weiger: "Just as he felt the need to create an unattainable woman (Dulcinea), so he must seek an inaccessible time and place (*locus amoenus*)."[78] However, in our analysis, the relationship suggested by Weiger is reversed – it seems that the need for the unattainable Woman derives from the imagined loss of paradise.

[78] Weiger, p.47

On the one hand, then, we see that the absenting of the Woman serves as the means by which the masochistic subject constitutes himself. However, in addition to the act of self-constitution, there is another facet to deliberate absence that is common to both Don Quijote and Grisóstomo, and that is death. For all the many acts of violence contained therein, the act of dying in *Don Quijote* is conspicuous by the absence of any scientifically plausible agent or cause. The reader cannot point to any act of murder, nor does any *explicit* act of suicide take place, although the indeterminate death of Grisóstomo after being rejected by Marcela has prompted much speculation. As Bruno Diamani notes, the cause of Grisóstomo's death has been the subject of some debate within Cervantine criticism, with critics tending to come down either in favour of suicide or natural death.[79] Américo Castro, for instance, argues that the cause of death is suicide by hanging.[80] Javier Herrero concurs that Grisistomo commits suicide, but by stabbing rather than by hanging.[81] The traditional view, argued by Luis Rosales and Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce amongst others, supports the thesis of death by natural causes, that Grisóstomo "simply pined away on realizing that Marcela would not respond to his love."[82] Since death from a broken heart would not appear to have any scientific basis as a natural cause of death, the temptation to conclude that it is suicide is obviously strong for the modern reader, even though no specific physical act of suicide is mentioned (suicide being considered a mortal sin, this would have been highly tabooed in Cervantes' time in any case). In terms of textual evidence, when one reads in Grisóstomo's final poem "Tú, que con tantas sinrazones muestras la razón que me fuerza a que la haga/ a la cansada vida que aborrezco/ pues ya ves que te da notorias muestras/ esta del corazón profunda llaga"/ "You, whose unreason shows the reason clear/ that forces me to end this life grown hateful to me/ can see the signs of the fatal wound that cuts this heart in two..." (DQj,94; DQx,96), the juxtaposition of a forced end to life and a fatal wound to the heart makes Herrero's interpretation appear to be reasonable at first glance. However, at the same time it cannot elsewhere be inferred conclusively from the text that these lines are to be taken literally to refer to a stab wound, rather than the figurative 'broken heart'. Grisóstomo is introduced to the plot having "muerto de amores / "died of love" (DQj,79; DQx,81) for the shepherdess Marcela. It would appear, then, that the shepherd's death is to be understood as standing in some form of causal relationship to his failed pursuit of Marcela, albeit that his death, and his desire for death, are foretold in his final piece of writing. As

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[79] Diamani, Bruno. "Death in Cervantes' Galatea" in *Cervantes: Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America* 4.1 (1984), p.60

[80] Castro, Américo. "Los prólogos al *Quijote*" in *Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 3 (1941), p.337

[81] Herrero, Javier "Arcadia's Inferno: Cervantes' Attack on Pastoral," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 55 (1978), pp.289-299

[82] Avalle-Arce, Juan Bautista, "Grisóstomo y Marcela: La verdad problemática," *Nuevos deslindes cervantinos* Barcelona (1975), pp. 89-116

implausible as it may seem in the empirical world, those who maintain that Grisóstomo's is literally a death from melancholia seem to have recourse to stronger textual evidence than those who speculate on a physical act of suicide.

In this respect, Grisóstomo's death is not even unprecedented within that interpolated pastoral tale. Marcela's father, we learn, died from grief at the loss of his wife, who died while giving birth to their daughter (thereby reinforcing the association death and maternal generativity, as Ruth El Saffar notes).[83] In fact, grief as a cause of death is a recurring phenomenon throughout both parts of *Don Quijote*. There is no mystery presented in the text, for example, surrounding the death of Anselmo in the interpolated tale of *El curioso impertinente*. In his desolate state, following the catastrophic results of his experimentation with his wife's fidelity, he comes to the realization that he is dying and sits down to write his farewell note. Despite this prior knowledge of impending death, there is no suggestion of a *conscious* decision to take his own life. Overcome and weakened by grief, he dies in the middle of the act of writing, leaving his final note unfinished and suspended in mid-sentence. Again, there is no suggestion that this should be understood as anything other than a literal death from grief, caused by his foolish desire and, like Grisóstomo and Marcela's father, by the loss of love. Altisadora, in a mocking recreation of the romantic plot, feigns a death from grief similar to that of Grisóstomo after Don Quijote spurns her fictitious advances. Finally, Don Quijote's eventual death, while it is attributed to a medically plausible cause (a fever), is suggested by his family, friends and even his physician to be the result of a melancholy brought on by his defeat in battle by the Knight of the White Moon and subsequent prohibition from practicing knight-errantry on the one hand, and by the impossibility of disenchanting and finally seeing Dulcinea on the other (although we will later conclude that time simply caught up with him). In *Don Quijote* then, there is the suggestion of a recurring connection between melancholia and death. Since, as we have noted, such a connection clearly marks a departure from verisimilitude, how is it to be accounted for? Returning to the specific case of Grisóstomo, I would submit that his death follows just this model. Having been inevitably rejected by Marcela, Grisóstomo, professing his undying love but also his resentment of her cruelty, absents himself to write the poem that takes revenge with his subjective representation of her to the detriment of her good name, but ultimately brings about his own melancholic death. He has a hand in his death, whether or not his death is by his own hand. For there is more to Grisóstomo's death than just grief. Although no specific act of suicide is mentioned, it is very much self-inflicted, and even desired, even if this desire is not acknowledged. Given that Grisóstomo's death occurs immediately following his game of *Fort!-Da!*, the act of its self-constitution, it would seem that

[83] El Saffar, Ruth. "In Marcela's case" in El Saffar, Ruth, and Diana de Armas Wilson, *Quixotic desire: psychoanalytic perspectives on Cervantes*, p.162

his case suggests a paradoxical simultaneity between self-constitution and self-destruction. His gesture of mastery turns out, in the final analysis, to be the act of suicide. As we have seen, Don Quijote's letter to the absent Dulcinea points towards the possibility of his death from grief. However, whereas Don Quijote's letter has the appearance of a suicide note, it would appear that writing these verses is quite literally an act of suicide for Grisóstomo, for it is thus that he conjures up the grief that results in his death, as I will argue in the paragraphs that follow.

The poetic reference that prompted speculation on Grsostomo's suicide is far less explicit than the reference to his death as being the immediate result of his self-defeating desire for Marcela. Like Anselmo, a reckless desire took his life. As his friend Ambrosio comments, death is "el paradero que tienen los que a rienda suelta corren por la senda que el desvariado amor delante de los ojos les pone / "... the final destination of those who madly gallop along the heedless path that love places in front of them" (DQj,90; DQx,93). Whilst it is not openly or consciously acknowledged, Grisóstomo's futile pursuit of Marcela, a woman who has made her 'unattainability' quite clear, amounts to an act of self-sabotage that logically culminates in death by melancholic self-pity (whether or not his own hand was involved). The arrogant and entitled accusations of cruelty that ensue when this expectation is unfulfilled reveal, in turn, the expectation of instant gratification upon which this pursuit was premised. The Marcela-Grisóstomo story of chapters XI-XIV thus illustrates that punishment for this transgressive fantasy of Woman is consistent with the fantasy itself, for it is the Justice of Dike Herself, anterior to any judgement of good and evil. It is not the outcome of arbitrary legal judgement, but rather an autonomous, self-reflexive and automatic punishment for transgression that is simultaneously a wish fulfilment. Woman, the cipher of Dike-Astraea, has dispensed Justice to Grisóstomo in the form of death by *jouissance*. Unmediated Justice, in this sense, is truly immediate in that the transgression and the punishment are so immediate that they are absolutely indistinguishable from one another. The perverse gratification obtained from the defiant absenting of Marcela is carried to its absolute limit, the Lacanian path towards death followed to its final destination, "the final destination of those who follow the path that heedless love places in front of them." Grisóstomo travels the path of *jouissance*, the path towards death, to its furthest possible extreme.[84]

It is Marcela herself, when she finally extricates herself from this fantasy, who quite explicitly reveals the workings of this particular brand of Justice. When Marcela herself is finally given a voice, it is used as a means of decentring the masochistic pastoral perspective

[84] Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, p.323

and liberating herself from the punishing role of Woman in which she is being cast, in the perverse project of pastoral writing, as the one in the name of whose sadistic pleasure Grisóstomo has died. Having been represented hitherto as the desired, cruel Woman, Marcela, by appearing before the goatherds and becoming subject, serves to decentre and thereby expose the masochistic narrative, exposing Grisóstomo's death as the result of his own desire – not just in the sense of it being the consequence of his desire, but rather as something that he desired of itself. Far from being culpable for the death of Grisóstomo, Marcela counters that it was the latter's masochistic desire for her despite all discouragements, his obstinacy and not her cruelty, that killed him. As Marcela protests:

> ... tampoco yo merezco ser reprehendida por ser hermosa; que la hermosura en la mujer honesta es como el fuego apartado o como la espada aguda, que ni él quema ni ella corta a quien a ellos no se acerca (DQj,97)
>
> ... [nor do I] deserve to be reproved for being beautiful, for beauty in a chaste woman is like a distant fire and a far off sword: they do not burn or cut the person who does not approach them. (DQx,99)

That is to say, the beautiful woman does not kill simply by being what she is. Grisóstomo's death is, as Ambrosio openly proclaims, the logical consequence of his futile courting of Marcela. His moribund pursuit of Marcela, a woman who, from the outset, has made clear that she will never acquiesce to romantic proposals, conceals a desire that, like Don Quijote's, goes beyond the pleasure principle. Thus articulated in Lacanian terms, then, is Marcela's defence – it is not she, but rather Woman who has killed Grisóstomo. Marcela herself is not Woman, because Woman does not exist except as the fantasy of Grisóstomo who has not renounced his demand to *jouissance* – in other words, has not renounced his death wish, of which Woman is the occasion. Hence the sadistic pleasure in the event of his death that Grisóstomo's "Song of Despair" attributes to her:

> Canción desesperada, no te quejes/
> cuando mi triste compañía dejes;/
> antes, pues que la causa do naciste/
> con mi desdicha aumenta su ventura,/
> aun en la sepultura no estés triste
>
> Song of despair, do not weep at leaving me/
> since that will swell the joy of one who is/
> the reason for your birth and my misfortune. (DQx,99; DQx,97)

By letting Marcela speak to defend herself, Cervantes underlines the crucial distinction between Marcela as real-life woman and Marcela as Woman.

*Arcadia revisited*

The symmetry between the desire for return to an imaginary lost Arcadia as the restoration of a prohibited symbiosis with the first mother, and Grisóstomo's moribund courting of Marcela, comes clearly into focus as Grisóstomo is buried. It is betrayed by the symbolic presence of the first mother, Earth, in his masochistic pursuit of Marcela, hereby bringing sharply into focus the double aspect of the lower bodily material stratum as discussed by Bakhtin. As such, the Earth as mother is made to partake of the circularity of the 'errant path' in chapters XI-XIV: from the imagination of ideal origins, via the self-punishing desire to go beyond the pleasure principle, to the eventual fusion with Mother Earth in death. The same piece of ground, we are told, witnesses his first sighting of Marcela (and hence the stirring of his masochistic desire), her rejection of him (loss of the love object) and ultimately, his death . Appropriately, it is the same spot where he is finally buried, achieving in death the ultimate enjoyment, the return to the womb of the first mother, the original *jouissance* for which Don Quijote had initially expressed his desire. By absenting himself from Marcela deliberately, Grisóstomo thus casts himself into the beyond of the pleasure principle by conjuring *jouissance*, culminating in death by lethal enjoyment. This paradox of death by the play of *Fort!-Da!* is emphasized by the fact that this death is consummated in the act of writing. Entry into language, as Lacan explains, entails a renunciation of *jouissance*, yet Grisóstomo's act of writing is precisely his means to *jouissance*, a linguistic suicide. In a paradoxical reversal, or, alternatively, a progression to its furthest extreme, Grisóstomo's gesture of mastery turns out to be simultaneously a declaration of submission. *Fort!-Da!*, the game of deathly repetition by which the subject constitutes itself, turns out to be the act of suicide and the cause of death.

That the object of pastoral desires is Woman, rather than any specific woman; that Woman is a device through which the pastoral subject invents itself and that homesick return is the end goal, all becomes apparent towards the end of the first novel, where another pastoral plot is inserted that appears to be a mere variation on the events of chapters XI to XIV. In this case, the narrating shepherd claims that men who had never even laid eyes on Leandra, the corresponding variant of the cruel and absent Woman, appear dressed as shepherds in order to lament her, with so many present that the place "que parece que este sitio se ha convertido en la pastoral Arcadia, según está colmo de pastores y de apriscos" (429) / "... so crowded with shepherds and sheepfolds, seems to have been transformed into the pastoral Arcadia" (DQj,429; DQx,437). The fact that these mock shepherds have never even seen Leandra is the strongest evidence provided by Cervantes that the pastoral enterprise is not really about the woman herself. In the same way that Don Quijote claims that writers of love poetry invent imaginary

women for their verses, in order to be considered as lovers and as "men who have the capacity to be lovers", the pastoral subject imagines his love object in order to make her unattainable and hence masochistically imagine being rejected by her. The collective culmination of this mock collective grieving is the calling forth of the image of the lost *Heimat*, the pastoral Arcadia or maternal *locus amoenus*. This bizarre turn reminds us of the first pastoral interlude, which also took a perverse turn when Grisóstomo deliberately absented himself from Marcela in order to experience the suffering of her absence. Reading both of these bizarre turns in the pastoral plot together can illuminate the ultimate purpose of the romantic subject's pursuit of the desired Woman. In the first instance, the outcome was a death by which the original and ultimate *jouissance*, fusion with the "first mother" Earth, was achieved. In the second instance, a similar but this time collective exercise, Leandra, proceeds to the logical conclusion of the image of the Arcadia, of *Mutterrecht*, being evoked. The fantasy of Woman thus leads back to the lost object either in the form of the subject's death or the image of the Arcadia which, as in Nicolas Poussin's painting *Et in Arcadia Ego*, stand in a dialectical relationship. The romantic subjects constitute themselves as subjects, paradoxically, in order to attempt to recreate a Golden Age, which, as described by Don Quijote, predates human subjectivity itself. Hence it is an ideal that can only be brought about at the subject's own expense and is inherently self-defeating.

*Don Quijote Part II: A Journey to the "Realm of the Mothers"*

Thus far, we have discussed, overwhelmingly with reference to the first novel, Don Quijote's *causa sui* project as a desire for *jouissance* in the form of self-punishment, substituting immediately for the imaginary loss of unmediated maternal *jouissance*. We have also extrapolated a model of justice in which this transgression is inherently self-punishing – thereby locating feminine "Justice" within the masochistic doubling of pre-Oedipal bliss and the desire for death. Furthermore, we have identified as giving form to this Justice the punishing figure of the idealised Woman, whose invention proceeds from the 'flight from the feminine' or, more precisely, the flight from procreation and generativity (both masculine and feminine) and the platonic idealisation of the Feminine as *Ewig-Weibliche*.

We will now consider how this project develops in the second novel. Having underlined the immediate link between transgression and punishment in the first novel, we can begin by noting that penance and expiation have already been identified as dominant themes in several of the more detailed considerations of the second novel. Indeed, Neuschäfer, posits an explicit relationship between the blows that Don Quijote frequently receives as the consequences of his hubristic actions in the first novel and the greatly intensified ignominy and gradual *desengaño* and confrontation with reality endured in the second:

> Hay que darse cuenta de que los palos y las burlas que recibe Don Quijote forman, ya desde el principio, parte de una expiación. Pero solo en la segunda parte de la novela alcanza esa expiación su sentido ejemplar.[85]
>
> One has to realise that the beatings and pranks that Don Quijote suffers are, from the outset, part of an expiation. However, it is only in the second part of the novel that this expiation acquires its exemplary significance

In a similar vein, John Jay Allen's landmark *Don Quijote: Hero or Fool?* argues that what the knight must endure in *Don Quijote Part II* amounts to a purification, through which he (heroically) atones for the mortal (and foolish) sin he has committed in the first novel – which is none other than the sin of pride we have already identified.[86] More recently, Sullivan, in what is claimed to be the first dedicated study of Part II, considers the knight's tribulations as a process of purgatory that the knight and his squire must pass through in their quest for salvation.[87]

If Don Quijote's quest in the first novel was thoroughly rooted in its moment in Europe's intellectual history, not in the practice of chivalry so much as in the 'flight from the feminine' and the autonomous self-fashioning that was at once nostalgic for its own imaginary origins, then the second novel will exhibit remarkable prescience, anticipating the future self-reflexive trajectory of a modernity that was just beginning at the time of writing. It is this self-reflexive turn that is widely held to mark the second novel's departure from the first. Consider, for instance, Foucault's commentary from his brief interpretation of *Don Quijote*:

> In the second part of the novel, Don Quijote meets characters who have read the first part of his story and recognize him, the real man, as the hero of the book. Cervantes' text turns back upon itself, thrusts itself back into its own density, and becomes the object of its own narrative. The first part of the hero's adventures plays in the second part the role originally assumed by the chivalric romances.[88]

I intend to pose a challenge neither to the emphasis upon the penitential in the second novel, nor to that upon its self-reflexivity. What the remainder of this chapter will, however, seek to accomplish will be to connect these elements to the continued quest for the *Ewig-Weiblich* in the second novel, hereby arguing that, despite the "cambio de iniciativas" identified by Neuschäfer (pointing towards the decentring of Quijote's project of mastery that occurs in the sequel), the paradigm established in the first novel of self-punishing *jouissance* essentially holds and even intensifies.[89] Parr, in noting that "Quixotic desire" goes beyond the pleasure

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[85] Neuschäfer, p.42
[86] Allen, John Jay. *Don Quijote, Hero or Fool? A Study in Narrative Technique*, p.84
[87] See Sullivan, *Grotesque Purgatory*
[88] Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Arthaeology of the Human Sciences*, p.47
[89] Neuschäfer, p.42

principle, thus reversing into the desire to return to an inorganic state (i.e. a death wish), notes that this return is frequently anticipated in the second novel before its final fulfilment.[90] We will focus presently on the significance of doubling as the omen presaging this death and on the role of the idealised Feminine as death-giver that lures Quijote back towards the mother. As such, the second novel will be considered as an anticipation not only of Kafka but, most obviously, of the second part of Goethe's *Faust*: a descent to the "realm of the mothers" and voyage unto death in a quest to unite with the *Ewig-Weiblich* qua the disenchanted Dulcinea. However, the descent to the "realm of the mothers" will yield not the idealised femininity of Goethe's voyage, but a greater cognizance of reality and a confrontation with the generative, maternal Feminine, from which he had spent the first novel in flight.[91]

*The Scholar as Knight: Sansón Carrasco as Don Quijote's Double*

Dealing firstly with the question of doubling, let us now consider in particular the role of Sansón Carrasco as Don Quijote's double in the second novel. The entry into the storyline of Carrasco, a 24 year old graduate of the University of Salamanca and thus a Bachelor in a different sense than Alonso Quixano, is foreshadowed in the previous chapter in the barber's tale of the mad licentiate, designed to dissuade Don Quijote from another sally: "Era graduado en cánones por Osuna, pero, aunque lo fuera por Salamanca, según opinión de muchos, no dejara de ser loco" / "He was a graduate in canon law from Osuna, but even if he had graduated from Salamanca, in the opinion of many, he would not have been any less mad" (DQjII,11; DQxII,462) As a graduate, the fictional licentiate provides a counterpart to Carrasco (especially given the reference to Carrasco's alma mater), while as a madman who believed himself sane and fit to be released, he serves as a close analogy to Don Quijote, who is eager to take up arms once more. In the tale of the mad licentiate, then, we find united the qualities of knowledge and madness and, by extension, an amalgam of Don Quijote and Sansón Carrasco.

In the early chapters, Carrasco's principal function is as literary critic. Specifically, he functions as a critical reflection upon the first novel, which he has already read by the time he is introduced to Don Quijote in person. Carrasco functions as an agent of self-reflexivity firstly by making Quijote and Sancho Panza aware of the existence of the first part of their "history", as recorded by Cide Hamete Benengali and by offering an overview of critical opinions thereupon in chapter III. One of the more important objections doing the rounds, says Carrasco, "es que

[90] Parr, "Cervantes Foreshadows Freud: On Don Quijote's Flight from the Feminine and the Physical", p.23

[91] Let the decentring of Georg's perspective in the latter stages of Kafka's *Das Urteil* serve as a direct analogy here

su autor puso en ella una novela intitulada El curioso impertinente; no por mala ni por mal razonada, sino por no ser de aquel lugar, ni tiene que ver con la historia de su merced del señor don Quijote"/ "... is that its author put into it a novel called *The Man Who Was Recklessly Curious*, not because it is a bad novel or badly told, but because it is out of place and has nothing to do with the history of his grace Señor Don Quijote" (DQjII,26; DQxII,478). Let us demonstrate here that, in fact, the inclusion of this interpolated tale in the first novel is no accident at all because in it, we see the drive to *jouissance* that pervades the novel as a whole manifest at a specifically epistemological level. Furthermore, as a graduate and thus a representative of epistemology in the second novel, there is also a certain pertinence to Carrasco's obliviousness.

The analogies between the interpolated tale of *El curioso impertinente* and Don Quijote are, at least within our interpretive framework, many. For a start, there is a common nexus of a (feminine) paradise lost. However, in contrast to the discourses of chivalric and pastoral romance, this paradise is not a symbiosis with a mother-figure, but a marriage – Anselmo's marriage to Camila. In this sense, then, it is already a paternally mediated and therefore second-rate 'paradise', based upon the supposed inferiority of adult sexuality to maternal gratification. As 'next-best things' go, however, Anselmo's marriage to Camila is about as good as it gets. The novella resorts almost to hyperbole in its description of Camila's beauty, virtue, distinction etc., leaving absolutely no doubt in the reader's mind that she is as eligible as a woman can be. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to claim that, as the perfect woman, she is described as though she were a living, breathing Dulcinea, or the closest that a living woman can be to the non-existent and chimerical figure of Woman. Nonetheless, a flesh-and-blood woman she remains and, accordingly, unable to provide the impossible wholeness, the complete gratification that Anselmo requires – hence the highly unusual desire that plagues him. That this impossible wholeness is the ultimate aspiration of Anselmo's experiment is revealed quite candidly: "Podré decir yo que está colmo el vacío de mis deseos" / "I will be able to say that the cup of my desires is overflowing" (DQj,269; DQx,274).[92] In other words, Anselmo wants to no longer want – by conducting this experiment, he expects to fill in the lack that causes him to desire, that is: to restore a state prior to the existence of lack, a state of complete satisfaction of which we have already cited Quijote's Golden Age as a paradigm. Since we have already witnessed elsewhere in the novel that such utopian desires barely conceal a desire for self-punishment and death, and since wanting is a condition of living and being, we can agree fully with Jonathan Hall's assessment that Anselmo, like Don Quijote, is impelled by a desire that

[92] Edith Grossman's translation: "I will be able to say that the cup of my desires is overflowing" does not succeed in conveying the same idea of a void as the original text: "I will be able to say that the lack/void of my desires has been filled"

goes beyond the pleasure principle, i.e. by a death wish.[93] Indeed, like the complete satisfaction of the Golden Age, it goes beyond the pleasure principle precisely because of its impossibility, as Lotario seeks to persuade him: "Mira que el que busca lo imposible es justo que lo posible se le niegue" (279)/ "Remember that if a man seeks the impossible, the possible may justly be denied him" (DQj,279; DQx,286).

As the reader quickly establishes, Anselmo's desire pertains as much to epistemology itself as to judgement of the merits of his wife: "el deseo que me fatiga es pensar si Camila, mi esposa, es tan buena y tan perfeta como yo pienso; y no puedo enterarme en esta verdad, si no es probándola de manera que la prueba manifieste los quilates de su bondad /"... the desire that plagues me is my wondering if Camila, my wife, is as good and as perfect as I think she is, and I cannot learn the truth except by testing her so that the test reveals the worth of her virtue" (DQj,268-269; DQx,274). Let us here separate out the two issues at hand: the first is the question of whether Camila is good, indeed perfect. It is quite clear that Anselmo's desire is neither a matter of sex (since he wishes to separate himself from her) nor love (since love is not a question of thinking someone perfect). As with Don Quijote and his fellow practitioners of courtly love, it is a matter of exaltation and idolization. Is Camila worthy, in other words, of the pedestal upon which Anselmo wishes to place her? His desire to idolise, and his refusal to find sufficient the partial satisfaction (love, sexual relations) constituted by marriage, point towards the chimerical presence of Woman (i.e. the mother in disguise and as the masochist's impossible claim to complete satisfaction) also in this interpolated novella. On this occasion, however, She appears in her epistemological dimension – the idolisation of Camila is simultaneous with the impertinent desire for self-defeating knowledge, known classically as *curiositas*. The association of Woman and epistemology in this fashion, furthermore, is a pre-existing one. As Joseph Campbell observes in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*: "Woman, in the picture language of mythology, represents the totality of what can be known. The hero is the one who comes to know."[94] It is the criteria that Anselmo places upon "knowing", however, that make it impertinent. As Lotario attempts to reason with him:

> Pues si tú sabes que tienes mujer retirada, honesta, desinteresada y prudente, ¿qué buscas? ¿Qué ... será más después de lo que es ahora? (DQj, 271)

> But if you know you have a wife who is reserved, honest, unmercenary and prudent, what else do you need to know? ...What will she be afterwards that is better than she is now? (DQx,278)

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[93] Hall, Jonathan,. *Anxious pleasures: Shakespearean comedy and the nation-state*, Madison [N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, (1995) p.212

[94] Campbell, Joseph. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p.116

Here we see plainly a conflict between "knowing" as an article of faith and confidence, on the one hand, and as empirical proof on the other. By conducting his fatal experiment, Anselmo constitutes himself as an epistemological, proto-Cartesian subject in search of the certainty of objective knowledge. He does this, furthermore, by voluntary absence from Camila, the significance of which we have already discussed in relation to self-constitution. Designed to yield objective knowledge of Camila's "virtue", Anselmo's experiment creates precisely the conditions under which this "virtue" itself yields.

By now we have established the link between the Woman fantasy, transgression and punishment. That Anselmo's desire is transgressive in the sense of going against God is made clear by Lotario: "[los amigos] no se han de valer de su amistad en cosas que fuesen contra Dios ... por ninguna humana ha de perder la amistad divina/"[friends] must not make use of their friendship for things that go against God...divine friendship must not be lost for the sake of human friendship." (DQj,270; DQx, 276). That no good can come of it for Anselmo himself is made equally clear: "Mas si es tan buena como crees, impertinente cosa será hacer experiencia de la mesma verdad, pues, después de hecha, se ha de quedar con la estimación que primero tenía./"If she is as virtuous as you believe, it would be reckless to experiment with that truth, for when you have done so, it will have the same value it had before" (DQj,271; DQx,278). The absolute best that Anselmo's empirical test can hope to achieve is to confirm an item of knowledge that is based upon, and whose value lies in, having faith in it in the first place. The worst possible outcome is the one that Anselmo is eventually left with. It is little wonder, then, that Jonathan Hall comments: "At the end, when all three are destroyed by the consequences of this evil desire, the reader is left with the impression that this disastrous clarification was indeed an unacknowledged or unconscious goal of the husband's desire."[95] While "unconscious goals" are equally impossible to infer conclusively from a fictional text, the fact that Anselmo stands only to lose from the experiment, yet remains compelled by his *curiositas* and his demand for complete satisfaction, make Hall's claim seem at least a very reasonable speculation. Like Grisóstomo his self-sabotage also stems from his unrenounced claim to complete satisfaction.

Thus the Woman fantasy, as the simultaneous idolisation of Marcela and the coveting of a destructive knowledge, proves to be both Anselmo's transgression against God as father, and his self-punishment. The juxtaposition of judgemental epistemology and fatal gratification, in turn, evoke fairly clearly the Garden of Eden, the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Fall, to which we referred both as an imperfect analogy to the Golden Age and in our thought experiment concerning perspectives on the question of law and enjoyment. Indeed,

[95] Hall, p.212

Juergen Hahn views the novella explicitly as an allegory for the original sin of pride that precipitated the Fall. For Hahn, it is the sin of pride that constitutes its pertinence to the novel as a whole. While I would agree with Hahn on the issue of pride linking the *Curioso Impertinente* to the main plot of Don Quijote, I cannot agree with the relationship that he posits. Hahn cites Quijote's declaration to Sancho that they should slay pride by slaying giants. Whilst Quijote does indeed say this, we have furnished ample evidence of his own hubris to undermine Hahn's argument.[96] Quijote's own *hubris* is the complement, rather than the antidote, to Anselmo's *curiositas*.

If, in Don Quijote's Golden Age fantasy, we witnessed a denial of the Fall through the continued demand for complete satisfaction, along with the imagination of paradise without prohibition, then the story of Anselmo's *curiositas* provides us with an important missing piece of the puzzle: a semblance of paradise (albeit one that was already limited) rendered no longer possible by epistemological pride, by Anselmo's self-elevation to an objective, Archimedean point as both empirical observer and judge of Camila's virtue. Since the pride and subsequent Fall quite clearly constitute Quijote's blind spot with regards to the passing of paradise, it is little wonder that he should repeat them by claiming the place of God on earth. It is particularly ironic, moreover, that the criticism of this tale's "impertinence" to the first novel should be brought by Carrasco, who himself will come to symbolize the "Quixotization" of the pursuit of knowledge.

*White Moons and Mirrors: Don Quijote's self-defeat*

Thus far considered is Sansón Carrasco's role as an agent of the second novel's self-reflexive turn by making the protagonists aware of the existence of the first novel and by functioning as its critic. In chapters XII-XIV, he will become Quijote's double in a more visually obvious sense. Following their ominous encounter with "... la misma Muerte, con rostro humano" (70) /"Death himself with a human face" (DQjII,70; DQxII,523), Quijote and Sancho are preparing to rest in inviting woodland when they hear the lamentations of a knight – alternately described as the Knight of the Wood and the Knight of the Mirrors who, it will shortly be discovered, is none other than Carrasco on a mission to defeat Quijote and order him to return home. Here appears, then, Carrasco the scholar as knight-errant. His more detailed introduction to Don Quijote in chapter XIV reveals the extent of the parody. The first details he provides echo, curtailed into the space of a paragraph, two of the most salient features that we have identified of Quijote's disposition – compulsive autonomy and masochistic subordination to the fantasy of

[96]Hahn, Juergen. "'El curioso impertinente' and Don Quijote's Symbolic Struggle against Curiositas." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 49 (1972), pp.128–40

the Woman on a pedestal. Consider firstly: "... señor caballero, quiero que sepáis que mi destino, o, por mejor decir, mi elección, me trujo a enamorar de la sin par Casildea de Vandalia" (87)/"...Señor Knight, I want you to know that my destiny or, I should say, my own free choice, led me to fall in love with the peerless Casildea de Vandalia." (DQjII,87; DQxII,538) This identity of destiny and free will echo perfectly the paradoxical blend of radical autonomy and bondage to a punishing fate at the hands of the Lady that, we have argued, characterise Quijote's *causa sui* project. The knight-errant's relationship to the idealised Lady is also laid bare very succinctly as a reflection of Don Quijote's to Dulcinea:

> Esta tal Casildea ... pagó mis buenos pensamientos y comedidos deseos con hacerme ocupar, como su madrina a Hércules, en muchos ydiversos peligros, prometiéndome al fin de cada uno que en el fin delotro llegaría el de mi esperanza; pero así se han ido eslabonando mis trabajos, que no tienen cuento, ni yo sé cuál ha de ser el último que dé principio al cumplimiento de mis buenos deseos (DQj, 87)

> This Casildea ... repaid my virtuous thoughts and courageous desires by having me, as his stepmother did with Hercules, engaging in many different kinds of dangers, promising me at the end of each one that at the end of the next my hopes would be realized; but my labours have been linked together for so long that ... [I do not] know which will be the final one that initiates the satisfaction of my virtuous desires (DQx, 538)

To be highlighted here, firstly, is the analogy to Hercules' stepmother (That is: the homology of the lady and the mother-substitute). Secondly, there is the compulsion to danger as "reward" for these "virtuous" thoughts, underlining the role of the non-existent Woman as the compulsion to punish and endanger self. The third tendency is the indefinitely deferred satisfaction of his desire (for union with the Woman), the promise of which impels this self-punishment. The knight owns the daring feats; to the non-existent Woman is ceded all the power, to be used against himself.

Not only does Carrasco as Knight of the Mirrors himself double Don Quijote in this concrete sense: in boasting (albeit falsely, of course) that he has already done battle with and vanquished one Don Quijote de la Mancha, Carrasco further presages the existence of an actual *Doppelgänger* by the same name. Not only does this augur Quijote's own eventual defeat at the hands of Carrasco, but also the revelation, not long before his eventual death, of the existence of another set of uncanny *Doppelgänger* from Avellaneda's apocryphal sequel, as revealed by Don Alvaro Tarfe, a friend of the "other" Quijote, in chapter LXXII. The doubleness of Sansón Carrasco as Knight of the Mirrors is thus detailed, if this could not already be inferred from his

moniker, the symbolism of which seems obvious. Indeed, Howard Mancing points out this obviousness, although we will argue here that there is even more significance to it than the matter of *desengaño*, of looking oneself in the mirror and "facing reality" that he suggests.[97] True, Don Quijote does have the opportunity to do this, due to the reflective coat that the other knight wears over his armour. Of immediate significance in chapter XIV, however, is that Don Quijote then proceeds to defeat his mirror image – the most visible enactment of Don Quijote's self-defeat to date.

So much, then, for Carrasco's knight as mirror, but what are we to make of the fact that his reflective coat is made up of many small moons? In fact, Carrasco's association with the moon is reinforced when he finally obtains the revenge he will hence seek. We are referring, of course, to his reappearance in Barcelona as the Knight of the White Moon, an episode that will precipitate in Don Quijote's enforced retirement from knight-errantry, thus his *de facto* death as that persona. On the one hand, Echevarría points to both the etymological (and supposedly causal) association between the moon (*luna*) and lunacy, in a recent lecture series on the Yale Open programme.[98] The implication, by Echevarría's reckoning, is that in seeking to purge Don Quijote of his madness, Carrasco himself has become a lunatic (indeed, our third chapter will reveal just this tendency in modernity, with particular reference to Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*). Correct as that may be, the doubleness of Quijote and Carrasco extends beyond the matter of lunacy in the sense of madness. There is yet another dimension to the moon that would seem most pertinent here, one that has already been identified by Anne Cruz and Ruth El Saffar, amongst others.[99] Cruz notes the "feminine contours" of the Knight of the White Moon, while El Saffar, in the same volume, elaborates in considerably greater detail upon the significance of the moon as symbol of feminine divinity, specifically the Goddess Artemis. Of importance to our argument is also the fact that El Saffar's primary interest in the moon pertains to the Marcela-Grisóstomo episode of the first novel, her emphasis being upon the archetypal underpinnings of Marcela's character in relation to Artemis and the alliance between her and the "Great Mother" Earth.[100] Hereby established, then, is the link between chapters XI-XIV in Part I, the episode which saw Quijote profess his homesick yearning for a return to the rule of the mother and explain his advent as a reaction to the passing of that imaginary Golden Age; and Don Quijote's final defeat by his own double in the second novel, another devotee of the *Ewig-Weiblich* lunar Goddess. The fact that the Knight of the White Moon demands confession

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[97] Mancing, Howard.*The Cervantes encyclopedia ( L-Z)*, p.654
[98] Echevarría, Roberto González. "Open Yale Courses, span-300: Cervantes' Don Quijote" http://oyc.yale.edu/transcript/909/span-300
[99] Cruz, Anna. "Mirroring Others" in Ruth El Saffar and Diana de Armas Wilson (eds.), *Quixotic desire*, p.113. See also note 62 in current chapter.
[100] El Saffar, "In Marcela's case". p.163

of the superior beauty of "mi dama, sea quien fuere ..." /"... my lady, whoever she may be ..." (DQjII;428; DQxII,885), serves to underline the archetypal underpinning, and hence the interchangeability, of the idealised Woman as death-giver. Just as Marcela, not as an actual human being but as Grisóstomo's torturer, was the occasion for his self-defeating death, so Don Quijote's defeat by his double bears the complicity of the moon Goddess Artemis. Don Quijote's eventual succumbing to Carrasco as the Knight of the White Moon thus underlines the reflexivity of his defeat. In the first instance, Quijote had defeated his mirror image; in the second, his double – this time a knight serving the generic *Ewig-Weiblich* – proves to be his undoing. That Quijote's ultimate downfall is effected by a double with such feminine contours serves to underline the collusion between the double and the Woman. The colluding figures of the compulsion to enjoy (and hence the obstacle to sexual relations) in Žižek's analysis, let us recall, were the archaic-maternal Woman (the figure of enjoyment itself) and the anal-sadistic *pere-jouisseur*, the figure of the double that is "in the subject more than the subject itself" and compels this enjoyment.[101] Whilst the status of the Knight of the White Moon, and Sansón Carrasco in general, as double are fairly clear, as described above, his 'paternal' qualities are less obvious. Anne Cruz however, designates him as a Lacanian "A-father", meaning that he is a representative of social authority. [102] Furthermore, Echevarría emphasises his role as an internal "author" of Quijote's actions, as he vacillates between engineering Quijote's return home and prolonging his continued quest for enjoyment.[103] Once more, we will see a similar tendency in Kafka's *Das Urteil* – Georg's fantasy of autonomous selfhood is decentred by a sadistic paternal figure with similarly "feminine contours" who declares himself to be in league with the archaic mother, who sabotages Georg's marriage plans and compels his ultimate enjoyment in death by drowning.

Appropriately, then, despite defeating him in battle, Carrasco withdraws his challenge to Dulcinea's beauty, thereby leaving intact until the very end Quijote's by now fading and desperate hope of seeing her disenchanted, of uniting with the *Ewig-Weiblich*. It is also entirely appropriate, moreover, that Quijote's figurative death as knight-errant should precipitate almost immediately in another imitative project, one that augurs his impending death as much as it signifies the fleeting, but entirely illusory, achievement of a mission. However, this achievement is not the disenchantment of Dulcinea, but the habitation of the maternally connoted *locus amoenus* that recalls the Golden Age, the age that he swore to restore in the first novel. In this reversal from chivalric to pastoral romance, from Don Quijote to the shepherd Quixotiz, we hereby see substituted one form of enjoyment for another, the correlated-

[101] Žižek, Slavoj, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54
[102] Cruz, p.110
[103] Echevarría, http://oyc.yale.edu/transcript/909/span-300

opposition of the chivalric and pastoral having been established in the first novel. This anticipates, in particular, Georg Bendemann's reversal from covert patricide to voluntary, self-executed death by drowning at the compulsion of his father's judgement. That Quijote's trajectory culminates in this maternally connoted space, albeit briefly, prior to his biological death as Alonso Quixano, underlines our argument that the second novel, with its defeats, humiliations and disillusionments, is at the same time a journey to the "realm of the mothers", a *locus amoenus* in which Don Quijote is permitted brief respite just before he must face the reality of death – which, of course, we have already identified as Arcadia's double.

*The Cave of Montesinos: Return to the Womb and Return of the Repressed*

The episode that most clearly augurs Don Quijote's return to an inorganic state and most obviously anticipates Faust's descent to the realm of the mother, however, is one that occurs much earlier in proceedings. I am referring here to Don Quijote's adventure in the Cave of Montesinos, the significance of which is very thoroughly outlined by Echevarría.[104] Let us here elaborate upon some of his observations and spell out their significance in terms of our chapter. Probably the most crucial, yet also the most obvious point to be made concerns the maternal significance of the cave itself, which has its own counterpart in *Faust II* in the Rocky Caves of the Aegean. It is as an echo from an anterior cave, however, that the adventure in the Cave of Montesinos acquires particular meaning: that of Plato. For Quijote's descent can be further understood as an injured retreat to the "world of shadows" (which corresponds, in fact, to the Earthly reality with which Don Quijote is here so rudely confronted), having attempted in vain to dwell in the "world of pure mind", of ideal forms, the realm of the Absolute.[105]

The cave adventure is variously described as a descent to the bowels of the earth or the abyss, while the opening covered in thicket easily justifies Parr's claim that the cave "connotes femininity".[106] The maternal character of the earth in the first novel has, of course, been elaborated upon above. This maternal and uterine symbolism having been understood, it is no surprise that the first sight that Don Quijote encounters upon "waking up" (the temporal discrepancy inside and outside the cave would suggest that he was, in fact, dreaming the whole time) within the cave is another pastoral Arcadia, another *locus amoenus*: "desperté dél y me hallé en la mitad del más bello, ameno y deleitoso prado que puede criar la naturaleza ni imaginar la más discreta imaginación humana" / "... I awoke and found myself in the midst of

[104] Echevarría, http://oyc.yale.edu/transcript/909/span-300
[105] Watt, Stephen "Introduction: The Theory of Forms (Books 5–7)", *Plato: Republic*, London: Wordsworth Editions, pp. xiv–xvi
[106] Parr, Don Quijote, *Don Juan and Related Subjects*, p.129

the most beautiful, pleasant and charming meadow that nature could create or the most discerning human mind could imagine" (DQjII,152; DQxII,604). The *locus amoenus*, just as Faust's mother realm, is beyond the constraints of temporality and mortality yet, paradoxically, doubles death itself. It is fitting, then, that Don Quijote's time perception within the cave should differ from Sancho's, the latter insisting that what seemed more than three days was little more than half an hour. Now, let us recall that Don Quijote's 'flight from the feminine' was, quite paradoxically, a simultaneous flight from maternal generativity and genital sexuality and a desire to return to the virgin Mother Earth as *locus amoenus* standing as a metaphor for an idealised uterine bliss. To reiterate Parr's explanation, it was a denial of the less than poetic aspects of femininity through idealisation of the Woman on a pedestal – in Faustian terms, the *Ewig-Weibliche*. Upon witnessing Quijote descend to the maternal realm of the Cave of Montesinos and awake in what appears to be another exemplary *locus amoenus*, the reader could be forgiven the initial impression that the adventure represents, even if only at the unconscious level of dream, the culmination of his wishes.

However, even before Quijote recounts in detail his experiences in the Cave, it is clear that this is a utopia beset with melancholia (as, for that matter, were the two pastoral Arcadias that figured in the first novel). His description of this fantasy world (and Quijote staunchly insists on its paradisiacal description when Sancho describes it as a hell) is immediately followed by a lament for the figures he has encountered, spoken "... como si con dolor inmenso las sacara de las entrañas" / "... as if he were tearing [the words] with great sorrow from the very depths of his being" (DQjII,151; DQxII,604). It is immediately apparent, then, that in this maternal utopia, all is not all that it seems. It is surely not without significance that this initial account is accompanied by the following epiphany: "En efecto, ahora acabo de conocer que todos los contentos desta vida pasan como sombra y sueño, o se marchitan como la flor del campo" / "In truth, now I realise that all the pleasures of this life pass like shadows and dreams, or wither like the flowers in the field" (DQjII,150; DQxII,604). We have pointed throughout this chapter to the inevitable pairing of Arcadia and death, and sure enough it is in this semblance of utopia that Don Quijote will face head-on the bodily finitude from which he has fled since his initial act of self-causation, in addition to the matters of procreation and generativity. Dealing firstly with death, the huge flock of crows that flies out of the mouth of the cave, forcing Quijote to the ground, appears as the first omen of this adventure, although the reader can already recall the knight's brush with the parliament of Death as early as chapter XI. Mortality as a physical reality is soon encountered when the legend of Durandarte, "... flor y espejo de los caballeros enamorados y valientes de su tiempo" (154)/ "the model of enamoured and valiant knights of his time" (DQjII,154; DQxII,606-607), hence a prototype for Quijote himself, is encountered in the lifeless flesh. Furthermore, corporeal reality very soon intervenes

in this ethereal cave world, when Don Quijote enquires with Montesinos about Durandarte's dying wish to have his heart removed and sent to his Lady Belerma (prototype of Dulcinea). From its elevated status as symbol of love and courage, Durandarte's heart is quickly brought down to earth, as Bakhtin would have it, by Montesino's grotesque focus on the gory details the heart as a physical specimen. He estimates its weight at around two pounds, before describing how he cleaned and salted the heart (thereby preserving it from turning and smelling bad). Durandarte's heart is thus described quite literally as the piece of offal that it has become once detached from his corpse, "seco y amojamado"(156)/ "if not fresh, at least dried and salted" (DQjII,156; DQxII,607).

It is the legendary beauty, Lady Belerma, allegedly no less than the equal in beauty of Dulcinea herself, who is next brought down to earth by the episode's focus on base, physical reality. Her "gravity" gives her the appearance of a matron, while her "beetle-brow", "snub nose" and scant teeth remind us of the *hombrunas* and *marimachas* of the first novel, especially Maritornes and Aldonza Lorenzo, out of whom Quijote fashioned his idealised femininity. Then come the specifically feminine aspects of Belerma's degradation (in the Bakhtinian sense of the word), returning the discussion firmly to the feminine lower bodily material stratum: "Y no toma ocasión su amarillez y sus ojeras de estar con el mal mensil, ordinario en las mujeres, porque ha muchos meses, y aun años, que no le tiene ni asoma por sus puertas" / "And her sallow complexion and deep circles arise not from the monthly distress common in women, because for many months, even years, she has not had it, nor has it appeared at her portals" (DQjII,156; DQxII,609). In one motion, Montesinos succeeds her in alluding not only to the biological fact of the idealised Lady menstruating, but also her current menopausal condition – a twofold allusion to the generative aspects of femininty. And while Don Quijote objects to Montesinos' attempt to compare Belerma's beauty to that of Don Quijote, he will soon see that the comparison is, in fact, quite fitting as he is confronted with "Dulcinea" as the burly farmhand that Aldonza Lorenzo really is. The three peasant girls of whom Don Quijote catches sight in the meadow are the same three whom Sancho had attempted to pass off as the enchanted Dulcinea and friends in chapter X – Aldonza Lorenzo herself is not among them, but could just as well be, based on Sancho's previous descriptions. However, it is with more than simply the "enchanted" appearance of Dulcinea that Quijote is confronted. We have considered already how he is confronted with the repressed in the interrelated forms of death and female generativity. Now, he will see manifest the sexuality that he has also repressed – more specifically, his sexual inadequacy. Dulcinea's turning around and running away, followed by Montesinos' advice that to follow her would be in vain, point towards her permanent unattainability. However, it is perhaps the request for a loan of six *reales*, made against the security of Dulcinea's sexually suggestive undergarment, that is most revealing. Quijote can

only provide her with four. Perhaps the most ambitious interpretation of this scene to be made along these lines is by Henry Sullivan, who recalls Lacan's claim that the unconscious can count from 0 to 6 and not beyond, with 4 denoting marriage, 5 denoting children and 6 denoting grandchildren, hence the perpetuation of lineage. Thus understood, Dulcinea's request is for the perpetuation of her lineage, while the most that Don Quijote can provide is marriage.[107] Whilst this interpretation would necessitate clearer proof of an analogous significance to these numbers prior to the specific discourse of psychoanalysis (perhaps, for example, in myth or religion where much psychoanalytic discourse finds its analogy), the insufficiency of Quijote's provision surely suffices to suggest inadequacy, and that is the most glaring inadequacy we have uncovered of Quijote. As Echevarría, drawing similar conclusions albeit in less detail, quips: "... it could not be clearer; you do not have to be Freud."[108]

Having first appeared to promise a fulfilment of his wish to return to an idealised, womb-like *locus amoenus* in the "bowels" of the (Mother) Earth, Quijote's descent to the maternal realm turns out, quite appropriately, to be the locus for the return of the repressed – of confrontation with the lower bodily material stratum pertaining to death, menstruation, excretory waste and sexual intercourse. Furthermore, he is confronted with his own mortality and sexual timidity. So much, then, for the uterine fantasy, for it is precisely in this uterine location that Don Quijote must confront, in dream, Reality itself. Gloria Fry considers the Cave of Montesinos adventure to be emblematic of the hero's "rebirth" in the second novel, following which his illusions are shaken, if not entirely shattered, and he develops a far greater apprehension of reality (which Fry expresses in the tragic terminology of a gradual "catharsis", thereby supporting the link between his madness and tragic *hubris*).[109] Certainly, the image of Quijote emerging from the opening of the cave tethered to a rope would encourage this idea. This provides an illuminating point of comparison with our interpretation of Quijote's genesis in the first novel, in which Quijote was reborn on his own terms. That Quijote is reborn cognizant of the previously denied realities of the body as organism marks the contrast with the rebirth on his own terms, and signals a correction of that error.

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[107] Lacan, Jacques, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XX: Encore,* p.123 cited in Sullivan, *Grotesque Purgatory*, pp.128-130

[108] Echevarría, http://oyc.yale.edu/transcript/909/span-300

[109] Fry, Gloria M. "Symbolic Action in the Episode of the Cave of Montesinos from *Don Quijote*" in *Hispania*, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Sep., 1965), pp.468-474

*Deathbed Repentance and Reconciliation with Name*

While the critical consensus suggests, along with Fry, that Quijote becomes gradually saner from this moment onwards, his "catharsis" is fully realised only at the very end of the novel, for it is here, upon Alonso Quixano's deathbed, that chivalry is explicitly and emphatically renounced. Even upon return to La Mancha, Don Quijote's despairing reaction to the omens he encounters in chapter LXXIII, telling him he will never see Dulcinea, suggest that he still harboured some hope of so doing. However, upon his deathbed, any further such aspirations related to chivalric exploits have been clearly purged:

> ... que ya yo no soy don Quijote de la Mancha, sino Alonso Quijano, a quien mis costumbres me dieron renombre de Bueno. Ya soy enemigo de Amadís de Gaula y de toda la infinita caterva de su linaje, ya me son odiosas todas las historias profanes del andante caballería, ya conozco mi necedad y el peligro en que me pusieron haberlas leído, ya, por misericordia de Dios, escarmentando en cabeza propia, las abomino. (DQjII,477)

> ... I am no longer Don Quijote de La Mancha, once called Good because of my virtuous life. Now, I am the enemy of Amadis de Gaul and all the infinite horde of his lineage. Now all the profane histories of knight errantry are hateful to me; now I recognise my foolishness and the danger I was in because I read them; now, by God's mercy, I have learned from my experience and I despise them. (DQxII,935)

Let us consider here the elements of Don Quijote's deathbed return to sanity: the renunciation of all that is chivalric could not be more explicit. Bearing in mind the paternal significance of the first name discussed in relation to Quijote's self-invention, it is surely no coincidence that, at the moment the *causa sui* project is definitively renounced, he is reconciled with his own paternal name (in which he was presumably baptised) and acknowledges the grace and mercy of God as father – as opposed to his previous, though still ostensibly 'Christian' profession to be his agent on earth.

It is this renunciation that redeems the death of Don Quijote, making it peaceful and "Christian" (DQxII,938), thereby marking a departure from the pattern of melancholic, fundamentally self-inflicted deaths that had pervaded both novels (even if the reference to the physical act of suicide is omitted, the tendency remains clear). Now, the narrator does speculate inconclusively that Quijote's fatal fever might be caused by the melancholia at his defeat, as a result of which he had already taken ill to bed for several days. Furthermore, the physician who examines him is similarly of the opinion that "melancolías y desabrimientos le acababan"/ "melancholia and low spirits were bringing his life to an end" (DQjII,476; DQxII,935). If we

can take nothing else from this, we can at least conclude here that melancholia can indeed be seen as a cause of death without *necessarily* implying a concrete act of suicide, as was suggested in the case of Grisóstomo. However, no sooner has the physician concluded this than Quijote awakes with renewed vigour, praising God for his mercy and declaring himself sane. This does not change the ultimate outcome of imminent death. It does, however, redeem it. For Quijote's fate is no longer a fate of the kind that Grisóstomo and Anselmo suffered, a melancholic, self-arranged, masochistic fatality, but the fate that awaits everyone who occupies a human body. Indeed, the opening of the final chapter serves to underline just this:

> Como las cosas humanas no sean eternas, yendo siempre en declinación de sus principios hasta llegar a su último fin, especialmente las vidas de los hombres, y como la de don Quijote no tuviese privilegio del cielo para detener el curso de la suya, llegó su fin y acabamiento cuando él menos lo pensaba. (DQjII,476)

> Since human affairs, particularly the lives of men, are not eternal and are always in a state of decline from their beginnings until they reach their end, and since the life of Don Quijote had no privilege from heaven to stop its natural course, it reached its end and conclusion when he least expected it. (DQxII,934)

Here is emphasised that Don Quijote is no exception to the Reality of human finitude, as he had aspired to be throughout the course of the two novels. Parallel to his personal redemption upon his deathbed, the narrator redeems Alonso Quixano's death by taking it out of his own hands, thereby removing it from the paradigm of self-punishment and self-destruction (which derived from his claim to exceptionality) that marked his adventures and returning it to the domain of human finitude. In his "tranquil and Christian" death by "natural causes", Alonso Quixano is reconciled to reality and the Law – he is not immune to the passage of time, nor is he God on earth. He is a human being – a mere mortal, albeit a good one.

Before proceeding to consider how the 'errant path' is travelled in Kafka's writing, let us review what has been presented in the chapter just concluding. Setting from the context of a cultural 'flight from the feminine' in Spain and, more generally, in Europe, the present chapter considered Don Quijote's quest his own 'flight from the feminine' and *causa sui* project. In his flight from physical, and particularly sexual, reality, we showed the knight to be at odds with both motherhood and fatherhood, as per our theoretical framework. Our analysis revealed self-punishing and self-destructive desire to be inseparable from his quest, a state of affairs that we identified with the dark side of the absolute justice for which Don Quijote strove. The idealised, ephemeral lady, whose prime example was obviously the non-existent Dulcinea, but to whose number we also added Lady Justice ("La Justicia"), gave form to the errant Quijote's self-punishing desire.

In Part II, Don Quijote's 'errant path' came full circle and regressed, progressively, towards death. This self-reflexive, regressive turn marked a shift that anticipated the future trajectory of modernity. Quijote's death was augured at various points along the way by uncanny encounters both with the figure of death and with Quijote's double, Sansón Carrasco, in his chivalric guises of the Knight of the Mirrors and the Knight of the White Moon. Don Quijote's fantasy of mastery, of being *causa sui*, was undermined as Carrasco began to author his adventures increasingly. The quest to disenchant Dulcinea, to capture the ideal feminine, leads only back down to Earth in a Bakhtinian sense: to death, generativity and those aspects of femininity – and of his own condition – of which he had lived in denial. With the circular trajectory of the 'errant path' now established in the adventures of Don Quijote, we will now proceed to consider how it is traversed in the works of Kafka. However, before doing so, we will consider the matter of 'return', anticipated in Part II of *Don Quijote* and how it is manifest in Kafka's historical and cultural context.

# II

# "*DER PROCEß* GEHT ALLMÄHLICH INS *URTEIL* HINÜBER": ERRANT RETURNS IN KAFKA'S *URTEIL* AND *PROCEß*

*Aims and Outline*

In the previous chapter, we advanced a reading of *Don Quijote* based on our concept, developed in the introduction, of the 'errant path'. This concept was inspired by Kafka's own reading of Cervantes' novel as expressed in his aphorism about Don Quixote, focusing in particular upon his daemonic and self-destructive tendency. Don Quijote appears as an exemplary first model of the *causa sui* project and coincides, temporally, with the onset of modernity as understood with reference to our introduction. What makes matters all the more interesting, and what we have neglected to discuss hitherto, is his regressive, anti-modern attitude, leaving the knight in a thoroughly ambivalent position with regards to the age in which he finds himself. He is at once very much a product of the turn of the 17th century, his project is eminently modern and yet he declares his opposition to the fallen present and his desire to restore the golden past. In the coming chapter, we will not only place Don Quijote's relationship to his age within a more

meaningful context through its juxtaposition with Kafka's, but we will see that same paradoxical route of self-annihilation by self-formation, the 'errant path', is followed by Kafka's protagonists. Through a close reading of both Kafka texts, we will observe that the 'errant path' is travelled in a far more intense and distilled form in *Das Urteil* and in a more drawn out form in *Der Proceß*. Our most pressing aim in this reading, of course, is to illustrate clearly the comparability of the two authors' work at a deep level, the existence of a rich shared narrative that makes their juxtaposition worthwhile.

Our other goal in this chapter, and one that will precede our close reading of Kafka, is to place their contexts within meaningful relationship to one another within the narrative of modernity. The first step in our study of Kafka, then is to locate him within a cultural context that might sensibly be related to that outlined as a preface to our chapter on Cervantes, in spite of the differences in time and place. In our analysis of Don Quijote, we set out from the premise of a 'flight from the feminine' at the turn of the 17th century as the intellectual and cultural context for the novel. The coordinates of this context were provided firstly, in psychoanalytic terms and as a European phenomenon, by Susan Bordo and in more specifically Spanish terms by Ruth El Saffar, who correlated this shift with the circumstances that gave birth to the modern novel by rendering epic consciousness impossible. Our analysis of Kafka will seek to locate his work within an intellectual and cultural context of which the unifying principle is the matter of 'return'. 'Return' will acquire a twofold significance here, pertaining to two superficially different but interdependent ways in which the modern subject is plunged into crisis, two forms of 'return' that were already anticipated most clearly in the Cave of Montesinos episode in *Don Quijote Part II* and will also unite both of Kafka's stories that we are analysing in detail. On the one hand, the subject may experience an *unheimlich* return of what it has repressed, just as Don Quijote was confronted with the bodily aspect of femininity from which he was in flight. On the other hand, 'return' also evokes the subject's nostalgic desire to regress to an organic, primordial unity that is imagined to have been lost. From *Don Quijote*, we think here in particular of the symbolism of the cave adventure as a return to the womb, which was correlated with Quijote's quest to recapture a primordial, 'feminine' essence in Dulcinea. Other obvious examples include his discourse on the Golden Age and the foreshadowing of the knight's death by his brief return to a pastoral landscape. Both of these aspects of 'return' can be noted with respect to *fin de siècle* Austria-Hungary. On the one hand, the modern subject finds itself 'haunted' by what it has excluded in its self-constitution, a tendency that emerges most clearly in Barry Murnane's discussion of the Gothic. On the other hand, there arises, both in response to the industrialised and bureaucratised conditions of modernity and, even more specifically in Kafka's case, in response to cultural liminality, a 'homesick' longing to return to restore past

idylls. This tendency will be illustrated with reference to Scott Spector's *Prague Territories*. Both Murnane's and Spector's discussions will allow us, in differing ways, to bridge the temporal gap between Cervantes' and Kafka's cultural contexts.

*The "Unsalvageable" Self and Crisis of Language*

Let us preface our discussion of Murnane's and Spector's contributions, however, with a more general introduction to this crisis of subjectivity. In discussing the intellectual and cultural climate of the Austro-Hungarian empire at the *fin de siècle*, it has become commonplace to refer to two interrelated crises: of language and of self. On the one hand, we find a widespread scepticism about the representative capacity of language, of the inadequacy of its arbitrary relationship to the material world, to reality." This phenomenon is not confined to Habsburg Vienna by any means. Contemporaneous with Kafka's later writing (1916), the German-Jewish Walter Benjamin was formulating a philosophy of language based on the notion of a "Sündenfall des Sprachgeistes" (Fall of Language-Mind)[1] man's mythical fall from a prelapsarian state in which his words expressed the very essence of their referent, to his present state in which his language could only signify arbitrarily and allusively. However, just as the uprooting "flight from the feminine" in the 17th century, the sense of separation of self from world, inner from outer, was a European crisis that acquired particular intensity in Spain, so Habsburg Central Europe appears as the epicentre of the early 20th century crises of language and selfhood.

That Kafka partook of his era's scepticism of language's ability to express truth is apparent in the following aphorism from 1918:

> Die Sprache kann für alles außerhalb der sinnlichen Welt nur andeutungsweise, aber niemals auch nur annähernd vergleichsweise gebraucht werden, da sie entsprechend der sinnlichen Welt, nur vom Besitz und seinen Beziehungen handelt.
>
> For everything outside of the sensory world, language can be employed only allusively but never with any degree of approximation, since it, with respect to the sensory world, deals only with property and property relations. [2]

Going hand in hand with the crisis of language is a crisis of selfhood, which, we will argue here, appears as a direct legacy of the refashioning of self-world relations at the turn of the 17th

[1] Benjamin, Walter."Über Sprache überhaupt und über die Sprache des Menschen"in. *Gesammelte Schriften, vol. II-1*, pp.140-157

[2] Spector, Scott, *Prague territories national conflict and cultural innovation in Franz Kafka's fin de siècle*, p.68

century that we have previously described. The watchword for this crisis, as Judith Ryan notes in *The Vanishing Subject*, is the 'unrettbare Ich' of Ernst Mach's *Beiträge zur Analyse der Empfindungen*.[3] The Enlightenment's ideal of the rational and sovereign subject, completely separate from the object and from the natural world, Susan Bordo's version of the 'father of oneself' project previously analysed, is undermined by a movement that seeks to expose it as a fiction and reduce the self to a passive recipient of fleeting thoughts and impressions, lacking in constancy, coherence and agency. The dualisms upon which modernity was founded - subject and object, mind and body - were deemed to no longer be tenable. Freud's discovery of the unconscious[4] represents unarguably the most celebrated theoretical decentring of the thinking *cogito* and intentional self, although Judith Ryan takes great trouble to emphasise the role of empiricist philosophers such as Brentano in decentering the *cogito* before Freud. We are seeking to locate Kafka in the context of a cultural turn against the theoretical foundations of a modernity whose origin goes back to the turn of the 17th century, hereby providing a meaningful justification for his juxtaposition with Cervantes, a similarly iconic representative of his cultural and historical context.

Perhaps the strongest single testimony to the relationship between the *fin de siècle* cultural and intellectual crisis and the corresponding crisis at the turn of the 17th century is to be found in a piece of writing that has become synonymous with the Viennese crisis of subjectivity: Hugo von Hofmannthal's "Ein Brief". This fictional letter, written by the fictional poet Lord Chandos, excuses his abandonment of writing, which he attributes to his estrangement from language. The most obvious clues linking our two cultural crises are, firstly, the letter's date (1603) and, secondly, the identity of the fictional letter's recipient: none other than Francis Bacon, pioneer of scientific method who, even in Bordo's essay, stands alongside Descartes in his synonymy with that era. Furthermore, the letter contains copious allusion to the epistemic shift with which Bacon is associated, echoing the narrative of a separation of self from the greater whole. Hofmannsthal's "Chandosbrief" is structured in a manner that should by now be familiar to us after our readings of Marthe Robert, Susan Bordo and of *Don Quijote* itself: a harmonious recent past, a melancholic and alienated present and a messianic future shadowed by death. Lord Chandos reports experiencing a catastrophic rupture resulting in his current "disease of the mind", a crisis of language and an alienation from his creative muse. This rupture has taken place no more than three years previously (1600), since he is 26 years

[3] Ryan, p.20

[4] Or, should we say, his invention of a discourse for describing the unconscious systematically, for as already discussed, Freud himself attributes the actual discovery of the unconscious to his literary "Vorläufer"

old at the time of writing, yet at 23 was still able to marvel at the perfect order apparent in the Latin prose at the piazza in Venice.

As Lorna Martens has already noted, Chandos' harmonious recent past reads like a compressed version of Michel Foucault's account of Renaissance epistemology, with which we will engage in our final chapter, "The Judgement on Modernity".[5] Chandos reports having conceived of nature as one great, unbroken entity during what he now considers, with hindsight, as a state of "Trunkenheit/intoxication" (EB,7).[6] He possessed an intuition of "Form", of the sense of natural order permeating all things and he aspired to compile an encyclopaedia of that order. He hungered to decipher the fables and wisdom of the ancients, the hieroglyphs of a secret wisdom hidden behind a veil. Everything was considered an allegory for something else and each creature the key to understanding all the others. In the disintegrated and fragmentary present, in which there is no longer any such unifying idea, Chandos has lost the ability to think or speak coherently about anything. He expresses distaste for the concepts of soul, spirit and body, of which he cannot conceive within the "abstract" terms necessary for passing judgment. He can no longer seek refuge in the wisdom of the Ancients, for although he understands the ideal order presented in their writings, he is excluded from that order. It no longer corresponds to his reality. Although he can, at times, intuit his unity with the greater whole of nature, experiencing his body as a semiotic riddle yielding the key to everything, the intuition is fleeting and inaccessible to his language. Chandos expresses the hope of returning to a creative symbiosis with nature, in which man begins "mit dem Herzen zu denken/ "to think with the heart" and in which Chandos is able to express himself in a language "in welcher die stummen Dinge zuweilen zu mir sprechen, und in welcher ich vielleicht einst im Grabe vor einem unbekannten Richter mich verantworten werde"/ "in which inanimate things speak to me and wherein I may one day have to justify myself before an unknown judge" (EB,18) However, the Romantic longing of reconciling words and being, along with the fictional author's despair at ever obtaining this goal, is shadowed by an altogether darker, morbid longing to see language itself dissolved and regress to oblivion within the self: a "wortlosen, schrankenlosen Entzückens"/ "wordless and boundless ecstasy", an "unnamed bliss", thinking in "einem Material, das unmittelbarer, flüssiger, glühender ist als Worte"/ "a medium more liquid, more immediate, more glowing than words" which forms "Wirbel"/ "whirlpools" leading "... in den tiefsten Schoß des Friedens"/ " ... into the deepest womb of peace" (EB,19) The letter concludes

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[5] Martens, Lorna, *Shadow lines: Austrian literature from Freud to Kafka*, p.206

[6] Ref for English translations: Hofmannsthal, Hugo von. *The Letter of Lord Chandos* http://depts.washington.edu/vienna/documents/Hofmannsthal/Hofmannsthal_Chandos.htm

with a bitterly ironic expression of gratitude, love and admiration for Bacon, "den größten Wohltäter meines Geistes"/ "the greatest benefactor of my mind" (EB,20), by which is implied Bacon's culpability for his current malaise. In arguably the best-known textual manifestation of the *fin de siècle* Viennese *Sprachkrise*, then, we see the origins of the crisis traced back, albeit under the guise of fiction, to the epistemic shifts at the turn of the 17th century, of which the letter's recipient was at the forefront.

*Ghosts and Shadows*

Thus far in our consideration of Kafka's cultural and intellectual context, in which we are according central importance to a crisis of subjectivity, we can observe a direct thematic similarity and continuity from the turn of the 17th century. The "Chandos-Brief" abstracts the Modernist crisis in *fin de siècle* Vienna and returns it to the turn of the 17th century and the separation from nature, in an account that can stand easily alongside those of Marthe Robert, Susan Bordo, Ruth El Saffar and Michel Foucault. Chandos' letter would appear to reflect, at its moment in the early 20th century, 'homesickness' comparable to its Early Modern counterpart. We will here consider two different critical perspectives that legitimise placing Kafka within such a context, the first being Barry Murnane's *Verkehr mit Gespenstern: Gothic und Moderne bei Franz Kafka*. Murnane reformulates the return of what the Enlightenment self had tried to repress as a haunting. As the title suggests, he analyses Kafka within the tradition of the German Gothic, a genre theorised elsewhere as a "response to modernity experienced as the loss of tradition, the loss of the divine and the sacred as organising principles of moral truth and order."[7] As conceived by Murnane, the Gothic is to be identified as an agent of crisis in modernity, effecting an intrusion, from the margins, of all that the Enlightenment excludes. Murnane emphasises the 'abject' dimensions of the Gothic, its focus on that which has been excluded from the Enlightenment's ideal of the rational, stable and autonomous subject (such as fear, passion and religious belief) and ascribes to it a desubjectifying role, undermining the coherence of the self and interrogating the extent to which "the *Ich* is actually able to say *Ich* at all."[8] As such, it constitutes a "... Kritik der Aufklärung und der damit einhergehenden Reduktion des Menschen zu Vernunftswesen durch den zunehmend rationalisierenden, empiristischen *Realitätsbegriff*."[9] (Critique of the Enlightenment and its accompanying

[7] Punter, David, *The Literature of Terror*, p.127, cited in Murnane, *Verkehr mit Gespenstern*. p.46
[8] Murnane, Barry, "Haunting Literary History: An Introduction to German Gothic" in Murnane and Cusack (eds) *Popular Revenants*, p.23
[9] Murnane, *Verkehr mit Gespenstern,* p.20

reduction of the human to a purely rational being due to the increasingly rationalistic, empiricist concept of reality).

Of particular interest for our analysis is the liminal relationship in which Murnane places the Gothic with respect to both Romanticism and Enlightenment as a 'revenant' literature. On the one hand, the Gothic is seen to be continuous with the Romantic movement and is even described as "Post-Romantic."[10] As such, it shares Romanticism's critical stance with respect to Enlightenment. However, Murnane's account of this "dark Romantic" genre places it as far away from the utopian desires and idealised landscapes of, for example, the Pastoral, as the savage *Sierra Morena* is from the pastoral Arcadia in *Don Quijote*. However, Murnane takes great care to emphasise that the Gothic is "... keineswegs nur antimodern,"[11] (by no means only anti-modern) but belongs to Enlightenment itself. The key to Murnane's conceptualisation of the Gothic's relationship to modernity, as far as it pertains to this dissertation, is dialectical relationship of 'shadowing', upon which he further expands in an introductory essay to his more recently published edited volume on the genre.[12] The Gothic, he contends, is a "post-Romantic shadow" or "black box" of modernity:

> Perhaps it makes sense to view the Gothic novel around 1800 as a black box containing those difficulties being negotiated by a society thrust headlong into the capitalist, bureaucratic and industrial conditions of modernity.[13]

In our reading of Kafka, we will find that the dialectical relationship of 'shadowing' corresponds to the "Korrespondenzverhältnis" between Georg Bendemann and his Friend in Russia, but also to Georg and his father, and indeed the father and friend. Furthermore, a similar dialectical relationship will structure Josef K.'s self-punishing dealings with the court on the one hand and his nostalgic longing to undertake his "Fahrt zur Mutter" on the other.

On the one hand, then, the Gothic is to be understood as broadly opposed to Enlightenment's excess of rationality; on the other hand, Gothic belongs uncannily to the crisis within Enlightenment itself. Such a dialectical relationship has itself already been, and will continue to be, 'shadowed' in the course of the current dissertation. With reference to Susan Bordo, we saw two dialectically opposed forms of Oedipal desire, one active and one passive, the former emerging out of the repression of the latter. *Don Quijote* was replete with shadowing/doubling: the knight himself was uncannily mirrored by Grisóstomo, Anselmo and, most literally, by Sansón Carrasco. We also cited the dialectical relationship between the

[10] Murnane, "Haunting Literary History", p.23
[11] Murnane, *Verkehr mit Gespenstern*, p.21
[12] Murnane, "Haunting Literary History", p.23
[13] Murnane, "Haunting Literary History", p.23

opposed figures of the Sovereign and the *Homo Sacer*. Expressed in Žižek's formulation, we could describe the horrors of the Gothic as "what is in the [Enlightenment] subject more than subject itself".[14] As such, the Gothic appears truly 'revenant' in the mould of Georg Bendemann's father – representing no longer merely the 'repressed' and marginal shadow to Enlightenment (but is still very much "what is in Enlightenment more than itself"), but the same agency in its 'returned' aspect.

Through Murnane's location of Kafka in the Gothic, we can understand the ways in which Kafka is already preceded in his admixture of the bureaucratic enlightened world and its bizarre revenants. The point to be underlined, as an outcome of Murnane's analysis, is that, synonymous as Kafka has become with the 'Kafkaesque' themes of bureaucratisation and dehumanisation in modernity, he in fact belongs to a *tradition* of such critique. By reading Kafka within the framework of the Gothic, Murnane places him within a tradition of 'shadowing' or 'doubling' modernity that dates from before the turn of the 19th century onwards. The location of Kafka in a literary tradition that has its origins around the turn of the 19th rather than the 20th century means that we must answer the following question: if the 'Kafkaesque' shadowing of modernity is hardly an innovation of Kafka himself, then why should our analysis privilege him and his particular moment so?

On the one hand, we can cite his fame and canonical status. As W.H. Auden commented, Kafka stands in a similar relationship to his age as Dante and Shakespeare to theirs, and this could surely be extended to Cervantes and Spain at the turn of the 17th century.[15] Furthermore, Kafka was more or less a contemporary of Freud, to the extent that he could report "... Gedanken an Freud, natürlich" ("thoughts of Freud, of course" Tag,292, Diar, 213). For all that Brentano, Mach et al. may have attacked the foundations of the Enlightenment subject as *cogito*, Freud's formulation of a theory of the unconscious marks a paradigm shift unrivalled by the others. And whilst the Gothic as a genre may claim its significance in subverting Enlightenment's notions of rational, intentional selfhood, Kafka's predecessors were indeed subverting an *established* philosophical truth through literary means. Kafka's career, by contrast, belongs to the same era in which these notions themselves are discredited from within by Freud's radical reconstruction of subjectivity that decenters entirely the conscious and intentional ego.

Perhaps the main reason for privileging Kafka to the extent that we are, however, is his short story *Das Urteil*. This story, one of the few works of which Kafka declared himself to be

[14] C.f. Žižek, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54
[15] Gray, Ronald, *Kafka*, p.1

proud, contains in its most distilled form the narrative of 'errancy' that unites Cervantes and Kafka thematically, but also, temporally. This is a ten-page narrative of repression and flight, dialectical opposition and shadowing at the margins and haunting return. Remarkable in its own right, as a figuration of the aforementioned *Problematik*, Kafka's short story also serves as a superb allegory for the period that separates him temporally from Cervantes, as our final chapter will argue.

*Chivalric Romance and Romanticism: Don Quijote as prototypical "Shadow of Modernity"*

From Murnane's location of Kafka within the Gothic, we saw the author placed within a tradition of dialectically 'shadowing' modernity. Our present task is to suggest that this tradition of literary shadowing can be stretched back even further, to the advent of modernity as defined in the introduction of this dissertation. Here, we discussed at length the dialectical relationship between 'desire for the mother' and the *causa sui* fantasy, incestuous desire and its repression, the nostalgic longing to be one with nature and the project of rationalisation. As should already be clear from the close reading conducted in the previous chapter, the relation that we are positing between Don Quijote and his moment in European cultural history corresponds precisely to that which Barry Murnane identifies between another broadly Romantic genre, the German Gothic, and its cultural context. Just as Murnane identifies the Gothic as a Post-Romantic "shadow of modernity", an uncanny mirror of bureaucratic, capitalist German society in the 19th century, so it makes sense to view Don Quijote as modernity's very first literary 'shadow', a Pre- or even Proto-Romantic shadow who 'corresponds' with the moment of 'flight' and 'repression' rather than 'return'. [16] The ideal of autonomous, rational subjectivity that the Gothic sets out to subvert likewise has its origins at the turn of the 17th century. Don Quijote is written at the threshold of modernity, at the point of words separating from things and man's alienation from its previous 'symbiosis' with nature and the metaphysical certainty that this symbiosis afforded, as Marthe Robert, György Lukács and Michel Foucault variously argue.[17] Don Quijote's quest, in the first novel at least, can be understood as a reaction against his historical epoch, against the 'Fall' into modernity, before modernity has even really begun. The simplest argument that can be brought forth in support of this claim is that, in essence, his mission is to return an earlier state: the Age of Chivalry and, ultimately, the Golden Age, with its original symbiosis with nature and the "First Mother" Earth. This sense of upheaval and loss,

[16] That Don Quijote is in turn variously 'shadowed' in the novel itself, illustrates the interchangeabilty within this dialectic, which is further highlighted in relation to both Romanticism itself and the Prague circle.

[17] For Robert and Lukács, see introduction. For discussion of Foucault, see "The Judgement on Modernity"

as we have repeatedly stressed, is most obviously apparent in the discourse on the Golden Age, which laments the loss of this symbiosis. On the one hand, we have seen, and will reiterate in the next chapter, that he embodies everything that the Modern subject cast out in its self-constitution (madness, nostalgia, superstition) and he explicitly abhors the present "Age of Iron". Nonetheless, his own project of self-invention reveals the extent to which he and modernity belong to one another.

If Don Quijote is to be understood as a Proto-Romantic shadow of modernity and the Gothic is to be understood as a Post-Romantic shadow of modernity (that reaches all the way to Kafka), then at least some consideration of Romanticism's own role as "shadow of modernity" is also required, even if a detailed survey of literary Romanticism itself is beyond the scope of this thesis. The extent to which Romanticism interests us here is the extent to which that movement considers Don Quijote to be one of its own forefathers. We can begin by noting that the obvious thematic continuity between Don Quijote and the German Romantics is very much a matter of explicit influence, or at the very least, conscious identification since, like Don Quijote, they viewed themselves as "... heroic seekers after visions of beauty which they were doomed to fail to make actual in art or life."[18]At this point it would require far too great a digression from the scope of the current chapter to engage in detail with the numerous Romantic interpretations of Cervantes' novel, which begin, approximately, with German Romantics such as Schelling and Tieck. Anthony Close has conducted the most thoroughgoing review of this strain of Cervantine interpretation, while ultimately rejecting it in favour of his emphasis upon the novel's burlesque aspects. Though himself opposed to the Romantic interpretation of *Don Quijote*, Close certainly does not dispute that the Romantics saw in *Don Quijote* "... a work of art that directly anticipated the preoccupations and values of Romanticism."[19] At the heart of these preoccupations, Close later explains, is mankind's sundering from the natural world. It is the hero's expression of nostalgia for a lost unity with nature that inevitably forms a cornerstone of the Romantic interpretation of the novel. Nature, according to the Romantic view, is a "vast living organism" unified by a "single current of life energy",[20] of which the multiplicity of life forms was an outgrowth. In its original state, humankind was but one manifestation of this greater force and hence fully integrated into the natural world, "bound to it by a deep sympathetic affinity, enabling him, if sufficiently sensitive, to intuit it as a congregation of familiar symbols in direct communion with him." Man's "original sin", in the Romantic account, is estrangement from nature, due to the emergence of a form of human consciousness, which reduced it to an "inert object, as a

[18] Close, p.37
[19] Close, p.29
[20] Close, p.33

mechanical assemblage of components for cold rational analysis instead of as a harmonious unity co-extensive with mind."[21] This "objectifying" mode of thought, Close explains, is typified for the Romantics in the French Enlightenment and British empiricism, making Romanticism, at least in part, a reaction to those progressive tendencies. The summary of Romanticism that Close gives us in *The Romantic Approach to Don Quijote* resonates with what we have argued hitherto of both the Chandos' letter and Bordo's thesis, with humankind's pre-modern, sympathetic affinity with the natural world. The difference, of course, is that Close's account of Romanticism does not explicitly historicize man's 'original sin' at the turn of the 17th century which, would make that "original sin" contemporaneous with the novel about which he is writing, invoking the now well-worn thesis that *Don Quijote* marks the end of an old order and a 'Fall' into modernity. Andrew Cunningham, furthermore, has described the discourse of Romanticism in terms that can stand directly alongside Don Quijote's. According to Cunningham, the four fundamental tenets of Romanticism are:

> ... the original unity of man and nature in a Golden Age; the subsequent separation of man from nature and the fragmentation of human faculties; the interpretability of the history of the universe in human, spiritual terms; and the possibility of salvation through the contemplation of nature.[22]

In the Romantic interpretation, Quijote is typically a "[martyr] on the altar of the Absolute", struggling, most visibly in his unrequited adoration of Dulcinea, against the dualities formed in the act of falling - subject and object, Ideal and Real, spirit and matter, and so forth. Although Romanticism, as a reaction against the Enlightenment, with its fallen "analytic and judgmental approach", did not emerge until some 150 years after the publication of *Don Quijote*, the first two of those four criteria already suffice to illustrate how Don Quijote (the protagonist rather than the novel itself) might be viewed as a forerunner of that movement and why, indeed, so much significance was attached to the novel by the German Romantics as a precursor of their own concerns. We can note, for instance, the thematic and generic continuity between *Don Quijote* and the later Romantic movement that would flourish in Germany under the 'Gothic' rubric – the chivalric, the pastoral, the outlaw novel or picaresque, all of which likewise preceded the *Quijote* novel as *romances* in their own right and which the novel indeed famously parodies.

Romanticism thus appears to take up Don Quijote's mantle as dialectical opponent to modernity. Illustrating the continuity between the knight Don Quijote and the Romanticism, and

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[21]Close, p. 34 This Romantic founding narrative of a "Fall" into Modernity from an original state of nature or infancy, from a unity expressed both as an internal harmony and a unity with nature, and of the melancholy struggle of the self-conscious artist to recapture this idyll structures, for example, Schiller's "Über Naïve und Sentimentalische Dichtung."

[22] Cunningham, Andrew, and Nicholas Jardine. *Romanticism and the Sciences*, p.4

further illustrating the interchanageability within the dialectic of Enlightenment and Romanticism, is the matter of Romantics' own self-defining practices. Just as we will see the Enlightenment subject constitute itself in opposition to that which it represses and excludes (the anxiety, nostalgia, melancholia and irrationality more readily associated with the Romantics), so the Romantic subject conventionally constitutes itself in opposition to everything that the Enlightenment represents, just as Don Quijote set out to restore the fallen "Age of Iron" to the Golden Age of peace and harmony.[23] We can further illustrate this practice (and indeed, the sheer persistence of the Romantic impulse itself beyond the constraints of national borders and limited historical epochs) by considering the far more recent example of the French-Brazilian cultural critic Michael Löwy, a self-proclaimed Marxist and sympathiser with the revolutionary Romantic tendency, who provides a succinct and accessible introduction to Romanticism in *Morning Star* as recently as 1987.[24] Löwy's introduction emphasises that Romanticism is far more than a literary movement confined to the 19th century. The unifying principles of Romanticism's various strands, Löwy writes, are a sense of paradise lost and a "cultural protest" against the bourgeois order, "a revolt against modern industrial society in the name of some of the social and cultural values of the past."[25] Löwy is plainly asserting here that Romanticism defines itself as anti-Enlightenment and certainly does not recognise any complicity therein.

Furthermore, we find in Löwy's definition the outlines of a similarly dichotomous opposition of self and other *within* Romanticism itself. Löwy finds limited the traditional Marxist criticism of Romanticism as a reactionary, regressive response to the conditions of bourgeois capitalism. As a Marxist himself, he objects: "While many Romantics want to restore the past, in a regressive or reactionary way, revolutionary Romanticism projects the nostalgia into a utopian future."[26] Romanticism, then, has at opposed poles both progressive and regressive tendencies, with Löwy seeking to sharply differentiate his brand of revolutionary Romanticism from the reactionary kind. However, might this not likewise be merely a dialectical opposition? The very idea of projecting "nostalgia" into the future points towards a phenomenon that we first discussed in the theorisation of the *causa sui* project, encountered very clearly in our theoretical framework and in Don Quijote's revolutionary desire to restore the Golden Age, and will continue to be ever-present throughout this thesis: progressive regression. As Horkheimer and Adorno write of the Enlightenment at which Romanticism takes

[23] This does not mean, however, that it is any such thing – if Romanticism is the dialectical shadow of Enlightenment, then it should not come as any surprise to find therein the same fallacies of self-definition that characterise Enlightenment

[24] Löwy, Michael. *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia*, p.29

[25] Löwy, p.34

[26] Löwy, p.34

aim: "the curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression."[27] In fact, as Jörg Kreienbrock has recently shown, Heinrich Heine had long ago prophesised the necessary reversal of progressive, revolutionary Romanticism into the pure barbarism of a "Gothic nightmare",[28] in terms that foreshadow Horkheimer and Adorno's prognosis marvellously and might be taken as the statement of Romanticism's own dialectic: "Progressive revolutionäre Dynamik schlägt in Regression um."[29]

Thus explained, then, is the extent to which Don Quijote can not only be seen, within his own story, to struggle against the Fall into modernity just after this Fall has taken place, but also to inspire a future generation of Romantics to do the same in the non-fictional world. Furthermore, as our analysis of Foucault's *Order of Things* and *Madness and Civilization* will reveal in Chapter 3, the presumed antipathy between Don Quijote and modernity is thoroughly reciprocal. However, as our analysis in the previous chapter also revealed, Don Quijote's quest is also a 'flight from the feminine' and a *causa sui* project, meaning that, like it or not, he is also thoroughly complicit in the project of modernity. In the preceding paragraphs, we set out in reverse from Murnane's location of Kafka in the Gothic tradition as a "post-Romantic shadow of modernity" and argued that Quijote, at the turn of the 17th century, stands in a comparable relationship to modernity's advent, as a "Proto-Romantic shadow of modernity". We noted, furthermore, the inspiration that *Don Quijote* provided for the Romantic movement.

We hence arrive at the answer to an all-important question in justifying the juxtaposition of Cervantes and Kafka: how do we account for the quantum leap of 300 years between the two authors? On the one hand, we have just cited the continuity between Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka through the tradition of dialectically "shadowing" rational modernity, a tradition perpetuated by reading. On the other hand, we have also emphasised the matter of 'return', with its twofold significance outlined above, in the Habsburg *fin de siècle*, in contrast to the matters of 'flight' and 'repression' at the turn of the 17th century. A rational, autonomous self that arose, as Susan Bordo argued, out of a moment of cultural crisis at the turn of the 17th century, finds itself haunted by the return of what it tried to leave behind. A 'masculine' separation from the 'feminine' realm precipitates an uncanny 'homesickness'. The preceding paragraphs, then, indicate a twofold relationship between Cervantes' and Kafka's historical moments, which is, in fact, a dialectic of continuity *and* repetition. Thus summarised, then, is the manner in which the historical contexts in which Cervantes and Kafka wrote can be placed in a meaningful

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[27] Adorno & Horkheimer, p.28

[28] Kreienbrock, Jörg. "Popular Ghosts: Heinrich Heine on German Geistesgeschichte as Gothic Novel" in Barry Murnane and Andrew Cusack (eds). *Popular Revenants,* p.135

[29] Winkler, Markus, *Mythisches Denken zwischen Romantik und Realismus: zur Erfahrung kultureller Fremdheit im Werk Heinrich Heines*. Tübingen: Niemeyer (1995); cited Kreienbrock, p.135

relationship to one another as far as the present thesis is concerned. On the one hand, we can argue that the 'flight from the feminine' and *causa sui* project presented in *Don Quijote* reflects the cultural 'flight from the feminine' taking place at the time of writing. Furthermore, the decentering of self, the return of the revenant and the homesick desire to return to the maternal origin, all of which proliferate to varying degrees in our analysis of Kafka's fiction, can be taken to reflect the cultural manifestations of 'return' presented thus far in the present chapter. Hence the two writers, at their respective moments, can be linked to one another by the dialectic of continuity and repetition just described, in addition to the more obvious matter of Kafka having actually read *Don Quijote* and advanced the interpretation presented in his aphorism.

*Homesick in Prague*

If, however, Brown's thesis that the infantile Oedipal fantasy is primarily a fantasy of self-causation and, as such, a commonplace of infancy (at least in Western civilisation) holds true, then the possibility must also be acknowledged that this historical framework is not absolute. If every infancy gives rise to a *causa sui* project and self-repression, in addition to the nostalgia that shadows these phenomena, then it must also be acknowledged as a more universal (though not absolutely universal, for this would imply that it is never overcome) aspect of the individual or collective human condition.

We will now proceed to consider an additional layer of cultural 'homesickness' within Kafka's immediate context that does not have its roots in the cultural and epistemological shifts of the 17th century, at least insofar as Jewish 'homelessness' has a far longer history again. The evidence for this is provided by Scott Spector's *Prague Territories*. Whilst Vienna is conventionally held to be the epicentre of the Modernist crises in the Habsburg *fin de siècle*, Kafka was writing some 250 km away in Prague. Having located Kafka more generally within a *fin de siècle* crisis of modern subjectivity centred in Habsburg Austria-Hungary, we can witness the proliferation of an even more specific type of 'homesickness' in Kafka's immediate literary milieu. Spector does a superb job of mapping the more general crises of self, language and *Heimat* onto the local context of Prague and, more specifically, onto a fluid association of German-speaking Jewish writers and intellectuals grouped under Max Brod's rubric of the 'Prague Circle'.[30] As such, his study provides an excellent opportunity to 'read' the immediate cultural context in which Kafka wrote in relation to the theoretical framework thus far developed in this dissertation. On the one hand, the modern nation state and the problem of

[30] In fact, Spector emphasises the multiplicity of Prague circles, "many orbits" (p.17), each with their own artistic and political agendas and overlapping to varying degrees.

assimilating those who do not accord neatly with a pre-conceived national identity, suggests that the 'homesickness' at issue in Spector's book is a modern symptom. However, the specific question of the Jewish identity of the 'Prague Circle' generation introduces a dimension that would not appear to have its roots at the turn of the 17th century, but belongs more generally to the history of the Jewish people in Europe.

Spector draws the link between the era's general *Sprachkrise* and the particular cultural no-man's land occupied by Kafka's generation of German-speaking Jewish intellectuals, "... in the black abyss between the nations in Prague."[31] This liminality, this formlessness, this otherness to the Modern notion of territory and the nation state, it appears, is the source of the 'homesickness' at issue in Spector's anlysis.[32] Their situation is described, borrowing Kafka's words, as follows: "... with their hind legs they were stuck to the Judaism of their fathers, and with their flailing forelegs they found no new ground. Their despair over this was their inspiration."[33] Even more pertinent for the present thesis are the various manifestations of this particular generation's nostalgic homesickness in variously "reterritorializing" (Nationalist) and "deterritorializing" (universalist, spiritualist) political and aesthetic movements.[34] A relatively brief consideration of these movements will reveal their fundamentally Romantic orientation and, by extension, their implication in the Quixotic legacy.

The first of the "deterritorializing" tendencies that Spector studies in detail, Expressionism, comes particularly close to the nostalgic brand of utopian desire that we have encountered to date in this dissertation.[35] As illustrated with reference to Franz Werfel's poem "An den Leser", which states its homesickness for childhood quite openly, Expressionism fixates on the "collapse of an imagined premodern organic community"[36] and the restoration of what amounts to the same. The Expressionists saw the resolution of this homesickness not in the fashioning of a new territorial homeland, for it was a movement of those who felt homesick

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[31] Spector, p.115

[32] John Zilcosky, in *Kafka's Travels*, makes a similar argument about the appeal of exoticism for Kafka. Because of this liminal position, Zilcosky argues, Kafka seeks a lost *Heimat* in exotic lands.

[33] Spector, p. 115. The generational difference highlighted here concords with Spector's emphasis that notions of 'liminality' and 'marginality' do not necessarily apply to Prague's German-speaking Jews as a whole, for the parental generation appears to have identified much less problematically with the national status quo

[34] Spector borrows here significantly from the conceptual framework of Deleuze and Guattari in *Kafka: Towards an Minor Literature*, which likewise emphasises Kafka's liminal cultural identity within Habsburg Prague.

[35] This proximity includes the ambivalence between the revolutionary and the reactionary, for Spector argues that Expressionist and Zionist discourse approximates that of the radical Czech and German nationalist movements to a greater degree than either would care to acknowledge.

[36] Spector, p.101

at home, those who were "banished from the chart of any national territory."[37] Rather, the Expressionist solution was a spiritual *Ur-Heimat* that could not be defined in territorial terms, but rather opposed itself to the very notion of territory *per se*. The Expressionist project, as explained by Spector, was a radical humanism or "world friendship" without borders. There is more than a little of Don Quijote's hunger for the absolute in Spector's description. Memorable in this regard is Spector's analysis of Paul Kornfeld's "Gerechtigkeit" ("Justice") and "Gebet um Wunder" ("Prayer for a Miracle"), both of which oppose terrestrial (read: territorial) "spiritless ... and material law" with an ideal, absolute, divine justice without borders to be delivered by messianic intervention as a "limitless, engulfing spiritual force."[38]

Corresponding both to the Expressionist hunger for the absolute is an idealisation of a feminine other that ranks alongside that of Don Quijote. This is expressed in the concept of "erotic symbiosis" which, after our reading of *Don Quijote*, is pregnant with connotations of an impossible paradise regained. As Spector shows with particular reference to Max Brod's *Der Besuch aus dem Elysium*, the paradigmatic form of this symbiosis is not the union of man and woman, but in an asymmetrical yearning never to be requited. In fact, the symbiosis is not about a woman at all but rather "... the desire she awakens in the man's soul" – the continuity with the asymmetric idealisation of Woman in *Don Quijote* could not really be any clearer.[39] Typical of this idealising attitude towards the feminine other is the following statement, which Quijote himself could have uttered to Dulcinea: "My love could never have found such fulfilment through mutual love and the gift of contentment."[40]

The longing for a spiritual *Heimat* that Spector describes in his analysis of Expressionism, furthermore, carries over into the cultural Zionist movement of, *inter alia*, Hugo Bergmann and Martin Buber, which is not to be conflated with the statist, territorial, leanings of what is conventionally understood as political Zionism. Cultural Zionism, as analysed by Spector, was not simply a matter of establishing a physical Jewish homeland, but rather, like Expressionism, proposed a spiritual, deterritorializing solution to the problem of homesickness, a "spiritual territory" that was at odds with Zionism's fundamental territorial ambitions.

As Spector explains, Prague Circle Zionists, as a generation of European Jews who did not fit neatly into a singular national identity, were seen to the formless, 'feminine' position

[37] Spector, p. 96
[38] Spector, p. 100
[39] Spector, p. 121
[40] Spector, p. 121

with respect to German and Czech territorial national identities.[41] However, Spector later proceeds to reveal that the Central European Jewish subject engaged in the same 'Orientalist' tendencies of feminising and eroticising the *ostjüdisch* Other to which they themselves were subject by the nationalistic, territorial order. The gaze Eastward was at once towards an exotic locus and towards imagined origins. The East was identified with its women, as object of desire, of yearning for"erotic symbiosis" in a manner that is explicitly compared with Edward Said's *Orientalism.* The Hasidic *Ostjude* was, on the one hand, the exotic and radically other, the 'feminine' double, while at the same time of the central European Jew's own primordial self, their own lost essence. The East became the mythical site of the "imagined, originary Jew".[42]In fact such interchangeability of the usual oppositions in cultural discourse between self and other, the central and peripheral positions, is a persistent theme in Spector's study. Another of Spector's major insights is the extent to which opposing political schools talked in the same terms. The rhetoric employed by the predominately left-wing and Jewish Expressionist and Zionist groupings, besides clearly resembling one another, resembled the right-wing, nationalist Czech and German *Völkisch* movements to a far greater degree than any would surely have cared to acknowledge. Spector refers to this phenomenon as the "complicity of discourse" – a singular discourse of *Heimat* lost and to be regained which each tendency, whether Czech or German nationalist, Expressionist or Zionist, exploited to its own ends.[43]

*The difference between Sancho Panza and Georg Bendemann*

By the time of his death by natural causes (not the suicide by self-defeat that claimed Grisóstomo and Anselmo), Don Quijote has firmly renounced the accursed romances of chivalry and his quest to disenchant Dulcinea, the forerunner to the *Ewig-weibliche.* As the preceding paragraphs have indicated, that does not mean, that Quixotism itself dies with Don Quijote, for a process of *quijotización*, afflicting primarily Sancho Panza but also, quite blatantly, Sansón Carrasco, has begun at the beginning of the second novel. Accordingly, both urge Quijote not to abandon his quest for Dulcinea even as he lies on his deathbed.[44]

About the *quijotización* of epistemology, symbolised in *Don Quijote* by the scholar Carrasco, we will read more in the final chapter. Let us presently consider more closely the figure of Sancho Panza, for two reasons: firstly, because Kafka's aphorism, presented in the introduction, is purportedly about the squire, even though we have thus far attributed greater

[41] Spector, p.120
[42] Spector, p.165
[43] Spector, p.117
[44] Madariega, Salvador de. Salvador de Madariaga, *Guía del lector del Quijote*, pp.127-135, 137-148

significance to the daemonic meaning of Quixotism itself; secondly, because, as the materialistic, rational man of appetites, he foreshadows to some degree the emergence of the *homo economicus* that we find in Kafka's fiction, but must also be sharply differentiated from this figure, as we will argue with the help of Mikhail Bakhtin. We will begin by considering what Kafka writes about the relationship between the squire and his master in light of our analysis of the novel. Recall that Quijote, in Kafka's interpretation, is Sancho's daemon that he succeeds in separating from himself. This separation, combined with the invocation of the daemonic, suggests doubling, seeming to imply that Don Quijote is part of Sancho's self that becomes other. Are we to read it, then, that Quijote is, in Žižek's terms, "what is in Sancho more than Sancho himself"?[45] Are we dealing with another dialectical opposition in which the idealistic, imaginative knight and his rational, materialistic squire are ultimately one and the same? Salvador de Madariaga's thesis of *quijotización* and *sanchificación* would certainly point in this direction.

However, despite Madariaga's thesis, it will be asserted here that we are not dealing simply with a dialectical opposition between the knight and the squire that one might suppose. Certainly, we must avoid the temptation to see in the opposition between the rational, materialistic squire and the myth- and magic-oriented knight something akin to a '*Dialectic of Enlightenment*' in which the rational man tries to fortify himself against the irrational other.[46] For this to fully apply, Sancho would have to become fully quixotic and succumb to this self-destructive impulse that he casts out. Kafka tells us explicitly that this is not the case. Quixote's deeds, in Kafka's view, do not really harm anyone (except himself, given the suicidal tendency that we and Kafka attribute to him), least of all Sancho, who, lest we forget, ought to have been his target but is royally entertained for the rest of his days. Yes, Sancho does follow the 'errant path' traced by his master's "Züge", but he does so out of a certain sense of responsibility and he does not succumb as his master does. He does not reject or disown his daemon. Perhaps it is for this very reason that he does not succumb to that daemon? Recall that, in Kafka's aphorism, there were two pairs of doubles: on the one hand Sancho Panza and his daemon Don Quijote and on the other hand, the dead pair of Don Quijotes fighting interminably to the death. Sancho is unique here in demonstrating the 'proper' manner of dealing with one's daemon in not succumbing to the daemonic dialectic of death.

What interests us immediately, as a preface to our chapter on Kafka, is one very specific form of *quijotización* that threatens Sancho, in the latter half of the second novel. It is a

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[45] C.f. Žižek, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54

[46] The importance of this dialectic will howeve become clear in the following chapter. The point to be emphasised here is that Sancho escapes any such dialectic.

threat, however, to which he does not succumb, unlike Kafka's individualistic 'economic men' who, in our analysis, will appear fully quixotic. Not unrelated to the question of responsibility, as we will soon discuss in our analysis of *Der Proceß*, Sancho wards off the threat of the succumbing to quixotism both by learning from experience and exercising agency, hereby succeeding in the face of victimisation where Josef K., in particular, will capitulate. In Part II chapter XXXV, the enchanter Merlin announces to the knight and his squire that Dulcinea can be disenchanted in exchange for Sancho receiving 3,300 lashes on his bare buttocks, which, crucially, *must* be self-inflicted. This sub-plot reaches its climax as the pair is returning to their village in chapter LXXI, when it becomes a matter of money. Quijote offers to pay his squire according to the lashes that he administers to himself, instructing him to put a price on each lash. It is at this point that the *quijotización* of the squire appears complete – the appetite for money has become complicit with the fatal lure of Dulcinea and the self-punishing impulse to which she gives form. The exchange begins with Quijote effectively writing Sancho Panza a *carte blanche* of remunerated self-punishment, advising him to pay himself with his own hand from the money that he is minding for Don Quijote in accordance with the number of lashes he gives himself. The offer meets with a predictably enthusiastic response. In the matter of the lashes is established a very specific danger posed by Sancho's *quijotización*. We might very easily read this as an entry into paid bondage, in which Sancho's materialism becomes self-punishing. In this sense, the situation of *homo economicus* is foreshadowed, with money taking the place of Dulcinea as idol. In fact, Henry Sullivan views the exchange in just these terms: in whipping himself, Sancho is to become a "martyr for his Master's desire."[47]

However, Sancho does not really submit to any such bondage at all, acting only according to his will. Sancho is no fool and no victim unlike, for instance, Josef K. Deciding after six lashes that self-flagellation is not a particularly pleasurable experience – and not strictly necessary, given his master's inattentiveness due to his preoccupation with his own melancholia – Sancho ensures that the trees behind him take a much heavier flogging than his back. Sancho learns from experience and does not repeat this unpleasure unnecessarily. A materialistic simpleton he may be, but certainly no fool. A free man, as Kafka describes him, he escapes the lure of paid bondage.

While Sancho Panza might be assumed to foreshadow the *homo economicus* of Kafka's stories, being as he is the rational counterpart to the idealist Don Quijote and preoccupied with matters of wealth and power, Mikhail Bakhtin further undermines the case for viewing him thus. Bakhtin does not dispute Sancho Panza's essentially materialistic character, pointing to the

[47] Sullivan, *Grotesque Purgatory*, p.144

symbolism of his name (Panza = belly), but insists that the squire is not yet the "private, egotistic 'economic man'" this figure being defined by its individualistic, atomised existence. Rather, Sancho embodies the materialistic character prior to the influence of capitalism. As Bakhtin explains, Sancho Panza's "... love of abundance and wealth have not, as yet, a private, egotistical, alienating character."[48] He does not yet correspond to the "... bourgeois conception of the completed, atomized being" that we will find illustrated in the figures of Georg Bendemann and Josef K.[49] In fact, for Bakhtin, it is Don Quijote who is the atomized individual, who lives in denial of the body. His squire, by contrast, provides the necessary antidote to the knight by bringing his "abstract and deadened idealism" back down to earth. Sancho foreshadows the individualistic 'economic men' Georg Bendemann and Josef K., but is not yet a *homo economicus* in their mould. Despite becoming more like Don Quijote in speech and manner, he does not succumb fully to the Quixotic impulse but profits from his "responsibility" for Quijote. However, Bakhtin's analysis suggests that the materialism that Sancho embodies will, ultimately succumb to this tendency.

Judging from Bakhtin's analysis of the pair, then, then, the individualistic "economic man" actually has more in common with Don Quijote than he does with the rational, materialistic Sancho Panza. And, while Sancho himself does not succumb to a materialistic version of Quixotism, the matter of the lashes in exchange for payment does point unmistakably towards the advent of the *homo economicus,* materialism tainted by the knight's self-punishing streak. This will now be corroborated in our analysis of Kafka's 'economic men', Georg Bendemann and Josef K.

*Georg Bendemann's Flight from the Feminine*

Let us begin, once again, at the origin, by discussing the significance of the mother in *Das Urteil.* Richard T. Gray, in "Infinite Commerce: The aporia of bourgeois subjectivity in Kafka's *The Judgement*," makes several valuable observations regarding the mother, which echo clearly what has gone before in this dissertation.[50] Gray's wider thesis concerns the division of the moribund bourgeois subject which, in *Das Urteil*, is symbolised in the opposition of maternal and paternal realms. Gray interprets the absent mother as the primary embodiment of a utopian 'femininity' that has been marginalised in the time and place of the

[48] Bakhtin, p.22
[49] Bakhtin, p.22
[50] Gray, Richard T.. "Infinite Commerce: The Aporia of Bourgeois Subjectivity in Kafka's *The Judgement*" in *Stations of the Divided Subject*, pp.269-316

story. The story unfolds in the bourgeois "world of fathers,"[51] which would be more accurately described as a world of sons' rivalries with their fathers. We will see later on just how appropriate Gray's use of the idea of marginalisation is in relation to *Das Urteil*: in *Don Quijote*, motherhood was associated with both generativity and death and, in Kafka's story, it likewise marks the extremities of the text, the beginning and the end. However, in engaging with Gray's interpretation, we will call into question some of his assumptions about this relationship, depart markedly from his position, and offer a startling perspective on his interpretation of the 'feminine'.

Gray states that "... the very constitution of the bourgeois subject is predicated upon the repression of the feminine",[52] an assertion that he seeks to bear out in *Das Urteil*. Gray's interpretation draws upon the opposition drawn by Horkheimer between the "world of fathers", with its "bourgeois civic concerns", and the "world of mothers" – a 'feminine' domain characterised by a utopian, communitarian form of love modelled on the mother-child bond. Gray argues that *Das Urteil* unfolds in the "world of fathers", with the 'feminine' cast to the margins. The mother-child model of love, according to this distinction, provides a utopian alternative to the "egocentric, bureaucratised Eros of the paternal tyrant."[53] Hereby created is a similar dichotomy of the maternal and the paternal to the one we criticised in our reading of Bordo's 'flight from the feminine.' Gray starts out in the parlance of psychoanalysis, acknowledging the structural analogy between rational subjectivity's repression of "the feminine" and Kristeva's account of the infant's accession to the Symbolic Order by repression of the semiotic "chora" – the same analogy that we adopted in our discussion of Bordo. The "primary act of repression" of the "unreasonable" and "incalculable" feminine, then, produces simultaneously the rational, male bourgeois subject and the irrational, 'feminine' Freudian unconscious, which are "genetically interdependent".[54] However, he then proceeds to discuss Horkheimer's duality of the bourgeois "world of fathers", whose forces of capital pose the threat of desubjectification, and the idealised, utopian "world of mothers", that offers a potential resistance to the forces of desubjectification, without acknowledging how the two models are in conflict. At least as far as male subjects are concerned, the unmediated mother-child bond is seen by mainstream psychoanalysis as precisely the opposite: not as the ideal love model upon which to base social intercourse, but rather as that which must be renounced as a prerequisite to becoming a subject. The psychoanalytic view is particularly firmly at odds with Horkheimer's alignment of the mother-child bond with adult sexual union, as both belonging to the idealised

[51] Gray, p.285
[52] Gray, p.27
[53] Gray, p.285
[54] Gray, p.27

"world of mothers."[55] Accordingly, Horkheimer's Frankfurt School colleague, Marcuse, notably invokes Freud in his Great Refusal of the "tyranny" of the genital libidinal organisation, calling for the institution of the "maternal utopia".[56] Desire for an idealised dyadic relationship of the kind proposed by Horkheimer is hence precisely that which of necessity must be renounced and overcome in order for the male subject to come into being and, in particular, enjoy sexual union with another woman. Procreative sexual union belongs definitively to the realm of fathers, at least as far as a male, heterosexual subject is concerned. Does not this opposition of the nurturing maternal and the authoritarian paternal structuring Horkheimer's, Gray's and Bordo's analyses follow precisely the logic of the bourgeois subject that all three, presumably, would gladly be rid of? In addition, Horkheimer's division between the worlds of mothers and fathers presupposes, in both cases, the subject as child. Between the opposition of the utopian mother-child and authoritarian father-child bonds remains the common factor of the child. And yet, our protagonist, a young businessman, is ostensibly an adult. Furthermore, Gray's analysis that the bourgeois subject is divided in the story between the friend as "unschuldiges Kind" and Georg as "teuflischer Mensch" creates an oversimplified dichotomy in which the friend and Georg represent the 'good' and 'bad' halves of the divided bourgeois subject, failing to take account of this "genetic interdependence." Gray does not emphasise this same genetic interdependence at the level of the mother-father opposition as he does at the level of the conscious-unconscious divide. Whilst Gray posits the division of the bourgeois subject into the opposed tendencies of rational and irrational, masculine and feminine, "infinite commerce" and utopian resistance, he does not emphasise the converse of his argument – that binarily opposed tendencies (which, as will be illustrated in the current analysis, ultimately amount to the same thing anyway) are in fact *united* in the bourgeois subject. Expressed in terms of Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, we might describe these tendencies, which ultimately reverse into one another, as "irresistible progress" and "irresistible regression." Going beyond Gray's assessment, our analysis will emphasise the converse: the same "genetic interdependence" of innocence and the demonic character that he recognised of the rational ego and the unconscious – that one ultimately reverses into the other since both pertain to the infantile character that Georg has never overcome.

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[55] Gray, p.285

[56] See Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man*. The example of Marcuse, a strident critic of the bourgeois order, calling for a "maternal utopia", serves to illustrate a similar opposition that Žižek draws between left- and right-wing intellectuals as "Fools" and "Knaves", which correspond approximately to the opposed tendencies of bourgeois subjectivity described above. "Knaves," to the right, are defenders of the *status quo*, while Marcuse would be an example of the "Fool" – the left-wing thinker who seeks to subvert the existing order but ends up, as its supplement, perpetuating it. See Žižek, Slavoj, *The Plague of Fantasies*, London: Verso (1997), p.45

This repression of the feminine indicated by Gray provides clear correspondence with the 'flight from the feminine' in the formation of the modern subject. It should be noted, however, that there appears to be very little obvious basis for associating femininity with utopia in any conventional, idealising sense in *Das Urteil*. We discussed at some length the idealisation in *Don Quijote* of the Earth-Mother and of Femininity in the form of Dulcinea. Kafka provides us neither with any anterior moment of unbridled fullness, nor any *locus amoenus*, nor any chimerical beauty that would immediately legitimise the idealisation of femininity to the extent suggested by Gray. The loss of Georg's mother certainly does not provoke the same nostalgia or sense of melancholy as in Don Quijote's Golden Age discourse – at least, not overtly. As was the case with Bordo, the mother, as a matter of fact, simply *is* dead. Georg's father's evaluation that Georg's grief is much less than his would seem to be entirely accurate upon initial reading.

Consequently, very few details are available about the mother herself from the text of *Das Urteil* without recourse to archetypal (mythical, religious or psychoanalytical) concepts of motherhood or the feminine, such as Gray has employed. What can be uncontroversially gleamed from the text is:

i) Her condition as Mother;

ii) The fact of her death – i.e. she does not die; she is already dead. This, perhaps, is the only ready association between the mother and utopia, given the relationship we have already established between them. Having already identified the association between the mother and death, we might also suggest that Nirvana is equally her domain. At the surface level of the text, however, there is nothing to indicate this utopian inverse of death.

iii) The coincidence of her death and the beginning of Georg's socioeconomic success story as a 'self-made man'.

It is interesting to note that Georg's father refers to her alternately as "die Mutter" (literally: "*the* mother") or "unser Mütterchen" ("*our little* mother"), but never, in the original German text, as "deine Mutter" ("*your* mother"). Nor does he make any reference to her by name, nor as his wife, nor in any other context than as "die Mutter." This would seem to imply that her essential, archetypal and enduring function is that of Motherhood, regardless of relation to another person. That is to say, what has been lost is the Maternal Function itself, though not yet in either its idealised or monstrous aspects. The fact that the mother's only discernible characteristic in *Das Urteil* is that she is dead, and that the first reference to her in the text is of

her death, serves to establish the association of death and femininity, establishing death, the realm of *jouissance*, as the domain of the mother. Her death, which has occurred approximately two years prior to the time of narration, foregrounds the events that unfold in *Das Urteil*, both chronologically and causally.

Just as was encountered in *Don Quijote*, then, there is the background in *Das Urteil* of the mother's absence and therefore of the lost Mother-Child bond, albeit without any of the nostalgia expressed by the knight. It is in relation to this aspect of the 'flight from the feminine' that we cannot fail to consider the story's enigmatic narrative perspective. For, it will be argued here, Kafka's narrative perspective exemplifies the form of consciousness that emerges from the 'flight from the feminine': oblivious to that of which it is not the source, to that which is outside itself, whilst feigning objectivity; yet at the same time equally alienated from the source of its thoughts, from the impulses shaping its intentions. *Das Urteil*, despite being written in the third person, is narrated overwhelmingly and singularly from the protagonist's perspective, a position for which Richard T. Gray has coined the term "monopolized narration."[57] Through the medium of the narrator, the reader appears to have access to Georg's mental workings by means of an inner monologue. This whole sequence is subtly marked as Georg's thought by the preceding phrase: "Er dachte darüber nach ..."/ "He was thinking about his friend" (U,23; J,101). The narrator does not purport to have any such access to his father's thoughts, even after the point at which the story turns back on itself and the father's narrative comes to dominate. The narrator's role is complicated, however, by the fact that the syntactic distinction drawn between Georg's thoughts and the narrative itself is inconsistent. On the one hand, Kafka employs, especially for his protagonist's longer inner monologues, a technique of free indirect speech in which, as Pascal points out, Georg's thoughts are reported with syntax and tense identical to objective narration.[58] Let us consider, for example, his first monologue. His train of thought is introduced by the aforementioned "Er dachte darüber nach ..."/ "He was thinking about his friend", which only definitively marks the following clause, "...wie dieser Freund [...] vor Jahren schon nach Rußland sich förmlich geflüchtet hatte" / "who had actually run away to Russia some years before" (U,23:J,101) as being attributable to him. The remainder of the paragraph has the syntactic appearance of narrative description, and, whilst this is from a shared perspective with the protagonist in any case, this technique does lend to Georg's reflections a misleading impression of objectivity. Moreover, the following paragraph of Georg's monologue, beginning "Was sollte man an einem solchen Manne schreiben...?" (U,23:J,101), is realised in similarly free indirect speech, yet, despite the change in paragraph,

[57] Gray, Richard T. *A Franz Kafka Encyclopedia*, p.195
[58] Pascal, Roy. *Kafka's Narrators*, p.24

no additional marker is used to attribute the new paragraph to Georg's thoughts. To compound the temptation to mistake these thoughts of Georg's for narration, there are other places in which Georg's thoughts are not merely introduced by the narrator, but also punctuated as though they were direct speech. For example: " Im Geschäft ist er doch ganz anders ... wie er hier breit sitzt und die Arme über der Brust kreuzt. "/ "In business hours he's quite different ... how solidly he sits here with his arms crossed" (U,27:J,106). His thought: "Jetzt wird er sich vorbeugen ... wenn er fiele und zerschmetterte"/ "Now he'll lean forward, thought Georg, what if he topples and smashes himself!"(U,31; J,111) is similarly punctuated. We see, then, the inconsistent marking of Georg's thoughts, which may have the effect of leading a careless reader to attribute those unmarked thoughts to the narrator, lending them an undue impression of objectivity and blurring the distinction between a narrator and protagonist who already share the same angle of vision.

The third-person form simultaneously invites the reader's presumption of objectivity on the one hand, while suggesting a large degree of alienation from self, if indeed the perspective itself is otherwise in the first person. The disguise of the third-person form for what is essentially a first-person narration lends a cover of apparent objectivity in a way that keeps the reader off-balance on two counts. On the one hand, it might prompt a truly unsuspecting reader to accept the narration as reliable, assuming that this implies the existence of critical distance between narrator and protagonist, and suspend disbelief entirely. On the other hand, the reader who recognises that one is dealing with a first-person narrator, whilst he or she will probably be cautious enough to consider it unreliable to the extent of not being "objectively" true, can nonetheless reasonably expect it to be authentic. What is not reckoned with, however, is that, just as the reader is limited outwardly to Georg's view, we are also share Georg's equally limited self-awareness. Ingeborg Henel writes of the Kafkaesque narrator:

> ...der Er-Erzähler blickt mit dem Helden nur nach außen auf die Welt und nicht auf den Helden: er weiß nichts davon, was in seinem Inneren vorgeht. Der Leser erfährt über dem Helden nur, was dieser über sich selbst sagt oder was andere über ihn sagen. Diese Aussagen gehen aber niemals in die Tiefe; überdies sind sie nicht zuverlässig und oft sogar absichtlich irreführend.[59]
>
> [The third-person narrator shares the protagonist's outlook but knows nothing of the protagonist or his inner workings. All that the reader finds out about the protagonist is what he says about himself or what others say about him. However, these statements do not penetrate to any depth and, furthermore, they are unreliable and indeed often intentionally misleading.]

[59] Henel, Ingeborg. "Die Deutbarkeit von Kafka's Werken" in *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 86 (1967), p.255

Such a narrative perspective is the ideal mode of expression for the 'flight from the feminine' and 'father of oneself' fantasy – founded upon a sense of 'objective' separateness, yet constructed primarily through the medium of thought. Obscured within this narrative perspective is that which has been repressed from thought and must therefore return, which is none other than Georg's continued bond to the mother. Indeed, at a conscious level, the words of Susan Bordo could not ring any more true in relation to the death of Georg's mother: "there was nothing to mourn, nothing to lament."[60] Whilst the apparent dryness of the friend's expression of sympathy is commented upon, the impression remains that, for Georg himself, her death has been nothing short of a boon, marking as it does the beginning of his meteoric commercial progress on the road to becoming the self-made businessman that he is now. The 'flight from the feminine' is thus manifest as the organising principle of the story's narrative perspective. Georg's bond to the mother has been repressed from consciousness, yet not overcome – this is precisely the blind spot both of Georg's own perspective and the narrative perspective, since these remain congruent, despite Kafka's use of the third person.

*"Das besondere Korrespondenzverhältnis":The Friend in Russia*

The preceding paragraphs do not exhaust our observations on the variable narrative perspective of *Das Urteil* but are merely one aspect. We will return to consider other aspects as our analysis proceeds. Thus far, then, we have considered the absence of the mother and of any apparent mourning, on Georg's part, of her absence. It is in relation to this absence of grief for the mother that we will attempt to locate the significance of Georg's friend in Russia. The story begins with Georg Bendemann, sitting in his room writing a letter to a "Jugendfreund", a childhood friend. We will shortly elaborate fully upon the significance of the friend, and of Georg's "correspondence" with him. Of more immediate importance, however, is what the friend suggests about the mother. Let us consider once again the manner in which the friend is introduced by the narrator: "Er dachte darüber nach, wie dieser Freund, mit seinem Fortkommen zu Hause unzufrieden, vor Jahren schon nach Ruβland sich förmlich geflüchtet hatte"/ He was thinking about his friend, who had actually run away to Russia some years before, being dissatisfied with his prospects at home" (U,23; J,101). Let us note here the presence, in differing form, of the verbs "fortkommen" and "flüchten", which do not come across in the translation. The latter verb tells us that we are again dealing with a "flight". The idea of "Fortkommen", on the surface, refers to the friend's progress or "getting on" (or lack thereof). However, the word also carries the meaning of "taking leave" or being made to disappear. The friend has literally been sent "Fort" to Russia, which once again puts us in mind

[60] Bordo, "The Flight from the Feminine and the Cartesian Masculinization of Thought", p.452

of the game of *Fort!-Da!*, the various dimensions of which we have already discussed in relation to Don Quijote and to Bordo's thesis on the foundation of modernity. In Bordo's essay, the emphasis was upon repressing the desire to reunite with the mother-world by making parturition even more definitive, founding the modern, scientific and "masculine" perspective upon the fantasy of being its cause. In *Don Quijote*, absence had a similar significance. The knight invented the fantasy of Dulcinea out of Aldonza Lorenzo as his *raison d'etre* only to make her perennially absent, hereby feigning that she was absent by choice. This provided the nexus with the imaginary Golden Age, for he chose the life furthest from this idyll, which he could not have restored anyway despite this being his professed mission. In both Bordo's founding moment of modernity and in *Don Quijote*, then, we were dealing with manifestations of a "flight from the feminine." Our first task will be to argue that, in *Das Urteil*, we are dealing with another manifestation of the same. In *Das Urteil*, the absent friend in Russia represents another absence – the absenting of the mother on Georg's own terms.

Like the previous manifestations of the 'flight from the feminine' discussed in this thesis, then, Georg's separation from the maternal will go far beyond the necessary parting whilst, paradoxically, never actually achieving it – by trying to assume "mastery" and make her absent on his terms. Let us recall, that Bordo wrote not only of early modern man's separation from Mother-Earth/Cosmos, but of the accompanying repression of another "feminine principle" in the process of the "Cartesian" subject's formation – 'feminine' epistemology or that which, we argued, provided the previous sense of connectedness.[61] Gray also correlates the friend's exile with the repression of the feminine, of the mother-child bond: "To the marginalization of the feminine in the universe of infinite commerce corresponds the banishment of the friend, who similarly embodies that 'reservoir' of resistance against...total desubjectification."[62] The friend hence embodies one half of the divided subject, the utopian "unschuldiges Kind" that retains the bond to the mother, while Georg himself is the other half: the "teuflischer Mensch" who "... [capitulates] and mimetically [adapts] to the reifying structures of bourgeois socioeconomic and discursive practice."[63] Our analysis will share with Gray's the view that the feminine has been repressed by Georg and, furthermore, that the friend stands in a relationship to this repressed feminine. Moreover, since the friend has remained absent since the death of the mother and since, as Gray correctly notes, both the friend's exile and the mother's death are posited in the story as factors in Georg's unexpected success, I find it entirely reasonable to suppose that the friend more specifically embodies that which once bound Georg to the mother. I would also fully support Gray's notion that the feminine impulse,

[61] Bordo, *Feminist Interpretations of Rene Descartes*, p.64
[62] Gray, p.308
[63] Gray, p.308

whose repression is manifest in the death of the mother and exile of the friend is "utopian" although, as will be clear from the previous section on *Don Quijote*, the concept of utopia is thoroughly ambivalent, as is the idea of the 'feminine'.

By interrogating the nature of this 'feminine' impulse, we will see that only one version of the 'feminine' utopia is taken into account, which, predictably, is the idealised version. The idealising terms in which the mother-child bond and "femininity" are described have more than a little of *Don Quijote* about them. However, if we are to take it that the "world of mothers" constitutes some kind of alternative to the here and now of the patriarchal order, then the only evidence we have of the nature of this utopia is in the figure of the friend. On the surface, it is very difficult to support the claim that the lifestyle of the friend in Russia constitutes any sort of utopian alternative existence to Georg's successful ascent in the capitalist socioeconomic order. If anything, the friend's "Russland" has much more of the purgatorial *Sierra Morena* about it than the idyllic Arcadia, the mythical Golden Age, primitive commun(al)ism etc. True, it is opposed to the realm of the father, but there is nothing particularly alluring about it. We have already argued that he embodies the negative of success in the capitalist socioeconomic order and symbolic reality, in which self-definition and -propagation is the goal, but if *Das Urteil* shows him posing an overt challenge to this order, or even offering a positive alternative, then this is far from obvious. Indeed, although Gray sees the feminine and the friend-Mother nexus as harbouring a utopian alternative, he does eventually reach the conclusion that, with his lack of *Verkehr*, stuck in "solitary confinement in a nether-realm beyond all social praxis",[64] the utopian potential embodied by the friend is rendered impotent. The 'feminine' alternative, according to his analysis, remains an ever-elusive goal, representing a potential that can never be fulfilled by the self-causing subject and which, as Gray duly recognises, ultimately marks a path to death. But this still assumes that the utopian alternative embodied by the friend is, in itself, a desirable one rather than recognising the other realm as the region of isolation, martyrdom, celibacy and death about which Kafka makes absolutely no pretensions. In fact, when we come to discuss the alliance between Georg's father and friend, the 'feminine' impulse within Georg that the friend is supposed to embody will be revealed for what it is – an expression of the primordial father within!

Thus far, then, we have discussed the background of the mother's death and Gray's analysis of the narrative's marginalisation of the feminine. Having considered the friend thus far in terms of this association with the mother, let us now consider Georg's relationship to him more closely. The marked contrast in fortunes between Georg and the friend really begins with

[64] Gray, p.313

the death of the mother, which suggests correspondence between the friend and the mother. The association, which has its nexus in their common absence, between the friend and the mother, is further underlined by the fact that the friend has not been present since before the death of the mother. The taking-leave of the friend, then, which we here speculate to be aimed at obtaining mastery over the mother's absence, becomes permanent in correlation to the permanence of the mother's absence. The fact that the friend is described as a "Jugendfreund" places him within Georg's childhood, consistent with our thesis that he is the object of Georg's play of *Fort!-Da!* The friend's periodic but increasingly infrequent *Heimkehr* prior to the death of the mother, on the other hand, suggest the repetitive return of the *unheimlich* repressed, the return to the surface of Georg's repressed *jouissance*. The fact that, since the mother's death, the friend-double has remained permanently absent, would seem to indicate that the claim to maternal *jouissance* has been finally renounced, leading to the exponential rise in Georg's positive libidinal investment.

Like many other commentators, Gray also sees the friend in Russia as a double or alter ego of Georg, embodying a rejected possible life trajectory or alternative self. According to Gray, the friend embodies everything that Georg himself must repress in order to construct himself as a successful bourgeois economic subject and, furthermore, everything that the bourgeois system itself must repress in order to secure its position of hegemony. In the figure of the firend in Russia, we are again faced with what Žižek describes as "what is in the subject more than subject himself",[65] in other words: the double. In a variation in theme upon this "sacrifice" of part of the self, Walter Sokel conceives the friend in Russia as Georg's former self, the "pure, childlike self" that existed, when the mother was still alive.[66] This childlike self, whom Georg has repressed but with whom he has evidently not severed the lines of communication, remained faithful to the mother and did not assert himself against his father.[67] This act of repression, which Sokel will elsewhere link to the theme of "arrest" in *Der Proceß*, produces the division between the "unschuldiges Kind" (the friend qua childlike Georg) and the "teuflischer Mensch" (the economically successful Georg). In the figure of the friend, then, we are dealing with the revocation of childhood, just as we were, most clearly, in Susan Bordo's discussion of the Cartesian origins of modernity. And, just as we argued in our analysis of "childhood" in Bordo's article, repressing does not amount to outgrowing and, as can be argued with reference to Brown's interpretation of the *causa sui* project, the repression of childhood is precisely that which precludes outgrowing it.

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[65] Žižek, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54

[66] Recall here also Scott Spector's analysis of the East as *Ur*-Home that is at once homely and exotic and, furthermore, the site of the originary self, the *Ostjude*.

[67] Sokel, Walter. *Myth of Power and the Self*, p.189

Furthermore, the function of this act of correspondence in consolidating Georg's bourgeois identity is quite apparent in the text. The image of Georg sitting in his "Privatzimmer" (literally: "private room", as though a room did not sufficiently portray separation in itself), a choice of word that reinforces his individuality and separateness, can be seen as a further indication that the writing of letters to the friend serves the process of self-formation and exaggerated consolidation of ego boundaries (U,23:J,101). The most basic opposition, prior to any value judgements, between Georg and the friend in Russia is that between presence and absence, an opposition that could be reformulated, as Richard T Gray has observed, between the words "heimlich" and "unheimlich".[68] As well as his being made "strange" or uncanny, the friend's absence is reinforced by a linguistic sleight of hand in which the idea of his foreignness is reiterated. "So arbeitete er sich in der *Fremde* nutzlos ab, der *Fremd*artige Vollbart bedeckte nur schlecht das seit den Kinderjahren wohlbekannte Gesicht..."/ "So he was wearing himself out to no purpose in a foreign country, the unfamiliar full beard he wore did not quite conceal the face Georg had known so well since childhood" (U,23; J,101) reads the beginning of one sentence, while another ends "... so bliebe er dann trotz allem in seiner *Fremd*e, verbittert durch die Ratschläge und den Freunden noch ein Stück mehr ent*fremd*et"/ "and then he would still be left an alien in a foreign land embittered by his friends' advice and more than ever estranged from them" (U,24; J,102). The repetition of the idea of the friend's "foreignness" six times within a couple of paragraphs through various words based the stem "Fremd", serves as a subtle attempt to make his absence permanent. The friend's enforced absence forms part of an overall process of negation implied by Georg's play of *Fort!-Da!* The friend is at once negated and made to embody negativity. This process of negation is apparent in Georg's ascription of negative emotion to the friend in the hypothetical event of his return. The negativity of the friend's emotional state is most clearly emphasised by the threefold repetition of the prefix "Un-": "... *un*zufrienden und *un*fähig, diese *Un*zufriedenheit jemals zu beseitigen" (U,24; J,102) In this negativity, we also find an important nexus with the matter of repression for, according to Freud, the prefix *un-* is the mark of repression.[69] Thus, a similar linguistic manoeuvre works towards the friend's overall negation as towards his being made "foreign" through repression. Further to the matter of the friend's repression, we will find him below described, should he return, as being stared at like a "Zurückgekehrter". This is translated by Willa and Edwin Muir as "a prodigal", although 'revenant' would be a more literal and, for the purposes of our interpretation, more appropriate translation.

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[68] Gray, *Stations of the Divided Subject* , p.275
[69] Freud, "The Uncanny", p.245

Given the understanding of the *Fort!-Da!* game as a gesture of mastery in the face of helplessness, it is unsurprising that Georg's construction of his relationship to the friend in Russia places him in a position of mastery in relation to the latter, albeit indirectly and subtly, by reducing him to a pitiful figure of dependency and subordination:

> Was wollte man einem solchen Manne schreiben, der sich offenbar verrannt hatte, den man bedauern, dem man aber nicht helfen konnte. Sollte man ihm vielleicht raten, wieder nach Hause zu kommen, seine Existenz hierher zu verlegen, alle die alten freundschaftlichen Beziehungen wieder aufzunehmen – wofür ja kein Hindernis bestand – und im übrigen auf die Hilfe der Freunde zu vertrauen? Das bedeutete aber nichts anderes, als daß man ihm gleichzeitig, je schonender, desto kränkender, sagte, daß seine bisherigen Versuche mißlungen seien, daß er endlich von ihnen ablassen solle, daß er zurückkehren und sich als ein für immer Zurückgekehrter von allen mit großen Augen anstaunen lassen müsse, daß nur seine Freunde etwas verstünden und daß er ein altes Kind sei, das den erfolgreichen, zu Hause gebliebenen Freunden einfach zu folgen habe. (U,23)

> What could one write to such a man, who had obviously run off the rails, a man one could be sorry for but could not help. Should one advise him to come home, to transplant himself and take up his old friendships again -- there was nothing to hinder him -- and in general to rely on the help of his friends? But that was as good as telling him, and the more kindly the more offensively, that all his efforts hitherto had miscarried, that he should finally give up, come back home, and be gaped at by everyone as a returned prodigal, that only his friends knew what was what and that he himself was just a big child who should do what his successful and home-keeping friends prescribed. (J,102)

The above reflections declare the friend's very existence as failed, deprive him of his independence and agency and reduce him to a state of passivity, helplessness and servitude in relation to his "more successful friends," such as Georg himself. The friend is variously ascribed status of an adult child, being described in his desired submissiveness as "ein groβes Kind" ("a big child"), and placed on a progressive decline by virtue of his yellow skin, which appears to suggest a developing illness (U,24; J,102). Georg's father later describes him as being terminally "Gelb zum wegwerfen"/ "Yellow enough to be thrown away" (U,31; J,112). Thus the friend simultaneously embodies the possibilities of regression and death or, expressed in a more simplified form, the drive towards death in either direction. Georg's propagation of self, then, is contingent upon the reversal of the very same process on the part of the friend, that is: it is dependent upon his negation and objectification. In contrast to Georg's active self-definition, the friend's entire being is passive, narrated and defined as he is by Georg.

During the passage in which Georg muses over the decision to invite the friend to his wedding, a series of binary oppositions based on the former's success at home and the latter's

failure in Russia serve to consolidate Georg's ego boundaries, his self-definition as a successful young businessman. Here a striking contrast emerges between this *causa sui* project and Don Quijote's some three hundred years previously: a shift from the periphery to the centre. The exile from the Law and from the community can no longer be correlated with social deviance. Our Quijote is no longer a knight-errant at odds with his time and place, but a young businessman at the heart of the socio-economic order of his time, hereby underlining the "Quixotization" of *homo economicus*. Georg's success is described in economic, marital and social terms – he appears to be the epitome of the successful "economic man", as Walter Sokel claims, or bourgeois subject, in Richard T. Gray's paradigm. His success in each sphere is placed in direct contrast to the abject failure of the friend. Whereas the friend's business, despite a promising start, is struggling, Georg's business has taken off quite unexpectedly since the death of the mother. The business prospects in Russia are "verschwindend" ("vanishing"), tending towards zero, in direct contrast to the exponential growth of Georg's business at home, which has seen its workforce double, its turnover increase fivefold and further progress undoubtedly on the horizon.

Georg's recent engagement to Frieda Brandenfeld, "...einem Mädchen aus wohlhabender Familie...,"/ "girl from a well-to-do family" (U,25; J,103), serves a dual function in reinforcing Georg's self-defining identity. That her well-to-do background is her defining characteristic is consistent with Georg's desired identity as a successful economic subject. We are reminded at this juncture of the manner in which Don Quijote admits to inventing Dulcinea in accordance with how he needs her to be, and that his imagination of her in all her perfection serves his own ontological requirements as a knight errant. In Georg's case, however, her defining characteristic is not *Ewig-Weiblichkeit* but wealth. We are not told that she is exceptionally beautiful – she is desirable simply because she is from a well-to-do family. As was anticipated by Sancho Panza's enthusiastic complicity in the pursuit of Dulcinea's disenchantment, financial prosperity has come to partake of the lure of *das Ewig-Weibliche*. Yet just as Sancho Panza's account of the flesh-and-blood reality of Aldonza Lorenzo contradicts the idealised image of Dulcinea, Georg's father's description of her as a "widerliche Gans"/ "nasty creature" (U,30; J,110) who hitches her skirt up a little too high serves to destroy the illusion of Frieda's middle-class respectability. Secondly, his marital contract with her stands yet again in direct contrast to the status of the friend, who seems to be setting himself for "ein endgültiges Junggesellentum"/ "becoming a permanent bachelor" (U,23; J,101). Georg further uses the figure of Frieda Brandenfeld in his letter to reinforce this difference. In addition to eventually informing the friend of his happiness at becoming engaged, he writes: "Auβerdem bekommst Du in meiner Braut ... eine aufrichtige Freundin, was für einen Junggesellen nicht

ohne Bedeutung ist"/ "Besides that, you will acquire in my fiancée, ... a genuine friend of the opposite sex, which is not without importance to a bachelor." (U,26; J,104). What the actual significance of Frieda's new relationship to the friend in Russia is remains unspoken. However, the fact of having female contact specifically as a bachelor surely serves to reinforce the fact that this relationship is purely platonic or asexual. The significance evoked here therefore pertains to Georg's achievement of marriage and his friend's failure to do so. Where Georg marries, a platonic friendship must suffice for the friend. The friend thus embodies an asexual existence that stands in binary opposition to the life embarked upon by Georg since the death of the mother. Whereas Georg maintains an active social life and regularly spends his evenings with friends, we are told that the friend has very few dealings either with his fellow expatriates or with the indigenous population. In fact, the choice of word to convey this lack of dealing, "Verkehr" (= traffic, intercourse), a word upon whose multiplicity of meanings the text so skilfully plays, effectively delineates the apparently clear boundary between Georg and the friend in Russia, referring as it does to social interaction, trade or commerce, and sexual intercourse. In general terms, we could say Georg defines himself positively in terms of the supposed plenitude of his "Verkehr", whereas the friend is defined by the absence of the same. The volume or absence of "Verkehr" corresponds, then, to the extent of Georg and the friend's self-propagation or lack thereof. The employment of the word "Verkehr" in all three contexts – sexual, economic and social – serves to unify them as reflections of the Self's libido, as libidinal investments of selfhood. By extension of their contrasting fortunes in business, then, Georg has propagated himself exponentially, having been able to give free expression to his positive libido since the death of the mother. The friend, by contrast, has literally been "verschwindend" (literally: "vanishing"), tended as he has during this time towards self-nullification.

This doubleness, then, is "das besondere Korrespondenzverhältnis"[70] in which Georg stands to his friend in Russia" – they are doubles in very close analogy to the doubleness of the chivalric and pastoral genres in Don Quijote. It is a correspondence of opposites by which Georg defines himself as "not the friend in Russia", in which the adult self is "not-the-childhood-self" as in the Cartesian revocation of childhood. However, it is a correspondence in which the friend will be later revealed as that which is in Georg more than Georg himself. Given these binary oppositions that establish Georg's mastery, in addition to our (and Gray's) hypothesis of his continued occupation of the "realm of the mother" that is Russia, we can recognise the analogy between this "Korrespondenzverhältnis" and the differentiation between

[70] Translated by Muir as"the peculiar relationship that had developed between them in their correspondence", but more literally referring to the way in which they "correspond" to one another as alter egos (J, 102)

Don Quijote and Grisóstomo, the pastoral imitator who continued to inhabit the maternal *locus amoenus*, in chapters XI-XIV of *Don Quijote*.

*Causa Sui: Georg Bendemann, the self-made man*

To review what has been presented thus far, with the absence of the mother and the friend in Russia, the outward projection of his experience of maternal *jouissance*, both having been repressed (or "abjected", in Kristeva's model) in Georg's gesture of mastery. We noted above the apparent lack of nostalgia for the mother's presence – in fact, it would seem that Georg's life has progressed from good to better since her death. Georg has experienced something of an unexpected rebirth, a new, autonomously fashioned identity that is the binary opposite the friend's. In addition to empowering Georg, however, the absence of the mother has resulted in the weakening of Georg's father. Indeed, the narration itself implies a causal link between his Mother's death, his father's decline and Georg's sudden ascent, measured in the growth in productivity of his business:

> Vielleicht hatte ihn der Vater bei Lebzeiten der Mutter dadurch, daß er im Geschäft nur seine Ansicht gelten lassen wollte, an einer wirklichen eigenen Tätigkeit gehindert, vielleicht war der Vater seit dem Tode der Mutter, trotzdem er noch immer im Geschäfte arbeitete, zurückhaltender geworden, vielleicht spielten – was sogar sehr wahrscheinlich war – glückliche Zufälle eine weit wichtigere Rolle, jedenfalls aber hatte sich das Geschäft in diesen zwei Jahren ganz unerwartet entwickelt, das Personal hatte man verdoppeln müssen, der Umsatz hatte sich verfünffacht, ein weiterer Fortschritt stand zweifellos bevor. (U,24)

> Perhaps during his mother's lifetime his father's insistence on having everything his own way in the business had hindered him from developing any real activity of his own, perhaps since her death his father had become less aggressive, although he was still active in the business, perhaps it was mostly due to an accidental run of good fortune -- which was very probable indeed -- but at any rate during those two years the business had developed in a most unexpected way, the staff had had to be doubled, the turnover was five times as great; no doubt about it, further progress lay just ahead. (J,102-103)

This passage reinforces the point made both in the introduction and in the previous chapter – specifically, that the 'flight from the feminine', the repression of all feeling for the mother, precipitates not in a turn *towards* the paternal but very much against the father. It is clear that Georg's father was far more powerful in his rightful position whilst Georg maintained some form of relationship to the living Mother. Since all relation to the dead Mother has been so emphatically repressed from consciousness, however, his father's position has weakened.

Whatever else can be said of Georg's sundered ties to the mother, then, it appears unlikely that the separation is under the terms of the symbolic Law. In the commercial field, then, in addition to Georg's rebirth/self-invention the death of the mother has precipitated in the assumption of power, inverting the hierarchy between father and son. In effect, it has initiated a process in which Georg will *take his father's place*. Georg's repression of the feminine corresponds to his displacement of his father – suggesting that this repression is on his terms, not on the terms of any paternal metaphor. Of significance here is not only the fact that Georg has stepped into his father's shoes, however, but the impression that he (and he alone) has been the cause of both his own personal growth and the growth of his business. His mother has died, his father has stepped aside and Georg has finally obtained free reign to realise his own potential and that of the family business, with spectacular results. Whilst he does not claim to have founded the business, he has seized the opportunity, taken the reigns and made the business what it is. He presents himself, in short, as capitalist society's ideal – the self-made man. That we find here juxtaposed the fact of having assumed his own father's place and the claim of having built both himself and the business up more or less from the ground indicates that we are now being presented once more with the other face of the 'flight from the feminine' – the delusion of being *causa sui* in the form of capitalism's 'self-made man'.

*Guilty Patricide*

And yet, on the face of it, hostility towards his father is the furthest thing from Georg's mind. Similarly, the overt motivation behind Georg's establishment of this hierarchy with the friend in Russia is neither conceit nor denigration of his friend, but quite the opposite. It is here that we return to consider another aspect of the story's narrative perspective. Not only is the narrative shorn of all sense of mourning for the mother, but also of the specifically Oedipal aspect of the *causa sui* project. As the narrative perspective is congruent with Georg's own thoughts, Georg's Oedipal ambition is repressed from the surface of the narrative, just as it is from his own consciousness. Patricidal ambition can only be inferred from Georg's actions, not from the narration itself. What we do witness at the level of consciousness, however, is an overdeveloped sense of guilt which, upon closer inspection, can be seen to drive the patricidal project itself.

In fact, well-meaning guilt has also been the motive behind the "repression" of the friend. Georg's reluctance to communicate authentically, to inform him of his engagement, is based on a sense of pity for him and a concern for how this invitation and news of Georg's own life successes will make his friend feel. His overt motivation can thus be summed up by the word "Schonung", literally: "care-taking": a desire to spare his friend's feelings. It is

immediately evident that Georg's "Schonung" conceals another motive: "... je schonender, desto kränkender ..."/ "the more kindly the more offensively" (U,23; J,102). The more the advice to his friend to give up and come home is sugarcoated, the more wounding it will become. "Schonung", by virtue of this correlation between "schonend" and "kränkend" (kindness and offensiveness), is revealed to be part of a covert strategy to humiliate, subordinate and disempower with apparent kindness, consideration and care-taking behaviour. Georg seeks to spare his friend in Russia the humiliation of seeing that he is far more successful – an expression of his bourgeois guilt premised on his presumption of superiority. This claim will require some justification, as there is a fundamental ambivalence in Georg's treatment of his father between the desire to care-take and the desire to supplant – between the overt impression of filial loyalty yielded by his concern for an aging father, on the one hand, and the patricidal charge levelled by his father of wanting to "cover him up", on the other. However, when the reader considers the discrepancy between Georg's initial impressions of the father in his room and his subsequent thoughts and actions, the picture becomes clearer: repressed Oedipal desire is manifest as the guilt/pity that motivates Georg's *Schonung*.

Let us consider here Georg's apparent concern for his father more closely. It is in response to the father's baffling question about the existence of the friend in Russia, the full implications of which will be discussed below, that Georg experiences his sudden concern for the father's well-being: "Lassen wir meine Freunde sein. Tausend Freunde ersetzen mir nicht meinen Vater. Weißt du, was ich glaube? Du schonst dich nicht genug"/ Never mind my friends. A thousand friends wouldn't make up to me for my father. Do you know what I think? You're not taking enough care of yourself (U,28;J107). We have already discussed the significance of Georg's concept of *Schonung* in relation to the friend in Russia. Georg's apparent newfound and overdeveloped sense of filial duty towards the father, as with his hypersensitivity towards the friend in Russia, betrays quite clearly a strong sense of guilt at the state in which both apparently find themselves. However, it is again of vital importance not to mistakenly take this guilt as the result of transgressing against the Law through his success as a businessman. Rather, Georg's self-punishing guilt *is the motive* – a drive that would stealthily, if unintentionally, reduce the friend to a state of dependence on him, simultaneously regress him towards childhood and progress him prematurely towards death.

Georg exhibits precisely the same guilt in the subsequent exchange with his father, admonishing him that "...das Alter verlangt seine Rechte"/ But old age must be taken care of (U,28; J107). This, let us recall, is a man whom Georg has perceived to be "immer noch ein Riese"/ "still a giant of a man" (U,26: J,105), suggesting alarm at the unexpected stature and indeed vitality that the figure before him possesses. Age and health are further used as a pretext

for marginalizing his father in the family business: "Du bist mir im Geschäft unentbehrlich, das weißt du ja sehr genau, aber wenn das Geschäft deine Gesundheit bedrohen sollte, sperre ich es noch morgen für immer"/ I can't do without you in the business, you know that very well, but if the business is going to undermine your health, I'm ready to close it down tomorrow forever (U,28; J107). The fact that it is the father who is indispensible to Georg emphasises the inversion of the father-son hierarchy that has taken place in the business since the death of the mother. And yet, the damage that the business may do to Georg's father remains hypothetical, suggesting that, in actual fact, he remains in good health.

As Georg is carrying his father into the bed, he catches sight of his unclean underwear, prompting a return of the guilt that was evident in his reflections on the friend in Russia. This is manifest in the self-reproach that it should have been his responsibility to change him. This guilty reflection not only exaggerates the decline of his father but clearly reduces him to a position dependency, to "ein groβes Kind", a big baby. How, it must be objected, can he continue to play an indispensable role in the family business whilst being incapable of changing his own underwear? Now, the text does not dispute that Georg's father is indeed showing signs of his age – the latter acknowledges this much himself:

> ... ich bin nicht mehr kräftig genug, mein Gedächtnis laßt nach, ich habe nicht mehr den Blick für alle die vielen Sachen. Das ist erstens der Ablauf der Natur, und zweitens hat mich der Tod unseres Mütterchens viel mehr niedergeschlagen als dich (U,27)
>
> I'm not equal to things any longer, my memory's failing, I haven't an eye for so many things any longer. That's the course of nature in the first place, and in the second place the death of our dear mother hit me harder than it did you (J,107)

The father's declining role in the business is, by his own admission, partly a result of "der Ablauf der Natur"/ "the course of nature" (U,27; J,107), and of his loss of strength due to the death of the mother. We can corroborate this against Georg's previously mentioned explanation that his authoritarian father, who would only let his own viewpoint stand, had stepped back since the mother's death. However, Georg, via the narrator, attributes a far greater role to indeterminate "glückliche Zufälle" in his own ascent.

I would like to make a brief excursus at this point to speculate upon the significance of such vagueness. Corresponding to the central role that Georg attributes to fortunate coincidence is his father's own allusion to "unschöne Dinge" since the mother's death, the muted accusation that some business affairs are being concealed from him. In fact, the pairing of glückliche Zufälle/ unschöne Dinge forms part of a wider pattern within the text of denying significance to

people and events. Hence Georg informs the friend of the "bedeutungslose"/ "unimportant" news of marriage of a "gleichgültigen" man with an "ebenso gleichgültigen"/ "equally unimportant" woman (U,25; J,103). His reflections upon the contrasting fortunes of the friend in Russia are the end result of "ungeordnet" thinking that is typical of a Sunday afternoon. As we have already noted above, Georg's reflections upon his correspondence with the friend in Russia are anything but random, following, as they do, the very specific logic of self-construction by binary opposition.

Furthermore, the denial and subversion of intentionality is another recurring feature of Georg's narrative. If his friend were to return home and be depressed/ repressed/ oppressed/ suppressed, it would, the narrator unconvincingly protests, be "... natürlich nicht mit Absicht, aber durch die Tatsachen"/ "not out of malice, of course, but through force of circumstances" (U,204; J,102).[71] As already noted, the logic of abjection the exposition of the friend follows is by definition repressive, since Georg's identity is contingent upon opposition to and marginalization of the friend and all that he embodies. However, only a few paragraphs later, the subversion of intentionality works to the opposite effect. "Ganz gegen Georgs Absicht,"/ "quite contrary to his intentions" (U,25; J,103), the friend begins to take an interest in the engagement of the "gleichgültigen" unidentified couple, the anonymous shadow event to Georg's own engagement and one which foreshadows the protagonist's own impending non-identity. The unintentional piquing of the friend's interest in this insignificant marriage, sets in motion a sequence by which the return of the 'revenant' is made inevitable.

With this pattern of denying significance and subverting intentionality now established, let us now return to consider Georg's father's reference to "unschöne Dinge"/ "things [that] have been done that aren't right" and "der Ablauf der Natur" (U,27; J,107). For, I would like to suggest here, the former refers to Georg's perceptual acceleration of the latter. With this incongruity between caretaking actions motivated by guilt and patricidal consequences having been posited, a fundamental ambivalence arises in the significance of Georg's engagement to Frieda Brandenfeld, in relation to the question of its 'legality', in a psychoanalytic sense. On the surface, it appears legal: the father who issues the Law, whilst prohibiting enjoyment of the mother (which would imply taking the father's place or *becoming* him) nonetheless holds fatherhood up as an ideal for the son. However, Georg's aforementioned momentary resolution to move his father in with him, to "adopt" him following the marriage to Frieda, betrays the underlying and indeed unconscious agenda to fully invert the father-son relationship, to usurp

[71] Literally, "... not intentionally, of course, but by the facts"

from his father the coveted position of *paterfamilias* that he has already seized within the business by similarly covert means. That Georg's impending marriage is driven by vicarious Oedipal desire is most clearly evident in Georg's suggestion that they should switch beds, allowing the son to usurp the matrimonial bed. Georg reassures his father that this will not be a change of any consequence and that everything in the room will be transferred over with him. The only possessions mentioned in the room are the "Andenken an die selige Mutter"/ "various mementoes of Georg's dead mother (U,26: J,105). However, Georg insists that that his father go "vorläufig" to lie down in the other room, giving him time alone in the room with the mother who is present in the form of her "Andenken" (mementoes or, more literally, "memory"). Georg's succession of the father, his fulfilment of the Symbolic Law's promise at a conscious level with his marriage to Frieda Brandenfeld, a woman from another family, thus *transgresses* against the Law's fundamental prohibition by seeking to usurp vicariously his paternal prerogative of enjoying the mother. Implied, then, is an inversion of Lacan's Law of the Name-of-the-Father. Marriage itself, by this logic assumes the status of an Oedipal attack on the father by usurping a privilege that is reserved for him. Frieda, then, is effectively reduced to a mother-substitute, marriage concealing a 'homesick' return, an inverted attempt to claim full *jouissance*. This is betrayed in her name, Frieda evoking *Friede*: peace, Nirvana, death. Thomas Anz likewise argues for viewing Frieda as an encryption of the mother. On the one hand, her appearance in the text coincides with the mother's disappearance, meaning that Frieda succeeds the mother logically. On the other hand, from Georg's father's perspective, Frieda is the 'whore' to the 'Madonna' that the mother is transformed into by virtue of the shrine to her in his room.[72]

Like the friend in Russia, Georg's father is simultaneously placed on a path towards death whilst regressing towards childish dependence. As Georg is carrying his father to the bed, his apparent sense of responsibility towards him becomes ever more acute. He begins to worry about arrangements for his father's care after his marriage. That he has not discussed such arrangements expressly with Frieda to date "... denn sie hatten stillschweigend vorausgesetzt, daß der Vater allein in der alten Wohnung bleiben würde"/ for they had both of them silently taken it for granted that the old man would go on living alone in the old house (U,29; J,109) suggests that this was not previously a cause for concern. This silent agreement is a contradiction in terms that alerts the reader to the manoeuvring that is characteristic of the unreliable narration. One can only conclude from it that, if he had hitherto given the matter any thought at all, Georg certainly had no concerns at the idea of leaving his father to take care of

[72] Anz, p.133

himself. There is nothing to anticipate the spontaneous and rapidly growing sense of urgency that follows: "Doch jetzt entschloß er sich kurz mit aller Bestimmtheit, den Vater in seinen künftigen Haushalt mitzunehmen"/ „But now he made a quick, firm decision to take him into his own future establishment" (U,29; J,109). Having previously opted for the route of independence represented by moving out with his new bride and leaving his father at home, Georg is suddenly overcome by the impulse to take his father fully into his care, thus setting up a new living arrangement in which he and Frieda will be the parents, while his father will become their dependant. As though this resolution were not revealing enough of a covert Oedipal agenda, the urgency of the father's care situation immediately intensifies again: "Es schien ja fast, wenn man genauer zusah, daß die Pflege, die dort dem Vater bereitet werden sollte, zu spät kommen könnte"/ "It almost looked, on closer inspection, as if the care he meant to lavish there on his father might come too late" (U,29; J,109). Within a short space of time, Georg's father has been transformed from a giant and an indispensable employee into an old and incapable *kindisch geworden* man (man become child) in imminent danger of death! Such is Georg's perceptual acceleration of the course of nature. And yet this Oedipal agenda remains beyond his consciousness and, by virtue of the text's ambivalence, below the text's linguistic surface and manifest only as a well-meaning guilt that precipitates attempted patricide, repressed but never overcome.

Having established guilt as a motive in Georg's patricide by stealth, we can posit a reciprocal relationship between Oedipal transgression and guilt that reminds us of Don Quijote's hubristic self-elevation to God's minister on Earth – his own version of the *causa sui* project. The knight saw his role as no less than that of God, since the soldier who carries out the captain's orders does no less than the captain who issues them. Accordingly, this entirely voluntary ministry's code of conduct fuelled the knight's self-punishing impulse, demanding arbitrary self-denial and endangerment on His behalf, whilst presuming to pronounce the final word on what is just. Similarly, the agency that produces Georg's guilt arises from his *causa sui* project. As Gray contends, following the Freudian thesis of the super-ego as the introjection of parental and social authority, "Georg introjects patriarchal authority as a tyrannical super-ego".[73] Norman O. Brown likewise viewed the super-ego as a realisation of the 'father of oneself' fantasy, the child becoming the father of himself at the reciprocal cost of being the child of the introjected father. Georg's introjection of his father as a guilt-producing super-ego, then, is what produces the guilt that drives the killing of his father by stealth. Georg transgresses against the father, essentially, by introjecting him. What we witness in *Das Urteil* is a vicious

[73] Gray, p.313

circle that begins with the *causa sui*, the introjection of the father as super-ego and culminates in the attempt to cover him up. The introjection of the paternal imago is precisely what undermines the 'authority' of the father (in the most literal sense of being the author, rather than in the sense of having the ability to command obedience) that is: it undermines that *paternity* of the actual father. This vicious circle corresponds, in turn, to the vicious circle by which the 'flight from the feminine', the repression from consciousness of all longing for the mother, leads back to the realm of the mother that is death.

The story thus undermines the Freudian position that the super-ego constitutes the foundations of moral conscience and supports the Lacanian position that the super-ego dispenses an "anti-legal" guilt, which "has nothing to do with moral conscience as far as its most obligatory demands are concerned" and, furthermore, is a source of *jouissance*.[74] According to Walter Sokel, *Das Urteil* is preceded by an original, Edenic harmony in which Georg was a true friend to the friend in Russia and in which he had a truly loving relationship to his father. Thus understood, his feelings of guilt are the result of alienating himself from this pre-existing harmony.[75] However, Georg's guilt is not simply regret for the abandonment of the "child-like" self and commercial success. It is not just a question of him feeling bad for his friend or having a *schlechtes Gewissen* for not taking enough care of his father, all of which could be taken unproblematically as an expression of moral conscience. We see, then, that Georg's apparently well-intentioned guilt is far from ethical, complicit as it is in establishing his mastery and denigrating the friend. It is not an expression of conscience but a super-egoic impulse that is anti-legal, as per Lacan, self-punishing and patricidal. Conventional (which is not necessarily to say real) cause and effect are hereby inverted: the guilt produces the deed, and not *vice versa*. "Oedipal guilt" is not the remorse of having committed the deed, but precisely that which further drives the Oedipal act. This further underlines the argument that the super-ego itself, created in the act of introjecting paternal authority, partakes of the Oedipal transgression itself.

*Father and Friend – The Return of the Repressed*

What is it that brings about Georg's sudden visualisation of his father as being elderly and weakened unto the point of death, his sudden impulse to "take care" of him? It is quite clear from the text that this urge arises as an evasive response to his father's questioning about whether he really has a friend in Russia. But what is Georg's father really asking here, and why

[74] Lacan, ; Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.80
[75] Sokel, p.192

should Georg attempt to suppress this line of questioning so vigorously? On the surface, it would appear as though the father is simply questioning the existence of the friend in Russia. The nonexistence of the recipient of Georg's letters appears incomprehensible to the reader to whom he has just been introduced in the opening paragraphs and leaves us facing a choice between two conclusions. The first, and most likely of these, given the account of the father's decline and his own admission that his memory is failing, is that the father is senile and simply cannot remember the friend. Certainly, this appears to be how Georg understands it, as he urges his father to think back to their previous encounters, of his tales of the Russian Revolution that the father has himself recounted on occasions. However, the father's steadfast assertion that Georg has no friend in Petersburg and that he is "immer ein Spaβmacher gewesen"/ "has always been a leg-puller" offers a second possibility, namely, that Georg is lying (U,28:J,108). This would explain Georg's "embarrassed" reaction to the question – as though having one lie exposed were not embarrassing enough, we have already noted the contingency of Georg's very narrative not only upon the friend's existence, but upon Georg's opposition to him. To expose the friend's existence as a fabrication of Georg's own mind would be to expose Georg's own self-definition as the same. Is it then simply a case of Georg's father having known the friend all along, but disingenuously questioning his existence in order to feed Georg's impression of senility? In fact, there is more to the question again than that. "Hast du wirklich diesen Freund in Petersburg?"/ "Do you really have this friend in St. Petersburg?" is very loaded indeed (U,28:J,107). Walter Sokel emphasises the semantic conflict between Georg's and the father's definitions of the word "friend". Hence, Sokel argues, what is in question is not the existence of a person in Russia whom Georg calls "a friend", but whether Georg is truly a friend to him.[76] However, when Georg's father's questions are considered more closely, I would suggest that what is really at issue here is the friend's location, a possibility that Sokel does not consider. Whilst the father may initially appear to be disputing the existence of the friend with his initial objections ("To St. Petersburg?"/ "Do you really have this friend in St. Petersburg?"), the focus of his interrogation turns to Petersburg itself: "Du hast keinen Freund in Petersburg ... Wie solltest du denn gerade dort einen Freund haben! Das kann ich gar nicht glauben."/ "You have no friend in St. Petersburg ... How could you have a friend out there! I can't believe it" (U,28:J, 108). Thus, when Georg's father triumphantly reveals that he knows the friend, he is not actually admitting something that he previously denied, for he did not explicitly deny *knowing* him. Instead, he is disputing the friend's *absence*, an absence upon which, of course, Georg's self-invention is contingent. This challenge is further underlined by the revelation that he was the friend's "...Vertreter hier am Ort."/ ("representing him here on the spot.") (U,30; J,111).

[76] Sokel, p.197

That the *unheimlich* friend had a *heimlich* ally in the father testifies to Georg's failure, or unwillingness, to keep the friend at bay. In similar fashion, Georg's father innocently asks him, "Bin ich gut zugedeckt?"/ "Am I well covered up now?" (U,29:J,109) after Georg has laid him down in bed, before playing on the verb "zudecken" (cover up) to accuse Georg of attempted patricide. Upon initial inspection, the sudden resurgence of the elderly father, precisely at the point when Georg appeared to have succeeded in his complete inversion of their roles, has the appearance of a tyrannical father condemning his treacherous son and reclaiming his rightful position as *paterfamilias* – Oedipus being put in his place, as it were: "Du wolltest mich zudecken, das weiß ich, mein Früchtchen, aber zugedeckt bin ich noch nicht. Und ist es auch die letzte Kraft, genug für dich, zuviel für dich"/ You wanted to cover me up, I know, my young sprig, but I'm far from being covered up yet. And even if this is the last strength I have, it's enough for you, too much for you (U,29; J,109).

If, however, the friend is Georg's revoked 'feminine' childhood self, failing in an inhospitable nether region, and the father symbolises the economic success to which Georg aspires, then how do we account for Georg's father as the friend's representative? And how do we account for the idea of the friend in Russia being a son after his own heart. In fact, the exchange that follows reveals that there is more to the resurgent father than meets the eye. Having been marginalized from his symbolic role as *paterfamilias* and reduced to a position of passivity and dependency in an analogous manner to the friend in Russia, Georg's father's resurgence, I will here argue, is in the capacity of an agent of (maternal) *jouissance*. This *jouissance* is primarily manifest, we will argue, as accusation, the production of guilt, on the one hand and the fulfilment of the death wish implicit in the *causa sui* fantasy. Gray contends that it is at this moment that Georg's father ceases to function as the objective correlate, the externalisation, of Georg's authoritarian super-ego and sides with the utopian impulse of the mother and friend. Gray considers this contradiction the irresoluble aporia of the bourgeois subject.[77] However, from a Lacanian perspective, we can contradict Gray and argue that this apparent *volte-face* represents Georg's father at his most super-egoic, in commanding Georg to "Enjoy!"

As such, we can suggest that he functions as an externalisation of the internal source of the guilt that, as we have already argued, has driven Georg's patricidal actions. On the one hand, then, the father's resurgence marks a dramatic, 'schizophrenic' *volte-face*, with Georg's narrative turning back on itself, with the version of events offered by the father coming to assume greater force than Georg's own narrative. We cannot verify whether Georg's or his

[77] Gray, p.313

father's narrative is more true. Nor is this necessarily the point, for what is reflected in the story's *volte-face* is another truth: the inevitability of Georg's *causa sui* project sabotaging itself and its inevitable link with guilt and self-condemnation (but not simply as cause and effect, as we might expect). However, from another perspective, it simply represents matters coming to a head. Georg's father himself now assumes, externally, the function of the internal critic and dispenser of guilty *jouissance*. The path towards self-defeat and death implicitly travelled in Georg's 'father of oneself' project reaches its logical conclusion in his final accusation and death. Moreover, this death is to be differentiated from a simple suicide in the necessity of persecution by an external agency. In the case of Don Quijote, the principal persecutory agency was the fantasised Woman whom, we noted with reference to Žižek, was "one of the names-of-the-father". And what do we find in *Das Urteil*, if not the figure of a primal, revenant father doing for Georg Bendemann what Dulcinea did for Don Quijote: functioning as his external persecutor, fulfilling his death wish, inflicting *justice*? However, we should not push this claim to the point where Georg's father is reduced purely to a psychical projection, despite his nightmarish aspect and even though the text is patently no longer 'realistic'. Georg's father corresponds functionally with Georg's super-ego, but cannot be reduced to projection of his unconscious. As Ritchie Robertson cautions, it is all too easy to explain something away as a projection of the unconscious, until such claims become unfalsifiable.[78]

To what extent is Georg truly compelled to die? Not at all, if the external application of physical violence, or even the real threat thereof, is to be taken as a minimal criterion. "Georg fühlte sich aus dem Zimmer gejagt"/ "Georg felt himself urged from the room" (U,32:J,113). Georg "feels" himself forced from the room. That is, feels his suicidal action originating outside, but there is no affirmative statement that he is physically forced either ("Er wurde aus dem Zimmer gejagt", "Der Vater jagte ihn aus dem Zimmer"). Nor does he explicitly flee. Agency is missing entirely from the sentence. Georg is the subject, to the extent that he *feels*, but he is acted upon instead of acting. This is subsequently reiterated by the employment of the impersonal *es* as the grammatical subject of the subject: "zum Wasser trieb *es* ihm", rendered in Willa and Edwin Muir's translation simply as "driven toward the water" (U,32; J,113). What is this enigmatic *es*, other than a marker of the impersonal mood? *Das Es*, perhaps? Even though, as Walter Sokel points out, Kafka wrote the story long before Freud published "The Ego and the Id",[79] we witness in Georg's death the lexical conspiracy between the impulsiveness of the Id, of Georg's *Trieb* for gratification, and the abdication of agency in one's actions. Nor, for that matter does Georg's father summon him to his bedroom. Georg leaves the secure confines

[78] Robertson, Ritchie. *Kafka: Judaism, Politics, and Literature*, p.99
[79] Sokel, p.211

of his "Privatzimmer," abandoning, symbolically, the fortified self, and goes to inform his father of his decision to send notice to St. Petersburg, of his own volition, despite not having been to his room for months.[80] Why would he do so now, except that his visit constitutes a logical continuation of Georg's simultaneous patricide and self-punishment? In our consideration of *Der Proceß*, we will see the extent to which the fantasy of abdicating agency is implicit within Kafkaesque *jouissance*.

In both our introduction and our discussion of *Don Quijote*, we mentioned the conspiracy of the mother and introjected father qua super-ego in the production of *jouissance*. In *Das Urteil*, we see this at its most manifest. The most explicit evidence of his conspiracy with the mother is his own proclamation: "Allein hätte ich vielleicht zurückweichen müssen, aber so hat mir die Mutter ihre Kraft abgegeben ..."/ "All by myself I might have had to give way, but your mother has given me so much of her strength" (U,31; J,111). Thus is revealed the conspiracy between primal father and archaic Mother; that it is not to him, but rather to the power of the archaic Mother, using him as her agent in the infliction of *jouissance*, that Georg must submit. A further indication of the confusion in the father's gender can be found in his mockery of Frieda Brandenfeld. Lifting up his nightshirt in imitation of the manner in which Georg's bride is said to have lifted her skirts, he reveals "... auf seinem Oberschenkel die Narbe aus seinen Kriegsjahren", "the scar on his thigh from his war wound" (U,30; J,110). Besides the fact that he is acting in imitation of a woman, Frieda, the tyrannical father's gender is further confused by the suggestion that his war wound is a literal castration, the mutilation of his genitals. Ironically, however, this castration increases his power over Georg exponentially, for it functions both as a grotesque parody of a vagina on the one hand, a visual confrontation with the mother's generative power, and as a threat of castration in itself.[81] Georg's castrated father, paradoxically, thus precipitates the reappearance of the repressed, abject maternal body that precipitates Georg's desubjectification, through the absence of fatherhood.

*Compelling Jouissance: The Judgement reads: "Enjoy!"*

It can be further inferred that the tyrannical father does not embody the Symbolic function of Law due to his opposition to Georg's marriage. As discussed above, the psychoanalytic

[80] Just as the *Mann vom Lande* goes to the door of the Law of his own free will and Josef K. turns up to his appointments with the court.

[81] C.f. Brown, p.123: "... the apprehension of the mother in terms of sexual differentiation, as castrated automatically and without reference to a father-figure, turns both boy and girl away from the mother and generates horror, terror, contempt."

narrative holds that the father prohibits the incestuous *jouissance* of the mother whilst holding up the ideal of procreative sexual relations in adulthood. Just as Georg covertly seeks an inversion of the father-son hierarchy in marriage, however, this Law is also duly inverted in his father's final condemnation of his son. He defies Georg: "Häng' dich nur in deine Braut ein und komm' mir entgegen! Ich fege sie dir von der Seite weg, du weißt nicht wie!" It is to marriage and adult sexual relations, through which Georg vicariously commits incest by inverting their roles, that his father stands as a barrier. This is further underlined by the condemnation of Georg's adult sexuality:

> ... weil sie die Röcke so und so und so gehoben hat, hast du dich an sie herangemacht, und damit du an ihr ohne Störung dich befriedigen kannst, hast du unserer Mutter Andenken geschändet, den Freund verraten und deinen Vater ins Bett gesteckt ... (U,30)
>
> because she lifted her skirts like this and this you made up to her, and in order to make free with her undisturbed you have disgraced your mother's memory, betrayed your friend, and stuck your father into bed (J,110)

That his sexual relationship with Frieda, reduced to the figure of the whore, constitutes a desecration of the mother's "Andenken" is a charge that carries a double meaning. On the one hand, we have already witnessed Georg's foiled attempt to be left alone in the father's room with the "Andenken" (= mementoes to the mother). The desecration of the "Andenken", then, would come from the incestuous intent towards it. However, "Andenken" can also simply mean memory, the charge thus being that by having adult sexual relations, Georg has disgraced the mother's memory. Adult sexual relations, by such inverted/perverse logic, would represent infidelity towards the mother. This would certainly be consistent with a betrayal of the friend, whom we identified with the mother-child bond. By contrast, the friend would have been a son after the inverted father's own heart, never abandoning maternal innocence. Perhaps the most compelling clue, however, that the father-*jouisseur* is in league with the mother in the infliction of enjoyment is the sentence of death by drowning that he passes down upon his son. This apparent punishment for his Oedipal project is to complete the circular journey unto death, to follow the circular 'errant path' to its logical conclusion in the experience of *jouissance*. This *jouissance* is suggested firstly in his infliction of guilt, hereby assuming the role of the now externalised punishing super-ego. Georg's father's revelation of his empowerment by the mother and his alliance with the friend does not, as Gray has claimed, mark the point at which he ceases to function as "the objective correlate of his own authoritarian super-ego,"[82] but instead marks the culmination of his super-egoic function; secondly in Georg's encounter with

[82] Gray, p.312

the grotesque feminine lower bodily stratum now borne by his father; thirdly, in his regression, in his final moments, to "der ausgezeichnete Turner, der er in seinen Jugendjahren zum Stolz seiner Eltern gewesen war"/ "the distinguished gymnast he had once been in his youth, to his parents' pride" (U,32:J,113), and finally, in his death by drowning, which connotes an "oceanic" dissolution and unity with the greater whole.[83]

As a father who appears alternately as the weakened figure stripped of his symbolic function and as the nightmarish fantasy of the patriarchal tyrant, Georg's father corresponds much more closely to Žižek's father-*jouisseur*, the agency that does not prohibit regressive *jouissance* but commands it. Georg's father appears as the mythical primal father-*jouisseur* made flesh, who corresponds externally with his punishing super-ego. In *Enjoy Your Symptom!*, Žižek explains the "anal" (Pre-genital) father-*jouisseur* as the reverse of the Symbolic father of Law, who emerges where identification with the latter fails. He is the agency that hinders the "normal" sexual relationship, just as Georg's father does with his pledge to annihilate Georg's marriage.[84] This father does not forbid enjoyment (that which must be renounced in order for adult sexuality to proceed) but compels it. This constitutes his complicity with the archaic Mother in the infliction of *jouissance*.

Crucial to Žižek's interpretation of this figure is that he is not a mythical, primal figure at all but an eminently modern one. Freud, Žižek insists, is the victim of a "perspective illusion".[85] Instead of the Law's emergence upon the murder of the primordial father-*jouisseur*, the emergence of the father-*jouisseur*, the latter emerges in the vacuum left by the failure of the (symbolic) function of paternity, the prohibition of *jouissance*. This is symbolised in *Das Urteil* by Georg's father collapsing on the bed as Georg rushes towards the river in which he has been sentenced to drown. Gray interprets this as the father also dying as he sentences his son to die, drawing the conclusion that the friend in Russia is the only person left standing by the end of the story.[86] While the function of paternity is enfeebled in *Das Urteil*, Georg's father is not absent. However, by his castrated presence and his collapse following his sentencing of Georg, he represents fatherhood reduced to the principle of its own negation.

In the preceding paragraphs, then, we argued that Georg's father embodies the paternal Law's self-destruction, the compulsion rather than the prohibition of enjoyment. Hence his

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[83] C.f.Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*, pp.11-13 on the "oceanic feeling", for Freud likewise a feeling of limitlessness and unity with the greater whole. Freud acknowledges this as a purely subjective phenomenon that he cannot discern in himself. Freud speculates that this feeling betrays a "longing for the father" and may be the source of all religious feeling (p.19)

[84] Žižek, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54

[85] Žižek, *The Metastases of Enjoyment*, p.206

[86] Gray, p.313

correspondence with Georg's alter-ego, the friend in Russia becomes clearer. As Gray has claimed, the friend corresponds to the part of himself that Georg has repressed to establish himself in the "patriarchal" order – the part of himself that is bound to the mother. As such, this repressed part of the self is none other than the father-*jouisseur* within himself. The friend as utopian, 'feminine' impulse is actually none other than the father-*jouisseur* within, who in turn "corresponds with" (hence the father's letters) the revoked childhood self. By this logic, there is nothing particularly 'feminine' about this repressed impulse at all! To this extent there is no real contradiction in Georg's father's revelation that he is his present representative. Žižek likewise associates this obscene father figure with the shadowy double, the object of the primordial repression. This "anal" (pre-genital) father-*jouisseur,* Žižek explains, is not a double in the sense of a mere mirror image, but in the sense of giving form to the subject's "surplus enjoyment" that it has renounced, what is "in the subject more than subject itself"[87] – the object of primal repression, the part of the self that must be sacrificed in order to live as a "normal" member of society and make adult sexual relations possible. Quite simply, the "reservoir" of utopian potential (note yet another watery metaphor!) embodied by the mother and the friend that Gray claims to discern in the text is, in fact, none other than the desire for desubjectification and death itself – i.e. the *jouisseur* within. The resurgence of Georg's father thus represents the return of the *jouisseur* that has been repressed, sacrificed but never overcome in Georg's project of self-causation.

By this interpretation, then, *jouissance* is the common bond embodied by the friend that serves as "die Verbindung zwischen Vater und Sohn" (Tag,322; Diar,214) In Kafka's own interpretation, advanced in his diary entry of February 12th, 1913, this common bond consists of "die Liebe, Anhänglichkeit der Mutter durch die treue Erinnerung an sie"/ "Love, devotion to the mother and loyalty to her memory" (Tag,323; Diar,215). Our attempt at interpretation, with the benefit of lengthy hindsight and a thoroughly contemporary theoretical accompaniment in the form of Žižek, suggests their structural commonality is indeed a bond to the mother, but of a less innocuous nature than love and faithful memory. As presumptious as it might appear to second-guess Kafka's explanation of his own work, this diary entry rather undermines itself as a statement of authorial intention. For a start, Kafka writes that, almost three months after writing the story, he has been sketching out relationships, "die mir in der Geschichte klargeworden sind, soweit ich sie gegenwärtig habe." (Tag,323; D,214). That such an exercise (Kafka trying to interpret his own work) was necessary in the first place hardly indicates that he planned the story with a series of preconceived relationships in mind. This corresponds to the well-known

[87] Žižek, "Grimaces of the Real", p.54

account of the story's production, alluded to in the same diary entry: "eine regelrechte Geburt mit Schmutz und Schleim bedeckt aus mir herausgekommen" (Tag,323; D,214).

Rather than representing the hope of preserving the integrity of the subject amidst the bourgeois social forces, as Gray claims, the friend's psychic proximity poses precisely this threat of desubjectification. The utopia that he embodies is none other than the *jouissance* itself that inheres in the bourgeois subject. The bourgeois subject can thus be conceived as a trinity of *jouisseur,* consisting of father, friend and Georg himself: firstly, Georg's father is the father-*jouisseur* that sentences Georg to enjoyment. Secondly, the friend is also father-jouisseur within, the enjoying part of the self that has been repressed. Thirdly, Georg has been 'enjoying' all along anyway. Georg himself was already a *jouisseur* even before the sentence, for his *causa sui* project has placed him on the path of *jouissance* and the death sentence merely constitutes the logical conclusion of the path he has embarked upon! Georg and the friend in Russia are exponents of two dialectically opposed forms of enjoyment, just as Don Quijote and Grisóstomo: the 'active' variant of becoming the 'father of oneself' and the passive variant of living in a fatherless nether-realm of the mother. The friend in Russia, occupying the mother's domain and living a bachelor's existence without "Verkehr", represents Deleuze's "new, sexless man" living outside the paternal realm.[88] He stands for an outright rejection of the Law, living, as he does, outside of the father's realm, outside of Georg's symbolic reality in the "world of mothers". As we have already witnessed in the previous chapter on *Don Quijote*, the self-destructive pursuit of suffering for its own sake is closely tied to the attempt to become the father of oneself, and this is just as clearly the case in Kafka's *Urteil*. The immediate and necessary consequence of Georg's *causa sui* fantasy is the desire for self-obliteration, the reflexive use of 'paternal' power. For, by the 'errant', circuitous path that becoming the 'father of oneself' ultimately implies union with the mother. Flight from *jouissance* and the maternal proceeds to the paradoxical conclusion of usurping the father and hence a return to *jouissance*. In his *causa sui* project, attempting to be reborn on his own terms and trying to take the place of his father, Georg already begins what is finished by the end of the story with his death as a final enjoyment. Georg's father hence resurfaces simultaneously as the agent of the mother and the present embodiment of the friend in Russia. Finally, in the experience of *jouissance*, the return to origin, Georg becomes one with the friend in Russia, who is "what is in him more than he himself."

[88] Deleuze, *Coldness and Cruelty*, p.33

*Unschuldiges Kind* and *Teuflischer Mensch*

By inverting the prohibition on enjoyment, Georg's father compels him to regress towards *jouissance,* the state of oceanic non-differentiation from the world, freed from the constraints of his subjectivity at the expense of death. By the time Georg realises his ill-repressed fantasy of engulfment by the archaic mother, not only has Georg's own identity dissolved completely, but identity and difference per se has dissolved completely into sameness. By virtue of his watery death, Georg is reunited with his alter ego in the ultimate experience of *jouissance*, succumbing to the feminine beyond of the pleasure principle. His de-subjectification and death by drowning marks the dissolution of their relationship of binary opposition. However, they were only ever in dialectical opposition. The father's sentencing of Georg summarizes perfectly the two sides of this paradoxical coin: "Ein unschuldiges Kind warst du eigentlich, aber noch eigentlicher warst du ein teuflischer Mensch!"/ "An innocent child, yes, that you were, truly, but still more truly have you been a devilish human being!" (U,32; J,113). Far more than simply passing judgement on this attempt, however, the word "teuflisch" or "devilish" also suggests the demonic, and with it the strong suggestion of repetition – the repetition of Georg's attempts at 'restoring innocence'. This repetition is further attested to by his repeated forgetting: "... denn immerfort vergaβ Georg alles"/ "... since [Georg] kept on forgetting everything" (U,31; J,112).

It is at this point that we can resolve the dialectic of Georg's divided (*unschuldig* and *teuflisch*) self into an ultimate unity, with the assistance of Terry Eagleton's observation on the demonic:

> The demonic is a momentary respite from the tyrannical legibility of things, a realm of lost innocence which pre-dates our calamitous fall into meaning. Like most realms of lost innocence, it is never far from the graveyard. [89]

Just as in *Don Quijote*, the self-causing subject's game of deathly repetition, *Fort!-Da!*, turns out, in the final analysis, to be an act of suicide. The letters that are supposed to reinforce Georg's identity and the friend's absence have the unintended effect of returning the friend who never really left, a presence that is embodied in the father-*jouisseur*. The imaginary self that is thereby created is haunted by an existentially guilty masochism that drives the continued coup against his father, and the desire for its own dissolution grows in direct correlation with its development. The analogy between Georg and his repressed 'feminine' impulse can be very well illustrated in *Das Urteil* in the analogy between Georg's position vis a vis his father and the friend's position in relation to Georg himself. Just as Georg projects passivity and

[89] Eagleton, Terry. *Sweet Violence: the Idea of the Tragic*, p.278

submission onto the friend in Russia, so he exhibits the same passivity and submission in the face of his super-egoic father's death sentence. Just as the friend has been marginalised to Russia, a nether-realm in which the mother-child bond reigns, he casts himself, at his father-*jouisseur*'s behest, into another 'feminine' region in which water and death coincide. The fact that Kafka himself claims to have thought of a strong ejaculation when writing the conclusion to *Das Urteil,* strengthens its association with gratification. We see, then, in Georg's death by drowning the complete breakdown of identity per se. In an apparently complete reversal of the process of self-formation with which *Das Urteil* opens, as evidenced by the firm ego boundaries symbolized by Georg's *Privatzimmer* and the play of *Fort!-Da!* with the friend in Russia, the story ends in the *jouissance* of a dissolution of self in the river upon which he looked at the beginning.

*Narrative perspective*

Georg is already shown in the 'realistic' portion of the narrative to be impelled by the guilt-inducing super-ego. The narrative will become fantastic, irrational and mad at the moment when Georg's father assumes the external role of this agency and the narrative turns back against itself to assume his point of view, to contradict what has gone before and condemn Georg to death. The moment that Georg leaves his Privatzimmer corresponds to the shift from rational to irrational narration – the breakdown of the artificially secured self. As such, we can appreciate that, just as Kafka's narrative perspective previously gave form to the 'flight from the feminine', so it now takes as its organising principle the return of the repressed, hereby inviting the reader to experience the "madness inherent to *cogito*."[90]

In addition, Kafka's narrative perspective provides a standpoint uniquely appropriate for his dying moment. This perspective is simultaneously immanent and transcendent, hereby suggesting the mutual implication of privileged internal and external points; the point of non-differentiation and the Archimedean Point; of 'being one with' everything and having a 'God's eye view' of everything. Georg's death by drowning calls to mind the myth of Narcissus, even though not mentioned explicitly. The allusion is most clearly evident in the father's preface to Georg's condemnation: "Jetzt weißt du also, was es noch außer dir gab, bisher wußtest du nur von dir!" This statement by Georg's father serves a dual function. Firstly it indicts Georg's inability to see beyond his autonomous but specular construction of self, beyond what originates in his own thoughts, of the narcissism inherent in his *causa sui* project. It also promises a perspective beyond the narrow limitations of this particular brand of subjectivity, fulfilling a desire that inevitably haunts it since its inception. This desire is for a viewpoint that transcends

[90] Žižek, *Cogito and the Unconscious*, p.6

subjective experience and seeks to apprehend reality in its totality, an Archimedean point, as it were: "Er hat den Archimedischen Punkt gefunden, hat ihn aber gegen sich ausgenützt, offenbar hat er ihn nur unter dieser Bedingung finden dürfen"[91] (Tag,528). Sure enough, such a narrative viewpoint is obtained only in Georg's dying moment. The experience of limitlessness and unity with the greater whole precipitates in the coveted Archimedean view of totality, which is revealed in the final sentence of the story, from which the subject is grammatically absent whilst beholding infinity: "In diesem Augenblick ging über die Brücke ein geradezu unendlicher Verkehr"/ "At this moment an unending stream of traffic was just going over the bridge" (U,32; J,113). Now, "Verkehr" here literally denotes the traffic passing over the bridge from which Georg has just flung himself into the river. However, it will be argued here that Kafka's final insight exploits a remarkable quirk of the German language by which a world already denoting inversion can mean both one thing and precisely its opposite: the verb "verkehren". This remarkable ambivalence also features in *Der Proceß* and is analysed in more depth, along with other words with the prefix *ver-*, by John Zilcosky, who offers us an explicit link with the matter of *errancy*.

On the one hand, "verkehren" denotes movement: to travel (in any given direction), to traffic and to have intercourse with. Hence, in a sexual sense an "unendlicher Verkehr" would seem to refer, on the one hand, to an eternal cycle of procreation, the reproduction, *ad infinitum*, of the father. However, *verkehren* can mean precisely the opposite: to turn around (i.e. to deviate from a course of motion), to invert, to change places with, all of which denote the subversion of fatherhood – Georg's Oedipal usurpation and his masochistic death. Hence there is ambivalence in the word "Verkehr" between the eternal reproduction of fatherhood and the subversion of fatherhood. It is with this ambivalence that the text reaches its Archimedean point. In the oceanic limitlessness of death by drowning, that is simultaneous with a fleeting, Archimedean apprehension of an absolute and infinite "unendlicher Verkehr", as the tension between eternal cycles of intercourse and their inversion – the text achieves its own *jouissance*, coming, albeit only allusively, as close as language possibly can to a Reality from which it is necessarily severed.

*Das Urteil geht in den Proceß über: Arrested Development*

In our analysis of *Das Urteil*, then, we see an exceptionally close analogy to *Don Quijote*: maternal absence and the protagonist's presumption of authoring this absence; the *causa sui*

[91] He found the Archimedean point, but he used it against himself; it seems that he was permitted to find it only under this condition

project as both self-invention and taking the place of the father; the decentring and self-defeat of the *causa sui* subject at the hands of the double. Finally, the concept of Justice that was developed in *Don Quijote* was also in operation in *Das Urteil* as the (self-) infliction of *jouissance*, which is already infused into the narrative in the form of self-punishing guilt and finds its ultimate expression in the judgement of Georg's father who, empowered by the dead Mother, compels Georg's enjoyment in the sentence of death by drowning. A trajectory that had spanned over 1,000 pages in *Don Quijote* unfolds in the space of ten pages in Kafka's short story! There are, however, a number of crucial differences that are important to emphasise. Most obvious, of course, is the social context – approximately 300 years after *Don Quijote* in an Austro-Hungarian urban context recognisable as modern in its commercial emphasis. Another notable difference concerns the social positioning of the self-causing subject. Whilst he remains outside the Law, he is no longer at the periphery of the social order – as a "junger Kaufmann", he is symbolic of the prevailing social order itself. As Walter Sokel writes of Kafka's heroes in his punitive stories, they are exceptional only by being so typical. It should be noted also that the self-infliction of *jouissance*, whilst ultimately powered by the mother, is not primarily in the name of Woman, as it was in Don Quijote's case, but rather in the name of the figure with which Žižek considers her function identical, i.e.: the primordial and revenant father-*jouisseur*, one of the names-of-the-father that compels *jouissance* rather than the Name-of the-father that forbids it.

Building upon this close reading of *Das Urteil*, let us now proceed to consider its natural complement (due to the obvious legal nexus), *Der Proceß*. We should immediately acknowledge the extent to which explicit parallels have been drawn between the issues raised above and corresponding ideas in *Der Proceß*. Perhaps the most obviously important, as far as our interpretation is concerned, is Walter Sokel's interpretation of Josef K's "Verhaftung". For Sokel, "arrest" – the "central fact" of *Der Proceß* in his estimation – refers to a similar developmental condition that he identified in *Das Urteil*: the repression of the "pure, childlike self":

> Arrest is the central fact and symbol in *The Trial*, Kafka's longest and most ambitious tale of punishment. The German word for arrest, *Verhaftung*, carries the additional meaning of entanglement and fatal attachment...The protagonist's condition of attachment to his childhood self has been repressed or put out of mind, but never truly overcome. The act or happening of his being arrested (literally stopped in his advance) by a catastrophic event is the emergence of the invisible condition of entanglement that had persisted in him all along.[92]

[92] Sokel, p.43

*Verhaftung*, then, refers quite literally to a state of arrested development. Consistent with Sokel's claim, we should highlight, in fact, that neither Franz, nor Willem nor the "Aufseher" tell him that *they* are arresting him, just as there is no concrete act of arrest, such as a physical apprehension or a handcuffing. The purpose of the men's presence, other than to keep watch, is not explicitly to arrest (i.e. detain) K., but to *inform* him that he *is* "*verhaftet.*" In a sense, then, perhaps nothing concrete has changed with the presence of the men, hence K.'s freedom to pursue his professional and social lives as hitherto, should he so desire. The men simply inform him of a pre-existing condition of "arrest" which will produce his *Trial.*

Sokel concedes that this repression and attachment is far less obvious in *Der Proceß* than in *Das Urteil*, but insists that it can nonetheless be inferred from Josef K's repressed family ties, most clearly from his estrangement from his mother as described in the incomplete fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter". "Arrest," then, in Sokel's analysis, consists of an ambivalent relationship to the childhood self, which is repressed but not outgrown. Recalling our discussion of Bordo in particular, this alienated relationship to one's own childhood corresponds precisely to the metaphysical revocation of childhood envisioned by the Cartesian revolution – its attempt to become adult simply by repressing childhood.

Sokel also draws the fairly clear parallel between Georg Bendemann's father-judge and the function of the court: "In the Trial ... the situation is abstracted from the family context, of which only remnants, such as K's uncle and mother, are left. The son has become the accused and the father has been generalized, depersonalized and elevated into an accusing court."[93] Furthermore, Sokel also observes that, as in *Das Urteil*, this "paternal" function is allied with the regressive tendencies in the protagonist himself. "The adult ego of the modern bourgeois" Sokel writes, "is to be broken, humbled, impoverished and made ready for death."[94] In Sokel's interpretation of Josef K's trial, then, we are dealing with a similarly purgatorial and regressive experience as in the second part of *Don Quijote*. However, we have good reason to question just how "adult" Josef K's bourgeois ego can actually be considered, given that, as Sokel himself claims, it arises out of the repression of the childhood self that is never overcome. Furthermore, in Don Quijote's case, humiliation, impoverishment and morbidity were exposed as expressions of his death wish, pre-ordained by Don Quijote's project of self-creation. Might not Josef K's ignominy be similarly self-inflicted? This will indeed be our reading of *Der Proceß*: Josef K's trial will be considered primarily as dispensing Justice in the same way that Dulcinea and Georg Bendemann's father did. We will argue, following Sokel, that the sentence of the court is the same as the judgement pronounced by Georg Bendemann's father – a condemnation to death

[93] Sokel, p.229
[94] Sokel, p.229

that, as a regression to a state of innocence, is also no more than the fulfilment of the accused's death wish. Since the "punishment" of the court is the immediate, self-defeating consequence of the transgression (the death wish) and is thus inflicted without recourse to external judgement, we will argue that it must be regarded as eminently "just", as it was in the case of Don Quijote.

*Uncanny Returns*: *The Trial and the "Journey to the Mother"*

The closest interpretation of *Der Proceß* in such terms has been made by the Canadian scholar John Zilcosky who, in close analogy to our reading of *Das Urteil*, emphasises the masochistic dimensions of Josef K's death.[95] Of central importance to Zilcosky's analysis is the unfinished fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter" which he interprets in strikingly similar terms to our reading of *Don Quijote Part II*: as symbolising a journey beyond temporality and unto death, in explicit analogy to the descent to the realm of Mothers in Goethe's *Faust II*. However, in foregrounding our own interpretation of Kafka's novel, we will devote considerable space to a critical discussion of Zilcosky's interpretation not simply because of the indebtedness of our own interpretation, but also to demarcate more clearly the points at which our own reading diverges from his. Indeed, there are a number of specific challenges that can be posed to Zilcosky's interpretation while remaining rooted in the fundamental insights of his analysis. My principal challenge to Zilcosky concerns, yet again, the opposition between the maternal and the paternal. In Zilcosky's analysis, this opposition seems to be taken for granted. Such a view ignores the extent that K.'s desire to return to the mother might contribute to his experience of the trial. We will argue that the "Journey to the Mother" is, in fact, implicit within the trial itself. Our principal basis for making this claim, besides the most obvious parallel that the trial and the voyage to the mother have a common nexus in death, will be several textual clues that link this excursus to the main plot. The voyage to the mother will hence be considered as an allegory for Josef K.'s relationship to the court and, in particular, as a commentary upon the motives behind his attendance.

Let us begin, then, by considering Zilcosky's analysis of "Fahrt zur Mutter." In this fragment, the protagonist is suddenly struck by a sudden homesickness: the urge to visit his mother. This urge, we soon discover, derives from a certain feeling of "Wehleidigkeit" (self-pity) that has recently affected him (P, 352; T,198). Furthermore, as we discover in another fragment, "Staatsanwalt," K's mother resides in an "unveränderlichen Städtchen"/"unchanging village" (P,335; T,190), that is to say, a place not subject to the processes of change and hence, in Zilcosky's interpretation, beyond temporal process. The place that Josef K suddenly

[95] Zilcosky, John. *Kafka's Travels* See chapter 3: "*The Trial* and the Exotic Heimat", pp.71-102

experiences the urge to visit in his state of nostalgia, then, is a site of maternal dwelling outside (and since it is the object of nostalgia, most likely prior to) temporal process. The resonance with the mythical Golden Age of Don Quijote's imagination could not be any clearer, particularly since we also discover in it the absence of fatherhood, through the fact that Josef K "... die Fürsorge des eigenen Vaters, der sehr jung gestorben war, niemals erfahren hatte ..."/ "[had never] experienced the care of his own father, who had died quite young" (P,335; T,190). Accordingly, Zilcosky attributes Josef K's nostalgia to a "pre-Oedipal memory structure", in which the maternal *Heimat* is a *locus amoenus*, a "...pure, untrammelled spot..." that has not yet been "territorialized" by the father.[96] As in *Don Quijote*, we are dealing with a denial of the basic fact of procreation, the fantasy of existing without being fathered. This longing to escape temporality leads Zilcosky to the conclusion that the "Fahrt zur Mutter" refers symbolically to a journey unto death, in explicit analogy to the descent to the realm of the mothers in Faust and hence in implicit analogy to our reading of *Don Quijote Part II*.[97] By extension, the inexplicable "Wünschen" that cause Josef K's sudden notion to visit this region must be seen as the manifestation of a death wish.

In being beyond temporal process, however, this *Städtchen* already betrays a certain complicity with the court's disciplinary mechanisms. One of the most bizarre and disturbing aspects of the episode "Der Prügler" for K. is the fact that, when he examines the storage cupboard on the night after the initial flogging scene, the same events are being repeated (P, 74; T,117). Moreover, the court clearly operates in a different temporality to the normal, weekday courts that open at 9am. The fact that K. is admonished for being one hour and five minutes late to his first hearing, despite the fact that he has not been given a specific time at which to appear (P,52; T,41) arouses the suspicion that he would have been accused of being equally as late no matter what time he had turned up – that is to say: that the court operates outside temporal process.

Zilcosky himself also recognises an analogous desire on K.'s part in relation to his trial itself – his seemingly impossible desire is to obtain an actual acquittal, a "wirkliche Freisprechung" (P, 205; T,122) which, as the painter advises him, is unknown in modern times except in communal mythology.[98] Furthermore, Titorelli advises him, such an acquittal would carry with it as a consequence the destruction of everything, even the acquittal itself: "Bei einer wirklichen Freisprechung sollen die Prozessakten vollständig abgelegt werden, sie verschwinden gänzlich aus dem Verfahren, nicht nur die Anklage, auch der Prozess und sogar

[96] Zilcosky, p.81
[97] Zilcosky, p.81
[98] Zilcosky, p.86

der Freispruch sind vernichtet, alles ist vernichtet" (P, 214; T,127). This destructive longing for an impossible (and thus utopian) outcome known only in myth is quite rightly, in my view, taken by Zilcosky as a precursor to K's nostalgia for his mother's unchanging village, which in turn augurs his death in the final chapter. Zilcosky interprets Josef K's eventual death as the culmination of a "series of desires", beginning with the expression of suicidal thoughts in the immediate aftermath of his arrest,[99] continuing with his urge to visit his mother and including also his yearning for an actual acquittal, a "wirkliche Freisprechung." Thus Zilcosky highlights the "circularity" of Josef K's desire: a progressive regression to "Lebloses" (an inorganic or lifeless state), a return, in death, to "...an imagined biological *Ur*-home: a mystical moment before conception during which [he] existed albeit beyond time and animation".[100] In other words, it is the same desire that impelled both Don Quijote and Georg Bendemann to aim beyond the pleasure principle. This impression of circularity and return to origin is heightened when one considers that Kafka wrote the first and last chapters of the novel simultaneously. Furthermore, Zilcosky highlights another very apposite point of comparison, one that resonates very strongly with the theme of Original Sin and the Fall from Paradise: Kleist's essay "Über das Marionettentheater", in which the narrator and his interlocutor long for a return to a paradise preceding human knowledge but find that "Paradies ist verriegelt und der Cherub hinter uns; wir müssen die Reise um die Welt machen, und sehen, ob es vielleicht von hinten irgendwo wieder offen ist."[101]/ "Paradise is bolted, with the cherub behind us; we must journey around the world and determine if perhaps at the end somewhere there is an opening to be discovered again".[102] Here we see expressed clearly the intention to take the circuitous route back to paradise lost, corresponding precisely to the 'errant path' of the *causa sui* project. We are reminded of Don Quijote's emphatic renunciation of the unbridled enjoyment of the Golden Age in the self-punishing practice of chivalry, with the mission of restoring it in a messianic future. In Kleist's essay, the regressive claim to paradise is inverted and indefinitely deferred,

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[99] "Es wunderte K., wenigstens aus dem Gedankengang der Wächter wunderte es ihn, dass sie ihn in das Zimmer getrieben und ihn hier allein gelassen hatten, wo er doch zehnfache Möglichkeit hatte, sich umzubringen. Gleichzeitig allerdings fragte er sich, diesmal aus seinem Gedankengang, was für einen Grund er haben könnte, es zu tun. Etwa weil die zwei nebenan saßen und sein Frühstück abgefangen hatten? Es wäre so sinnlos gewesen, sich umzubringen, dass er, selbst wenn er es hätte tun wollen, infolge der Sinnlosigkeit dazu nicht imstande gewesen wäre. " (P,17)

"K. was surprised, at least from the guards' perspective, that they had driven him into his room and left him alone there, where it would be ten times easier to kill himself. At the same time he asked himself from his own perspective what possible reason he could have for doing so. Because those two were sitting next door and had taken away his breakfast? Committing suicide would be so irrational that even had he wished to, their rationality of the act would have prevented him." (T,22)

[100] Zilcosky, p.83

[101] Kleist, "Über das Marionettentheater", *Heinrich von Kleist: Sämtliche Werke*, Wiesbaden: R. Löwit (1810) pp. 980-987 cited Zilcosky, p.82

[102] Kleist and Thomas G. Neumiller, "On the Marionette Theatre" in *The Drama Review*, Vol. 16, No. 3, The "Puppet" Issue (Sep., 1972), p.24

but not renounced. While Zilcosky does not develop this analogy to its full potential, we will suggest that Josef K.'s trial represents precisely this journey – the 'errant path' that we will once more discuss below.

Bearing in mind our readings to date of *Don Quijote* and *Das Urteil*, it should not surprise us to find that Zilcosky hence characterises Josef K's nostalgic "series of desires" as masochistic and advances the thesis that the obtainment of masochistic gratification, as opposed to unwilling victimhood at the hands of some inscrutable bureaucratic powers or oppressive social or even metaphysical forces, is the driving force behind his death. It is from this desire that K's dying emotion, the shame that would outlive him, springs:

> In Kafka's world, this longing to escape the endless, technologized motion of patriarchal law (sexuality, disorientation, legal process) produces a sense of shame. K's violent yet nostalgic longings are anathema to the modern legal world, where absolute acquittals persist only as legends ...[103]

It is here that we encounter once more the bourgeois opposition between the "patriarchal" world of fathers and the mother as a symbol of utopia (which is surely no less a manifestation of the same patriarchy). The above quotation concerning Josef K.'s shame, in particular, suggests a dichotomy between maternal and paternal domains that is not dissimilar to the one that Gray applied to his interpretation of *Das Urteil*. Death, the "unveränderliches Städtchen" (unchanging village) of the mother that lies beyond temporal process is hence understood as a utopian locus of escape, an alternative to "the endless, technologized motion of patriarchal law" with its emphasis on temporality, sexuality and bureaucracy. Such a reading implies that Josef K.'s ultimate death constitutes a release from his 'paternal' trial – from the world of bureaucrats and officials, which, in Walter Benjamin's reading of Kafka, is the same as the "world of fathers."[104]

Whilst I would not dispute Zilcosky's analysis that utopian escape is implied in the "Fahrt zur Mutter", his reading ignores the manner in which this fantasy of escape might be complicit in his trial itself. For is the trial itself any less a voyage unto death? Might not Josef K.'s trial be visited upon him as the immediate consequence of his *desire to flee, to return 'home'*? Consider, for example, the priest's explanation in the cathedral, that "Das Verfahren geht allmählich ins Urteil über"/ "the proceedings gradually merge into the judgment" (P,289; T,166), the judgement being, as it was eponymously in *Das Urteil*, the sentence of death. The

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[103] Zilcosky, p.83
[104] Benjamin, Walter, *Selected Writings 1931-1934*, p.796

text also makes fairly clear that Josef K. understands his impending death as an execution that is the culmination of his trial itself. At the moment just prior to the knife being thrust into his heart, he asks himself: "War noch Hilfe? Gab es Einwände, die man vergessen hatte? Gewiss gab es solche ... Wo war der Richter, den er nie gesehen hatte? Wo war das hohe Gericht, bis zu dem er nie gekommen war?" (P, 312; T,178). However complicit K. may be in his death in the final chapter, and whatever emancipatory potential he may see therein, there is little doubt that it is delivered by the court as the outcome of his trial. As discussed, Zilcosky emphasises the masochistic motive behind Josef K.'s complicity in his own death, which he views as an intensification of the court's own sadomasochistic logic serving his own nostalgic desire for "something that goes beyond the pains and pleasures of masochism."[105] In other words, the court delivers, at the end of the novel, the fulfilment of Josef K.'s own death wish. It is for this reason that Zilcosky claims K. "wants to annihilate the terms of masochism (by turning "game" into "reality") and, in so doing, return nostalgically to an unchanging place beyond time and (legal) proceedings".[106] However, as Deleuze has argued in his study of Sacher-Masoch, this goal is actually inherent in the terms masochism itself – Deleuze's masochist aspires, through punishment of the image of the father in himself, to rebirth in a mythical symbolic order in which all power is invested in an idealised mother-figure and "in which the father has been abolished for all time."[107]

Since it is Josef K's trial that ultimately delivers this return, however voluntary it may be, we might argue that Zilcosky does not push his reading of masochism in the novel far enough: might not Josef K.'s entire trial, and not just his execution, be his source of masochistic *jouissance*, with death the mere culmination? If the escape, in the act of dying, to this other region in which the mother reigns points towards Josef K.'s *jouissance*, then it follows that the court that orders and executes the sentence of death is the "paternal" agency that inflicts this *jouissance*, just as Georg Bendemann's father was in *Das Urteil*. This corresponds, in fact, to Walter Sokel's understanding of the court as an extension of the father figure in Kafka's tales of punishment, most obviously in *Das Urteil*, who is allied to the son's own repressed regressive desires and sabotages his attempts at growth and self-assertion.[108] Not only Josef K.'s death, then, as John Zilcosky has argued, but *his trial itself* will be considered as his source of masochistic enjoyment that serves the agenda of returning him to the maternal *Heimat* of death. And might not, in turn, the enigmatic *Wünsche* (wishes) that motivate his visit to the mother be precisely the source of Josef K.'s sense of *Verirrung* that Zilcosky insists is such an important

[105] Zilcosky, p.100
[106] Zilcosky, p.100
[107] Deleuze, p.66
[108] Sokel, p.45

aspect of his experience of being on trial? Zilcosky does not consider the possibility of a secret complicity between the 'paternal' bureaucracy of the court and the regressive lure of the deathly maternal locus, which would undermine the opposition of mother and father suggested in his analysis.

Let us inspect in greater detail the urge that K. experiences to visit his Mother. According to Zilcosky, he experiences a sudden and inexplicable "desire for his mother", this being expressed in appropriately psychoanalytic parlance.[109] In fact, Josef K's "desire" cannot be really be called any such thing: a closer inspection reveals that it is sexual only to the extent that it coincides with the experience of *jouissance*. The maternal body is evoked only rather allusively in the "unveränderliches Städtchen" and in the absence of paternal care (read: prohibition of the maternal body). Nor is it *overtly* a desire to regress to an idealised childhood, akin to Don Quijote's Golden Age, in which the all-good mother met all his needs immediately. On the contrary, the narrator informs us that K. has always rejected rather than invited his mother's affections (P, 335; T,190). He recognises that there is no rational reason for him to travel immediately – he had originally promised to visit on his 31st birthday, which, of course, is the day after his eventual death – but decides he must nonetheless. The notion that he takes to visit his mother, then, is one for which he cannot account and might more accurately be described as compulsive. In fact, the manner in which Josef K. "receives" this notion bears no little resemblance to the manner in which he receives communication from the courts: "Plötzlich beim Mittagessen fiel ihm ein er solle seine Mutter besuchen"/ Suddenly at lunch it occurred to him that he ought to visit his mother. (P, 351; T,198). Firstly, the verb: the notion to visit his mother "fiel ihm ein" (ocurred to him), just as the court "ihm einfiel" in the fragment "Kampf mit dem Direktor-Stellvertreter"/ "Fight with the Deputy Manager". Furthermore, the ocurrence or *Einfall* itself ("er solle seine Mutter besuchen") is followed by the use of *Konjunktiv I*. This would appear to be a strikingly unusual usage of a form that is generally reserved for the expression of reported speech. This use of *Konjunktiv I* serves to alienate Josef K. from the source of this notion – later in the same fragment, we read that Josef K. experiences his reflections upon the visit as though they were not his own thoughts "sondern als suchten sie ihm fremde Leute beizubringen" (P, 354; T,199).

The uncanniness of Josef K.'s sudden *Einfall* and subsequent voyage to the mother corresponds to the uncanniness of his initial arrest, during which his room is suddenly invaded by "fremde Leute", the guards, whose *Fremdheit* is their principal referential feature until they are named as Willem and Franz who, in turn, claim "von allen [Josef K's] Mitmenschen am

[109] Zilcosky, p.81

nächsten [zu] stehen"/ the human beings closest to [Josef K.] now" (P,14; T,20 ). Unlike both *Don Quijote* and *Das Urteil*, *Der Proceß* begins not with a process of self-constitution and radical separation from the foreign. Rather, its starting point is the uncanny encounter with the foreign, the point at which the security of the self's boundaries are already compromised. Zilcosky's analysis of Josef K's arrest points precisely to this uncanniness – the irruption of foreignness into the protagonist's private (*Heimlich*) boarding room. Here, Zilcosky provides an ingenious twist on the theme of uncanniness, expressing it, in keeping with his book's overall theme, in the geospatial discourse of travel. Josef K, in his analysis, is "travelling at home",[110] accosted by guards dressed in what appear to be travel suits ("Reiseanzüge") and facing the hassle usually encountered in travelling (such as unfamiliar and seemingly archaic power relationships and the obligation to present his identity documents or "Legitimationspapiere") within the confines of home (P,14; T,20) . This "home", for Zilcosky, is an artificial construct, implying fortified boundaries that lack any genuine structural integrity and that are already compromised by the constant comings and goings of, for example, Frau Grubach and the cook Anna.[111] Given this artificiality, it is no surprise that Zilcosky interprets the room as an extension of Josef K's structure of self, in precisely the same way as we interpreted Georg Bendemann's "Privatzimmer" as being symbolic of his fortified and exaggeratedly separate but ontologically insecure ego that he abandoned voluntarily. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive of *Der Proceß* as an elongated alternative to Georg Bendemann's confrontation with his father in *Das Urteil*. Josef K, as chief-clerk in a large bank, is thoroughly immersed, like the "junger Kaufmann" Georg Bendemann, in the world of commerce. Josef K is confronted in his artificially private space by his doubles who, both in their foreignness and their hirsute appearance, are reminiscent of Georg Bendemann's friend in Russia. Given that *Der Proceß* begins with this unreal, uncanny irruption and ends in the protagonist's death sentence, the initial analogy to the second half *Das Urteil* is already fairly strong.

The communications that Josef K. receives by telephone ordering him to attend court are, like the notion to visit his mother, similarly marked by the use of *Konjunktiv*. The first such communication takes place at the beginning of the second chapter, "Erste Untersuchung":

> K. war telephonisch verständigt worden, dass am nächsten Sonntag eine kleine Untersuchung in seiner Angelegenheit stattfinden würde. Man machte ihn darauf aufmerksam, dass diese Untersuchungen regelmäßig, wenn auch vielleicht nicht jede Woche, so doch häufiger einander folgen würden. Es liege einerseits im allgemeinen Interesse, den Prozess rasch zu Ende zu führen, anderseits aber müssten die Untersuchungen in jeder Hinsicht gründlich sein und dürften doch wegen der damit verbundenen Anstrengung niemals allzu lange dauern. Deshalb habe man den Ausweg

[110] Zilcosky, p.71
[111] Zilcosky, p.72

> dieser rasch aufeinander folgenden, aber kurzen Untersuchungen gewählt. Die Bestimmung des Sonntags als Untersuchungstag habe man deshalb vorgenommen, um K. in seiner beruflichen Arbeit nicht zu stören. Man setze voraus, dass er damit einverstanden sei, sollte er einen anderen Termin wünschen, so würde man ihm, so gut es ginge, entgegenkommen. Die Untersuchungen wären beispielsweise auch in der Nacht möglich, aber da sei wohl K. nicht frisch genug. Jedenfalls werde man es, solange K. nichts einwende, beim Sonntag belassen. Es sei selbstverständlich, dass er bestimmt erscheinen müsse, darauf müsse man ihn wohl nicht erst aufmerksam machen. (P,50)

> K. was informed by telephone that a brief inquiry into his affair would take place the following Sunday. He was notified that such inquiries would now be held on a regular basis, perhaps not every week, but with increasing frequency. On the one hand, it was in the general interest to bring his trial to a rapid conclusion; on the other, the inquiries must be thorough in every respect, yet never last too long, due to the strain involved. Therefore they had selected the expedient of this succession of closely spaced but brief inquiries. Sundays had been chosen for the inquiries to avoid disturbing K.'s professional life. It was assumed he would find this acceptable; if he preferred some other fixed time, they would try their best to accommodate him. For example the inquiries could be held at night, but K. probably wouldn't be fresh enough then. At any rate, as long as K. had no objection, they would stay with Sundays. Of course he was required to appear; it was probably not really necessary to point that out. (T,39).

As reported speech, the communication takes place almost exclusively in the *Konjunktiv*. Where K. himself needs to be referenced, the narrator uses both the passive "war...verständigt worden" (was informed) and the impersonal "man machte ihn..." (he was made), thereby circumventing the necessity of revealing to the reader any hint of his interlocutor's identity and prompting one to question whether there even is one, since none appears as the speaking subject of the commands being issued. So begins the ambiguity as to whether the origin of the commands is internal or external. Whilst Josef K.'s decision to visit his mother suggests an alienation from the source of his own thoughts, which are experienced as though communicated by a strange other, his arrest is experienced as the intrusion of a strange other that is already intimately familiar with him. In fact, that the relationship between Josef K. and his accusing court is more immediate than would be suggested by a simple opposition of subject and object is apparent from the outset of the novel. Given the obvious relation to the author's name, the fact that one of K's guards is named Franz strongly suggests that they are to be understood as *Doppelgänger*, at once emphatically *fremd* and alienated and yet also uncannily familiar. About *Wille*[m], embodying Josef K.'s errant willpower, we will write more in due course – the scenario of K. being confronted by his doubles Franz and Willem appears already to suggest being betrayed, turned upon by himself and, specifically, by his *Willen* (willpower). This would

resonate, of course, with Sokel's analysis of Josef K's arrest – a "fatal attachment" to a revenant part of the self that has been repressed but not overcome.[112]

Consider for example, Willem's claim about the court's *a priori* knowledge of the defendant's guilt:

> Unsere Behörde, soweit ich sie kenne...sucht doch nicht etwa die Schuld in der Bevölkerung, sondern wird wie es im Gesetz heißt von der Schuld angezogen und muß uns Wächter schicken. Das ist das Gesetz. Wo gäbe es da einen Irrtum? (P,18)
>
> ... our department, as far as I know, and I know only the lowest level,doesn't seek out guilt among the general population, but, as the Law states, is attracted by guilt and has to send us guards out. That's the Law. What mistake could there be?"(T,20)

If there is any substance to this claim (and my approach will be to take this claim quite literally and argue that the appearance of the guards is an immediate manifestation of Josef K.'s guilt, and that this is, in fact, "the law") then the court must either possess some extremely invasive technologies of surveillance, or possess an immediate psychical relationship to the defendant. Such a link, in fact, can be further inferred from Josef K's response to Willem's claim: "Es besteht wohl auch nur in ihren Köpfen"/ "It probably exists only in your heads" (P,18; T,20), hereby immediately reciprocating this apparent claim to telepathy. This is immediately followed by another symbolic attempt at telepathy with the guards: "...er wollte sich irgendwie in die Gedanken der Wächter einschleichen, sie zu seinen Gunsten wenden oder sich dort einbürgern"/ "he wanted to slip into his guards' thoughts somehow and turn them to his own advantage or accustom himself to them" (P,18; T,21). There are other indicators in K's exchange with his guards of a telepathic relationship that permits an extraordinary nonverbal communication. K tries to ascertain silently who the guard is, then is drawn into "Zwiegespräch der Blicke" (P18; T,21), with Franz. Following K.'s protests to the guards' supervisor, he is told to talk less, since "fast alles, was Sie vorhin gesagt haben, hätte man auch, wenn Sie nur ein paar Worte gesagt hätten, Ihrem Verhalten entnehmen können"/ "almost everything you've said up to now could have been inferred from your behaviour, even if you'd said only a few words" (P,22; T, 25). Legend has it, we later learn from the businessman Block, that guilt can be read from the accused's lips (P,138-139; T,241). Other than the speculation that an unidentified "Jemand muβte Josef K. verleumdet haben..."/ "Someone must have slandered Josef K." (P,11; T,17), there is no mention of his guilt being externally communicated to the court. Furthermore, Josef K. appears to find this claim affirmed in the following chapter on the way to his first hearing, deducing that, since the court is drawn his guilt, whichever staircase he chooses at random must

[112] Sokel, p.43

be the correct one. Whilst he may be only playing with this supposition in his thoughts, it turns out to be correct after all. The relationship between Josef K. and the court, with its paradox of immediacy and alienation, comes most clearly into view when he yet again receives two strange visitors in the final chapter, who will this time accompany him to his execution. For a start, the impression of telepathy is strengthened by the fact that K has not been given notice of any visit but is already sitting by his door, dressed in black like his executioners and looking like he is expecting visitors (P,309; T, 174). As they depart on Josef K.'s final walk towards death, the psychical unity will appear to become physical as they march in formation: "sie bildeten jetzt alle drei eine solche Einheit, dass, wenn man einen von ihnen zerschlagen hätte, alle zerschlagen gewesen wären. Es war eine Einheit, wie sie fast nur Lebloses bilden kann"/ "It wasa unit of the sort seldom formed except by lifeless matter." (P,310; T,175). The merging of Josef K. with his doubles, the part of himself that has been repressed, thus coincides with his final voyage towards *Lebloses*, a lifeless state, here echoing Freud's *Beyond the pleasure principle*, as Zilcosky has noted.[113]

*The Court and Indirect compulsion*

In the preceding paragraphs, then, we have outlined the discursive analogy between the idea that K. "receives" that he ought to visit his mother and the obligation that he receives from the court to attend his trial, noting the analogy between these forms of compulsion and furthering our conviction that the "Fahrt zur Mutter" is analogous to the trial itself. Despite this ambiguity between internal and external compulsion, and despite the combination of the dystopian and bizarre elements that would encourage the reader to interpret the trial as a nightmare or paranoid fantasy originating in K.'s own consciousness, the court is treated, on the surface of the narrative, as a social rather than a psychic agency. Therefore, even if we ultimately intend to emphasise the internal (personal or psychological) dimensions of the trial, the possibility of an interpretation emphasising socio-political factors must at least be taken seriously.

Let us return briefly to the communication that K. receives, as reported speech, at the beginning of "Erste Untersuchung": "Es sei selbstverständlich, dass er bestimmt erscheinen müsse, darauf müsse man ihn wohl nicht erst aufmerksam machen (P,50; T,39). Similar to the notion that K. takes to visit his mother ("... er *solle* seine Mutter besuchen"/ "he *ought* to visit his mother" P,50; T,39, my emphasis), the linguistic emphasis here is also on compulsion, this time expressed in the final sentence through the verb *müssen* (to have to) – Josef K's obligation to attend the hearing. No reason is given as to *why* Josef K. should attend, nor is any punishment threatened in the event of his non-appearance – the compulsion to attend is

[113] Zilcosky, p.96

presented as being so self-evident as to not require any further explanation and, on this occasion, K. does not request any. He simply *must* attend, period. This expression of compulsion gives the measure of the seemingly omnipotent court's hold on Josef K. That his experience of this compulsion contradicts his previous experience and understanding of the juridical order in which he lived is apparent from his bewilderment at his arrest: "K. lebte doch in einem Rechtsstaat, überall herrschte Friede, alle Gesetze bestanden aufrecht, wer wagte, ihn in seiner Wohnung zu überfallen?"/ "After all, K. lived in a stategoverned by law, there was universal peace, all statutes were in force; who dared assault him in his own lodgings?" (P,15; T,19 ). Nor does the lawyer Huld's description of the thoroughly opaque, unaccountable, corrupt and incompetent bureaucracy that passes for legal process in chapter 7 accord with any conceivable idea of a *Rechtsstaat*. Most alarming is the defendant's complete lack of entitlement to defence – which is merely tolerated rather than permitted and undermined at every possible opportunity so that all responsibility falls upon the defendant himself. It would appear, then, that K. is faced with a suspension of law as he knows it, compelled by an apparatus that, in turn, answers to none. Accordingly, Giorgio Agamben cites "Vor dem Gesetz" ("Before the Law"), the parable told to K. in the cathedral as an allegory for his own situation before the Law, as an exemplary model of the ban, of the law functioning as its own suspension, devoid of content beyond its imperative force. [114]We know nothing of what the law commands Josef K., merely that it compels and that it claims to be attracted to his *a priori* guilt.

However, the freedom of movement that it grants to its defendants appears thoroughly at odds with its all-pervasiveness and ability to compel. Walter Sokel has already emphasised, in fact, that leaving aside Josef K.'s initial arrest, it is he who welcomes and even initiates contact with the court. K. is not under arrest, *gefangengenommen*, in the conventional sense. He has not been remanded in custody, is not imprisoned and is explicitly free to go to work and socialise as he was before his arrest. His court appearance is arranged by telephone, with no specific sanctions threatened for failing to appear, notice merely being given of an assumed compulsion to attend ("Es sei selbstverständlich, daß er bestimmt erscheinen müsse, darauf müsse man ihn wohl nicht erst aufmerksam machen"/ "Of course he was required to appear; it was probably not really necessary to point that out", P,50; T,39). However, he is not taken to the court by force. Whilst the *Untersuchungsrichter* rebukes him for turning up one hour and five minutes late, his tardiness is ultimately left unpunished. However, Josef K.'s freedom from tangible, violent coercion does not yet entirely negate the possibility that the compulsion Josef K. experiences is of social origin. This dissonance between the all-pervasive and compulsive nature of the court and its conspicuous lack of violent means to enforce the defendant's

[114] Agamben, p.35

complicity would appear to beg for a Foucauldian interpretation, with particular reference to *Discipline and Punish*.[115] To do justice entirely to such an interpretation would be beyond the scope of the current chapter,[116] therefore we will limit our analysis to the mere outline of such an argument. There is no shortage of scope to read *Der Proceß* as a nightmarish fantasy of a panoptic society, of disciplinary power achieving its ideal functioning. Josef K. is not in custody because he does not need to be – the prison is a paradigm generalised to society itself, he is already in the Panopticon. As evidence that K. finds himself in a penal dystopia, we could cite the presence of his three colleagues from the bank, Kaminer, Rabensteiner and Kullich, since Foucault tells us that the advent of the prison as paradigm was intimately tied to the rise of the capitalist economy, to increasing productivity in the workplace. Why would Josef K. turn up to his trial without being forced to do so, if not for the action of disciplinary power upon his body? Why are no specific threats of violence ever made, if not for the expectation that the threat of power should preclude the necessity of its application: "Man wird Sie zu finden wissen...Man pflegt die Machtmittel des Gerichtes nicht auf sich zu hetzen"/ "We'll know how to find you ... People generally avoid inciting the court to exercise its powers on them," (P,341; T,191)?

Therefore, while Josef K.'s experience of compulsion is fairly clear, there is a possibly irreducible ambiguity between internal and external compulsion – is Josef K. compelled by disciplinary power, by his own super-ego, or by some conspiracy between both? In fact, Ritchie Robertson contends that the true terror of the trial is in the ambiguity between inside and outside.[117] We can recall here also Kafka's remark that bureaucracy is "closer to the original human nature than any other social institution",[118] which likewise points towards the interdependence of inside and outside. Žižek extends the functioning of the super-ego to the level of social law in the figure of the primal father-*jouisseur*. For the purposes of our argument, it would be a superfluous and lengthy diversion to attempt to argue conclusively for one or the other, since our interest lies primarily in K.'s response to this compulsion.

*Delusions of Agency?*

Whether we understand the agency that compels Josef K. as psychic or social, the question must nonetheless be posed: to what extent is he truly compelled? Is his death inevitable? A recent

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[115] Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, pp.195-228

[116] Indeed, a recently published monograph by Carl Curtis, developed from his doctoral thesis, is devoted exclusively to reading Kafka's novels from the perspective of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*. See: Curtis, Carl, *Justice, Punishment and Docile Bodies: Michel Foucault and the Fiction of Franz Kafka*

[117] Robertson, *Kafka: Judaism, Politics, and Literature*,, p.107

[118] Letter to Oscar Baum, 1922, cited in Žižek, *Interrogating the Real*, p.131

example of scholarship that concurs with K.'s victimhood is Chris Fleming and John O'Carroll's "Delusions of Agency: Kafka, Imprisonment and Modern Victimhood."[119] For Fleming and O'Carroll, Josef K. embodies a particular form of victimhood – that of the modern subject and the social forces or "victimhood mechanisms" to which it gives rise. *Der Proceß* in their view, constitutes "a cultural critique analogous to Max Weber's image of the 'iron cage' of modernity."[120] They regard Josef K. as the victim of a scapegoating mechanism, by which he takes upon himself the ills of society. Josef K. is indeed guilty, but his sins are the sins of the system and he is thus a mere scapegoat. This concurs with Walter Sokel's view that K. is exceptional within his social context only by being so unexceptional, and the same could surely be said of Georg Bendemann.

To this extent, I can agree with their analysis. Indeed, in the next chapter, we will trace the origins and fate of modern subjectivity and will come to understand that Josef K. is indeed exemplary (as are Georg Bendemann and Don Quijote). Where I cannot agree with them, however, is their deduction that K. is ultimately a victim of the system, even if they do fully acknowledge his own enmeshment therein. According to the authors: "Josef K.'s primary error does not reside in his inability to be 'personally accountable,' to exercise some moral agency, but in his evident delusion that he is an agent at all."[121] It is the logical leap from Josef K. as scapegoat to Josef K. lacking any agency that must be challenged here for, I would submit, the inevitability of his fate that this implies does not stand up to close scrutiny. For a start, it overlooks a fundamental shift in K.'s attitude to the court that occurs in chapter 7. As we will demonstrate, K. does exhibit "delusions of agency" with respect to the court in the early chapters. However, his contempt for the court reverses very suddenly into the delusion that he has no choice but to engage with his trial (despite the fact that the court itself does not summon him or communicate directly with him after his first hearing). Coincidentally or otherwise, this immediately follows his first visit to the lawyer Huld and his first tryst with Leni.

What we are dealing with in the case of K., I will demonstrate, is a dialectic of delusional opposites, a fantasy of omnipotence and a fantasy of helplessness akin to the active and passive variants of Oedipal desire outlined in the introduction to this thesis, the former reversing into the latter. Just as he is deluded of his agency in the early part of the novel, his subsequent fantasy of helplessness will ensure that he fails to exert the agency (understood not

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[119] Fleming, Chris and O'Carroll, John. "Delusions of Agency : Kafka, Imprisonment and Modern Victimhood" in A. Karina Kordela and Dimitris Vardoulakis (eds.) *Kafka's Cages: Freedom and Confinement in Modernity* (pp.29-48)
[120] Fleming & O'Carroll, p.43
[121] Fleming & O'Carroll, p.42

in a strictly moral sense but in the general sense of responsibility for one's actions) that he could have reasonably done. In fact, this will be central to our interpretation of K.'s guilt and innocence – the active complicity in his own fate that Fleming and O'Carroll overlook. Fleming and O'Carroll do not reckon with Josef K.'s *vorauseilender Gehorsam*, his preemptive obedience of the court's expectations that may or may not exist.

Nonetheless, Fleming and O'Carroll are perhaps even more correct than they realise in taking K. as an exemplar of modern subjectivity for, in the next chapter, it will be shown that this dual fantasy of omnipotence and helplessness is also at the heart of modern subjectivity itself. We already discussed the delusional transformation of passivity into activity through Norman O. Brown's *Causa Sui* fantasy, which replaces infantile helplessness with the infantile fantasy of omnipotence. Josef K. evidently never overcomes this infantile dialectic of omnipotence and helplessness, absolute free will and absolute submission to fate, and neither, it will be argued, does modernity. This does not, however, mean that they could not have done so, merely that they failed to do so. We can frame the question of agency, then, in relation to the process that fails – overcoming the dual fantasies of infancy or, in layman's terms, growing up. Recall here our discussion of Susan Bordo – this was precisely the process that was subject to a shortcut in the advent of the Cartesian subject, which constituted itself by revoking childhood. It is in this context also that we understood Sokel's concept of "arrest" – repressing, but not overcoming, the infantile self. In the fragment "Staatsanwalt", we see that Josef K.'s early development follows a similar trajectory: he renounced all dependency on his mother by rejecting her affections (P,260; T,190) although moving into a lodging house presided over by a mother-substitute Frau Grubach and having his breakfast delivered to him every morning suggests anything but adult independence. Surely it is no coincidence, then, that K. is informed that he is "arrested" when he calls for his breakfast. Furthermore, he has never experienced paternal care and he has fled home at an early age. This rejection of the mother's affections has its counterpart in all three texts that we have read in detail to date, and appears to be another variation upon the theme of a 'flight from the feminine'. In *Don Quijote* and *Das Urteil*, we saw that this flight led, via the 'errant' path, uncannily and inexorably full-circle back to the domain of the mother, and we have just suggested, following Zilcosky, that a similar circularity is apparent in *Der Proceß*. Furthermore, like Georg Bendemann, his mother has been absent (both physically and, apparently, from consciousness, given that there she is not mentioned outside the two fragments "Fahrt zur Mutter" ("Journey to his Mother" and "Staatsanwalt" ("Public Prosecutor") and is thus completely absent from the main plot) for approximately two years. K.'s early history, then, has all the vital ingredients of a *causa sui* fantasy. Josef K.,

symbolic indeed of the modern subject, evidently takes a similar shortcut to adulthood, gets lost on the way and never arrives.

*Errancy and Self-defeat*

Perhaps this substantiates the "errancy" of which Zilcosky writes. The second aspect of Zilcosky's interpretation of *Der Proceß* that is pertinent to our own interpretive framework concerns the matter of "errancy," as conveyed, for example, by the terms "Verirrung" and "Verfahren." He considers the idea of errancy at three distinct levels. Firstly and most basically, it is a literal description of Josef K's errant motion.[122] We have already discussed K.'s "Fahrt zur Mutter" and the journey unto death that it symbolises. However, as also emerges from Zilcosky's analysis, even if the paradox is not stated quite as emphatically as it could be, the desire to escape temporality is no less a struggle to escape from finitude, to flee from death, than it is a death wish. Employing an analogy to Freud's *Beyond the pleasure principle*, according to which all life is a deferral of the inevitable return to a lifeless state, Zilcosky identifies in *Der Proceß*, opposed to the nostalgic desire for return, the imperative to defer death. Two observations are appropriate at this point. Firstly, this paradox is more logical than it might appear at first glance – an escape from temporality is inherently a death wish, since death is conceived, as already discussed, as being beyond time. However, it is no less a flight from death, since temporality necessarily implies finitude and hence leads inexorably towards death. Secondly, this coincidence of opposites – the death wish and the flight from death – also characterised Don Quijote's trajectory. In *Der Proceß*, the protraction of this flight from death is apparent, firstly in Josef K's anxiety to avoid coming to a standstill. For example, in chapter 6 he grabs his uncle's arm in order prevent him from coming to rest. The aversion to being at rest is apparent, firstly, in Josef K's seemingly random, non-linear and non-progressive motion throughout the city, which Zilcosky describes systematically. The link between this continuous motion and the fate of K's trial becomes apparent in the businessman, fellow accused and overtly masochistic Block's citation of an old legal maxim: "...für den Verdächtigen ist Bewegung besser als Ruhe, denn der, welcher ruht, kann immer, ohne es zu wissen, auf einer Waagschale sein und mit seinen Sünden gewogen werden"/ "... a suspect is better off moving than at rest, for one at rest may be on the scales without knowing it, being weighed with all his sins (P,202; T,152). The painter Titorellli likewise advises K to protract his legal proceedings

[122] Zilcosky, p.90

by pursuing a "scheinbare Freisprechung," which involves keeping his files in permanent circulation using an extended metaphor of travel:

> [Der Akt] bleibt im Verfahren, er wird, wie es der ununterbrochene Verkehr der Gerichtskanzleien erfordert, zu den höheren Gerichten weitergeleitet, kommt zu den niedrigeren zurück und pendelt so mit größeren und kleineren Schwingungen, mit größeren und kleineren Stockungen auf und ab. Diese Wege sind unberechenbar. (P,218)

> [The file] remains in circulation; following the law court's normal routine they are passed on to the higher courts, come back to the lower ones, swinging back and forth with larger or smaller oscillations, longer or shorter interruptions. These paths are unpredictable. (T,127)

However, as Zilcosky very astutely observes, playing upon the homonymy between "Verfahen" as legal process and "sich verfahren" as being lost in an errant, non-progressive motion, this deferral of death inheres very much in the trial itself, for whilst one postpones the final outcome, one remains on trial all the while. In other words, being on trial corresponds, linguistically, to this perpetual motion in flight from final conviction and death.

Secondly, there is the matter of spiritual errancy, of going astray morally. Zilcosky connects this sense of errancy to traditional theological readings of Kafka's novel, that view Josef K's guilt in terms of Original Sin. About Josef K's guilt and its relation to *Erbsünde* and *Sündenfall*, we will write further in due course. Suffice to note at this point, however, the nexus between the myth of Fall and errancy as a moral or spiritual quality. Thirdly, Zilcosky relates the concepts of "Verirrung", "Verfahren" (which, in addition to meaning "process" as a noun means to get lost or take a wrong turn when used as a reflexive verb) and "Verkehr", as in *Das Urteil*, with the idea of perversion and thus with "Josef K's peculiar [masochistic] sexuality."[123] The unification of these three levels in the concept of errancy: physically wandering, being spiritually lost and psychosexually 'deviant' provides a constellation that connects Josef K's errancy to Don Quijote's knight errantry. Whilst a positive proof that Kafka intended that any such connection be made is beyond the means of this chapter, we might wonder at the significance of the portrait of a knight that holds Josef K so transfixed in the Cathedral. One detail of this image in particular provides a very interesting resonance with our analysis of *Don Quijote* in the previous chapter, in relation to the matters both of his own "peculiar sexuality" and of his relationship to the Fall from Paradise:

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[123] Zilcosky, p.89

> Das erste, was K. sah und zum Teil erriet, war ein großer, gepanzerter Ritter, der am äußersten Rande des Bildes dargestellt war. Er stützte sich auf sein Schwert, das er in den kahlen Boden vor sich – nur einige Grashalme kamen hie und da hervor – gestoßen hatte (P,285)
>
> The first thing K. saw, and in part surmised, was a tall knight in armor, portrayed at the extreme edge of the painting. He was leaning on his sword, which he had thrust into the bare earth – only a few blades of grass sprang up here and there – before him. (T,217).

The knight that so fascinates Josef K, then, is penetrating the (Mother) Earth with his sword, which, it will be remembered, we interpreted as a "compensation" for genital sexuality, hereby symbolising a claim to unity that corresponds to Don Quijote's mission to restore the Golden Age. This resonates with the significance of return to origin that Zilcosky accords in his analysis to the incomplete fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter", which we are also reading more closely in our own analysis.

At this point, let us return briefly to the fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter", in order to illustrate yet another parallel with the aspect of trial itself currently at issue: the matter of doing things contrary to one's intentions and to one's will. As K. is weighing up whether to visit his mother, the following is given consideration: "Und würde er ... die alte Frau nicht erschrecken, was er natürlich nicht beabsichtigte, was aber gegen seinen Willen sehr leicht geschehen konnte, *da jetzt vieles gegen seinen Willen geschah*"/ "And might he not shock the old woman as well, without wishing to of course, but against his will, since so many things were happening now against his will." (P,357; T,199)

As Walter Sokel observes, it is strongly implied that the protagonist has had a hand in his initial arrest. Josef K has unwittingly initiated the proceedings against himself by summoning the court's *Wächter* with the ringing of the bell that was supposed to summon Anna with his breakfast. The first words they speak to him certainly suggest this: "Sie haben geläutet?" The court claims to be drawn out by the accused's guilt – might K.'s guilt have something to do with things happening *against his will*? Underpinning Josef K.'s trial, I should like to argue here, is a tendency to undermine his intentions by yielding to self-defeating impulses. As in the case of *Don Quijote*, the "errant" journey implicit in the trial is also the path of self-defeat. Consider, for example, the initial court summons that he receives. Is there, perhaps, some symbolism in Josef K. having just been summoned to court at the moment he refuses the *Direktor-Stellvertreter*'s invitation to a party on his yacht. This social gathering, which, besides possibly being pleasurable in itself, would probably be professionally advantageous in allowing K. to build relationships with senior colleagues, coincides with his "Erste Untersuchung." Not only that, but *Staatsanwalt* Hasterer, whom it initially occurred to

K. to call following his arrest and whom K. obviously sees as a potential source of help in his trial, will also be in attendance. On that first occasion, K decided, in a bizarrely childish, petulant outburst, not to call Hasterer, hereby lending credence to the guard's observation that he is behaving worse than a child. Infuriated by the supervisor wondering what purpose would be served by such a call, K. strops like a sulking child:

> „Gut, ich werde nicht telephonieren." „Aber doch", sagte der Aufseher und streckte die Hand zum Vorzimmer aus, wo das Telephon war, bitte, telephonieren Sie doch." „Nein, ich will nicht mehr" (P,27)
>
> "Fine, I won't telephone." "But do," said the inspector, and waved toward the hall, where the telephone was, "please do telephone." "No, I no longer wish to" (T,25)

On this occasion, likewise, K. will choose the indulgent gratification of self-defeating impulses. Whilst it is not difficult to recognise the potential gratification in "humiliating" a more powerful colleague that one dislikes, it is undeniably self-defeating, even when this humiliation is only in K.'s head. For K.'s loss in his refusal to attend is far greater than that of the *Direktor-Stellvertreter*. Rather than choosing to avail of the advantage he clearly sees in his second-most senior colleague trying to build a relationship with him, K. imagines this to constitute a "humiliation", since they have allegedly never gotten on well and the *Direktor-Stellvertreter* regards him as a threat (In fact, we can deduce no more from this than that K. resents his senior because he covets his job and *would like* to be considered a threat, for there is no evidence that the feeling is mutual). Hence, instead of acting in his perceived best interests, K. opts for perverse gratification, imagining that he would "humble" him again by declining the invitation in favour of his duties with the court (P,41; T,27).

We see, then, that K. begins his trial by opting for self-defeat. His "compulsion" to attend court coincides with his undoubtedly gratifying but self-defeating submission to childish impulses. Indeed, the exertions of the trial will see a major deterioration in K.'s professional life: tiredness, distractedness, as observed by the manufacturer in chapter 7 and growing paranoia resulting in a thoroughly self-defeating outlook. Consider, for example, his paranoia at being asked to entertain the Italian visitor amongst several other business trips, which he fears are attempts to remove him from the office so that his work can be checked. To illustrate K.'s self-defeating approach, consider the following vicious circle in chapter 9: he does not want to undertake such trips due to the aforementioned paranoia, and realises that he could refuse most of them without difficulty – but to do so would be to admit he is afraid there may be some basis to his fears. Therefore, even though he does not want to go and could easily get out of it, he is afraid of not being asked to go. It is entirely in keeping with his masochistic leanings,

furthermore, that he chooses not to mention that he has a serious cold in case his employer decides not to send him out in the Autumn, hereby contributing, undoubtedly, to his own malaise.

How does this self-defeating tendency pertain to his "delusions of agency"? It must be immediately stated that, while Josef K. regards himself as a victim of the court, he by no means appears to regard resistance to the court as impossible in the early stages of his trial. If anything, he exudes a hubristic air of untouchability. This does not mean, however, that he does resist. Indeed, throughout his arrest and initial hearing, he insists vigorously upon his superiority to the court officials and upon his freedom to take or leave the court as he desires. Following arrest, his contempt is made clear for his guards, the "niedrigsten Organe"/ "lowly agents" (P,15; T,21), and supposes that the whole matter could be clarified if only he had the opportunity to talk to a "mir ebenbürtigen Menschen"/ "someone of my own sort" (P,15; T,21) At his first hearing in chapter 2, K. likewise does not let the opportunity pass to express his contempt for the court. He denounces his arresting guards as "demoralisiertes Gesindel"/ "corrupt ruffians" (P,65; T,48) before firing the parting shot "Ihr Lumpen!"/ "You scoundrels!" (P,72; T,52) to the court and declaring that they can keep their hearings. The contradiction between K.'s defiant intent and his compliant course of action is particularly apparent in his speech to the examining magistrate:

> Sie können einwenden, dass es ja überhaupt kein Verfahren ist, Sie haben sehr recht, denn es ist ja nur ein Verfahren, wenn ich es als solches anerkenne. Aber ich erkenne es also für den Augenblick jetzt an, aus Mitleid gewissermaßen. Man kann sich nicht anders als mitleidig dazu stellen, wenn man es überhaupt beachten will. (P,66)
>
> You may object that these aren't proceedings at all, and you're certainly right there, they are only proceedings if I recognize them as such. But I do recognize them, for the moment, out of compassion, so to speak. One can only view them compassionately, if one chooses to pay any attention to them at all. (T,46)

These are clearly not the words of one who feels himself at the mercy of the court! Far from it – if anything, they suggest, at the other extreme, foolish hubris. K. boldly claims that he can only be tried if he submits himself to the process and is fully complicit therein. Let us assume momentarily that K. does indeed possess the power of veto that he claims. The converse of this claim is that, should the trial proceed, it will do so with K.'s full consent. Accordingly, he does not exercise his bold prerogative and instead chooses to recognise the proceedings, out of pity. This expression of condescending obligation establishes the mould for Josef K.'s relationship with the court in the early stages of his trial: simultaneously contemptuous and complicit. In chapter 2 we have seen K. take the undoubtedly gratifying, but equally self-defeating option of

turning up to court in order to tell the assembly precisely what he thinks of it. That K.'s performance has been self-defeating is made clear by the *Untersuchungsrichter*, who informs him: "Ich wollte Sie nur darauf aufmerksam machen, ...dass Sie sich heute – es dürfte Ihnen noch nicht zu Bewusstsein gekommen sein – des Vorteils beraubt haben, den ein Verhör für den Verhafteten in jedem Falle bedeutet."/ "I just wanted to draw your attention to the fact," said the examining magistrate, "that you have today deprived yourself –
although you can't yet have realized it – of the advantage that an interrogation offers to the arrested man in each case" (P,72; T,51). However, even K.'s profession of defiance and contempt for the court is undermined not only by voluntary attendance but also his explicit recognition of the proceedings. K.'s attendance is explained thus: "... er war gleich entschlossen, Sonntag hinzugehen, es war gewiss notwendig, der Prozess kam in Gang und er musste sich dem entgegenstellen, diese erste Untersuchung sollte auch die letzte sein"/ "... he had resolved at once to go on Sunday; it was clearly necessary, the trial was getting under way and he had to put up a fight; this initial inquiry must also be the last. (P,54; T,39). On the basis of this reasoning, we can understand that K. hopes to achieve two objectives: firstly, resistance, by facing the trial head-on and secondly, obtaining his future freedom by ensuring that the first hearing is the last. However, for all that he has defied the court in word, he has ceded to the court power over his body simply by being there. That he had made a resolution on the matter implies recognition that a decision about attending can be made – that is: that it is his prerogative rather than an unavoidable obligation. This being so: why would he attend at all, when the clearest form of resistance would have been non-attendance? Why ensure that the first hearing should be the last, when even the first hearing can be taken or left?

K. does indeed close the first hearing by declaring his intention to never return. However, this defiance is likewise undermined by his daily wait for his next summons and, of course, by his unsolicited return to court at the presumed appointed hour the following Sunday, just in case it was assumed that his court appearances were scheduled for every Sunday at the same time. Instead of relief at not hearing from the court, K. seems almost disappointed at his luck – that the court would not pose more of a challenge: "... er konnte nicht glauben, dass man seinen Verzicht auf Verhöre wörtlich genommen hatte ..."/ "he couldn't believe they had taken his waiver of interrogations literally" (P,77;T,55). When he is informed by the court usher's wife that the court is not in session, rather than taking this as his cue to leave and enjoy his (at least provisional) freedom, K. again chooses to look the proverbial gift-horse in the mouth: "„Warum sollte keine Sitzung sein?" fragte er und wollte es nicht glauben."/ "'Why wouldn't there be a session?' he asked, not really believing it." (P,73; T,52) Similarly K. is loath to accept the priest/prison chaplain's dismissal of him in the cathedral: "Bitte, warte noch ...Willst

du nicht noch etwas von mir?"/ Please, wait a moment ... Do you want anything else from me?" (P.304; T,174). In chapter 3, he has still lost none of the exaggerated confidence in his power to overcome the court, expressed here in hyperbole: "Blieb er nicht immer so frei, dass er das ganze Gericht, wenigstens soweit es ihn betraf, sofort zerschlagen konnte?"/ "Wouldn't he still be free enough to simply smash the entire court, at least insofar as it touched him?" (P87; T,57). Ironically, this reasoning is used to justify to himself the urge to give in to the lures of the court-usher's wife who, he suspects, is trying to entrap him. K. clearly regards himself as having control over his trial. What he does not reckon with, however, is his capacity to use this power to his own detriment. The fact that he attends when the court is not even in session provides evidence that Josef K.'s autonomous compulsion exceeds whatever the court may command and places the initiative firmly in his hands. Although there is no hearing on this following Sunday, it is nonetheless the occasion for K. to suffer his first "defeat" at the hands of the court, as he is denied the sexual favour of the court-usher's wife, hereby losing out in a rivalry with the *Untersuchungsrichter* and the student who does his bidding. Not to worry, he figures: "er erhielt die Niederlage nur deshalb, weil er den Kampf aufsuchte"/ "he had suffered defeat only because he had sought to do battle." (P,86; T,59).

We have considered thus far the dissonance between K.'s contempt and steadfast insistence upon his freedom to take or leave his trial in its early stages and his unwavering compliance with the court, to the extent that he appears even when not explicitly summoned. We can also juxtapose the accused's alleged defencelessness, according to Huld, with the court's lack of tangible, visible power and its *laissez faire* approach to Josef K.'s freedom of movement. Whether we consider the compulsion experienced by K. as a manifestation of "disciplinary" power or of his own super-ego, one thing is for certain: he obeys. And while the operation of "invisible power" might offer a plausible enough explanation for this obedience despite his physical freedom (consciousness of visibility induced by surveillance producing a self-disciplined, "docile body"), the observation made by Fräulein Bürstner on the evening following the arrest rings even more true: "Das Gericht hat eine eigentümliche Anziehungskraft ..."/ "The court has a strange attraction, doesn't it?" (P, 42; T,35), an uncanny power to attract K., causing him to comply in spite of himself. The relationship between reflex, involuntary actions, hubristic complacency and the condition of being on trial is further underlined at the end of chapter 3, as K. suffers a bad reaction to conditions in the court offices: "Wollte etwa sein Körper revolutionieren und ihm einen neuen Prozess bereiten, da er den alten so mühelos ertrug?"/ Was his body going to rebel and offer him a new trial, since he was handling the old one so easily? (P,111; T,70). Might this yield a clue that there is a relationship between a "revolution of the body" and the condition of being on trial?

In considering the role of women (more specifically, the women whom he designates as "Helferinnen") we will see precisely how K.'s body betrays him to the court. Indeed, the 'fatal' characterisation of femininity in *Der Proceß* has already been observed by various critics. Walter Sokel's *Tragik und Ironie*, for example, draws attention to Leni's sirenesque qualities in a chapter on the motif of *femmes fatales* in the novel.[124] Vivian Liska likewise notes that women in *Der Proceß* represent "... eine bedrohliche, kreatürliche Seinsform, die für das männliche Subjekt eine tödliche Gefahr darstellt."[125] (Trans: threatening, sensuous beings that pose a fatal danger for the male subject). Peter Andre Alt, in addition to noting that women in *Der Proceß* are the product of "Männerphantasien" (male fantasies)[126] recognises their association with Josef K.'s *Triebimpulsen* (drives, impulses).[127] Fräulein Bürstner (c.f. *F*rieda *B*randenfeld, *F*elice *B*auer) herself appears to exert a similar "Anziehungskraft" for K. even before his trial has even made it to court. Besides K.'s trial itself, arguably the main subplot in the early stages of the novel is his sudden and desperate infatuation with his fellow lodger. Now, she is introduced to the reader as a woman presumed to be of fairly low social status, a typist whose surname translates as "Scrubber," (c.f. K.'s other "Helferinnen", the court usher's wife, who is described as a "Wäscherin" and Leni who is a "kleine Pflegerin") who is of little interest to K. and with whom, it is claimed, he has exchanged little more than pleasantries (although this is contradicted when he jumps to her defence against Frau Grubach's insinuations that she keeps the company of various men, claiming to know her very well.)

Nonetheless, the onset of his trial coincides with a "fatal attraction" to Bürstner, precipitating in some rather desperate conduct. How can we relate this to the wider problem of K.'s trial? Let us consider how his obsession with Bürstner develops. After K. disturbs her late at night to apologise for her room being invaded during his arrest, he concludes their exchange by making a rash and clumsy pass at her, which Zilcosky has gone as far as to describe as an "assault."[128] While Bürstner does not reciprocate, neither does she actively resist, nor even appear unduly offended by K.'s advances. Her reaction seems to be one of underwhelmed tolerance, nodding tiredly and turning to enter her room as K. bids farewell. She has already declared herself to be tired (and hence more forbearing than she ought to be), irritated and keen to be rid of K., yet she remains polite enough to give K. her hand as he takes leave. While K's advances may have been impulsive and desperate, they do not yet appear sufficiently menacing to justify Zilcosky's description. However, in the following days, we see the full extent of K.

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[124] Sokel, Walter. *Tragik und Ironie*, p.213
[125] Liska, Vivian. "Kafka und die Frauen" in Bettina von Jagow (ed.) *Kafka und die Frauen.*" *Kafka-Handbuch: Leben, Werk, Wirkung.* p.64
[126] Alt, Peter Andre. *Franz Kafka: Der Ewige Sohn,* p.398
[127] Alt, p.398
[128] Zilcosky, p.95

desperation as he literally stalks her from his room, evidently having developed a fatal attraction to her:

> Er versuchte auf die verschiedenste Weise, an sie heranzukommen, sie aber wusste es immer zu verhindern. Er kam gleich nach dem Büro nach Hause, blieb in seinem Zimmer, ohne das Licht anzudrehen, auf dem Kanapee sitzen und beschäftigte sich mit nichts anderem, als das Vorzimmer zu beobachten (P,319)
>
> He tried any number of approaches, but she always managed to avoid him. He came straight home from the office, sat on the divan in his room without turning on the light, and concentrated all his attention on the hall. (T,180).

By chapter 7, K. even appears sufficiently deluded as to believe that he has a "Verhältnis" to her, one that evidently ranks in importance alongside family and work considerations as a reason why he must face up to his trial. His "relationship" to Bürstner has supposedly suffered as a result of his trial, despite the claim that he barely knew her before his arrest! K.'s desperation to see Fräulein Bürstner again, however, is not explained as having a sexual motive. He is not simply seeking to pick up where he left off in chapter 1. Rather, he wants to justify himself, apologise for his behaviour and promise to respect her boundaries. In short, K.'s desperation to see her is laced with shame at his impulsive sexuality. In this sense that Fräulein Bürstner's *Anziehungskraft* mirrors that of the court – it induces K. to yield to *Triebimpulse* through a lack of self-control,[129] which in turn produces a guilty urge to explain himself – to issue an apology that is not even demanded of him.

The complicity between the *Anziehungskraft* of Fräulein Bürstner, the court and, ultimately, death, is laid bare in chapter 10, as K. is being led to his execution. Unexpectedly, given that he appears to have prepared for their arrival, K. briefly attempts a struggle, deciding to use all his remaining strength to make his executioners' task as difficult as possible and declaring that he will go no further. No sooner has he resolved to struggle, however, than he catches sight of a figure who appears to be Fräulein Bürstner and, in that precise moment, he is struck by the futility of agency before he has even tried to exert it:

> Da stieg vor ihnen aus einer tiefer gelegenen Gasse auf einer kleinen Treppe Fräulein Bürstner zum Platz empor. Es war nicht ganz sicher, ob sie es war, die Ähnlichkeit war freilich groß. Aber K. lag auch nichts daran, ob es bestimmt Fräulein Bürstner war, bloß die Wertlosigkeit seines Widerstandes kam ihm gleich zum Bewusstsein (P,307).
>
> At that moment, coming up a small flight of stairs to the squarefrom a narrow lane below, Fraulein Burstner appeared before them.He couldn't be absolutely sure it was her; there was certainly astrong resemblance. But it made no difference to K. whether it

[129] Alt, p.398

wasreally Fraulein Burstner; the futility of resistance was suddenly clearto him. (T,176).

The sudden appearance of Bürstner, then, causes (or at the very least, symbolises) the yielding of K.'s paltry willpower and his acceptance of death. The guards leave it up to K. to determine their direction, opening up another opportunity for resistance, but K., of course, follows the young lady, "nicht etwa, weil er sie einholen, nicht etwa, weil er sie möglichst lange sehen wollte, sondern nur deshalb, um die Mahnung, die sie für ihn bedeutete, nicht zu vergessen."/ and not because he wanted to keep her in sight for as long as possible, but simply not to forget the reminder she signified for him" (P312; T,176). Again, guilt and self-reproach, rather than lust, are his motives. Needless to say, following her in this manner takes him further down the route towards his own death. Once the young woman disappears, her place is immediately filled in the narrative by a triumvirate of similarly ominous feminine symbols: the moon, which bathes the scene of his execution in its uniquely "peaceful" (i.e. deathly) light; water, which also accompanied Georg Bendemann's death; and parts around an island of apparently virgin, untrammelled and uncivilised territory (P313; T,177).

While Fräulein Bürstner has no official relationship to K.'s case, the court's relationship with the deathly lure of Woman is evident in the figures of the court-usher's wife and Leni who both, like Bürstner, represent both a potential source of help with K.'s trial and provide occasion for K.'s submission to sexual impulses to his own detriment. Despite suspecting that the court-usher's wife might be trying to entrap him for the court with her advances, he sees no reason "warum er der Verlockung nicht nachgeben sollte"/ he could see no good reason not to give in to that temptation (P,87;T,57). Crucially, the verb *Nachgeben* (to give in) recurs in the "Fahrt zur Mutter" fragment, K.'s urge to visit his mother being attributed to "... ein fast haltloses Bestreben allen seinen Wünschen nachzugeben"/ "... an almost irresistible urge to give in to every desire" (P,354:T,197). The use of the verb *nachgeben*, then, indicating K.'s self-indulgent tendency to give in to impulses (further underlined by an additional reference to his feeling of self-pity, which is self-indulgence *par excellence*) creates the association between K. giving in to the lure of the court-usher's wife and his urge for his mother.

While K. merely suspects that the court-usher's wife (who, like Fräulein Bürstner, leaves him frustrated) could be trying to entrap him, his capitulation to Leni's advances, whilst finally resulting in a sexual encounter, does indeed entrap K., for reasons to be outlined. On the surface, chapter 7 marks a very sudden turning point in K.'s attitude to his trial, for it is here that his feeling of complacent mastery and contempt for the court reverses into an increasing

sense that he cannot escape his trial (P,167;T,102). On the other hand, we might question how much K.'s relationship to the court has really changed at all: if K. was indeed previously free to take or leave his trial, then he has evidently exercised his perceived choice in accepting the trial. Furthermore, K.'s current envelopment in his trial is likewise of his own making. Having unintentionally and complacently publicised his trial, "unvorsichtigerweise" / "carelessly" (P,171; T,102), he has allowed it to infiltrate both his professional and family lives, making it seemingly unavoidable. The lack of *Vorsicht*, in fact, is of considerable importance for K.'s trial. In chapter 9, the priest screams in exasperation at K.'s lack of understanding, as though watching someone fall: "... unvorsichtig, ohne Willen ..."/ "out in shock, involuntarily ..." (P,290,: T,167) In this description of an involuntary, reflex reaction (another *Revolution des Körpers*) is established is the semantic link between carelessness and the subversion of agency. Moreover, we have learned in chapter 1 that K. has history where being *unvorsichtig* is concerned – on an unspecified occasion, he has suffered the consequences of *unvorsichtig* behaviour and, following his arrest, he is determined not to repeat the error. However, by acting contrary to his intentions from the outset, it would appear that he is already repeating the mistake – we are told, after all, that he is not in the habit of learning from his experiences.

Chapter 7, then, does not mark as significant a shift in K.'s relationship to the court as might be supposed – merely in his attitude towards the necessity of defending himself. Furthermore, his change in attitude follows (one suspects not very coincidentally) his first visit to the lawyer Huld and his first tryst with Leni, who gives him the key to come when he wants. We can witness, in fact, Leni's role in eroding Josef K.'s defiance, expressed once more in terms of the verb *Nachgeben*. She claims to have heard that K. is too *unnachgiebig*, citing his protestations of innocence before the court as an example. Now, we have just argued that K. is *unnachgiebig* only in word, for he has yielded his body to the court by attending. Leni, then, attempts to elicit K.'s *Nachgiebigkeit*, or, should we say, to elicit it again. This pertains, overtly, to K.'s admission of guilt which, Leni claims, is his only chance of escape. However, the sexual dimension of *Nachgiebigkeit* is also made fairly obvious as Leni mounts his lap and presses herself against him. Just as with Fräulein Bürstner, K. is unable to help himself and yields to her accordingly with an impulsive kiss. That this immediately follows his admiration of her "Kralle" (claw) underlines her role as siren, her task now accomplished:[130] "'Jetzt gehörst du mir«, sagte sie ... Hier hast du den Hausschlüssel, komm, wann du willst«, waren ihre letzten Worte" "Here's the key to the building, come whenever you like," were her last words, and an aimless kiss struck him on the back while he was still on his way out." (P,146; T,91). Yielding to Leni in this manner, K. finds himself entrapped (though yet again returning of his

[130] C.f. die "Krallenhände der Sirenen" and the "Krallen" in "Das Schweigen der Sirenen"

own free-will) by the most malevolent manifestation of the law in the novel – the lawyer Huld, who reduces K. to dependency and who, were his trial to proceed longer, might very well reduce K. to a blatantly masochistic "dog" in the same way as he does to Block. Let us note as an aside here the significance of Huld's name: idol; from the verb *huldigen* (= to idolise, to adore).

*Delusions of Victimization*

Of course, the motif of Woman as a symbol of man's inability to exert agency in the face of compulsion has an extremely long history in the Western cultural tradition. The "temptress" Eve (who, let us recall, was formed of Adam's own flesh) has long been held within the Judeo-Christian tradition to give form to Adam's own impulsiveness. Man's original sin, then, is acquired on account of Adam's failure to resist Woman, the symbol of his own compulsiveness. Unsurprisingly, Original Sin has proved to be a fruitful line of enquiry in interpretations of Josef K.'s guilt in *Der Proceß*. The linking of his guilt to "origins" is suggested, for example, in his determination that he should reject "von vornherein" the possibility of being guilty. It is suggested even more strongly in K.'s supposition regarding the court's uncovering of guilt from some original void: "Zum Schluss ... zieht [das Gericht] von irgendwoher, wo ursprünglich gar nichts gewesen ist, eine große Schuld hervor"/ "But then in the end it pulls out some profound guilt from somewhere where there was originally none at all." (P,200; T,120) K. eating the "schönen Apfel" in chapter 1 provides the most obvious symbolic suggestion of his partaking in Adam's sinfulness, while the suggestion that such guilt is, in fact, inherent in the human condition itself is offered in the following exchange with the priest:

> „es ist ein Irrtum. Wie kann denn ein Mensch überhaupt schuldig sein. Wir sind hier doch alle Menschen, einer wie der andere." „Das ist richtig", sagte der Geistliche, „aber so pflegen die Schuldigen zu reden."(P,223)
>
> "It's a mistake.How can any person in general be guilty? We're all human after all,each and every one of us." "That's right," said the priest, "but that's how guilty people always talk." (T,166)

Guilt, then, is tied here to the insistence that human beings in general are, by default, *not guilty* which, as the priest concedes, is correct within its own limited logical framework. Now, this, in turn, could constitute a fairly obvious objection to the Original Sin thesis: if humankind as a whole is guilty of the same Original Sin as Josef K., then why is he (along with Block and a few other downtrodden individuals) singled out for trial? This is indeed the objection raised by Walter Sokel. However, Sokel is too hasty in dismissing this line of enquiry on that basis alone.[131] K.'s guilt, as suggested in the priest's answer, pertains to more than this general guilt.

[131] Sokel, p.228

"Die Schuldigen" are a more specific category: those who *deny* this general guilt. Sokel does not reckon here with Kafka's idiosyncratic understanding of Original Sin:

> Die Erbsünde, das alte Unrecht, das der Mensch begangen hat, besteht in dem Vorwurf, den der Mensch macht und von dem er nicht abläßt, das ihn ein Unrecht geschehen ist, das an ihm die Erbsünde begangen wurde. (15.2.1920, Tag,533)
>
> Original Sin, the old injustice committed by man, consists of the complaint made tirelessly by man that he is the victim of an injustice, that Original Sin was done unto him. (15.2.1920, Diar,391)

In other words, Original Sin is defined as claiming to be the innocent victim, not the perpetrator, of Original Sin. Ritchie Robertson, unlike Sokel, does recognise the proximity of this aphorism to *Der Proceß*. To be freed from Original Sin, Robertson explains, one would need to recognise one's *a priori* guilt. Robertson observes that Josef K.'s insistence upon his innocence is what makes his actual innocence impossible. Perhaps if K. had only recognised his guilt by default, he too might have been able to free himself, as Leni advised on K.'s first visit to Huld.

However, Robertson proceeds to interpret the question of guilt/innocence primarily in moral terms, and that is where our thesis will part company with his. For Robertson, the Law is what he calls the "moral law," on the basis of its unique logic that ignorance thereof already constitutes a transgression. As becomes apparent in his analysis, the "moral law" pertains, as one might expect, to the knowledge of Good and Evil and, just as importantly, to the imperative to translate this knowledge into moral action. Kafka, Robertson claims, writes as a "moral rigorist, for whom only the most uncompromising morality is good enough."[132] On the basis of Kafka's Brentanist leanings, Robertson writes, morality is held to be both objective, universal and, even more questionably (for this would render all moral debate superfluous), something innate that "we all already know." K.'s eating the apple symbolises his acquiring moral awareness and hence his becoming a potentially moral being. His trial is thus to be viewed as a moral awakening, which would coincide with an admission of his guilt. Robertson's emphasis upon moral guilt is shared by other eminent interpreters. Walter Sokel views the trial as a process of self-disclosure in which the court allows K. to reveal, through his choice of action, who he is.[133] Patrick Bridgwater likewise interprets the trial as a process in which K. must prove to himself "who and what manner of man he is."[134]

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[132] Robertson, Ritchie. *Kafka: Judaism, Politics, and Literature*, p.103
[133] Sokel, p.231
[134] Bridgwater, p.116

However, the emphasis upon morality in the consideration of K.'s guilt faces a number of problems. For a start – and as Robertson acknowledges – there is no anagnorisis, with K. protesting his innocence until the end. Furthermore, there is little, if any, discernible moral development. K. never does achieve the moral transformation from his excessive worldliness to comprehension of the absolute, which Robertson sees as being at stake in the trial and which he regards as a "suicidally difficult" task.[135] Those inclined towards viewing K.'s guilt in moral terms will have little difficulty in finding aspects of his character and conduct to object to. Robertson himself offers an inventory of K.'s morally dubious qualities, with which it is difficult to disagree: "Calculating, egoistic, aggressive, authoritarian, self-deceived, and repressed."[136] He suggests that K. has sacrificed his personality in order to conform to the bank, modern industrial society and so forth, although he cannot offer any firm evidence that K. was not already a thoroughly unpleasant individual even before taking a job at the bank. Sokel and Bridgwater likewise coincide in emphasising K.'s worldliness as a moral failing, interpreting his death as the worldly self's self-condemnation. However, just as K. maintains his innocence until the end, the description of his character provided by Robertson is no less applicable at the end of the novel than at the beginning. K.'s s resolution to produce an inventory of all his major life events and account for his actions offers the promise of an examination of conscience, but it is one that is never fulfilled – the inventory is never made and, in any case, is conceived as a tactic for his defence.

[135] Robertson, pp.100-103
[136] Robertson, p.100

*Beyond Morality*

Let it be argued here that the problem of responsibility can be read at an even more fundamental level than questions of good and evil. Beyond the matter of innocence in a moral (or morally ignorant) sense, there is another dimension to Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin that Robertson does not emphasise anywhere near as strongly: victimhood. Not only does Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin consist of insisting that one was not the perpetrator but, even worse, pronouncing oneself as the *victim* of Original Sin. We will argue here that, rather than a question of failing to live a moral life, Josef K.'s culpability is his own complicity with the trial by submitting to it – his penchant for victimhood. In other words, we are shifting the emphasis from moral agency (knowing right from wrong and acting accordingly) to the question of agency *per se* (i.e. taking responsibility for one's actions, recognising one's own agency in one's plight). Just as Original Sin consists, in Kafka's view, of claiming to be the victim whilst actually being its agent, Josef K. restages Original Sin with his trial by failing to exert agency against compulsion, claiming victimisation by the court whilst failing to recognise his own complicity – indeed his initiative – in proceedings, and suffers the consequences accordingly.

Our emphasis on Original Sin as an abdication of agency therein can be further supported etymologically, by considering the homonymy implicit in the word *Fall* – between Josef K.'s *Fall* and Adam's *Sündenfall*. In fact, the problematical status of the intransitive verb *fallen*, perched between activity and passivity, mirrors Josef K.'s own situation in his *Fall*. Consider the simple conjugation "Ich falle": on the one hand, I am the active subject of that conjugation. On the other hand, it is quite easy to conceive of falling as something that happens to me, an action in which I am entirely passive: I do not need to move and am acted upon by a force. However, this force, my own weight, is itself problematic – for as anyone minimally qualified in physics will know, my weight is a co-creation of my own body mass and the gravitational pull that acts upon it. Yet it remains *my* weight.

Now, *-fall* can be adjoined to various prefixes to produce a number of verbs and derivative nouns that occur without agency, that just happen. An important example, that we encountered above and will further consider in conjunction with *Fall* and *Sündenfall*, is *einfallen* - something occurs to me, a received notion, a voice experienced as being from without. An *Unfall* is, by definition, an accident (with implied negative consequences), something that happens contrary to intention. A *Zufall*, a coincidence, is related to accident but without the necessarily negative connotations. It is not the product of intention. However, the most significant nexus to be highlighted at present is between Josef K.'s *Fall* and the *Sündenfall* that is the source of Original Sin. The common nexus between the two "Falls," going by

Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin, is the denial of agency and the claim of victimhood. In our analysis of *Don Quijote* (and we will emphasise the matter again in the next chapter), we argued that it is unnecessary to refer to a punishing God, whom Adam "disobeyed", to explain the expulsion from Eden, for we explained how it could be understood as the direct consequence of Adam's own transgression. He chose (failed to resist the temptation, but ultimately chose) to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Since the Garden of Eden was, by its nature, a state of "innocence" preceding such knowledge, Adam's expulsion is the direct consequence of his transgression, not an arbitrary punishment for "disobedience" of God.

On that note, we can, perhaps, add a layer of theological implication to the persecuting court, the locus of which (within, without, or a conspiracy between both) we previously held to be ambiguous between the super-ego and disciplinary power. The victim needs a persecutor, *vorauseilander Gehorsam* requires, and can quite possibly conceive, an oppressive regime that demands obedience, regardless of whether there are specific instructions as to what to obeyed. Might the God that *we conceive* (rather than being conceived by) be implicated in this mechanism of victimhood that serves the agenda of abdicating responsibility? In fact, in the previous chapter, we already suggested how the Fall can be viewed as the entirely self-inflicted consequence of Adam's actions (acquiring knowledge of Good and Evil, making habitation of Paradise preceding such knowledge impossible), rather than as a punishment handed down by God for "disobedience," which suggests victimisation. This would imply an "introjection" of God as punitive, wrathful agency that condemns us, judges us guilty and must be obeyed unquestioningly, in an analogous manner to the infantile introjection of the paternal imago. God's voice as *Einfall*, a received voice on high that speaks, furthermore, in the *Konjunktiv*, with its ambiguity between reported speech and command ("Es gebe Licht"). The punitive God of the Old Testament is implicated as a further correlate to disciplinary power, at a social level, and the super-ego, at a psychic level, that feeds the delusion of victimisation – the manifestation of a punishment fantasy that stems from a denial of our own agency, a refusal to accept responsibility for our actions. In Wordsworth's well-known formulation, "The Child is the father of the Man"[137], and, in this instance, Man becomes the father of the God. For Brown, the punitive super-ego was the consequence of the *causa sui* complex and, most clearly in Don Quijote's variant, God's will is introjected not as the mediating Name but as the imperative to suffer on behalf of His Justice, a false God that feeds a punishment fantasy or persecution

[137] Brown, p.60

complex. In this sense, He really is interchangeable with the idol Dulcinea, lending further credence to Žižek's claim that "Woman is one of the names-of-the-father."[138]

*The Guilt of Innocence*

At this point let us remind ourselves of the association between innocence and the demonic that was established in *Das Urteil*. Innocence, after all, is precisely that upon which Josef K. insists most steadfastly throughout the novel, beginning at the very outset of the novel and continuing, at the very least, until his encounter with the priest in the cathedral. In fact, barring the possibility that the priest does indeed manage to convince K. of his guilt in that exchange, or that he has come to recognise his guilt between then and the final chapter (and there is nothing to suggest that either is the case), we can assume that K. goes to his death maintaining his innocence. The opening sentence sets the tone for this protest: " Jemand mußte Josef K. verleumdet haben, denn ohnedaß er etwas Böses getan hätte, wurde er eines Morgens verhaftet."/ "Jemand mußte Josef K. verleumdet haben, denn ohnedaß er etwas Böses getan hätte, wurde er eines Morgens verhaftet."/ "Someone must have slandered Josef K., for one morning, without having done anything truly wrong, he was arrested." (P,7; T,17). Beyond obviously insisting upon Josef K's innocence, the manner of its expression in *Konjunktiv II* already suggests that it constitutes more than the denial of a specific offense. On the one hand, it lacks the confidence of a straight denial (i.e. *Er hatte nichts Böses getan*), yet at the same time, it protests against the very *possibility* of guilt, whilst implicitly conceding not knowing what the specific accusation is. This vindicates the guard Franz's scornful observation: "Sieh, Willem, er gibt zu, er kenne das Gesetz nicht, und behauptet gleichzeitig, schuldlos zu sein."/ "You see, Willem, he admits that he doesn't know the Law and yet he claims he's innocent." (P,15; T,21). The innocence being protested here, then, already appears to exceed the absence of culpability in a specific instance and refer to a more essential innocence – an *inability* to commit *Böses*, the analogue of which, in legal terms, would be the *Unmündigkeit* that applies to children.

The "Erste Untersuchung", in particular, provides Josef K.'s platform for claiming his innocent victimhood in the face of the court apparatus, whose essence, he claims: "... besteht darin, dass unschuldige Personen verhaftet werden und gegen sie ein sinnloses und meistens ... ergebnisloses Verfahren eingeleitet wird."/ "... arresting innocent people and introducing senseless proceedings against them, which for the most part, as in my case, go nowhere." (P,69;

[138] Žižek, "Woman is One of the Names-of-the-father, or How Not to Misread Lacan's Formulas of Sexuation" *Lacanian Ink* 10 (1995) http://www.lacan.com/zizwoman.htm

T,50). What is striking already in this chapter is how little *Untersuchung* is conducted by the *Untersuchungsrichter*. Beyond the magistrate's initial rebuke for K.'s lateness, all that is asked is whether K. is a *Zimmermaler*. The rest of the hearing is dominated entirely by K., and consists of his protestation of his treatment (i.e. victimhood) at the hands of Franz and Willem, his contempt for the proceedings and, of course, his innocence. Having been asked whether he is a *Zimmermaler*, K. supposes a case of mistaken identity, suggesting that the guards were sent to arrest some *Zimmermaler* or other but chose him instead. However, K. appears just as convinced of that person's innocence as he is of his own. In fact, he claims to be taking the podium not for his own sake, but for the many innocents like him who, he seems able to state with certainty, are subject to similar trials. Being on trial, then, appears to be inextricably linked to the condition of being "innocent."

The third chapter, in turn, also contains a protestation of innocence which, while it does not pertain to Josef K. himself, is nonetheless notable for revealing what it means to claim to be *unschuldig* in the novel and, although certainly not in the manner intended by K., confirms his view that only the "innocent" are pursued by the court. The wife of the court usher, whom the student carries away for the pleasure of the *Untersuchungsrichter* just as K. thinks she "belongs" to him, attempts to communicate "...dass sie an der Entführung unschuldig sei"/ "The woman waved down at K., and tried to show by a shrug of her shoulders that the abduction wasn't her fault, but there wasn't a great deal of regret in the gesture. (P,87; T,59). However, to say she does not resist the call of the *Untersuchungsrichter* would be an understatement. She can do nothing about it, she protests, for the examining magistrate has sent for her and she must go. This passivity, however, quickly disappears when K. attempts to intervene on her behalf. She vigorously resists his intervention both verbally and physically, screaming and pushing him away with both hands – the student is only following orders! However, her gesture, a seemingly indifferent shrug of the shoulders betrays, in K.'s eyes, that she is not particularly displeased by her plight (P,87; T,59). Her "innocence" in her abduction, then, consists of denying her agency therein (she *must* go, she has no choice in the matter) at precisely the moment in which she positively and even violently exercises her choice to comply. This state of affairs mirrors closely Josef K.'s own relationship with the court. We have written of the peculiar "Anziehungskraft" of the court, the compulsion to attend that it communicates to him, of K.'s overwhelming tendency of "nachgeben" to this power despite multiple professions of his freedom and of his contempt for the court. It is not merely that he is passively complicit in the trial – by engaging proactively therein, turning up of his own accord, even when no hearing is scheduled, he is unknowingly exercising his agency, as will the *Mann*

*vom Lande* in his lifelong vigil outside the Law, in favour of the trial whilst claiming to be the innocent victim of a corrupt officialdom.

Thus analysed, then, is the steadfast maintenance of Josef K's innocence before the court from beginning to end, from the denial of the very possibility of his culpability in the novel's first sentence to K's similarly bewildered protestations before the priest in the cathedral, the last scene of note prior to the arrival of his executioners. Our analysis suggests, then, that Fleming and O'Carroll's claim that K. suffers under "delusions of agency" is justified only up to a point. K. persuades himself of his mastery and superiority before the court, particularly in the early stages of his trial, whilst impulsively obeying the imperative to attend (if for little other reason than to express this contempt). However, the "delusion of agency" tells only half of the story – set against it is a delusion of victimhood, of being completely without agency, which results in a failure on Josef K.'s part to exercise an agency that could have been expected of him. K.'s sustained insistence upon his "innocence" which, it will be argued here, entails the voluntary occupation of the victim's position and the utopian fantasy of abdicating what agency he *does* possess. As befits the self-defeating tendency that we have outlined, K. complies (albeit "gegen seinen Willen") with his own downfall (whether he realises it or not, this still constitutes the exercise of agency) one that is not omnipotent but demands the exercise of willpower to resist a compulsion which, whether it takes the form of the court's imperatives or the lure of its *femmes fatales*, is nothing without K's internal compulsiveness, his *vorauseilender Gehorsam* and his tendency towards *Nachgeben*.

In the preceding paragraphs, we have established that although Josef K. experiences a compulsion to attend court that exceeds even the supposed demands placed upon him. Furthermore, while we cannot state conclusively that his compulsion is purely internal, we have illustrated that his condition of being on trial is bound to his refusal to exercise will-power rather than self-indulgence. The fragment "zu Elsa" confirms with a previously unseen clarity the suspicion that the ultimate source of the court's immense powers of compulsion is Josef K.'s own compulsiveness, for in it, unlike at any point in the main novel, he defies the compulsive voice in deed as well as in word and thus exposes the objective nullity of the court's powers. His preemptive complicity with the court, out of a compulsion that, it later emerges, would be eminently possible to resist with the requisite willpower, raises a question that will later resurface in relation to the "Fahrt zur Mutter": if the court does not actually want anything from him, just as his mother does not demand his presence, then "Was wollte er dort?"/ "What did he want there?" (P,357; T,199). We have already stated the thesis that the trial is K's source of masochistic gratification and his exaggerated complicity in the face of apparent tyranny

would appear to corroborate this. In Zilcosky's analysis, the journey to the mother was symbolic of K's masochistic homesickness that amounted to a death wish – suffering and death were not ends in themselves but served a utopian agenda. Might this utopian nostalgia provide some explanation for K's similarly inexplicable complicity with his trial? Perhaps the following exchange with the painter Titorelli reveals that Josef K.'s trial serves a similarly nostalgic end:

> „Sie sind unschuldig?" fragte er. „Ja", sagte K. Die Beantwortung dieser Frage machte ihm geradezu Freude, besonders da sie gegenüber einem Privatmann, also ohne jede Verantwortung erfolgte. Noch niemand hatte ihn so offen gefragt. Um diese Freude auszukosten, fügte er noch hinzu: „Ich bin vollständig unschuldig." (P,200)

> "Are you innocent?" he asked. "Yes," said K. Answering this question was a positive pleasure, particularly since he was making the statement to a private citizen, and thus bore no true responsibility. No one had ever asked him so openly. To savour this pleasure to the full, he added: "I am totally innocent." (T,119).

What is this enigmatic "pleasure" or "joy" that K obtains from the affirmation of his innocence, one that he enjoys so much that he would savour it as long as possible? Might this "joy", identified by this passage with the claim to innocence, help to explain K.'s victimhood? From a psychoanalytic perspective, the significance of this "joy" would clearly be its French cognate, *jouissance*, hereby supporting our view, expressed from the outset, that K.'s trial itself is complicit with the realm of the mother, the site of *jouissance*. The innocence that K. wishes to have affirmed by the court in the form of the ideal outcome, a "wirkliche Freisprechung," here appears as the utopian double of the death that is the trial's final outcome, in the same way that the utopian "Fahrt zur Mutter" is also shadowed by the death that it symbolises. Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin resonates logically, furthermore, with Slavoj Žižek's explicitly Lacanian understanding of *Der Proceß*, specifically in relation to the vicious circle of innocence and guilt. As Žižek explains, the more one submits to the super-ego, the more one is punished. The more innocent one desires to be, the guiltier one becomes. Logically, then, this vicious circle must begin by submitting to the super-ego in the first place, by being guilty, by claiming to be innocent. Perhaps this accounts for Willem's claim that the court's watchmen are drawn by guilt? Perhaps the court's super-egoic law is none other than as follows: if you submit to us, you are, by definition, arrested.

According to Žižek, the court is essentially a super-egoic entity underpinned by the "imperative of enjoyment," a "fierce, 'mad' law" that "makes us feel guilty without knowing

what we are guilty of" and thereby "immediately inflicts *jouissance.*"[139] As opposed to other interpretations that equate Josef K.'s super-ego with moral conscience, Žižek follows Lacan's interpretation of the super-ego as an "anti-ethical" agency that compels *jouissance.* The punishment meted out by the super-ego is *jouissance* in the form of guilt. As such, Žižek implicitly views the court, just as Sokel does, as a manifestation of the powers of the primal father-*jouisseur.* It is important at this point to remind ourselves once more of the difference between the two contradictory father figures in Žižek's system of thought, just as we did in the previous chapter. We are not arguing that the court is a function of the (Symbolic) Name-of-the-Father, the paternal function as an intervention into the immediacy of the mother-child dyad and the plenitude of the unmediated, pre-linguistic relationship with the world through the institution of language – the father that explicitly prohibits *jouissance.* Instead, we are arguing, with Žižek, that the court corresponds to the obscene figure of the father-*jouisseur* (whether manifest as psychic or cultural super-ego – for Žižek, both possibilities exist, which supports the idea of inside-outside ambiguity) who compels this regressive *jouissance.* As a manifestation of the super-egoic father-*jouisseur*, the court must hence be regarded as "one of the names-of-the-father" (but *not* the Name-of-the-Father itself) in the same way that Žižek considered Woman to be, most obviously in the figure of the Lady of courtly love. Woman's complicity with the court, then, as we have just interpreted it, should not come as a surprise. However, it might be observed here that Žižek also appears to regard the *jouissance* inflicted by the court, similar to Fleming and O'Carroll, as a force against which no agency is possible. For example, he cites the priest's explanation that the court wants nothing of Josef K., receives him when he comes and lets him go when he leaves as an obvious example of the "mischievous neutrality of the super-ego,"[140] making it seem like K. has a choice in the matter, when he is no less compelled than if he were in custody.

In order to grasp what Žižek means here, let us consider the example of a child being forced to visit his or her grandmother that he uses to illustrate the difference between a father embodying "traditional" Symbolic authority and the "permissive" father-*jouisseur* embodying the "obscene super-ego injunction" that, in Žižek's analysis, also underpins the court.

> Think of the situation known to most of us from our youth: the unfortunate child who, on Sunday afternoon, has to visit his grandmother instead of being allowed to play with friends. The old-fashioned authoritarian father's message to the reluctant boy would have been: "I don't care how you feel. Just do your duty, go to grandmother and behave there properly!" In this case, the child's predicament is not bad at all: although forced to do something he clearly doesn't want to, he will retain his inner freedom and the ability to (later) rebel against the paternal authority. Much more tricky would have been the

[139] Žižek, *Interrogating the Real*, p.131
[140] Žižek, *Interrogating the Real*, p.130

> message of a "postmodern" non-authoritarian father: "You know how much your grandmother loves you! But, nonetheless, I do not want to force you to visit her - go there only if you really want to!" Every child who is not stupid (and as a rule they are definitely not stupid) will immediately recognize the trap of this permissive attitude: beneath the appearance of a free choice there is an even more oppressive demand than the one formulated by the traditional authoritarian father, namely an implicit injunction not only to visit the grandmother, but to do it voluntarily, out of the child's own free will. Such a false free choice is the obscene super-ego injunction: it deprives the child even of his inner freedom, ordering him not only what to do, but what to want to do.[141]

To what extent is this really a false free choice, if we assume that it can be taken at face value (i.e. that if the child refuses, he will not be forced to go)? Undoubtedly, such an injunction replaces a direct obligation with indirect, manipulative emotional blackmail designed to produce guilt. At least theoretically, however, a particularly spirited child might respond "Well I don't want to go, so if I don't have to go, I'm not going." Whilst this would obviously overlook the ethical implications of never visiting one's elderly relatives (although no more so than Žižek's example itself, for in an ideal scenario, I think we could agree, the child would indeed spontaneously want to visit his or her grandmother and not require any such coercion), the issue at hand is the possibility of resisting indirect methods of compulsion. In any case, as Lacan explains and Žižek further insists, super-egoic guilt "has nothing to do with moral conscience as far as its most obligatory demands are concerned."[142] That is, the guilt produced by the super-ego is not to be confused with a conscience qua moral compass, remorse, taking responsibility for one's actions, and so forth. Žižek goes as far as to describe the super-ego as an "anti-ethical" agency.[143] Indeed, did we not illustrate in our reading of *Das Urteil* that guilt was, in fact, the motive of the transgression rather than the response.

Now, it is just as patently unfair to place the burden of responsibility on a child for resisting such indirect compulsion and owning his desire as it is for the hypothetical "obscene" father to burden him or her with the responsibility of decision-making in such a scenario. On the other hand, Josef K., however "arrested" he might be in his development, is of adult age and Žižek is abstracting this paradigm of manipulative compulsion to the workings of a sociocultural authority that likewise applies to adults. Modern capitalist society, as Žižek emphasises, is infused with a super-egotized social law that enjoins us to enjoy. Because one is free to enjoy, this law states, one is obliged to do so, and guilt is produced as a "depressive, self-punitive hatred, and the anxiety that we have not enjoyed enough, or that Others enjoy

[141] Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.93
[142] Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.80
[143] Žižek, *How to Read Lacan*, p.80

more than we do." [144] One can easily understand how, for example, advertising functions by exploiting precisely this impulse. However, just as Josef K. is not physically restrained and brought to court, nor do advertisements put a gun to consumers' heads and people are susceptible to its lures to varying degrees. In fairly close analogy, Fleming and O'Carroll observe in *Der Proceß* the workings of "soft sanctions,"[145] operating through mechanisms of "social disapproval and disapproval." They contend that "social approval and disapproval are powerful forces, and can be even more restrictive — and judgemental — than any court of law." Whilst I am not seeking to deny the compulsive power of social approval and disapproval, they can surely be taken or left far more easily than a trial in a court of law as we know it. Such contentions support the authors' view that K.'s social context makes agency impossible. Could not agency be defined, however, precisely in terms of an ability to confront and not be controlled by such forces, an ability that individuals possess to varying degrees? Does the restrictiveness of such power not vary according to the individual's *need* for social approval, a need that is difficult, but certainly not impossible, to overcome?

As inherently compulsive as enjoyment may be, then, it can be resisted to varying degrees, depending on the extent to which one wants to or is able to resist it. Indeed, in K.'s conversation with Titorelli, as described above, we see the more alluring, pleasurable face of the *jouissance* inherent in claiming innocence. We find our suspicion confirmed that the abdication of this agency is inherent in this *jouissance*: in addition to being a declaration of innocence, K.'s "joy" also stems from the fact that it is being made "ohne jede Verantwortung". Josef K.'s particular pleasure is derived from the abdication of agency implied by not being responsible, further illustrating his penchant for the victim's position. Chapter 10 will see this Josef K. explicitly experience this peculiar "Freude" once more, immediately after a young woman resembling Fräulein Bürstner appears and he decides to accept his fate:

> Es war nichts Heldenhaftes, wenn er widerstand, wenn er jetzt den Herren Schwierigkeiten bereitete, wenn er jetzt in der Abwehr noch den letzten Schein des Lebens zu genießen versuchte. Er setzte sich in Gang, und von der Freude, die er dadurch den Herren machte, ging noch etwas auf ihn selbst über. (P,200)
>
> There would be nothing heroic in resistance, in makingtrouble for these men, in trying to enjoy a final vestige of life by fighting back. He started moving again, and part of the pleasure hegave the men by doing so was transmitted back to him. (T,176)

Yet again, an enigmatic *Freude* comes to be associated with the abdication of agency in the act of *Nachgeben*. K. yields to the two men and, in obtaining their approval, obtains "Freude" i.e.

[144] Sharpe, Matthew and Jeff Boucher, *Žižek and Politics, a Critical Introduction*, p.99
[145] Fleming & O'Carroll, p.34

*jouissance* himself. The deathly nature of this "pleasure" is underlined, of course, by the fact that they are in the process of leading him to his death.

Another important detail that betrays the analogy between the fragment "Fahrt zur Mutter" and the novel as a whole is the revelation that Josef K.'s desire to visit his mother is no longer founded on any actual demand on her part:

> Und die Mutter verlangte gar nicht nach ihm. Früher hatten sich in den Briefen des Vetters die dringenden Einladungen der Mutter regelmäßig wiederholt, jetzt schon lange nicht. Der Mutter wegen fuhr er also nicht hin, das war klar. (P,353)
>
> And his mother was not even asking for him. Previously, pressing invitations from his mother had appeared regularly in his cousin's letters, but for some time now they had not. He wasn't going for his mother's sake then, that was clear. (T,199).

That no actual demand is placed on K. to visit his mother recalls the novel's penultimate chapter, in which he is likewise informed that his attendance is not for the benefit of the court, which is equally indifferent as to whether he turns up. As he is taking leave of Josef K., the priest points out precisely this to him: "Das Gericht will nichts von dir. Es nimmt dich auf, wenn du kommst, und es entlässt dich, wenn du gehst"/ "The court wants nothing from you. It receives you when you come and dismisses you when you go." (T,304; P, 174). Of course, this revelation appears to be firmly at odds with the anonymous verbal imperative to attend delivered over the phone in chapter 2 and what we have written about the operation of 'disciplinary' power. However, if we consider K's dealings with the court a little more closely, we can see the merit in the priest's claim and begin to see more clearly K.'s own role in his plight (agency). Just as K.'s mother initially issued urgent invitations via his cousin, but has since gone quiet, imperatives from the court have been curiously lacking since the initial hearing. Even in the earlier chapters of the novel, Josef K.'s verbal defiance, his expressions of contempt for the court and its officials, his conviction of his own superiority and his frequently reiterated faith in his power to bring a prompt conclusion to his trial is firmly at odds with his unfailing complicity in his actions.

Let the fragment "Zu Elsa" serve as an illumination here, for it truly marks a departure from the paradigm of verbally defiant, but ultimately obedient cooperation that persists throughout the novel. We will see, in an alternate version of the story, that K. himself exposes the objective nullity of this power, that its power dissipates once it is defied through actions and not just words – K. is indeed free to walk away from the court with impunity, as the anonymous interlocutor on the phone is forced to admit once his bluff is called. Its opening reads very similarly to that of "Erste Untersuchung": K. receives an anonymous communication by

telephone, delivered in the court's characteristic register: reported speech with its vague threats and compulsions ("Man warne ihn vor Ungehorsamkeit"/ "He was warned against any failure to obey,P,336; T,190). However, on this occasion, the reader witnesses a resistance in deed that matches his verbal defiance, a resistance that has been lacking elsewhere in the novel and suggests that, perhaps, this encounter does not belong amongst the others. Having made an appointment to visit Elsa, he has already resolved not to attend court and does not deviate from this course of action, displaying a decisiveness that is likewise uncharacteristic of K.'s conduct over the novel as a whole. Uniquely, Josef K. actually enquires about the consequences of failure to comply, preferring for once to know his enemy rather than allowing the compulsion to stand uncontested:

> Immerhin stellte er im Bewusstsein seines guten Rechtes durch das Telephon die Frage, was geschehen würde, wenn er nicht käme. „Man wird Sie zu finden wissen", war die Antwort. „Und werde ich dafür bestraft werden, weil ich nicht freiwillig gekommen bin", fragte K. und lächelte in Erwartung dessen, was er hören würde. „Nein", war die Antwort. „Vorzüglich", sagte K., „was für einen Grund sollte ich dann aber haben, der heutigen Vorladung Folge zu leisten?" (P,337)
>
> Nevertheless, fully aware he had a good excuse, he asked over the phone what would happen if he didn't come. "We'll know how to find you," was the reply. "And will I be punished for failing to come of my own free will?" asked K. and smiled in anticipation of what he would hear. "No," was the reply. "Splendid," said K., "but then what possible reason do I have to comply with today's summons?" (T,190)

Immediately apparent with K's challenge is a change in register, from anonymous reported speech in *Konjunktiv* to the indicative and the direct speech of an interlocutor, although perhaps tellingly, the punctuation of this supposedly direct speech is subsequently employed to indicate K.'s own thoughts. When the ominous but still vague threat that the court will be able to find him is further probed for a specific punishment, the response is an abrupt "Nein." And with this challenge, the void behind the veiled threats is exposed, as yet another unspecified warning follows that it is not the done thing to provoke the court's powers, issued by a "schwächer werdende und schließlich vergehende Stimme"/ "voice, becoming fainter and finally dying away." (P,337; T,191). That the commanding, compelling voice is weakened to the point of withering by enquiring about the substance behind it serves to confirm the suspicion that its ultimate power source is Josef K's disposition towards obedience and compulsion. Having finally dared to challenge the invisible power compelling him, he has rendered it innocuous! It is surely no coincidence that Josef K.'s uncharacteristically substantial resistance to the court coincides with him overcoming his *Unvorsichtigkeit*, strengthening the impression that this tendency is closely related to his persecution by the court: "Man pflegt die Machtmittel des Gerichtes nicht auf sich zu hetzen."/ "People generally avoid inciting the court to exercise its

powers on them," (P,337; T,191) The voice does not say what these *Machtmittel* are, implying that K. would be better off not finding out. K. disagrees: "Es ist sehr unvorsichtig, wenn man das nicht tut ... man soll doch versuchen die Machtmittel kennen zu lernen."/ "It would be very unwise not to incite them," thought K. as he left, "after all, one should try to get to know those powers" (P,337; T,191). Hereby established is a causal relationship between being *unvorsichtig* and being on trial – not daring to confront veiled power. *Unvorsichtigkeit*, however, could yet return him to court. K. fears for a moment that he has absentmindedly given the driver the address of the court, which would have been very *unvorsichtig* but on this occasion he has not and, just to be sure, calls out Elsa's address again. Having steeled himself against *Unvorsichtigkeit*, he appears to escape from the vicious circle of the trial: "Von da an vergaß K. allmählich an das Gericht und die Gedanken an die Bank begannen ihn wieder wie in frühern Zeiten ganz zu erfüllen"/ "From then on K. gradually forgot about the court, and thoughts of the bank began to occupy him fully once more, as in earlier times. (P,338; T,191), which is perhaps the closest thing to a happy ending that one will ever read in a Kafka novel. "Von da an ..."/ "From then on..." suggests that he is untroubled by the court for an indefinite period thereafter, finding fulfilment once more in his career "wie in früheren Zeiten"/ "as in earlier times" (P,338; T,191). This suggests a return to the state of affairs that prevailed before the trial, with its self-doubt, fatigue and absentmindedness reared its head. In other words, the trial would appear to be over.

*Agency Before the Law*

The fragment "Zu Elsa" (Going to Elsa) plays, it might be suggested, with the never realised possibility of Josef K. heeding the lesson that the priest, in his capacity as "prison chaplain", has despairingly tried to teach him in chapter 9 with the parable "Vor dem Gesetz" ("Before the Law"). For how are we to interpret the priest's intervention, if not as a final warning, a plea in fact, for Josef K. to exercise the agency that he does indeed possess, in short: to realise the extent to which his situation is of his own making and help himself for once? The parable likewise treats the themes agency, obedience and daring to confront invisible power. "Vor dem Gesetz steht ein Türhüter. Zu diesem Türhüter kommt ein Mann vom Lande und bittet um Eintritt in das Gesetz."/ " Before the Law stands a doorkeeper. A man from the country comes to this doorkeeper and requests admittance to the Law" (P,292; T,167).

Here we can see immediately that the parable begins not with the *Türhüter* impeding the man's entry, neither verbally (for example, by saying "Halt!") nor physically. He is simply standing by the already open door to the Law. The parable begins, rather, with the *Mann vom*

*Lande* asking for his *permission* to enter – a display of preemptive obedience or *vorauseilender Gehorsam*. What would have happened had the man simply walked through the open, unimpeded door? We do not know, because the option is never explored. Based on the man's assumption that the *Türhüter* will impede his entry, the *Mann vom Lande* cedes his right of entry to the former before asking for it back! The *Türhüter* responds by telling him "... dass er ihm jetzt den Eintritt nicht gewähren könne."/ "that he can't grant him admittance now" (P,292; T,167). He does not say yet that it is impossible for the man to enter, merely that *he cannot grant* him entry now. This raises the question: can he grant him entry at all? Is entry, in fact, even his to grant?

The *Türhüter* does then indeed say "trotz meinem Verbot,"/ "even though I've forbidden it" (P,292; T,167), suggesting that it is indeed a prohibition. However, he undermines, at the very same moment as he issues it, the idea that this "prohibition" is really any such thing, by daring the *Mann vom Lande* to go ahead and walk in despite it. Or, expressed more precisely, by advising the man that he should dare to walk in. As if to emphasise the lack of physical or violent impediment, we are told that the door is open and the *Türhüter* is standing to the side. So, the option of simply walking through the door is indeed offered to the man (in fact, as Ritchie Robertson observes, this is the only actual imperative issued by the doorkeeper)[146] but he opts to wait for a more explicit permission so that he can remain obedient. The man goes to great lengths in order to enter whilst remaining obedient, including bribery. As he is dying, however, he is informed that the door was meant only for him – let us be clear: he was supposed to enter. What prompts this course of action?

> Merke aber: Ich bin mächtig. Und ich bin nur der unterste Türhüter. Von Saal zu Saal stehen aber Türhüter, einer mächtiger als der andere. Schon den Anblick des dritten kann nicht einmal ich mehr vertragen. (P,292)
>
> But bear this in mind: I'm powerful. And I'm only the lowest doorkeeper. From hall to hall, however, stand doorkeepers each more powerful than the one before. The mere sight of the third is more than even I can bear. (T,167)

Here we find two themes that figured prominently in the main plot of *Der Proceß*. Firstly, status: the doorkeeper is "der Unterste" just as Josef K. had, in the opening chapter, to deal with the "niedrigsten Organe," the lowest level of officialdom from the courts. The priest even forwards the interpretation that the doorkeeper is "untergeordnet" in relation to the man from the country. Let us recall Josef K.'s insistence upon his superiority to his guards and to the court, and his longing to talk to an official of the same standing as himself. Secondly, the

[146] Robertson, p.102

question of power: "I am powerful," claims the *Türhüter*. What powers does he possess precisely? By whom has he been granted this power? How, if at all, does he demonstrate it? The only power that we know he possesses is the one ceded to him by the man from the country: the power to "grant him entry". This he cannot do, so arguably, he cannot exercise any legitimate power! And yet, he claims for himself great power and, for his colleagues, even greater power. Yet proof of this power is never required, thus it remains invisible. The doorkeeper is powerful only by virtue of declaring himself so. We are beginning to see, then, that the *Mann vom Lande* remains outside the door, for the remainder of his life, of his own free will, as the priest suggests, due to his obedience and his submission to invisible powers that may not even exist. As the interpretations of the parable indicate, the man is entirely free and can go anywhere besides entering into the Law. Even this is only prohibited by one man, implying that the man's defiance could only meet with limited resistance at best. The power may not even be hidden; it may be nonexistent, for all accounts of the inside of the Law come only from the doorkeeper. The priest suggests that the doorkeeper may overestimate his own power out of conceit; that he may be trying to arouse fear in the man for what he himself fears. He may not even have seen the inside of the Law for himself!

And yet, the *Mann vom Lande* takes his word for it and obeys him. He does not grant himself entry to the Law because, to do so, he would have to dare. He would have to help himself. He would have to confront an unknown power, which may not even exist. This being so, the *Türhüter* has not deceived him, because he truly cannot grant him entry. That the *Türhüter* cannot grant him entry now does not mean that the entrance is not meant for him and him alone, as the priest emphasises. The lesson to be learned from the parable (which of course Josef K. refuses to learn) is a counterintuitive one: the Law – even if its exact content remains unknown – is such that one cannot be within it by obeying it, for such obedience constitutes the abdication of agency and entry is reserved for those who exercise agency. Lest any further evidence is required that the exercise of agency is what is at stake in both the parable *Vor dem Gesetz* and in the priest's final plea to K., let us consider his other advice:

> „Du suchst zuviel fremde Hilfe", sagte der Geistliche missbilligend, „und besonders bei Frauen. Merkst du denn nicht, dass es nicht die wahre Hilfe ist?" „Manchmal und sogar oft könnte ich dir recht geben", sagte K., „aber nicht immer. Die Frauen haben eine große Macht. Wenn ich einige Frauen, die ich kenne, dazu bewegen könnte, gemeinschaftlich für mich zu arbeiten, müsste ich durchdringen." (P,290)

> "You seek too much outside help," the priest said disapprovingly, "particularly from women. Haven't you noticed that it isn't true help." "Sometimes, often even, I'd have to say you're right," said K., "but not always. Women have great power. If I could get a

> few of the women I knowto join forces and work for me, I could surely make it through." (T,166)

Here, the priest reproaches K. for relying too much on the help of others, especially the help of women. We have already noted that, besides the mother-substitutes at his service in the lodging house, K.'s dealings with women, specifically Fräulein Bürstner, the court-usher's wife and Leni, have the double aspect of self-defeating sexual impulses (granting Woman a "große Macht" to which he submits) on the one hand, and the promise of help with his trial on the other. In both senses, then, women come to be associated with a lack of agency of K.'s part – he simply cannot *help himself.* This "help", the priest advises, is not true help, so what is? Is it God's help? Perhaps, if one goes by the maxim that God helps those who help themselves (for example, by giving K. the faith to walk through the door). The overwhelming emphasis of the priest's message, however, is on taking responsibility, especially when he urges K. not to yield someone else's opinion uncritically.

*Justice: The Reward for K.'s Foolishness*

Based upon the foregoing analysis, we can attribute to Josef K. a guilt in which three levels coincide. Firstly, at the religious level observed by Robertson: K.'s guilt does indeed correspond to Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin in structure and theme. In this analysis, K. is indeed guilty, since he protests his innocent victimhood at the hands of the court whilst denying his own agency in his plight. As such, *Der Proceß* might be understood as a re-enactment of the *Sündenfall* and the acquisition of *Erbsünde*, although one protracted re-enactment rather than a repetitive staging of the Fall. The second level might be regarded as the psychoanalytic perspective, with K.'s guilt understood as the self-punishing impulse (victimhood), his yielding to the call to "Enjoy!," whether this *jouissance* takes the form of the super-ego's obligation or the more alluring guise of the maternal utopia, that motivates his complicity with the court. Whilst such *Schuldgefühle* may not refer to anything other than themselves, the idea that guilt in itself might be transgressive is not without precedent, for we already argued that Georg Bendemann's guilt was not the consequence of his repression of his friend and patricidal inversion by stealth, but rather the motive of these transgressions. The third level at which we can understand K.'s guilt, closely related to the other two levels, is as his culpability, his agency in proceedings – that this is precisely what reaps his punishment. Thus understood, K. is on trial because he is indeed guilty, and he is guilty for no other reason than his willingness to obey the court, that is: his *Strafprozess* is the immediate punishment for turning up in court. We might suggest, indeed, that this is symbolised by the location of the

court (and indeed the site of K.'s execution) in the *Vorstadt*. In *Don Quijote*, the protagonist's self-punishment was symbolised by his voluntary flight to *despoblado*, the outside of the *polis*, to a barren, liminal and maternally connoted region in which he literally performed penance in Dulcinea's name. Might it not be that Josef K. steps "outside the law", becomes *Homo Sacer* (i.e. makes himself a scapegoat), in the very act of turning up to court for his *Strafprozess*? Zilcosky, in fact, emphasises the liminal, uncanny qualities of the *Vorstadt* – outside the limits of the city (that is, the *polis*), but not in the country. This observation lends weight to our previous analysis of "Vor dem Gesetz," for the *Mann vom Lande* also spends his life in the liminal state of being *vor-*, neither within the Law nor in the country from whence he came – of his own free will, as the priest explains. Zilcosky also notes how being put to death in such a region aligns K. with the mythical scapegoat, thereby underlining his "sacredness". This sacredness also carries the meaning of being unfit for sacrifice, as per Agamben's definition of *Homo Sacer*. Appropriately, he dies "wie ein Hund" "like a dog" (P,179; T,312), dogs belonging to the category of animals considered unclean and hence unfit for sacrifice by Judaism. Indeed, the *Ungeziefer* into which Gregor Samsa finds himself transformed in *Die Verwandlung*, whilst commonly denoting a beetle or bug, likewise refers literally to an animal that is unclean and unfit for sacrifice, suggesting that he can also be understood in close analogy to the *homo sacer*.

Already, then, we see in *Der Proceß* plentiful echoes of Kafka's interpretation of Original Sin and its close analogy in Žižek's interpretation of the super-ego. We can recall that the psychoanalytic category of super-ego and the problem of the Fall, the root of Original Sin, intersected in our analysis of Don Quijote, and the figure of Titorelli enables us to likewise align Josef K.'s "innocence" allusively to the Garden of Eden and analogous maternally connoted utopias. Consider the painter's claim that true innocence is the only condition of possibility for a "wirkliche Freisprechung." Contradicting his initial opinion that Josef K.'s innocence makes his case "ganz einfach," Titorelli reveals that such acquittals are known only in "Legenden," that is, in communal myth. This revelation already places the absolute innocence that K. claims in the sphere of myth, outside human temporality, just like his mother's village, the store-room in which beatings are administered and, as I have argued, the court itself. That Titorelli has painted such legends acquires special significance when considered alongside his other paintings. On the one hand, there are the pictures of *Heidelandschaften*, for which he is renowned, portraying two "schwache Bäume"/ "frail trees"

(P,220; T,130) separated by grass, the most obvious allusion here being, as Patrick Bridgwater recognises, to the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life.[147]

Titorelli's other painting, meanwhile, of a winged Lady Justice combined with the Goddess of the Hunt (preying upon the "innocent" perhaps) – reminds us that, in Don Quijote's Golden Age, his imaginary age of innocence that he seeks to restore, Lady Justice was also present, symbolising a justice that was absolute, untainted by arbitrary judgement of Good and Evil. It was argued that this unmediated form of Justice was served by *Don Quijote*, since the "trials" he endured were the immediate consequences of his actions, the wages of his folly, one might say. Here we come to the ultimate point that I wish to argue in my reading of *Der Proceß*, namely: that the court, in fact, also dispenses justice! In *Don Quijote*, we took Dulcinea as a cipher for the unmediated Justice that Don Quijote idealised as belonging to the Golden Age. Lady Justice stood on her own ground, unmediated by arbitrary legal judgements. Don Quijote's fantasy of serving Woman in the idealised figure of Dulcinea (who does not exist, of course) through the masochistic performance of manifold feats in her name was an automatically self-punishing transgression that did not require any arbitrary pronouncements on good or evil in order for the deed to reap its just desserts. The fantasy constituted a transgression since Woman disguised the illicit fantasy of possessing the mother, the correlate of Quijote's desire to return to the Golden Age. In *Der Proceß*, this same brand of Justice is etherealised not only in the form of a cipher for Woman qua Lady Justice, but as the paranoid fantasy of an obscene, persecutory court with judges, lawyers and officers lurking behind Woman's sirenesque *Anziehungskraft*. The concept of justice not as arbitrary judgement but as an immediate link between transgression and punishment is likewise suggested to reside in the maternal region in *Der Proceß*, as the outcome of Josef K.'s journey to his mother: "Fuhr er aber in irgendeiner Hoffnung seinetwegen hin, dann war er ein vollkommener Narr und würde sich dort in der schließlichen Verzweiflung *den Lohn seiner Narrheit* holen"/ "But if he was going in hopes of something, for hisown sake, then he was a total fool and would reap only final despair as a *reward for his foolishness*" (my emphasis, T, 354; P,199) What is striking in this instance, firstly, is an apparent shift in narrative perspective - a critical distance that has opened up between narrator and protagonist. We have grown accustomed to Kafka's narrator sharing the protagonist's perspective despite the use of the third-person form. Here, however the narrator passes a thoroughly detached judgement on K.'s actions: if he is going to see his mother for his own sake, in order to indulge his self-pity, then he is a *Narr*. The consequence of such a visit will be a *Verzweiflung* that is mirrored by K.'s growing sense of desperation as he becomes more deeply entangled with the court – Zilcosky has already drawn attention to the

[147] Bridgwater, Patrick. *Kafka's Novels: An Interpretation*, p.165

proliferation of the *ver-* prefix (*Verirrung, Verfahren, Vertretung*), to describe the sense of disorientation and perdition produced by the trial. Moreover, this "desperation" is held by the narrator to be no more than he deserves – since it is the immediate consequence, the reward indeed, for his foolish desire.

We can note, furthermore, that Josef K.'s *Unschuld* bridges the semantic gap between *Narrheit* and *Paradies*, his utopian fantasy of not being responsible, which we can align to his foolish desire to visit the mother and, following Zilcosky, his death wish. This is symbolised brilliantly, in fact, by the scene in which Titorelli sells K. the aforementioned paintings of the bleak yet suggestively Edenic *Heidelandschaft*. Just as K. is about to leave, Titorelli "kriecht" (like the beggar the manufacturer claims that he is) under the bed and offers to sell K. one such painting. K. agrees to buy one, not because he particularly wants one, for we are told that he does not think much of them, but out of a sense of obligation: "K. wollte nicht unhöflich sein"/ "K. didn't wish to be impolite" (P,220 T,130). Out of a belief that even a polite refusal would be *unhöflich*. K not only feels obliged to buy the painting, but to pretend to like it and want to buy it:

> „Schön", sagte K., „ich kaufe es." K. hatte unbedacht sich so kurz geäußert, er war daher froh, als der Maler, statt dies übel zu nehmen, ein zweites Bild vom Boden aufhob. „Hier ist ein Gegenstück zu diesem Bild", sagte der Maler. Es mochte als Gegenstück beabsichtigt sein, es war aber nicht der geringste Unterschied gegenüber dem ersten Bild zu merken (P,220)
>
> "Nice," said K., "I'll buy it." K. had spoken curtly without thinking, so he was glad when, instead of taking it badly, the painter picked up another painting from the floor. "Here's a companion piece to that picture," said the painter. It may have been intended as a companion piece, but not the slightest difference could be seen between it and the first one (T,130)

We can see already the resonance here with Žižek's anecdote above. However, K. reaps only punishment for yielding to his internal obligation and being unable to say no. It seems fairly clear that Titorelli is taking K. for a fool here, sensing K.'s foolish politeness and selling him the same picture repeatedly. Even if Titorelli is truly so deluded as to believe that K. really does want several copies of the same painting, then K.'s pretence has surely played a role in that delusion. This scene, then, symbolises the interconnection of *Paradies*, *Unschuld* and *Narrheit*. K., out of a desire not to offend (remain innocent), plays the fool and 'buys' (in the sense of being fooled, taken in by) the image of paradise, not once but repeatedly, since he does not learn to say no after the first occasion.

Furthermore, that this brand of justice might be what is at stake in the trial is in fact, intimated as early as the initial stages of Josef K.'s arrest:

> ...wohl aber erinnerte er sich – *ohne dass es sonst seine Gewohnheit gewesen wäre, aus Erfahrungen zu lernen* – an einige, an sich unbedeutende *Fälle*, in denen er zum Unterschied von seinen Freunden mit Bewusstsein, ohne das geringste Gefühl für die möglichen Folgen, sich *unvorsichtig* benommen hatte und dafür *durch das Ergebnis gestraft worden war.* Es sollte nicht wieder geschehen, zumindest nicht diesmal; war es eine Komödie, *so wollte er mitspielen.* (P,12 – my emphasis)

> ... but he clearly recalled – although he generally didn't make it a practice to learn from experience – a few occasions, unimportant in themselves, when, unlike his friends, he had deliberately behaved quite recklessly, without the least regard for his future, and had suffered the consequences.[148] That wasn't going to happen again, not this time at any rate: if this was a farce, he was going to play along. (T,19)

These few lines provide an extremely dense, economical portent of the errant path upon which K. is about to embark. For a start, the idea of immediate justice as "den Lohn seiner Narrheit" is echoed loudly in the memory of previous occasions in which K. was likewise *unvorsichtig* and "... durch das Ergebnis bestraft worden war" – here, too, he was punished, by the consequences of his own reckless behaviour, not by the arbitrary pronouncements of a judge. K.'s foolishness is further evoked here most obviously in his habit of not learning from his experiences which, as Patrick Bridgwater contends, is as good a definition of a fool as any. Indeed, K. resolves never to repeat those "an sich unbedeutend" *Fälle* (this being Kafka, the fact that they are described as such guarantees their significance!) but, in the very same moment, reasons that that he should *mitspielen* – complicity with the trial being the very course of action that repeats this pattern.

K.'s abdication of agency does indeed result in a return to innocence in the sense implied by the "Fahrt zur Mutter." In other words, a death wish results in death, albeit with responsibility even for death abdicated. We have read Josef K.'s trial as an exercise in victimhood – essentially a protracted suicide that takes exactly one year and could have been accomplished much more quickly if he had simply done the deed in his room when the thought of it occurred to him during his arrest. To ask whether Josef K. deserves his death is as redundant as asking whether he would have 'deserved' to die if he had hanged himself in his room on the morning of his arrest. He arranged his own death, as Zilcosky has already argued. The only difference is that it took a lot longer and required the assistance of a persecutory court to assume the agency thereof, which is further underlined at the end of the novel as Josef K. refuses to take the knife and do the deed himself. For Zilcosky, this refusal to take the knife and insistence instead upon his persecution is precisely what marks K.'s death out as masochistic.

[148] This translation does not convey, in the same manner as the original German" "durch das Ergebnis", that the result is the immediate punishment, literally: "punished by the outcome".

As such, justice in *Der Proceß* goes beyond the matter of "deserving", for his foolish guilt, the delusion of his innocence, is self-punishing in every sense.

In the present chapter, then, we located Kafka within a context dominated by the idea of 'return', while noting the sheer persistence of the Quixotic impulse. We posited that the relationship between Don Quijote and Kafka's protagonists was a dialectic of continuity and circularity: both are writing in crucial moments of crisis in modernity, but both can be seen to be continuous with one another within the tradition of shadowing modernity. We illustrated in detail the Quixotic tendencies of both Georg Bendemann and Josef K., their circuitous return to the realm of the mother, to death, via the 'errant path'. Whereas Georg Bendemann and Josef K. might appear a descendents of Sancho Panza, they differ from him in a number of respects. Whereas Sancho Panza assumes responsibility for his daemon and does not succumb to him despite being his natural target, Kafka's protagonists disown theirs and end up following the 'errant path' towards death. Where Sancho Panza exercises agency and spares himself unnecessary unpleasure, resisting the lure of paid bondage, Kafka's protagonists embrace the victim's role and are punished by the consequences.

# III

## THE JUDGEMENT ON MODERNITY

In the previous two chapters of this thesis, we discerned a common story that transcends the Kafka's *Das Urteil* and *Der Proceß* and Cervantes' *Don Quijote*: the passage along circuitous 'errant path' towards death. Let us remind ourselves of the outline of this story before proceeding to discern its presence in various theoretical discourses on modernity:

i) *Homelessness:* We have seen, over the course of the previous two chapters, that common to both Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka's *Urteil* there is an absent mother. In Kafka's *Urteil*, the death of Georg Bendemann's mother, who on the surface of the story is characterized by nothing other than her absence, foregrounds the story. Josef K. has left his home in his mother's village at a premature age.

ii) *Flight from the Feminine*: In *Das Urteil*, Georg's friendship with his double in Russia is structured as a *Fort!-Da!* gesture, while overt mourning for his dead mother is absent. Josef K. leaves home at a young age and rejects all maternal affection. In *Don Quijote*, voluntary absence from the female object of desire, be it mother or mother-substitute, is

a recurrent feature: Don Quijote's pursuit of a lifestyle that could not be any further removed from the plentitude of his Golden Age ideal; Grisóstomo's voluntary absence from Marcela and Anselmo's from Camila. Josef K., we learn briefly, has always rejected rather than welcomed maternal affections.

iii) *Causa sui:* In *Don Quijote*, the hero's self-creation from the *Logos* of chivalric romance constitutes an autonomous rebirth as Don Quijote de La Mancha that functions simultaneously as a parodic repetition of Genesis. Furthermore, his account of the institution of his profession, knight errantry, is accompanied by a declaration that they, and he by extension, are God's representatives on Earth, thereby effacing the difference in "rank" between "soldier" and "captain". In *Das Urteil*, Georg Bendemann's renaissance as the successful head of the family business is a stealth displacement of his own father from the same position. Josef K. has separated from his childhood at an early age and, to this extent, is self-fashioned. Furthermore, he does not recall having received any paternal care as a child.

*iv)* *Justice as self-punishment:* In *Don Quijote Part II*, the end of the hero's career is brought about by a defeat inflicted upon him by his double: the bachelor Sansón Carrasco, a reader of *Part I*. His conqueror goes by the title "Knight of the White Moon", suggesting that he is a rival devotee of the Virgin/Goddess/Eternal Feminine/Woman etc. Carrasco has previously suffered defeat under the moniker of Knight of the Mirrors – and whilst wearing reflective foil armour – underlining the view that Don Quijote's one victory is in fact self-defeat. In Kafka's *Urteil*, Georg's self-reflexive execution of the sentence passed upon him by his father-rival is particularly underlined by the use of the reflexive "fühlte sich" (felt himself) to describe the force driving him out of the room to his death by drowning. Josef K. endures a year-long ordeal at the hands of a court that, essentially, lets him come and go as he pleases. He is on trial for the immediate fact of his cooperation with the court, playing the victim and failing to help himself. This play of victimhood culminates in a death for which he had already prepared in advance.

v) *Progressive regression to "Lebloses"*: In *Don Quijote*, the knight's death is immediately prefigured by a return to the "feigned Arcadia" of the pastoral setting – the maternal, pseudo-utopian world from which his quest departs and the world that he declares as his mission to restore. In Kafka's *Urteil*, Georg's "Tode des Ertrinkens" precipitates in a return to oceanic unity with the greater whole. Josef K., in a moment of

self-pity, experiences an inexplicable urge to visit his mother in her unchanging village, this visit being symbolic of a voyage unto death. It is the court that delivers this return.

Having undertaken a close reading of Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka'a *Das Urteil* and *Der Proceß,* we come to the third and final chapter of this dissertation, in which our attention will turn to the 300 years that separate them – an epoch widely theorized as 'modernity'. The current chapter will set itself a twofold task: one the one hand, it will seek to forward a theorization of modernity in a narrative that reveals its analogies to what we have presented of Cervantes and Kafka, thus arguing that the work of those authors can be read as allegories of modernity. On the other hand, this chapter will also seek to contextualise both Cervantes and Kafka, chronologically, within this narrative of modernity. The previous two chapters have revealed an uncanny structural repetition between two bodies of work in which repetition itself is to the fore. The task that remains is to account for this repetition. In the previous two chapters, we noted the simultaneity of the subject's self-constitution and its being on the path towards self-destruction, or decentring. The argument of this chapter centres on a similar tendency within the subject of modernity. We will seek to draw a line from the advent of the Modern subject, with a decentring that forms the backdrop to Cervantes' novel at the turn of the 17th century, to the crisis or decentring of that subjectivity that is effected in Kafka's fiction. Freud, arguably the principal architect of the corresponding decentring at the turn of the 20th century in which we will seek to contextualise Kafka, has himself drawn the parallel between his own discovery of the unconscious and the decentring that founds modernity, with which he credits Copernicus. This chapter aims to explain, how, in analogy to the previous two chapters, the first decentring necessitates the second – why Cervantes leads to Kafka. A critical interpretation of some existing theories of the advent and alleged decline of modernity, principally with the writings of Foucault, but also with considerable focus on Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, will be our means of accomplishing this task.

*Foucault's Renaissance: A maternal utopia?*

The first step, however, will be to go back to the beginning before the beginning of modernity. Our engagement with Bordo in the introduction presented us with a working hypothesis on theoretical modernity, which we have sought to critique and add to in the course of this dissertation. Foucault's account of the Renaissance *episteme* in *The Order of Things* will be our first accompaniment in this task. To begin with, let us properly establish that there is indeed a substantial intersection – a basis for dialogue, so to speak – between Bordo and Foucault. In our engagement with Foucault's Renaissance, we will seek to corroborate the picture of pre-modern

epistemology painted by Bordo in her essay. Of particular importance, initially, will be to scrutinize her thesis of a pre-Cartesian sense of unity with the mother-world. This will entail being satisfied, firstly, that Foucault's account is 'about' the same mother as Bordo's essay and, secondly, that man perceives himself as being one with her.

As a starting point in the dialogue, it is quite apparent that both Bordo and Foucault are dealing with the same epistemological moment, coinciding as they do upon a crisis of knowledge beginning, approximately, at the turn of the seventeenth century. Foucault expresses the shift as an epistemological rupture, from what he terms the Renaissance *episteme* to the Classical *episteme*. Unlike Bordo, however, Foucault does not apply a gendered framework to his analysis of the Renaissance. As a consequence, the categories of mother and father are not immediately given. However, their presence can be quite easily extrapolated from the analogy to Bordo. We can ascertain without too much difficulty that their theses both deal with a similar epistemological question: the relationship of the human and the natural, and the possibility of knowing the object world. It is quite apparent, then, that man's relationship to the 'maternal' figures in Bordo's account (the universe and nature) and humankind's relationship to them are what is at stake in Foucault's discussion of the Renaissance *episteme*.

We have established from the outset that Foucault's account is indeed about the 'mother' of Bordo's account, even though "she" is not described in such terms. However, this does not automatically imply that there is anything "maternal" about Foucault's depiction of this universe – this will require further justification. Furthermore, there remains to be considered the question of the extent to which the knowing subject of the Renaissance *episteme* considers itself as being one with "her". Given that the paradigm, if not the argument, that I wish to advance is the same as that of Bordo, it will be necessary to consider in the course of this section the extent to which Foucault's account could legitimately be expressed in terms of mother, father and subject. I will identify from Foucault's Renaissance the mother as universe and hence as knowable totality, the father as God, who places restrictions upon what can be known, and the knowing subject as standing in relation to the aforementioned.

Let us begin with the problem of the universe's "maternity", which was very explicit in Bordo's essay but is conspicuous by its absence (or unspoken presence?) in *The Order of Things*. Recall that, in our engagement with Bordo, the Kristevan concepts of abjection and the abject proved to be very informative indeed. The 'flight from the feminine' – the absenting of the mother-world and of the epistemology that had indicated man's former oneness with her – was described as an act of abjection. Might Kristeva's intervention assist us here also? It is my

intention here to supplement our characterisation of the greater, knowable universe as 'mother' by comparing it to that which, according to Kristeva, the subject inhabits prior to separation from her, thereby also dealing with the question of the subject's "being one" with her. We will consider the Renaissance universe as *chora* or as a maternal space inhabited by Foucault's subject prior to the change of *episteme* or the 'flight from the feminine'. What makes an analogy between Foucault's Renaissance universe and Kristeva's semiotic *chora* quite apposite indeed is a word that is one of the most frequently recurring throughout *The Order of Things*: space. This, of course, is the fundamental Platonic usage of, and indeed the simplest translation of, the word *chora*, although the word also carries the meaning of a womb or receptacle of forms.

Let us remind ourselves, at this juncture, of the maternal qualities of Kristeva's *chora*. Kristeva takes her lead from Plato's *Timaeus* in characterising the *chora* as a specifically maternal space, noting that Plato describes the *chora* as maternal and nourishing.[1] Plato states that *chora* is not yet ordered as a unified whole since deity is lacking in it. Kristeva is likewise explicit on the point that the *chora* should not, in contrast to other psychoanalytic perspectives on the maternal body, be considered as representing an original unity, preceding as it does the father. Kristeva's *chora* is described as "... receptacle, unnameable, anterior to naming ... to the father and, consequently, maternally connoted."[2] The *chora*, being anterior to both naming and the father in Kristeva's description, however, implies the relationship between mother and child, of continuum between the two bodies that is not sundered by paternal intervention. As such, Kristeva contends that the *chora* precedes the Law, since she prefers to reserve that particular term for the Symbolic Order, to which has not yet been acceded. However, that is not to say that it is without order, for Kristeva states quite explicitly that the *chora* is subject to an ordering principle, and that this principle is given by the maternal body and characterised by continuum.

While Foucault stops short of explicitly gendering space in the same way, there are several correspondences with Kristeva's explicitly maternal counterpart and, more generally, with the idea of space as substratum of reality, in Foucault's renaissance *episteme*. However, this is not to say that *chora*, in this sense, is the only possible conceptualization or ordering of space. The question of space, how space is ordered and the possibilities for thinking space, goes to the heart of what *The Order of Things* is about, as first becomes clear when the introduction

[1] We should note here that Susan Bordo likewise cites the Platonic view of the universe as receptacle of forms, "the substratum of all material reality" – in other words: as *chora*, even though she does not call it such – as forming a crucial part of the tradition in Western thought for seeing the universe as mother prior to the "Cartesian" reconstruction (CMT, p.452)

[2] Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, p.26

opens with the famous passage from Jorge Luis Borges' essay "The Analytical Language of John Wilkins", about the classification of animals in a Chinese encyclopaedia.[3] Within *The Order of Things*, Foucault distinguishes three discrete epochs – *episteme*, in his terminology – constituted by the differing ways in which they conceive of and order space. We must therefore proceed through a detailed analogy between the space of the Renaissance universe and the semiotic *chora* in order to justify our analogy. We can do this most convincingly by considering Kristeva's *chora*, beyond the maternal character that we have already discussed, in terms of the semiotic modality of signification that she attributes to it. When we compare this modality with the view of language which, according to Foucault, is in operation during the Renaissance, some striking parallels begin to emerge. However, before we proceed to discuss the specifically linguistic aspects of the Renaissance's system of signification, there is much to comment on regarding the system underlying the production of meaning in Foucault's Renaissance, that which corresponds, in Kristeva's terms, to the "drive economy" underlying those signifying practices.

Recall that, in Bordo's account the opposition of "masculine" and 'feminine' epistemological stances denoted separation and connectedness respectively. Whilst Foucault does not share Bordo's paradigm, both authors do share a tension, as far as the cosmos and nature are concerned, between the extremes of separation and unity. What is clear is that the orientation of Renaissance epistemology is very much weighted towards continuity and non-differentiation i.e. reduction to one. For it is a cosmos in which a definite order prevails, an order characterised by continuity, which we have just identified as the ordering principle given by the maternal body. The universe is conceived, by Foucault's Renaissance, as a greater whole in which the constituent parts are continuous, from the smallest and most insignificant to the monumental. The earth reflects with the sky, the stars reflect plants and herbs and the number of fish in the sea corresponds to the number of animals on land. Foucault describes the order thus: "The world is linked together like a chain. At each point of contact there begins and ends a link that resembles the one before ... holding the extremes apart (God and matter) and yet bringing them together." (OT,18)

Furthermore, Foucault's account of the Renaissance *episteme* would seem to provide an excellent corroboration of Bordo's account of epistemology prior to the "Cartesian Reconstruction". In Bordo's essay, we read a citation of James Hillman in which he described the modern scientific consciousness as the long sharpened tool of the masculine mind which

[3] Borges, "The Analytical Language of John Wilkins" cited OT, p. xiv

had discarded parts of its own substance, calling them (falsely) "female", "Eve" and so on. We read this as implying that "pre-Cartesian" consciousness was undifferentiated, prior to the cultural "abjection" or 'flight from the feminine' that was the Cartesian reconstruction. In Foucault's account, we find this fairly explicitly corroborated in his explanation that Renaissance learning was a seemingly unstable mixture of erudition, magic, and "an already awakened awareness of that sovereign rationality in which we recognise ourselves ..." (OT,31) That this rationality, which Bordo would describe as masculine, has not yet made its exclusive claim to knowledge, supports the view that the Renaissance precedes the 'flight from the feminine' and that this "flight" corresponds to the change of *episteme*. Foucault provides us with one very explicit echo of Bordo with regard to the question of 'feminine' epistemology. Bordo variously mentions the concepts of *resemblance* and *antipathy* as commonplaces of pre-modern knowledge and as examples of the 'feminine' way of knowing that will come to be discarded. This is corroborated by Foucault's account, according to which resemblance or *similitude* is the fundamental concept in Renaissance epistemology, the glue which brings the continuum together. The Renaissance, as we have just discussed, thinks in terms of the ordered cosmic whole in which continuity reigns and resemblance is precisely what indicates the connectedness of everything, making it a 'feminine' epistemology *par excellence*, in Bordo's terms. It was by similitudes that the universal whole was constituted: "The entire nature of things, their coexistence, the way in which they link together and communicate is nothing other than their resemblance" (OT,28). The four forms of similitude (amongst many more) singled out by Foucault for attention are *convenientia,* based on physical proximity, which would apply, for example, to the body and the soul; *aemulatio*, denoting resemblances separated across space (eg. an object and its reflection; the light of the eyes and the light of the sun); *analogy*, denoting more abstract, conceptual relationships: "For example, the relation of the stars to the sky in which they shine may also be found: between plants and the earth, between living beings and the globe they inhabit ..."; and *sympathy*, "... an instance of the Same so strong and so insistent that it will not rest content to be merely one of the forms of likeness; it has the dangerous power of assimilating, of rendering things identical to one another, of mingling them, of causing their individuality to disappear" (OT,23). It is that final form of similitude, sympathy, so powerful that it would "reduce the world to a homogenous mass, to a featureless form of the Same" (OT,23), that most strongly expresses the tendency towards homogeneity of Renaissance knowledge. Were it not for its counter-balancing tendency, *antipathy*, the only force working in the direction of separation, writes Foucault, the entire universe would be in danger of being reduced to a point or "to a homogenous mass," that is: to one (OT,23). Let us remind ourselves of the language with which Foucault describes this tendency: "By positing resemblance as the link between signs and what they indicate ... sixteenth century knowledge condemned itself to

never knowing anything but the same thing, and to knowing that thing only at the unattainable end of an endless journey" (OT,29).

*Continuity of Man with the Universe*

In our discussion of Bordo, we argued that the 'feminine' epistemology could only legitimately be described as such – in the absence of any compelling argument linking it to how women actually think – to the extent that it was "abject," i.e. that it was the "substance" of the union with the mother-world. What Foucault's account also confirms is the role of resemblance, the 'feminine' epistemological method, in upholding this sense of being one with the world, the continuity between the human and natural spheres. For the continuity between all parts in the Whole includes continuity between man and the Whole:

> There does exist, however, in this space, furrowed in every direction, one particularly privileged point: it is saturated with analogies (all analogies can find one of their necessary terms there), and as they pass through it, their relations may be inverted without losing any of their force. This point is man: he stands in proportion to the heavens, just as he does to animals and plants, and privileged as he does also to the earth, to metals, to stalactites or storms. Upright between the surfaces of the universe, he stands in relation to the firmament (his face is to his body what the face of heaven is to the ether; his pulse beats in his veins as the stars circle the sky according to their own fixed paths; the seven orifices in his head are to his face what the seven planets are to the sky); but he is also the fulcrum upon which all these relations turn, so that we find them again, their similarity unimpaired, in the analogy of the human animal to the earth it inhabits: his flesh is a glebe, his bones are rocks, his veins great rivers, his bladder is the sea, and his seven principal organs are the metals hidden in the shafts of mine.s (OT,21)

According to Kristeva, metaphor and metonymy, that is to say, relationships of *likeness*, are indissociable from the drive economy underlying the semiotic. This drive, Kristeva explains, serves to "connect and orient the body to the mother". Hence the *chora* represents not so much an original unity, but rather an orientation *towards* non-differentiation from the mother, since the maternal body is the object of the drive. This finds its correlate in the reciprocal, metaphorical continuity between "the human animal and the planet he inhabits", between man and 'mother' Earth. Furthermore, the *chora* is described by Kristeva in *Powers of Horror* as a "receptacle of narcissism".[4] Correspondingly, pre-modern man is described as being not only continuous with the cosmic order but also, as occupying a narcissistic position within that order constituted by analogies. "He is the great fulcrum of proportions – the centre upon which relations are concentrated and from which they are once again reflected" (OT,22) Man places himself at the centre of the universe to the extent that he marks the fulcrum of all these

[4] Kristeva, *Powers of Horror*, p.13

metaphors. Not only does he partake of this tendency towards non-differentiation, but he is the focal point of this tendency, a privileged point within the web of resemblances, as directly opposed to the privileged (Archimedean) point outside of the object world which he will come to covet in modernity.

*The Whole as Jouissance*

Hitherto in our consideration of Foucault's Renaissance *episteme*, we have corroborated Bordo's account by establishing the presence of the maternal figures (even though they are not described in such terms) of universe, world and nature as the greater, knowable whole. We have noted that, in Foucault's Renaissance, epistemology remains undifferentiated along gender lines, at least as Bordo defines them. We have pointed to resemblance as a "feminine epistemology" par excellence that indicates the interconnectedness, through likeness, of all things within the universal whole, including the oneness of self and the greater whole. The universe, according to the Renaissance worldview laid out by Foucault, is conceived as a continuum in which everything is linked by relationships of likeness, with man marking the pivotal point within this continuum.

We can begin to understand, then, that according to the Renaissance worldview outlined by Foucault, the universe is conceived as an aspirational epistemological whole, a totality of resemblances that, in turn, all tend towards reduction to an ever elusive "same thing" that will have been revealed, "at the end of an endless journey" (OT,29), once all signs have been interrogated and their hidden similitudes uncovered. The doctrine of resemblance, then, can be described as a "totalizing" epistemology to the extent that it presumes itself, at least aspirationally, of being able to account for this whole. The totalizing aspirations of the epistemology of resemblance can be witnessed in Foucault's explanation that all knowledge must refer back to the greater whole in order to be validated: "The whole world," he writes, "... if even the slightest of analogies is to be justified and finally take on the appearance of certainty" (OT,29). We have already discussed the notion of the small things being continuous with the whole to the point where the homogenization of all is threatened. Even the mechanism that is conceived to prevent this tendency from being fully realized by imposing tangible limits on this continuity, the microcosm, is premised on the micro as a repetition of the macro and remains therefore dependent on the greater whole in order to be a thing of certainty.

Thus outlined, then, is the Renaissance's fixation on the whole. The constellation described above takes on even greater significance with regards to the 'maternity' of the

universe when examined from the Lacanian/Kristevan perspective we have chosen. The tendency of 16th century knowledge, as outlined by Foucault, is towards a privileged point of non-differentiation with the greater whole (a unity that Freud would describe as "oceanic"). We can deduce three parallel tendencies that are highly relevant for this discussion's psychoanalytic turn: firstly, reduction of the greater universal whole to one, undifferentiated "same thing"; secondly; capturing this unobtainable "thing" that is the whole and undivided knowledge and thirdly, the non-differentiation or fusion of man with this greater whole that is to be reduced to a "thing". These three processes – obtaining wholeness, obtaining a sublime "thing" and achieving non-differentiation — combine to suggest that the orientation of Renaissance epistemology is towards the experience of maternal *jouissance*, as we might expect within the *chora*. Indeed, the Lacanian scholar, Bruce Fink, has already made the connection between *jouissance* and the lure of the epistemological whole in modernity – for example, the possibility of formulating the "theory of everything" in a single scientific discourse – in an article entitled "Knowledge and *Jouissance*".[5] Within the discourse of the Whole, Fink attributes particular significance to the circle as its geometric representation. Accordingly, Foucault also presents us with a description in which circles, the geometric symbol of the Whole, abound. The circle represents, in its smaller form, the single instances of resemblance that relate to one another either as though linked in a chain "circle to circle" (as in *convenientia*), or as "a series of concentric circles reflecting or rivalling one another" (as in *aemulatio*). On a larger scale, the entire system of similitudes itself forms a circle, albeit one that remains incomplete until rendered "perfect and manifest" by the signs that indicate similitude but also resemble the things they indicate (OT,24).

This, then, is the specifically utopian dimension of Renaissance epistemology: the promise of a whole and undivided knowledge that will one day be revealed in its entirety – a promised *jouissance* that is conceived as an ultimate good in its interminable absence.

*The Renaissance approach to signification and its relationship to the semiotic modality*

Our juxtaposition of Foucault's Renaissance universe with the maternal *chora* is strengthened, but also challenged, by his description of the epoch's understanding of language. On the one hand, Foucault presents us with a description of understanding and practice pertaining to

[5]See Fink, Bruce. "Knowledge and Jouissance" in Suzanne, Barnard, and Bruce Fink. *Reading Seminar XX: Lacan's Major Work on Love, Knowledge, and Feminine Sexuality* , pp.21-46. Interestingly, Fink's metaphor for this totalization is the Archimedean Point – the privileged point of separation outside of the totality from which to behold it. However, as already argued, the Renaissance instead seeks the privileged point of non-differentiation *within* the greater Whole.

language that bears more than a passing resemblance to the semiotic modality of signification, which, according to Kristeva, operates in the *chora*. Both Foucault and Kristeva coincide (albeit without any mutual reference) in critiquing the modern understanding of language, which they describe in very similar terms. Kristeva's positing of the semiotic as an alternate modality of signification is intended as a challenge to the contemporary theorization of language that, in her view, limits itself to consideration of the Symbolic modality. The pillars of the Symbolic modality – most notably the "Cartesian" view of language as a medium for representing thought and the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified – are similarly criticised by Foucault as reflecting only the "Classical" view of language. That is to say: the view belonging to the *episteme* that follows the Renaissance. Foucault similarly seeks to illustrate that, during the Renaissance, a different view of language was in operation. The Renaissance subject did not yet conceive of language as "a totality of independent signs" (OT,34), a communicative tool with an arbitrary relationship to its representative content. In Kristeva's terms, it does not yet correspond to the modern understanding of language that is based on the Symbolic modality.

According to Kristeva, the Symbolic modality specifically governs language (although not exclusively) in its social usage, whereas the semiotic modality underpins all signifying practices, including those relating to language. The semiotic, which is anterior to, yet supports the symbolic, thus constitutes a common modality underlying both language and everything else that signifies. Despite its name, the semiotic modality operates not in terms of "signs" but rather in terms of psychical "marks and traces" that go towards constituting the *chora*. As Kristeva explains: "We understand the term semiotic in its Greek sense ... = distinctive mark, trace, index, precursory sign...imprint, trace, figuration."[6] Foucault's account of the Renaissance shares with Kristeva's account of the semiotic *chora* the idea of a common modality of signification underpinning both language and other things that signify. These other things that signify, according to Foucault, are the natural signatures, traces and "hieroglyphics" upon things that indicate a buried similitude. According to Foucault, the relationships of resemblance and antipathy discussed previously are by default buried and invisible, yet indicated by signatures, the marks upon things. Illustrating the manner in the doctrine of resemblance reinforces itself, the relationship between a sign and the likeness it indicates is yet another similitude. For example, one can discern the medicinal quality of the walnut in relation to the human head by their resemblance to one another: "what cures 'wounds of the pericranium' is the thick green rind covering the bones – the shell – of the fruit; but internal head ailments may be prevented by use of the nut itself 'which is exactly like the brain in appearance'" (OT,26).

[6] Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p.25

The Renaissance subject does not view language and the signatures upon things as being fundamentally different. Corresponding both to the overall tendency towards non-differentiation that we have described above, and language is sign – nothing more and nothing less. Language belongs to the vast network of natural signs that make accessible to man the concealed resemblances, "interwoven with the forms of the world ... [partaking] in the world-wide dissemination of similitudes and signatures" (OT,34). Furthermore, Foucault tells us, language obeys the same laws of resemblance and opposition amongst its letters to which signs are also subject. "There is no difference," Foucault writes, "between the visible marks ... stamped upon the earth, so that we may know its inner secrets, and the legible words that the Scriptures or the Sages of Antiquity have set down in the books preserved for us by tradition" (OT,32). Indeed, in their myth of origin, they are conceived as being entirely identical. The original Adamic language, "... that primal written word whose return [is simultaneously promised and postponed]" is nothing more than the marks and signatures upon things (OT,40).

Accordingly, Renaissance signifying practice pertaining to interpreting language does not differ from that pertaining to the signatures upon things: "The process is everywhere the same: that of the sign and its likeness" (OT,34). Moreover, these signifying practices bear more than a mere passing resemblance to the semiotic modality. The marks and traces of Kristeva's semiotic order are articulated according to their "resemblance and opposition" and constitute the *chora* as a "continuum" between the different parts of the body itself and the body and between the infantile and maternal bodies.[7] Did we not just discuss the role of the Renaissance doctrines of resemblance and antipathy in constituting man's metaphorical continuum with the cosmos?

Kristeva differentiates the semiotic further from the symbolic by reconfiguring the relationship of the linguistic to the extra-linguistic. The semiotic, she writes, is "... a modality of significance in which the linguistic sign is not yet articulated as the absence of the object".[8] Again, this has its direct parallel in Foucault's Renaissance. A similar relationship characterises the word's relationship with the thing, for this is not an arbitrary relationship between signifier and signified. The "profound kinship" between the word and the thing has not yet been sundered, for they are conjoined by a third element of resemblance, just like the signature to the concealed similitude. Words and things are therefore not decisively differentiated for the Renaissance subject. Language does not sever him from the immediacy of the object (-world) in the same way as the modern subject. In this sense, then, it could be claimed that the epoch's

[7] Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p.27
[8] Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p.26

conceptualization of language is pre-Symbolic or semiotic from a Kristevan perspective.[9] A crucial difference, however, will be discussed below.

*God as Name: Linguistic mediation and prohibition*

Whilst Foucault does not speak explicitly of a gendered 'mother' universe in the Renaissance *episteme*, then, its orientation appears to be firmly towards the experience of *jouissance*. In this sense, the late modern reader could be forgiven for the temptation to read Foucault's account as a direct corroboration of Bordo's essay, of the pre-modern universe as a metaphorical *chora* and the premodern experience as that of "being one with the world", based on what has been presented of their similarity thus far. Indeed the commonalities are many: Foucault's Renaissance is an epoch that quite clearly thinks in terms of the Whole and the continuity between all things. It is an *episteme* that seems to tend overwhelmingly towards non-differentiation: of rationality and magic, of language and natural signs, of words and the things to which they refer. We have just considered Foucault's Renaissance epistemological outlook in terms of habitation of the universe as *chora*. Kristeva is explicit on the point that the *chora* is anterior to the father, following on from Plato's description of *chora* as lacking in unity because there is no deity. Are we to take it, then, that Foucault's Renaissance should be read as another Golden Age of sorts, a continuum of all things within the maternal *chora*, a state of "being one with the world" not yet mediated by the father?

Before coming to any such conclusion, let us firstly recall that these tendencies towards wholeness and homogeneity are not absolute. We have already touched upon the separation of microcosm and macrocosm and the power of antipathy as separating tendencies. To these principles of separation that prevent total unity, homogeneity and immediacy, we can also add God the father, thereby providing another illuminating nexus – but also a crucial point of difference – with Bordo. For Bordo, the paternal comes to assume ascendancy over the maternal after the Cartesian reconstruction. God the father plays a symbolic, compensating and mediating role for Descartes' Meditator, bridging the gulf between inner and outer reality in the absence of an immediate sense of oneness with the mother-world. However, Bordo's turn towards the paternal does not occur until early modern man loses this sense of "being one with the world." (CMT,451). Foucault, by contrast, makes it abundantly clear that, in another sense, God the

[9] Another further meeting point for Foucault and Kristeva, on the subject of language, concerns the relationship of their respective signifying practices with literature. Both Foucault and Kristeva coincide in associating the enigmatic, mysterious quality of literature and poetic language with the Renaissance and semiotic modalities of signification respectively. As if to confirm the similarity of the signifying practices in question, both cite Mallarmé as exemplifying their respective modalities.

father's "mediating" function is very much in operation during the Renaissance itself – through language and prohibition. This is where the *chora* and the Renaissance understanding of the universe part company. As was stated above, Kristeva is explicit on the father's absence from the *chora*, just as Plato was regarding the absence of deity. However, the paternity of God is, in fact, fundamental to the Renaissance subject's understanding of the universe, by Foucault's account. Furthermore, it is He who buttresses – but also places limitations upon – this aspiration of the undivided Whole, just as it is deity that adds unity that is lacking in Plato's *chora*. Let us consider in greater depth the role attributed to Him by Foucault.

God's paternal role is primarily to be understood, from Foucault's account, through the mediation of language. We have just argued that Foucault's account of Renaissance knowledge, as a practice of signification that produces meaning, bears a strong resemblance to the semiotic modality, and that this modality is common to both human language and the marks and signatures upon things, with the former undifferentiated from the latter. However, this semiotic admixture of words and signatures nonetheless has a very specific role with respect to the natural world in which it has been set down, which I will now attempt to outline.

Kristeva describes the *chora* as "... a non-expressive [i.e. pre-verbal] totality formed by the drives and their stases."[10] Above, we have characterised the universal space of resemblances as constituting a totality, a Whole to be known. Foucault also makes it fairly clear that this totality is one which, by default at least, does not "express itself" in language. Nature and resemblances are conceived as being extra-linguistic phenomena by Renaissance thought, residing as they do in a 'feminine' space not immediately accessible to language. The only explicit association of gender and silence can be seen with respect to voice in the Renaissance concept of language. Voice, in the Renaissance, is seen as the "female part of language" and has fallen silent (OT,38). However, what might elsewhere be gendered as 'feminine' – e.g. nature, is distinguishable in Foucault's Renaissance by its silence, its invisibility, its mystery and its obscurity. However, neither resemblances nor 'nature', although immediately manifest and knowable, are beyond all possibility of cognition. They are something "... most clearly visible, yet something that must nevertheless be searched for, since it is also the most hidden" (OT,28), simultaneously mute, invisible and dormant by default and, yet, not entirely a secret. The purpose of the text of words and signatures is to mediate man's knowledge of resemblances and nature. Furthermore, the semiotic melange consisting of "... blazons ... characters... ciphers and obscure words" is also held to constitute paternal mediation, being, as it is "coeval with the institution of God." (OT,34)

[10] Kristeva, p.25

The a priori obscurity of resemblances and 'nature', and the resultant need to bring them to light again via semiotic mediation, derives from an act of paternal prohibition: the prohibition of unlimited *jouissance* qua immediate, total and manifest knowledge. As Foucault explains, "...God, in order to exercise our wisdom, sowed nature with forms for us to decipher" (OT,32). The Renaissance subscribes to the view that, in the beginning, language immediately resembled that to which it referred, making all knowledge immediate and manifest. However, the original, primal visibility of language has been lost, and its loss manifests itself in a "slight degree of non-coincidence" between a sign and that which it signifies. Were it not for this element of doubt, "... everything would be manifest and immediately knowable ..." (OT,29), but paternal prohibition mandates that this cannot be. As Foucault explains:

> This transparency was destroyed at Babel as a punishment for men. Languages became separated and incompatible with one another only in so far as they had previously lost this original resemblance to the things that had been the original reason for the existence of language. (OT,35)

However, God's intention is not to prohibit knowledge *per se*, merely to ensure that it must be worked for through the exegesis of language and signatures:

> It is not God's will that what he creates for man's benefit and what he has given us should remain hidden ... And even though he has hidden certain things, he has allowed nothing to remain without exterior and visible signs in the form of special marks - just as a man who has buried a hoard of treasure marks the spot that he may find it again. (OT,25)

During the Renaissance *episteme*, then, nature is conceived an extra-linguistic domain, but one that is mediated and made visible and audible in the semiotic totality of words and signatures. The function of God's "vast ... text" (OT,34) of undifferentiated words and signatures, promising a final meaning ever yet to be revealed, is to mediate the exegesis of, and thus render comprehensible, this extra-linguistic domain. Through the labour of semiotic interpretation and via the mediation of language, extra-linguistic "nature" is to be turned into an interlocutor. However, the aforementioned "slight degree of non-coincidence" (OT,29) between these two layers ensures that this mediation can never be a thing of absolute certainty. Therefore, that there will always remain an outside of knowledge: a "silent dominion", by which the search for meaning is "ceaselessly animated" (ON,40)

The Renaissance universe may invite comparison with the maternal *chora*, but it is a *chora* that is filtered through the medium of language, through the Name, and is differentiated from Kristeva's and Plato's by the presence of a (paternal) deity. In other words, the relationship to the object world, to the totality, to epistemological *jouissance*, remains mediated. Hence we can venture to suggest that the sense of continuity and wholeness, of "being one with

the world", which exists in Foucault's Renaissance – and which will emphatically be rejected come the Classical age – is not some kind of naïve immediacy but rather one that is painstakingly reconstructed using the epistemology proper to the epoch which, as Foucault tells us, is interpretation rather than observation.

The paternal, mediating role that we have attributed to language in Renaissance knowledge illustrates that, tempting as it may be for one to interpret the advent of modernity as a Fall from the metaphorical Golden Age, the maternal utopia, from a modern perspective, it cannot quite be considered such. Granted, it is conceived as a sundering of words and things, which has prompted Sigrid Weigel, for example, reading Foucault's account against Walter Benjamin's "Sündenfall des Sprachgeistes," to consider the change of *episteme* as a historicisation of the myth of the Fall.[11] Let us however state that, in Foucault's account, pre-Classical man categorically does not view his epoch in such terms. No, the Renaissance *episteme*, according to Foucault, quite explicitly considers itself already fallen, even if it appears to the modern reader to precede another Fall, an even more decisive sundering of words and things in the Classical *episteme*. The Renaissance state of knowledge derives from the (original, biblical, prehistoric) Fall or, expressed otherwise, an epistemological 'castration' imposed by God the father in the form of divine punishment – the expulsion from Eden, the great Flood and the confusion at Babel – that bars access to the absolute object of knowledge that Renaissance epistemology pursues. At various levels, Renaissance epistemology proposes the restoration of an original perfection, an original completeness, the recapturing of the epistemological absolute. However, whilst the worldview may *think* in terms of a totality – indeed, by Foucault's account, it appears unable to think or know *except* in relation to that totality – it is not a totality that is immediately *given*. Foucault clearly states that "the great, unbroken plain of words and things" has been fragmented and incomplete since the Flood, and that language has lacked the original transparency of the Adamite naming language since the disaster at Babel. (OT,35) Although Foucault writes that the sixteenth century understanding of language appears to have that something that has since been lost – an organic unity between word and thing constituted by resemblance, a trace of the perfectly transparent Adamic language that is most apparent in Hebrew – the purpose of such visibility is to be a reminder of the punishment at Babel itself. Furthermore, it is emphasised at various points in Foucault's account that this restoration of lost unity, the restoration of the linguistic transparency destroyed at Babel and the knowledge that was destroyed by the Flood, is an infinite exercise that can only be completed to a finite degree. All of the world's languages taken together can only reveal laboriously and fleetingly the image of the Truth, "the sign of the redeemed world" (OT,36), a

[11] Weigel, Sigrid. *Body and Image Space: Re-reading Walter Benjamin*, p.39

trace of Adam's language. The field of knowledge – language, nature and the heritage of Antiquity – constitutes "a vast space requiring interpretation" replete with "signs to be discovered and then, *little by little*, made to speak" (OT,33, my emphasis). The discovery of the original text, the reconstruction of the "great unbroken plain of words and things" and the restoration of the pure language of Adam are posited as tasks for eternity that will never be completed in their entirety within finite time. Only a partial and gradual reconstruction of the whole through the process of exegesis, a partial *jouissance*, is possible, even though the whole continues to loom on the horizon as a promised *jouissance* that remains forever to come, obtainable only in a messianic future.

However, what Foucault most certainly does not attribute to the avowedly fallen Renaissance *episteme*, despite its project of restoring the hidden epistemological whole, is a regressive, homesick nostalgia for the lost age before Babel and the Flood, nor any equivalent to the explicitly regressive nostalgia for an earlier age of innocence, *à la* Don Quijote and the Golden Age. Epistemological and linguistic 'castration' – the prohibition of immediate and complete *jouissance* represented by already knowing everything – would seem to have been accepted:

> Language possesses a symbolic function; but since the disaster at Babel we must no longer seek for it... in the words themselves but rather in the very existence of language, in its total relation to the totality of the world, in the intersecting of its space with the loci and forms of the cosmos. (OT,36)

This original privation, the fragmentation of the great unbroken plain of words and things and the loss of language's original transparency, is not the occasion for homesick melancholia, but rather marks a starting point in the redemptive pursuit of knowledge which God the father has intended for man. God the father, according to this worldview, has deliberately fragmented and obscured the linguistic and epistemological totality so as to necessitate its laboured reconstruction and discovery, and hence imbued man's pursuit of knowledge with purpose. The Renaissance subject is in the process of redeeming himself through language, through the translation from lower to higher languages and the fleeting restoration of the original linguistic transparency, thereby compensating in limited fashion the privation inflicted by God the father at Babel. Hence we see that, in Foucault's account of the Renaissance *episteme*, the desire to know and the prohibition of God the father function in alignment with one another. Knowing is redemption – mindful of man's original consumption from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, Renaissance learning does not allow itself to repeat the same indulgence, but endeavours to partake of the redeeming Tree of Life.

This brings us back to the question of epistemological "virility" as discussed above in relation to Susan Bordo's dubiously defined "masculinity", for we have here, I believe, another crucial divergence between Bordo and Foucault concerning the role of God as father. It was argued above that, whatever else might be said about Bordo's "masculinity", it could not be described as "virile" since "virility" is of the father. In the Lacanian account, it is upon identification with the father, the unification of Desire and the Law and the renunciation of the original and complete (maternal) *jouissance*, that virility arises: "There is not virility that castration does not consecrate."[12] In *Seminar V*, Lacan writes further that: "Castration means that *jouissance* must be refused, so that it can be reached on the inverted ladder of the Law of Desire."[13] The Lacanian analogy to what we have argued about Renaissance epistemology is hence an apposite one. Even though Renaissance epistemology may suffer for being unable to think or know except in relation to a Whole that can never be fully reconstructed, it is, at least by this definition, 'virile'. Full *jouissance* qua immediate and absolute knowledge and pure linguistic transparency has been made impossible by the epistemological 'castrations' of Babel and the Flood. 'Castration' has been accepted and motivates the pursuit of knowledge that is not immediately given – the partial, 'inverted' *jouissance* permissible by the father – through a process of signification. Furthermore, since God Himself has decreed that epistemological immediacy, wholeness and perfection can never be fully recaptured in their original totality within the constraints of finite time, the Renaissance subject appears to be reconciled to the fact that there will always be an "outside" of knowledge. There will always be more to know and more than can be known. It is precisely the existence of this 'outside' that drives Renaissance knowledge to expand its parameters and *grow*. God the father thus functions simultaneously as prohibition of the unrestrained pleasure of immediate and manifest epistemological wholeness and as conferrer of an epistemological virlity

Thus analysed, within the paradigm of mother-universe, father-God and knowing subject, is Foucault's account of the Western epistemological landscape prior to his first change of *episteme*, the crisis of knowledge corresponding to Bordo's 'flight from the feminine'. We have outlined some substantial intersections and a few, but very crucial, differences between Bordo's account of pre-Cartesian epistemology and Foucault's Renaissance *episteme*. Whilst neither mother nor father are explicitly mentioned, we do encounter a triangulation of man as knowing subject, the cosmic order as a Whole constituted by the infinite play of resemblance and God, who encourages knowledge – but prohibits immediate and absolute knowledge – of this order. Foucault's account of the importance of resemblances makes sense as a fleshing out

[12] Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection,* p.317
[13] Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, p.324

of Bordo's 'feminine' epistemology, not least as Bordo herself cites resemblance and antipathy as examples thereof but also because resemblance points to the continuity between man and the cosmos that is the subject of her essay. However, the place of God as father marks a crucial point of divergence between them, even though both ascribe to God a mediating role. Bordo does not attribute any significant place to God in the pre-modern sense of "being one with the world" (his role is to compensate for its loss) whereas Foucault describes a continuity with the cosmic order that is distinctly mediated by paternal prohibition. Of the Renaissance *episteme* we can conclude that, while its subject is oriented towards restoring an immediate connection or symbiosis with the universe, towards an experience of totality, it cannot itself be said to exist in such a symbiosis, as one might infer from Bordo's essay. The Renaissance posits the restoration of original unity in a messianic future, but does not, itself, constitute the original unity. God's paternal intervention, through the mediation of signs and through the punishments inflicted in mythic prehistory such as at Babel and the Great Flood, ensures that such immediacy will never quite be possible. Nonetheless, it is the perceived loss of this original immediacy and perfection and the promise of its return that drives the acquisition of knowledge. However, the *jouissance* of totality and unity is not immediate and complete, but deferred, laboured and destined to be forever incomplete.

Furthermore, Foucault would seem to corroborate our developing thesis that Bordo's "turn towards the paternal" is,[14] in actual fact, its precise opposite. We can deduce this by considering the fate similitude and, hence, of the 'feminine' way of knowing, from the 17th century onwards. For Bordo's 'flight from the feminine' demonstrably finds its counterpart in *The Order of Things* in the change of *episteme*. For what we seem to be dealing with at the onset of Foucault's Classical *episteme* is another account of a flight to the opposite extreme: towards separation, identity and difference, accompanied by a radical rejection of similitude, which we have correlated above with Bordo's 'feminine' epistemology. In other words: a (faux) 'masculinisation' of thought that turns *away from* the paternal principle of mediation just outlined.

*The change of Episteme: The Crisis of the Renaissance Subject and the Fall into Modernity*

Let us now proceed to consider the change of *episteme*, the decentring of the Renaissance subject, who is promised a unity with the whole that is never to be achieved as an end in itself, but drives the acquisition of knowledge. It is this decentring, after all, that provides the epistemological context in which *Don Quijote* is inscribed, as will be discussed below. In the meantime, what of this crisis itself? What we can say immediately is that, just like Bordo's

[14] Bordo, *The Flight to Objectivity*, p.58

'flight from the feminine', we are dealing with a 180-degree flight to the opposite extreme. Where knowledge had previously proceeded, through likeness, towards the homogenisation of all, it will be organised on the basis of identities and differences. However, unlike Bordo, who advances a coherent "psychocultural" explanation of the radical shift (albeit one that I do not entirely agree with), Foucault passes from one *episteme* to the next, leaving the reader in the dark as to the reasons for the sudden change. At each change of *episteme*, at the beginning of Chapter 3 Part II (Renaissance > Classical) and again at the beginning of Chapter 7 (Classical > Modern), he poses the question of why such rapid change could take place, without providing a straight answer. Indeed, he casts doubt on the very possibility of doing so:

> For an archaeology of knowledge, this profound breach in the expanse of continuities, though it must be analysed, and minutely so, cannot be 'explained' or even summed up in a single word ... Only thought re-apprehending itself at the root of its own history could provide a foundation, entirely free of doubt, for what the solitary truth of this event was in itself (OT,217)

What Foucault does provide us with, however, is the speculation that "Discontinuity ... probably begins with an erosion from outside, from the space which is, for thought, on the other side ..." (OT,49) and it is upon this speculation that I would like to offer my own hypothesis. A clue as to what he is implying can be found in the Foreword to the English edition of *The Order of Things*, in which this "other side" of thought is also mentioned. As though explicitly inviting a psychoanalytic interpretation, Foucault states that the object of his study is the "positive unconscious" or the "archaeological level" of knowledge. This "unconscious" that Foucault seeks to reveal consists of the underlying assumptions and rules governing the possibility of knowledge, common to the various disciplines of a given epoch, yet beyond the consciousness of their practitioners. What I have attempted hitherto in this chapter is a detailed consideration of those tendencies underlying the Renaissance *episteme*. My interpretation of that epoch, whilst attempting to dispel the notion that immediate pre-modernity constituted a 'maternal utopia' in the sense of an immediate symbiosis, nonetheless revealed the utopian *orientation* that sustained Renaissance learning. In the preface to *The Order of Things*, Foucault draws a crucial distinction between utopias and heterotopias. Of utopias, he writes: "... although they have no real locality there is nevertheless a fantastic, untroubled region in which they are able to unfold; they open up cities with vast avenues, superbly planted gardens, countries where life is easy, even though the road to them is chimerical" (OT,xvii). Although they are never to be reached, their posited existence animates and provides meaning. They permit myths, "fables and discourse" (OT,xvii), such as the myth of a lost totality of knowledge and the discourse that promises its return one unspecified day.

Heterotopias, by contrast, destroy the very same things. They are spaces of disorder, "...in which fragments of a large number of possible orders glitter separately ... without law or geometry." (OT,xvi) The heterotopia, according to Foucault, destroys language. He attempts to confront his reader with this experience, which he likens to aphasia, by citing Borges' well-known, and thoroughly bizarre, enumeration of animal classifications from a fictional Chinese encyclopaedia. The laughter that Borges' list elicits, he claims, derives from the uneasiness of having one's language destroyed, from the breakdown of the "... syntax which causes words and things ... to 'hold together'." (OT,xvii) To encounter the heterotopia, then, is to encounter the abyss of meaninglessness that opens up due to the destruction of the common ground holding words and things together. When Foucault alludes to the erosion of an *episteme* from the "outside", from a region beyond thought and language, then, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he is alluding to precisely such a traumatic encounter with the heterotopian abyss, to the destruction of a previously possible relationship between words and things, to the destruction of *meaning*.

Language, whether human language or "the prose of the world" (OT,16), had a clearly defined role during the Renaissance *episteme*, a role which we have expounded in the course of the current chapter and aligned with God as father. This role was one of mediating the knowing subject's relationship with the resemblances that constituted nature and the order of the universe through a veneer of meaning. It was the utopian, messianic vision of one day revealing that order in its entirety through the mediation of an "effectively written text" that animated the Renaissance (OT,41). Utopia thus constitutes the culmination of Renaissance discourse. An encounter with heterotopia, by contrast, implies a failure of mediation, a circumvention of God's prohibition of "immediate and manifest" experience of the universe. And, conversely, an unmediated experience of the universe implies an encounter with the abyss, with meaninglessness (the destruction of existing meaning) – with heterotopia. Expressed in terms of *jouissance*, the encounter with the heterotopia can be seen as a rejection of the "inverted" variant that must be pursued through the medium of language and succumbing to the temptation posed by the forbidden variant that traumatizes – the variant that paternal mediation is supposed to preclude. The implication of this that the separation from whatever illusory form of "symbiosis" with the world that existed with the Renaissance occurs not as a result of a "paternal" intervention in the subject-universe dyad, but rather as an all-too-close, unmediated encounter between man and universe that destroys all previous meanings. Although Foucault is careful not to mention it, it is difficult not to think of the discoveries of Copernicus in the context of the changing *episteme*: the decentring, by means of observation, of Earth in the universe and, along with it, humankind's narcissistic claim to its privileged place in the cosmic

order, its "megalomania" and "naïve self-love".[15] That is to say: a decentring of the subject of knowledge that had prevailed hitherto.

Modernity, then, begins with the violation of a given paternal prohibition and, as the inevitable result, a traumatic decentring. It is within the context of such a trauma that *Don Quijote* unfolds, as both our analysis and that of Marthe Robert have argued using differing approaches. We can ascertain this not just from the novel's date of publication at the turn of the 17th century (Part I in 1605 and Part II in 1615) but also from the fact that Foucault himself locates Quijote at this precise moment, as a liminal figure: "With all their twists and turns, Don Quijote's adventures form the boundary: they mark the end of the old interplay between resemblance and signs and contain the beginnings of new relations" (OT,45). In Foucault's brief reading, Don Quijote figures as the "Hero of the Same" – a remnant of the Renaissance *episteme*, "alienated in analogy", adrift in a new epoch in which, "... because of an essential rupture in the Western world, what has become important is no longer resemblances but identities and differences" (OT,47-48). In a fallen age in which words are emptied of their former content, to which they were related by similitude, his mission is to "transform reality into a sign", to live the unity of language and the world in his own being by making both self and world resemble his beloved books of chivalry (OT,46).

*Don Quijote: Foucault's Shadow of Modernity*

We have posited, along with Foucault, that Don Quijote occupies a threshold position on the brink of modernity, against the backdrop of an epistemological crisis. Foucault's Don Quijote, then, finds himself at the onset of the Classical *episteme*, as the socially "deviant" (OT,48) vanguard of an age not long passed, practicing an outmoded modality of signification where the accepted relationship between word and thing has become symbolic and arbitrary. As should be clear to the reader, my own reading of *Don Quijote* is quite different, although not entirely unrelated by any means. Foucault's claim that the knight attempts to convert reality into a sign to resemble the words contained in his fictions is difficult to disagree with. Furthermore, his understanding of the knight's quest as being to undo the chasm between words and things does resonate with the overall "Romantic" side of his character, the side that seeks to restore the lost unity by reversing the Fall from the Golden Age to the Age of Iron. This, however, accounts for only one side of Quijote's contradictory relation to that Fall, overlooking

[15] Freud, *Standard Edition, vol XVII*, p.139-143

as it does the ways in which his quest is itself implicit in the project of modernity which, as Foucault will later discuss, is likewise fixated on lost origins.

Let us pause, at this point, to remind ourselves of some of the ways in which this crisis could be reflected in my own study of Cervantes' novel. The prevalence of the theme of separation is the most obvious reflection. The aforementioned separation of humanity from the "First Mother" (Earth) and the associated degeneration of the Golden Age into the Age of Iron is the clearest instance of this. Furthermore, we have seen in the interpolated tale of Inappropriate Curiosity in *Don Quijote* how the science of observation and a desire for self-completion intertwine in a traumatic and ultimately self-destructive *jouissance* – libido and epistemology (desire and knowledge) intersect in this novella to the extent that Anselmo attempts to go beyond the bounds of possibility with respect to both.

We have discussed Don Quijote's positioning at the threshold of the Classical *episteme*. In Foucault's interpretation, Don Quijote embodies what has been cast out, repressed at the onset of modernity – the previously central epistemology of resemblance. The knight is an embodiment of similitude alienated and marginalised in the new age of representation, identity and difference. In *Madness and Civilization*, Don Quijote again serves Foucault – much more obviously – as an embodiment of a phenomenon that is included at the heart of civilization during the Renaissance, but is cast to the margins very suddenly with the beginning of the Enlightenment. That is the condition with which Don Quijote is virtually synonymous: madness.

Following what Foucault describes as an "undifferentiated" experience of madness during the Renaissance, madness will, within the short space of 50 years or so, come to mark the periphery of social order as the radically Other. Western civilization, Foucault contends in the preface to *Madness and Civilization*, is constituted upon an original act of separation that divides the man of reason from the man of madness: "... the Reason-Madness nexus constitutes for Western culture one of the dimensions of its originality" (MC, xi). Although the Renaissance is not posited by Foucault as an original non-differentiation of madness and reason, it is regarded as an epoch that is exceptional in its embracing of madness. This is because, just prior to and throughout the Renaissance, madness was considered to be "at the very heart of reason and truth" and something essential to man, specifically his limitations and his finitude (MC,14). Madness was understood as encompassing to the dark side of human nature itself - a receptacle for man's weaknesses, but also the folly of human dreams and illusions – ambition, avarice and propensity to 'indiscreet curiosity' (MC, 25). It is no surprise, then, that Anselmo's

empirical experiment with Camila's fidelity, born of precisely such an "indiscreet curiosity", is described unambiguously by the narrator as an act of patent madness.

The final item in that list already tells us that madness was considered during the Renaissance as possessing a profoundly epistemological dimension. The madman, it was believed, had exclusive access to forms of knowledge forbidden to men of reason. It is a forbidden wisdom, which, like its counterpart in the *Order of Things* that could only be accessed through the mediation of signatures, is described as dwelling in "the bowels of the Earth" (MC, 22). What is the nature of this forbidden knowledge possessed exclusively by the madman Renaissance, the knowledge for which madness is the price to be paid? According to Foucault, it is an eschatological knowledge. It signifies the "life of death" and a direct line of communication with the limits of experience, to the "great tragic powers" of the world. Let us take a little space at this point to analyse more closely the terms in which Foucault describes this "wisdom of fools":

> Doubtless, since it is a forbidden wisdom, it presages both the reign of Satan and the end of the world; ultimate bliss and supreme punishment; omnipotence on earth and the infernal fall. The Ship of Fools sails through a landscape of delights, where all is offered to desire, a sort of renewed paradise, since here man no longer knows either suffering or need; and yet he has not recovered his innocence. This false happiness is the diabolical triumph of the Antichrist. (MC,22)

This brief excerpt makes for compelling reading in the context of our chapter thus far, particularly in its association of madness with forbidden knowledge and "ultimate bliss". The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, in Foucault's metaphor, forms "the mast of the Ship of Fools" (MC,22). In our engagement with *The Order of Things*, we advanced a reading in which the end of the Renaissance *episteme*, man's proverbial Fall into modernity from his previous symbiosis with the 'maternal', came about as the result of the attainment of a forbidden knowledge. We conceptualised this attainment of knowledge in terms of the transgression of divine, paternal prohibition and the experience of traumatic *jouissance*. While Foucault clearly does not partake of the discourse of psychoanalysis in his above description of the 'wisdom of fools', it does not demand an excessive leap of imagination on the part of the reader to be able to translate it into such terms. The "ultimate bliss" that comes at the cost of "supreme punishment" is the most obvious analogue to the attainment of *jouissance*, a doubling of enjoyment and trauma that has been consistently emphasised throughout this dissertation. The absolute fulfilment of desire and the utopian absence of need (read: lack) and suffering further point in this direction. That paradise regained implies anything but a return to innocence has been nowhere more clearly stated than in the condemnation of Georg Bendemann who, we have

argued, attempts precisely that. And sure enough, the "wisdom of fools" (MC,22), in Foucault's explanation, heralds the triumph of Satan and carries the mark of the daemon. It is perhaps on the basis of this evidence that Jose Barchilon in his Introduction to *Madness and Civilization* (MC,vi), interprets Foucault as suggesting that the death instinct stems from this "tragic" understanding of the world, that there is an inter-discursive relationship between what Foucault writes about the Renaissance on madness and the Freudian daemonic death instinct, Lacanian *jouissance* etc. More specifically, however, one might suggest on the basis of our argument thus far, madness can be understood as the Renaissance man's projection screen for the 'daemonic' death drive as an acknowledged human commonplace. Freud, in fact, corroborates this view of madness in the Middle Ages in "The Uncanny" and, what is more, he endorses it. The madman is understood as a scapegoat who has succumbed to the daemonic lure of the death instinct that lures all men, the temptation to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and is being punished accordingly with his condition.

Such described, then, is the Renaissance's understanding of the madman as a tragic figure of forbidden knowledge and the temptation to know it, death and the lure of paradise regained. However, the Renaissance's familiarity with madness and the demonic, deathly dimension that it is supposed to embody, comes to a drastic halt in the first half of the 17th century, just like its epistemological reliance on the similitude that afforded a privileged communion with nature. In the Enlightenment, in which the ability to reason had come to be regarded as the essential human trait and, by the logic of cogito, fundamental to the constitution of selfhood, madness comes to embody unreason, the Not-I, a phenomenon with which reason "no longer felt any relation and would not compromise itself by too close a resemblance" (MC, 70). The once familiar madness becomes very foreign indeed. *Cogito* is thus founded on the exclusion of madness, on a flight from madness. However, this does not imply its absolute absence from the Age of Reason, because from the liminal space to which it is banished, madness remains essential to the constitution of self and society, for the very reason that civilization defines itself in opposition to it, by the logic of Self = Not Other. Like the fear of the generative power of maternity that Susan Bordo attributes to the 17th century after the Cartesian epistemological turn, madness appears, according to Foucault, to become the object of paranoid flight, a mere "thing to look at: no longer a monster inside oneself, but an animal with strange mechanisms, a bestiality from which man had long since been suppressed" (MC, 70), the animalistic Other rather than the animal within.

This flight to the opposite of madness becomes even more meaningful when considered in the context of the daemonic significance that we have just attached to it. If the madman was a projection screen for a generalised demonic impulse during the Renaissance – an impulse that

man acknowledged as his own and fascinated him all the more for that – then the volte face of the early modern period must surely be understood as a flight from the very same morbidity. Furthermore, the emergent Classical Age's flight from the 'daemonic' drive that the Renaissance appears to project on to the madman allows us to shed some explanatory light upon the upsurge in the fear of female generativity of which Bordo writes. For the madman, like the archaic mother who embodies maternal generativity, is also an abysmal figure of death.

*Cogito*, then, and the modernity founded upon that rational certainty, would appear to be founded upon a flight from death and the daemonic, embodied, in this case, in the figure of the madman and, by extension, Don Quijote. Indeed, on the grounds of his exemplifying both the epistemology of similitude and madness, Foucault, by implication, has Don Quijote serve as the previously integrated and undifferentiated object of an act of repression upon which modernity's self-constitution is contingent – the 'paradise lost' in the form of an epistemological communion with the universe through relationships of similitude and the demonic fulfilment of paradise regained at the cost of self-annihilation. In short: the death instinct. We arrive once more at the premise of Don Quijote as the daemonic death drive.

We argued above that Don Quijote stands, for Foucault, as a twofold incarnation of that in opposition to which modernity attempts to construct itself: similitude and madness. We have drawn parallels between the madman's embodiment of the daemonic and similitude's former role in binding humankind to its privileged position in fusion with the universal 'mother', arguing that both attest to an attempt to flee the daemonic. Madness, in the first half of the 17th century, experienced a rapid transition from the centre to the margins of civilization. In Chapter III, "Representing" of *The Order of Things*, Foucault likewise explains that resemblance is relegated from the central epistemological importance that it held during the Renaissance to the periphery, displaced "to the boundaries of knowledge, to the basest and humblest of frontiers" by a new epistemology based on precisely the opposite criteria: "identity and difference" (OT,51).

However, this loss of status, Foucault tells us, certainly did not imply a fall into irrelevance in the emerging, rational, mechanical "Cartesian" scheme of things. Indeed, Foucault pronounces himself suspicious of such "empty and obscurely incantatory phrases" that are so commonly employed in association with early modernity, considering them to be preconceptions that obscure deeper underlying epistemological tendencies. One of those tendencies, Foucault argues in "Representing", is that similitude, whilst being cast to the margins, remains "an indispensable border of knowledge" (OT,66). For although the abstract conceptualisation of order may have been the hallmark of Classical thought, such abstractions,

Foucault shows us, are only conceivable on the foundations provided by "primitive" resemblances, as his following citation of Hume illustrates:

> Let the philosopher pride himself on his precision as much as he will ... I nevertheless dare defy him to make a single step in his progress without the aid of resemblance. Throw but one glance upon the metaphysical aspect of the sciences, even the least abstract of them, and then tell me whether the general inductions that are derived from particular facts, or rather the kinds themselves, the species and all abstract notions, can be formed otherwise than by means of resemblance. (Merian, *Reflexions philosophiques sur la resemblance*, 1767, pp. 3 and 4; cited OT,67)

Similitudes were reduced to constituting the primitive, subterranean forms of knowledge upon which the more complex forms of abstract thought were to be built. And yet, from this subterranean position, they provided the all-important but invisible foundation, the "mute and ineffaceable necessity" (OT,67) underlying Classical knowledge. How, Foucault asks, can one conceive, of any order of comparison or equivalence between two items without a prior resemblance to give cause for comparison in the first place? This challenge is particularly pertinent, for instance, to economics, to the question of "exchanging", the formation of equivalent relationships of value that is given its own chapter later in the book.

Resemblance can thus be seen to be what is uncanny to Classical knowledge, the excluded and once familiar primitive material that plays its fundamental constitutive role in civilization from the boundary of consciousness. It is "the simplest form of what can be known" (OT,67) and yet what has been relegated from mainstream epistemological consciousness, "what is furthest from knowledge itself" (OT,67). The Classical *episteme* excludes similitude as a valid path of knowledge in its own right, pushing it out to the margins of knowledge. And yet, the Order that replaces it contains, at its very foundation, a process of discerning likeness. Resemblance can be seen thus as that which the Classical *episteme* casts to the margins at its founding moment, but continues to play a determinate role from its marginal position. Furthermore, the peripheralisation of madness discussed above can be argued to partake of a similar logic. We have established from our above reading of *Madness and Civilization* that *cogito* is founded upon the exclusion of madness. However, might this paranoid flight from unreason not itself be conceived as an act of madness? This is what Foucault suggests in his preface to the book. The repression of madness is founded he writes, upon its proliferation in its inverse form, the proliferation of what Foucault refers to cryptically as "that other form of madness", that madness:

> ...by which men, in an act of sovereign reason, confine their neighbors, and communicate and recognize each other through the merciless language of non-madness...which

> relegates Reason and Madness to one side or the other of its action as things henceforth external, deaf to all exchange, and as though dead to one another. (MC, ix)

In more recent times, Slavoj Zizek has further elaborated upon how precisely the formation of the *cogito* can, from another perspective, be viewed as an onset of madness. Zizek accomplishes this by drawing alternately upon Hegel's notion of madness as outlined in *Lectures On the Philosophy of World History* and Derrida's "Cogito and the History of Madness" (itself a challenge to *Madness and Civilization*).[16] For Hegel, madness is a radical retreat to the interior, a withdrawal from external reality. However, where Hegel "all too quickly" equates such a retreat to a regression to animality and nature, Zizek argues that such a definition of madness is even more applicable to what Descartes accomplished with cogito: "the severing of the links with the *Umwelt*, the end of the subject's immersion into its immediate natural environs"[17] Furthermore, he argues, now citing Derrida, the madness of the advent of cogito is accentuated by its passage through the moment of "universalised doubt". Beyond this moment of radical doubt in which the Man of Reason emerges, it is not difficult to imagine how this "reason-only" logic of *cogito* itself might constitute another form of madness[18]

Returning, however, to our own exploration of both Foucault works covered so far, we can posit another strong argument in favour of the idea that the flight from madness is towards madness. We read above that, in the Renaissance's view of things, the madman had succumbed to impertinent curiosity and eaten from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Madness was the inevitable price of epistemological *jouissance*, the tragic punishment for accessing forbidden knowledge. Furthermore, we hypothesised previously that the end of the Renaissance *episteme* was the result of precisely such an encounter with traumatic *jouissance* following a transgression against God the father's prohibition. The prohibition in operation during the

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[16] See Hegel, *Lectures On the Philosophy of World History* and Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness", cited Zizek

[17] Zizek, "*Cogito*, Madness and Religion: Derrida, Foucault and then Lacan", http://www.lacan.com/zizforest.html

[18] In order to illustrate this point, we might ask ourselves what image is most likely to be conjured up at the mention of the word "insane" in our own day and age. Who corresponds more closely to our contemporary ideas of madness: the man consumed by his passions, or the psychopath who might perfectly analyse and rationalise but cannot grasp the consequences of his actions, being entirely incapable as he is of empathy (e.g. Pedro Castel in Ernesto Sábato's *El Tunel*, concludes the novel in his prison cell "analysing" the reasons why the husband of Maria, the woman Castel has killed by stabbing her womb, might have committed suicide)? Indeed, Louis A. Sass, in his interdisciplinary study of *Madness and Modernism,* characterizes the schizoid personality in precisely such terms: an excess of rationality, a radical separation of the self from the world with fortified ego boundaries, the extreme of the Apollonian rather than the Dionysian – the very characteristics that have become synonymous with *cogito*. It is unsurprising, then, that the central argument of Sass' book is the analogy between schizotypal disorders the aesthetic tendencies of Modernism. See Sass, Louis A. Madness and Modernism: *Insanity in the light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought.* New York, NY: Basic Books, 1992

Renaissance, going by Foucault's account, was that knowledge was not to be immediate, but mediated by the signs that were "coeval with the institution of God" and therefore by meaning.[19] The advent of the Classical *episteme* was conceived as a Fall from the relative "Golden Age" of symbiosis with the natural world that was not necessarily a punishment for, but simply the logical and inevitable consequence of, humankind's (more specifically Copernicus') impertinent curiosity. One need not, after all, make reference to God as an agent of punishment in the case of this "Fall", given that the epistemological configuration that existed during the Renaissance – and held humankind to be at the centre of the universe - must logically have been rendered obsolete by the Copernican turn that discovered the heliocentric model. By analogy to *Madness and Civilization*, then, the onset of the Classical *episteme*, the moment at which the scission between reason and unreason becomes most definite, is simultaneous with what would surely, if Foucault's account is correct, be viewed from a Renaissance perspective as a fall into madness. What would appear to emerge from a cross reading of *Madness and Civilization* and *The Order of Things*, then, is that the madman is cast from civilization at the same moment as that civilization falls into a state of epistemological "madness" from consuming the figurative apple from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. We discussed in the previous chapters the idea of the biblical Fall being self-inflicted and not necessarily requiring reference to divine punishment, since knowledge of Good and Evil made the habitation of Paradise logically impossible. The punishment was a self-punishment, the immediate consequence of the transgression. In the Foucauldian change of *episteme*, it would appear that the Fall is repeated.

We have just described how, in Foucault's account, modernity qua the Classical *episteme* is founded upon a twofold repression, the objects of which he reconciles in the figure of Don Quijote – similitude and madness. And yet, we have also seen how Foucault, in differing ways, describes how similitude and madness remain fundamental to the constitution of the Classical *episteme*. Modernity takes on the likeness of that which it represses. Given that Don Quijote serves for Foucault as an incarnation of both, it is a small step to advance the hypothesis that Cervantes' knight can be understood as standing in a dialectical relationship to modernity – its rejected and marginalised Other, who remains its innermost self. In this sense, one can justly describe him as modernity's "Freund in Rußland", shadow, dialectical opposite, and so forth. We can fortify this argument greatly by now considering Quijote as *myth*, which, by the reckoning of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, would place him in a similarly dialectical relationship to modernity. Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialect of Enlightenment* serves as another

[19] Meaning is precisely that which, as Horkheimer and Adorno explain, has been discarded in modernity and replaced by the formula

testimony – indeed a far more explicit one - in support of our general thesis that modernity becomes the likeness of what it excludes. Furthermore, just as he is held to embody, for Foucault, those things upon whose exclusion the Modern Age was constituted but which persisted as modernity's condition of possibility, it is not difficult to argue the case for seeing Don Quijote as belonging to the order of myth. At a more general level, it is a case that is made simply but most effectively by Howard Mancing. His case for elevating Don Quijote to mythical status rests on the premise that his meaning transcends his original time and place – indeed, he becomes even more meaningful when removed from the immediate confines of Spain at the turn of the 17th century:

> Don Quijote is far more than a literary character; he is a genuine myth. What all myths have in common – what makes them myths – is that they are easily recognised outside their original context. Don Quijote is one of the few great modern literary myths ... A mythic figure lives in what Bakhtin calls "great time": "Works break through the boundaries of their own time, they live in centuries, that is, in *great time* and frequently (with great works, always) their lives there are more intense and fuller than are their lives within their own time."[20]

Jorge Luis Borges' fictional essay *Pierre Menard, Author of the Quijote*, makes a comparable observation about Cervantes' novel and its pertinence outside of its original context. Menard's word for word rewriting of *Don Quijote*, at a time that would have made him a contemporary of Kafka, is considered "infinitely richer" than Cervantes' original which, "...in a clumsy fashion, opposes to the fictions of chivalry the tawdry provincial reality of his country." Its enrichment comes from the different meanings imposed on the same words by the different, modern context, in the light of events in the intervening years and the insights of modern philosophical perspectives such as Nietzsche and James:

> To compose the *Quijote* at the beginning of the seventeenth century was a reasonable undertaking, necessary and perhaps even unavoidable; at the beginning of the twentieth, it is almost impossible. It is not in vain that three hundred years have gone by, filled with exceedingly complex events. Amongst them, to mention only one, is the *Quijote* itself.[21]

Clearly, it is likewise to Don Quijote's mythical status, and particularly to his significance outside of his immediate time and space, that I am appealing in the present thesis. Short of crediting Cervantes with a Nostradamus-like prognostic ability, we can only posit Don Quijote as a "shadow of modernity" if we posit from the outset that modernity partakes of a well-worn, mythical trajectory, one already travelled by Don Quijote himself (which is not to suggest, however, that he is the first to travel it). However, before we can establish the likeness of Don

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[20] Mancing, Howard. *The Cervantes encyclopedia: A-K*, p.242

[21] Borges, Jorge Luis. "Pierre Menard, Author of Don Quixote", in *Ficciones*, p.51

Quijote and the Enlightenment, it will be necessary to extract the most pertinent threads from Horkheimer and Adorno's "Concept of Enlightenment" from *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

*Enlightenment and the 'Father of Oneself' project*

The first of these features, and one much discussed hitherto, is repression, only this time it is myth that is its object. The Enlightenment, the authors explain, was constituted upon the exclusion of myth: "Enlightenment's program was the disenchantment of the world. It wanted to dispel myths, to overthrow fantasy with knowledge" (DE,1) The flight from myth, just as with Bordo's flight from 'feminine' epistemology, corresponds to the "mathematization" of knowledge enacted by Descartes, Bacon, Leibniz et al. The Enlightenment excludes myth by insisting upon the exclusivity of the rational and measurable – thereby turning the "impertinent curiosity" that was its founding cause into the epistemological rule. Its ideal is the rule of mind over nature and the elimination of superstition. Along the way, Horkheimer and Adorno explain, the old categories of knowledge that we saw in Foucault's Renaissance *episteme* – resemblance, kinship, magic and "meaning" – are discarded. We discern echoes of Bordo's claims about the 'feminine' epistemology when we read that the Enlightenment thereby "tabooed the knowledge which really apprehends the object" (DE,10). Through the "pre-emptive identification of the mathematized world with truth," the authors write, "Enlightenment believes itself safe from the return of the mythical" (DE,18), that is: safe from the return of what it has repressed. But how are we to explain the urge to be rid of the mythical for all time? We have already advanced the argument above that exclusion of madness and similitude from the epistemological mainstream in the formation of the modern subject placed that subject in a flight from the "great tragic powers of the universe" (MC, 25) that would later be appropriated by Freud as the demonic death instinct. In *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, it is also apparent that the repression of myth through the reduction of the natural world to pure rationality contains within itself a denial of death, finitude and subordination to greater powers. The Enlightenment's repression of the mythical is to be viewed in the overall context of a project of survival, an attempt at self- preservation as a flight from death.

Life and death, Horkheimer and Adorno explain, were intertwined in myth: "All birth is paid for with death, all fortune with misfortune. While men and gods may attempt in their short span to assess their fates by a measure other than blind destiny, existence triumphs over them in the end" (DE,11) The Enlightenment's flight from death is manifest in its utter compulsion to survive. This is the ultimate object of instrumental reason's drive to absolute mastery of nature. The Enlightenment, the authors claim, is founded on fear – it is "mythic fear radicalized"

(DE,11). The object of this fear is the loss of self, the return of the self to oblivion and the regression of civilization to mere natural existence, from which, according to the authors, humanity has strived to the point of self-mutilation to achieve. Survival is posited by Enlightenment in a false dichotomy with doom, as the latter's only alternative. The compulsive drive to survive manifests itself in the Enlightenment as the project of absolute mastery of nature.

We hereby find Susan Bordo's characterization of the "Cartesian reconstruction of the world" as a 'father of oneself' fantasy corroborated, for reasons to be presently outlined. Let us recall, at this point, Susan Bordo's discussion of this same tendency of modernity, which she located as a manifestation of the broader tendency of a 'flight from the feminine'. The rational reconstruction of the world (that would come to be the hallmark of Enlightenment), we read, was a gesture of mastery in response to the loss of "being one with the (mother) world". Bordo characterised Cartesian-inspired modernity as a 'father of oneself' fantasy, borrowing from Norman O. Brown's reinterpretation of the Oedipus Complex in *Life aganst Death: The Psychoanalytical Meaning of History*. According to Brown's/Bordo's reinterpretation, the Oedipus complex *qua* father of oneself fantasy arises not due to the boy wanting to take the place of the father as rival for the mother's love, but as part of a mechanism of denial by which all need for maternal gratification is renounced (and renounced, it bears repeating, absolutely autonomously). Returning to Bordo's source for the 'father of oneself' fantasy, Norman O. Brown, we can derive further strength for the idea of Enlightened modernity as precisely such an undertaking in the light of what we have discerned about its struggle for survival at all costs. Brown provides us with another telling detail: like Horkheimer and Adorno's Enlightenment, the 'father of oneself' or *causa sui* project is a flight from death, the undertaking of an ego that is not yet "strong enough to die" and we already discussed the flight from death of both Don Quijote and Josef K.[22]

Our reading of Bordo has already allowed us to draw the implication that the drive to subjugate the mother, nature and women in general derives from the 'father of oneself' project, from the same coup by which the father is deposed and rendered superfluous. Therefore, given that Horkheimer and Adorno make several references to the Enlightenment as a "patriarchal order", it could be argued at this point that a similar semantic criticism applies as it did to Bordo's concept of a "masculinisation of thought", only even more strongly, to *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. If, indeed, the underlying tendency of the Enlightenment is the *causa sui* project, and a refusal to acknowledge God as God by replacing Him with the subject, the term

[22] Brown, p.113

"patriarchal order" (implying the rule of the father) is a misnomer. Let us examine this terminology a little further in order to justify this criticism. The authors' idea of a patriarchal order evidently corresponds to that which is created by Bordo's "masculinisation of thought", and their usage of the term "masculine" carries similar implications of radical autonomy. The "terrible injuries" that humanity inflicted on itself in order to create the "masculine" self and that are repeated in every childhood posit the analogy between the epistemological or metaphysical formation of the self on the one hand, and the process of separation from the mother on the other hand, a process discussed at length at this thesis in various contexts and otherwise referred to as the *causa sui* project. We have just described the Enlightenment as a *causa sui* project in the sense of its flight from death and its pursuit of omnipotent immortality, but how, specifically, does the Enlightenment's struggle for survival transgress against fatherhood *explicitly* in Horkheimer and Adorno's account? According to Norman O. Brown, the essence of the Oedipal *causa sui* project is the desire to be God. Indeed, the terminology of *causa sui* is derived, in turn, from Spinoza's conceptualization of God as the Cause of Himself. Horkheimer and Adorno make explicit reference to the Enlightenment's dethroning of God, in a manner that is almost interchangeable with Don Quijote's own such coup. The Enlightenment has reduced "the distinction between man and God ... to an irrelevance" (DE,5) – did not Don Quijote do just that when, in his capacity as God's sword on earth, he asserted that the soldier, when he carries out the Captain's orders, does no less than the Captain himself? Furthermore, the Enlightenment's insistence upon the empirical and measurable, as the authors explain, means that, in any case, the existence of God cannot be assimilated.

In addition to recounting Horkheimer and Adorno's specific references to the Enlightenment's transgression against God as father, however, we can resume a thread that was developed in our discussion of Foucault and the Renaissance about the paternal function of prohibition. Let us recall that God the father, in our reading of Foucault's Renaissance *episteme*, had operated as a principle of deferred and limited gratification along the lines of Freud's reality principle. Contrary to the popular notion that pre-modern man had enjoyed an immediate sense of unity with the world, we inferred from Foucault that this absolute unity was the posited but unattainable goal of epistemological endeavour. God's prohibition of immediate and manifest knowledge had functioned as a principle of deferred and limited gratification that mediated this unity, ensuring that the task of reconstructing unity would require endeavour and would never be complete. He did not prohibit knowledge absolutely, merely stipulating that it must be worked for. This is consistent with Freud's explanation that the reality principle

remains fundamentally oriented towards pleasure, "... but pleasure which is assured through taking account of reality, even though it is pleasure postponed and diminished".[23]

Recall, furthermore, Harold Bloom's observation about Don Quijote's own pursuit of immortality. He suggests that, since Reality demands that we make friends with "the necessity of dying", Quijote's mission constitutes "the purest indulgence in the pleasure principle" and a "... war with Freud's reality principle".[24] By this criteria, and based on what Horkheimer and Adorno tell us of the Enlightenment's flight from death, it is also surely at odds with the reality principle, for immortality is the definition of what is impossible. We can here advance, then, the argument that the Enlightenment of which Horkheimer and Adorno write is transgressive against the father qua reality principle itself from its inception. Or, given that we have already characterised the inception of modernity earlier in this chapter as a moment of transgression against paternal prohibition, we can suggest that the Enlightenment repeats the transgression of its pre-history as its *modus operandi*. Far from being aligned, by virtue of its insistence upon absolute renunciation of joy, with the reality principle, as a reading of Brown might have us believe, the latter goes far beyond the demands of the father qua reality principle, which still ultimately aims at pleasure.[25] However, in fleeing from materiality and mortality in its Oedipal struggle to be *causa sui*, the Enlightenment seeks to circumvent the reality principle by the inverted route of denying itself all pleasure.

Accordingly, because it exceeds human limitations, the attempt at a definitive rupture from myth is inevitably doomed from the outset. We have already witnessed the paradox in Foucault's account of modernity's foundation upon repression. The objects of repression in Foucault's account are similitude and madness, the irony of which being that modernity hence becomes the likeness of madness. Horkheimer and Adorno are much more explicit than

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[23] Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis: A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*, p.357

[24] Bloom, *Don Quixote – Miguel de Cervantes*, p.147

[25] In order to explain precisely how this is the case, it is necessary to clarify that the question of instinctual renunciation in the reality principle is where this chapter parts company decisively with Brown, for he errs in succumbing to another insufficiently nuanced dichotomy – between the "path of instinctual gratification" represented by the pleasure principle, and the "path of instinctual renunciation", represented by the reality principle. The former principle he associates with all that provides humanity with happiness, particularly art, while the latter is the path that of obsessional neurosis and ultimate self-destruction. This helps to explain Brown's utopian idea that the paradigm for humanity's salvation and happiness is progressively regressive – a return to the "polymorphously perverse" body of pre-Oedipal infancy. Brown's dichotomy ignores the distinction between the deferral of the instant gratification of childhood demanded by the reality principle, and the renunciation of instinctual gratification *per se*, which one can much more easily envisage leading to neurosis and which, for reasons I will shortly argue, is indeed characteristic of the Enlightenment and its path to self-destruction The Enlightenment's absolute renunciation of pleasure, going far beyond the necessity of deferred and limited pleasure, reminds us at this point of our discussion of Kristeva's concept of abjection as we applied it to Bordo's account of the 'flight from the feminine'. Abjection, Kristeva told us, was a clumsy, violent rupture from the maternal that went far beyond the necessity of individuation and separation.

Foucault on the point that, in its founding act of repression, the Enlightenment becomes the likeness of what it tries to exclude. Central to Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of Enlightenment is the thesis that, in spite of their supposed opposition, there is a tacit, mutual implication between the Enlightenment and myth: "Myth is already Enlightenment, and Enlightenment reverts to mythology" (DE,xviii). Indeed, it is precisely in the act of disowning, abolishing and fleeing from myth that Enlightenment reverts to mythology: "Receiving all of its subject matter from myths in order to destroy them, it falls as judge under the spell of myth" (DE,8). By taking flight from myth, the Enlightenment becomes myth itself. The Enlightenment is compelled to repeat myth precisely due to its wilful ignorance thereof. It resembles myth even in this wilful ignorance itself.

*"Das besondere Korrespondenzverhältnis": the dialect of Myth and Enlightenment*

The complicity of Enlightenment and myth is illustrated particularly effectively with reference to the *Odyssey*. The Enlightenment ego, like Odysseus, is bent on survival, warding off the threat of dissolution and regression to an earlier state that was likewise the danger posed by the Sirens' song – the threat and promise of *jouissance*. The analogy between myth and Enlightenment centres, as I will here illustrate, on the refusal of the temptation that is named within Lacanian discourse as *jouissance*, but which can be identified as a far more eternal and universal phenomenon since it is the subject of myth. That *jouissance* is what is at stake in the simultaneous antipathy and convergence of myth and Enlightenment is clear from the terms in which Horkheimer and Adorno describe this temptation. It is the unification of the threat of death and destruction on the one hand, and the promise of unabated joy on the other. It is regression, dissolution, loss of self and the "[suspension of] the boundary between oneself and other life" (DE, 26). That the object of temptation is simultaneously joy and death reflects the twinship of pleasure and pain that defines *jouissance*. The Enlightenment subject, then, converges with Odysseus in its indefinite deferral of *jouissance*. For Odysseus, the *jouissance* that must be passed by is the Sirens's song. For the Enlightenment, it is enjoyment *per se*, the loss of self, deviation from the "way of civilization" that is obedience and work: "...under the work pressure of the Millennium now ending, pleasure has learned to hate itself" (DE,24). The irony here is that myth itself, with its lure of the past, itself belongs to this category of enjoyment from which Enlightenment flees. Enlightenment deafens itself to myth, just as Odysseus has his oarsmen plug their ears with wax. Myth, like madness and similitude, is an uncanny double of the Enlightenment: that in opposition to which it seeks to define itself, but that which simultaneously describes its innermost essence. For Horkheimer and Adorno, the

unitary ego or subject is the point of indistinction *par excellence* between myth and the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment reverts to mythology in the form of the subject which, the authors boldly claim, represents an amalgamation of all the figures of myth that are excluded in its formation: "According to enlightened thinking, the multiplicity of mythical figures can be reduced to a single common denominator, the subject" (DE,4).

This is an opportune moment to return to our conceptualisation of Don Quijote as myth and hence dialectical opposite of modernity, for in our study of *Don Quijote* we already drew the analogy between his *curriculum vitae* and the advent of subjectivity. Besides the explicit criteria offered by both Howard Mancing and Jorge Luis Borges by which Don Quijote attains the status of myth, we can argue that Don Quijote is myth, and hence the uncanny double of modernity, by noting that his relationship to the Enlightenment corresponds to that of myth as described by Horkheimer and Adorno. Don Quijote is myth and, accordingly, stands in an analogous relationship to modernity as the mythical figures of Horkheimer and Adorno's account. In *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, the precise manner of the convergence of myth and Enlightenment is in the flight from death, the resultant pursuit of immortality and its ensuing reduction of the difference between man and God to insignificance. Exercising the freedom of self-fashioning that is characteristic of the modern subject, the fifty-something Alonso Quixano takes flight from impending mortality by reinventing himself as a knight errant to rank alongside, or even exceed, the mythical greats Amadis de Gaul and Orlando Furioso, in a vain attempt to secure immortality. It is no coincidence that, implied in his mission, is the reduction of the distinction between himself and God to an irrelevance, as the Enlightenment subject would later do, by arguing for the insignificance of the distinction in rank between captain and soldier. His ultimate mission is the restoration of the Golden Age, a pre-civilizational, maternal utopia of unbounded *jouissance* and yet, just as Odysseus and Enlightenment, he denies himself all pleasure. Martyrdom for its own sake is his badge of office and nowhere is this more apparent than in his pedestal-worship of the ever-absent Woman, Dulcinea, his chimera of absolute *jouissance* never to be attained (because She doesn't exist) in whose name he foregoes all pleasure and seeks punishment. Like the Enlightenment, progressive regression is inscribed into Don Quijote's trajectory from the very outset. Like the modern subject, his advent is a rebirth, a progressive regression, a voyage beyond the pleasure principle. His mission is to restore an earlier state, the bygone age of chivalry and, ultimately, the absolute origins of the Golden Age. And regress he does, as symbolised in his foray into the Cave of Montesinos and his brief spell in the feigned Arcadia of the pastoral world, but only following his defeat by his double, the Knight of the White Moon. Don Quijote, then, ranks as a mythical figure to stand alongside Odysseus in his dialectical relationship to modernity – an incarnation of everything

that it tried to consign to history, but equally an incarnation of what it would become. He would have served Horkheimer and Adorno particularly well as myth, because, chronologically, he is not of Antiquity but of Europe on the threshold of modernity - at the very moment of myth's repression.

*Justice: The self-constitution of the Sovereign Subject as Homo Sacer*

In our discussion of Kafka's *Proceß* in particular, we struck upon the analogy between the super-ego, as an introjection of the paternal imago and as the legacy of the *causa sui* project, and "disciplinary power", conceived by Michel Foucault as the autonomous functioning of social authority. We posed a "chicken-and-egg" question about whether the locus of origin of such power is external or internal: i.e., is the super-ego an introjection of societal authority as symbolised by the father or, conversely, do societal disciplinary mechanisms derive from super-egoic impulses? We suggested that, whether the source of this imperative voice is psychic or social, it obtains its power from an act of obedience that is not strictly necessary, from the sort of *vorauseilender Gehorsam* displayed by Josef K.

The problem is made even more interesting by considering, at a theoretical level, Giorgio Agamben's reading of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, from which we might suggest that the locus is both internal and external – that the processes are separate but parallel. For Agamben's analysis allows us to comprehend that "disciplinary power" proceeds from Enlightenment's own *causa sui* project, which belongs right alongside those of Don Quijote, Georg Bendemann and Josef K. Firstly, let us briefly review the concept of "disciplinary power" in *Discipline and Punish*, which Foucault links the epistemological rupture that gave rise to modernity. The transition between the old and new penal regimes reflects the changing order of authority, explicable in terms of the decline of authoritative sovereign power and the rise of the bourgeoisie. Under the old order, capital crime consisted primarily of those offences directed against the sovereign. Judicial violence was understood, in turn, as an extension of sovereign power, fulfilling the function of retribution. Justice demanded a relationship of similitude between capital crime and punishment, the atrocity of the spectacle of execution revealing to the viewing public the truth of the regicide's crime. With the transition to prison as the paradigmatic form of punishment, the relationship between crime and penalty would become an arbitrary one, based on the Classical order's paradigm of representation.

The Panopticon, discussed by Foucault in chapter 7, represents the paradigmatic form of the new disciplinary order, one which originated with the prison but was generalized to society as a whole. Panopticism as a penal and disciplinary method is inspired by Jeremy Bentham's design of the ideal model for the prison, the Panopticon, "a new mode of obtaining

power of mind over mind, in a quantity hitherto without example" (DP,200). The Panopticon consists of a tower with wide windows opening outwards towards an outer ring-shaped building surrounding it, containing the cells. The construction of the prison's windows and lighting are such that the prisoner remains permanently visible, but cannot see the supervisor. The cells in the outer ring are like "... many cages, so many small theatres in which each actor is alone, perfectly individuated and constantly visible" (DP,200). The most salient feature of panopticism is the automization of the functioning of disciplinary power through the mere expectation of being seen "... to induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility [such that] ... surveillance is permanent in its effects, even if it is discontinuous in its action." (DP, 201) The genius of this particular construction of power, then, is in its autonomous functioning. Subjects merely need to be conscious of being observed (whether they are or not) in order to obey, calculating that transgressions are impossible to get away with.

According to Foucault, the emergence of the panoptic construction of power constitutes the dark side of the development of egalitarian, parliamentary democracy, and is hence inseparable from it: "The real, corporal disciplines constituted the foundation of formal, juridical liberties" (DP, 204). Disciplinary power, Foucault argues, undermines the very freedoms it purports to guarantee. Modern civilization, then, is founded upon and sustained by a threat of violence, yet disciplinary power is designed to preclude the necessity of its use. It operates by gaze rather than force, replacing the sovereign's power of death with power over life. That the divestment of sovereign power, just as in the case of Don Quijote, becomes a self-punishing act, is expressed in outcome that man "inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (DP,202). We have here another instance of voluntary compulsion, in which the subject declares his autonomy and finds itself under even more repressive conditions. We can also recall at this point Norman O. Brown's association between the success of the *causa sui* project and the institution of that psychic apparatus that we correlated with disciplinary power in the previous chapter: the super-ego.[26] Agamben takes Foucault's account of discipline as a suspension of law as a starting point in order to argue that, in modernity we are all virtually *homines sacri*. Following Foucault, Agamben's account of the emergence of this state of affairs begins with the French Revolution and the transition from the *Ancién Regime* to parliamentary democracy and the rise of capitalism. Just as sovereign power over death was replaced with individuating discipline's power over life and the body in Foucault's account, Agamben concurs that "... modern democracy does not abolish sacred life but rather shatters it and

[26] Brown, p.129

disseminates it into every individual body,"[27] and it does this precisely because of, rather than in spite of, the rights accompanying the declaration of 1789. The Enlightenment's egalitarian project of installing the subject as sovereign, the divestment of the king's sovereignty that forms the political correlate to the *causa sui* project, is precisely the reason why the citizen-subject is also *homo sacer*.

As lawmaker, the sovereign paradoxically remains outside of the law as exception but included, paradoxically, by this very relationship. In this regard, he is analogous to the *homo sacer*, and remains a "wolf to men", but in an inverted relation – one in which he has the power of decision over life and death, the power to decide who is *homo sacer*.[28] In the transition from divinely authorised royal sovereignty to collective sovereignty, bare life itself must become the bearer of sovereignty. The sovereign subject created by the declaration of rights can only be constituted as such, Agamben argues, "... through the repetition of the sovereign exception and the isolation...bare life, in himself".[29] Simply expressed, the contradictory figures of the sovereign and the *homo sacer* are two more of the oppositions unified in the figure of the Enlightenment subject. By constituting itself as sovereign, divesting and generalising to itself the king's power, it voluntarily exiles itself from the figurative polis, places itself outside the law as *homo sacer*, just as Don Quijote and Josef K. did. In his becoming sovereign citizen, the bare life within man becomes *homo sacer*. Modern man's status as banned *homo sacer*, then, leaves him subject to a law that for him is suspended, one that is in force but one that he is outside. For Agamben, the ban is exemplified in its purest form in Kafka's parable "Vor dem Gesetz" in which, he argues, the Mann vom Lande is abandoned to the outside of a law that does not command anything. It applies to him, then, in no longer applying. The Law in Kafka's work, Agamben argues, is a state of pure ban as it is a compulsive force without content, one that does not signify anything, "[presenting] itself with the greatest force precisely at the point at which it no longer prescribes anything."[30] That is to say, at the point at which the law is reduced to pure compulsion, to the pure "You must!" (or alternately the "Enjoy!") of the super-ego. In the Enlightenment subject's self constitution as both sovereign subject and *homo sacer*, then, we find our previously developed concept of justice enacted, in which the link between the act and its punishment is immediate. The subject steps voluntarily outside the Law in the act of becoming sovereign, just as did Don Quixote and Josef K.

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[27] Agamben, p.79
[28] Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer*, p. 70
[29] Agamben, p.79
[30] Agamben, p.35

Inevitably, the Enlightenment's *Causa Sui* project meets a similar fate as that of Cervantes' knight as it reverses into a progressive regression towards barbarism and self-annihilation. Why does the Enlightenment's mode of inception ensure its self-destruction? Why does the absolute Othering of the mythical ensure its return? Why does irresistible progress come only at the cost of irresistible regression? That Horkheimer and Adorno write in terms of the ego and regression place them in close proximity to psychoanalytic discourse, even if they do not actually partake of that discourse. Furthermore, in our analysis, we have numbered myth, along with madness and similitude (all of which are reconciled in the figure of Don Quijote), as doubles of modernity. One might expect, therefore, that Freud's account of the double in "The Uncanny" could shed some light on the question of the Enlightenment's inevitable implosion (about which, after all, Horkheimer and Adorno are writing in the present tense in 1944) and we will now attempt to argue for the explanatory power of Freud's essay. The Enlightenment's regressive and self-destructive tendency will henceforth be explained as a return of the repressed. It should not surprise us, at this stage, to recall that, for Freud, the uncanny double is a manifestation of precisely the ontological qualities that Horkheimer and Adorno ascribe to the Enlightenment, supporting their place within our broader thesis on modernity. The double serves two distinct functions relative to the ego, both of which can illuminate our discussion of modernity and myth, progress and regression. On the one hand, the creation of the double, at the earliest stages of ego development, serves the purpose of self-preservation that is so vital to Enlightenment, as "...insurance against the destruction of the ego and an 'energetic' denial of the power of death'"[31] – in other words, we find confirmed by Freud the simultaneity of the formation of the double and the *causa sui* project of fleeing from death. We have already discussed at length how modernity constitutes itself by forming, through the repression of, variously, myth, madness, similitude and "feminine epistemology" (which are not discrete entities), the doubles in opposition to which it defines itself.

However, Freud tells us, the double does not disappear with the passing of these primitive stages, persisting instead as the repressed material. This repressed material pertains, by Freud's account, to the archaic and complexes and beliefs of both infancy *and* primitive man. Freud, again anticipating Horkheimer and Adorno, numbers magic, the belief in "mana" and animism to such primitive beliefs. The complexes of which he writes "... are a harking-back to particular phases in the evolution of the self-regarding feeling, a regression to a time when the ego was not yet sharply differentiated from the external world and from other

[31] Freud, "The Uncanny" in *Standard Edition Vol XVII*, p.235

people."[32] Little wonder, then, that the Enlightenment would repress them with such fervour, since they long for everything that it fears most! It is crucial to note, though, that Freud draws the distinction between surmounting and repressing. Is not the crux of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* the notion that Enlightenment is founded upon the repression of primitive belief and myth (not that myth is all that primitive anyway – our discussion of myth reveals it to be quite prescient indeed), but that the latter are not surmounted – merely repressed and located within new terminology and new discourses? We can illustrate this continuity most clearly at the level of epistemology. We have already discerned, in our discussion of Foucault, a latent continuity within the radical change of *episteme* that gives rise to modernity. However, while the 'similitude' between the Classical and Renaissance *episteme* must be inferred from *The Order of Things*, Horkheimer and Adorno's account of the Enlightenment as a specifically epistemological project puts it in close proximity to Foucault's account of the Renaissance *episteme* in one very important respect. Like the doctrine of resemblance, Enlightenment rationality is a totalizing epistemology. However, its exclusion of all that it cannot assimilate, i.e. everything that does not conform to the standards of measurement, shows that its totalizing claims go beyond even those of Renaissance epistemology, which were merely aspirational. The latter aspired to account for all the relationships between things in the universe, but this was a revelation that was forever to come. There was always going to be an 'outside'. Enlightenment rationality, by contrast, already presumes itself to be a totality that refuses to acknowledge an 'outside' and, as Horkheimer and Adorno claim, finds the very notion of an 'outside' threatening. The Enlightenment, as described by the authors, is no less possessed by a tendency towards the homogeneity than was the Renaissance in Foucault's account, except that this tendency now expresses itself in the more abstract notion of equivalence: "Bourgeois society is ruled by equivalence. It makes dissimilar things comparable by reducing them to abstract quantities. For the Enlightenment, anything which cannot be resolved into numbers, and ultimately into one, is illusion" (DE,4). The Renaissance, as Foucault told us, "condemned itself to knowing the Same thing and to knowing that thing only at the unattainable end of an endless journey" (OT,29). The Enlightenment, on the other hand, is similarly destined to know only the same thing, but it is not a revelation that is indefinitely deferred. Rather, the Same thing that Enlightenment can only know is that which is it knows already: "The actual is validated, knowledge confines itself to repeating it, thought makes itself mere tautology" (DE,20).

Furthermore, let us once again reiterate our claim that modernity's 'father of oneself' fantasy, an infantile complex *par excellence*, is founded upon repression of the desire for non-

[32] Freud, "The Uncanny", p.236

differentiation from the mother-world, but still wants to displace the father. Freud suggests that the function of the uncanny double changes as the ego passes beyond these initial stages in which it serves as guarantor of survival. The double is transformed into a "ghastly harbinger of death" and the ego's self-criticizing, self-observing function at this later stage.[33] This was most clearly apparent in Kafka's *Urteil*, accounting for the double's transformation from Georg's friend in Russia to the obscene father-judge that stands in the way of his marriage and sentences him to death. Going back to our introduction, we observed in Norman O. Brown's analysis that the *causa sui* project, the self-repressive gesture of mastery undertaken by the ego in survival mode, did indeed precipitate the self-observing and self-critical function of the super-ego. In the present chapter, we have already observed in Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and Agamben's *Homo Sacer* the ways in which the modern subject's attempts to constitute itself as sovereign precipitate the disciplinary regime of surveillance. Here, that self-criticising and observing function is delegated to 'society', the collective being reduced to a homogenous space for comparison in which normality is constructed.We encounter the same principle, then, in man becoming "the principle of his own subjection" (DP,202-203)

Looking back on what we have said thus far of the Enlightenment, it is apparent that it has not progressed to the point, by the time Horkheimer and Adorno write about it, at which self-preservation is not its primary concern, and that its complexes merely remain in a different guise. And yet, despite the lack of real progress, modernity's doubles are still harbingers of doom. The existence of the double, the product of the ego's survival mode and residue of the *causa sui*, remains as a barrier to moving beyond survival mode towards the goal of self-actualization. Or, more accurately, as "harbinger of death", it ensures, as the return of the repressed, that self-actualisation and regressive self-destruction are identical and simultaneous. Georg's self-actualisation is only pronounced by Georg Bendemann's perverse father-judge just prior to his condemnation to death by drowning.

We see, then, the dialectic of Enlightenment and myth explained within the Freudian paradigm of the uncanny. However, it is not difficult, in turn to make the argument, that at the level of epistemology at least, it is Freud himself who enacts precisely the return of the repressed that decenters the autarchic, heavily fortified ego that is equally the bedrock of the Enlightenment and the point at which Enlightenment and myth converge. Freud locates the uncanny double, as we have seen, at the stage of primary narcissism, viewing it as a product of the ego's naïve and inflated self –regard. With respect to the Enlightenment ego itself as an epistemological construct, he certainly appears to claim this honour for himself, thereby

[33] Freud, "The Uncanny", p.235

revealing, in the words of Georg Bendemanns' father-judge: "Jetzt weisst du also, was es auβer dir gab!" I am referring here, of course, to Freud's famous account of the "three blows" to humanity's "naïve self-love", the third of which he claims credit for in exposing that the ego, far from being immortal, is not even "master in its own house":

> In the course of centuries the naïve self-love of men has had to submit to two major blows at the hands of science. The first was when they learnt that our earth was not the centre of the universe but only a tiny fragment of a cosmic system of scarcely imaginable vastness... the second blow fell when biological research destroyed man's supposedly privileged place in creation and proved his descent from the animal kingdom and his ineradicable animal nature... But human megalomania will have suffered its third and most wounding blow from the psychological research of the present time which seeks to prove to the ego that it is not even master in its own house, but must content itself with scanty information of what is going on unconsciously in its mind[34]

Foucault, in *The Order of Things*, likewise points towards Freud's decentring role, as articulator of the "unthought" shadow twin of the *cogito* that "... automatically short-circuits [its] primacy" (OT,325) in the appropriately titled chapter "Man and his Doubles". It is little wonder, then, that Freud's articulation of the unthought should avail to such an extent of the discourse of mythology from which the Enlightenment had tried to flee with such urgency.

Given their contemporaneity, we have likewise ordered Kafka to this same current of decentring the "I-think" at the onset of the 20th century. After all, Kafka hypothesizes (if that is not an understatement) in "Er" that the condition upon finding the Archimedean Point, the pursuit of which leads Descartes, in his Second Meditation, to the "I-think", is that it must be turned against itself. As we already made clear in the preface to our reading of Kafka, the literary 'return of the repressed' was in no way his invention. That E.T.A Hoffman, some one hundred years before Kafka's time, is credited by Freud as a master exponent of uncanny writing, would certainly dispel any such notion and Murnane's study of Kafka within the Gothic tradition reinforces this. Indeed, in our own analysis, we credited Cervantes with creating modernity's first literary 'shadow' and employing his own instances of shadowing within the novel itself, although Kafka, as we have argued, radically different in the way that he uses his narrative perspective to stage the return. This does not, however, diminish Kafka's significance in the decentring of the thinking self, in returning the archaic to the contemporary, and making the mythical resurge into the bourgeois, rational world of early 20th century Europe and return it to the prehistoric swamp world which, according to Walter Benjamin, Kafka's fiction has never left in the first place.

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[34] Freud, "Fixation to Traumas - The Unconscious", *Standard Edition XVI*, pp.284-85

If *Don Quijote* is the 'shadow' in opposition to whom modernity defines itself as insurance against its destruction, then Kafka (and the Gothic tradition to which he belongs) decidedly reveals its other aspect. Kafka provides us with several examples of his returns of the repressed: Odradek, lurking in various corners of the house, moving away for months on end but returning without fail; the return of archaic penal codes in modern settings in *Der Prozeß* and *In der Strafkolonie*; the proliferation of doubles and multiples in *Beschreibung eines Kampfes*, *Die Verwandlung* and various others. However, as this thesis has claimed from the outset, *Das Urteil* represents the paradigmatic form of all of these features within the confines of a ten-page short story. Furthermore, the mythical intersection between *Don Quijote* and modernity that we have outlined in this chapter is repeated with the same economy: separation from the mother, repression and shadowing, the *causa sui* project, the return of the repressed and the decentring of the autarchic ego and the regressive loss of self.

*The Errant Path of Enlightenment*

We have discussed, then, Freud's account of the dual aspect of the uncanny double and its relation to Horkheimer and Adorno's Enlightenment – that which is created through repression as an assurance of immortality, on the one hand, and that which, as the repressed that threatens to return, lurks as a harbinger of the death from which the ego is in perpetual flight. We have identified the Enlightenment ego as precisely such a *causa sui* project and its shadowy doubles – myth, madness and similitude – as the cast-offs that embody, in their repressed state, the regressive, daemonic *jouissance* feared by Enlightenment. We have also repeatedly emphasised the point that, as such, the Enlightenment ego fails to make any of the infinite progress that is its watchword, remaining fundamentally rooted in a primitive survival mode, in fear of its "shadow". By attempting to take flight from the mythical and from death, the Enlightenment itself becomes myth and, in so doing, places itself on the path towards "tireless self-destruction". The only path by which one can take flight from mortality is the circular path of *jouissance* – the path that leads back towards self-annihilation. Enlightenment is bound towards self-dissolution in *jouissance* precisely because it is founded upon the denial of *jouissance*. The absolute denial of all enjoyment is twinned with the regressive demand for complete and immediate gratification in transgressing against the father qua reality principle, which demands not that gratification is entirely foregone nor indefinitely deferred (which, in any case, is impossible), but merely prohibits the instant gratification experienced in childhood and its deferral in accordance with the requirements of reality. Thus is advanced a plausible explanation, in Freudian terms, of why the "the curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression" for the Enlightenment. Progress not mediated by the limitations of the reality principle reverses into regression.

If, as the authors appear to suggest, the extrication of humanity from the state of nature to "enlightened civilization" is injurious *per se*, then the reader might be forgiven for posing the obvious question: is regression a good thing or a bad thing? Are Horkheimer and Adorno, like Don Quijote, lamenting the 'Fall' into civilization from a prelapsarian state of abundant enjoyment as nature? Horkheimer and Adorno, in fact, are not anti-Enlightenment by any means. Two points in their argument illustrate this very clearly. Firstly and most obviously, they declare their support for it in the preface of *Dialectic* with the following caveat to their critical stance:

> We have no doubt – and herein lies our *petitio principii* – that freedom in enlightened society is inseparable from enlightened thinking. We believe we have perceived with equal clarity, however, that the very concept of that thinking, no less than the concrete historical forms, the institutions of society with which it is intertwined, already contain the germ of the regression which is taking place everywhere today (DE,xvi)

Indeed, they are fully aware of the dangerous character of regression, writing, as they are, while such a regression to barbarism was taking place. Secondly, it is also apparent that the authors have little use for Romanticism, the ideological heirs of Don Quijote who posit themselves as Enlightenment's opponents, due to the very complicity of their archaic ideal with the Enlightenment:

> The fashionable ideology, whose most urgent concern is to liquidate Enlightenment...pays it involuntary homage. It is forced to acknowledge enlightened thinking even in the remotest past. For the bad conscience of the present-day devotees of the archaic it is especially the earliest traces of enlightenment which threaten to unleash the process they seek to hold back, but which they themselves obliviously promote (DE,37)

If regression itself is not to be considered the goal, and the "curse of irresistible progress is irresistible regression", then what other possibilities does enlightened civilization have to regression, whether regressive or progressive? What further light can this thesis shed on the question posed in the preface to *Dialectic of Enlightenment*? Why has the Enlightenment not delivered the freedom and the "truly human" state that it promised to? We can account for this failure by pointing to what we have revealed about the Enlightenment – its pursuit of indefinite survival, its *causa sui* project and its ultimate regression and self-destruction – and tying it to the question of maturity and self-actualisation, citing Georg Bendemann here as a particularly apt explanatory paradigm due to the text's explicit references to his maturity. He self-destructs prematurely, yet has taken so long to mature. He does not live to consummate his marriage,

which would indicate his progression to sexual maturity, yet his death and regression are his culmination in themselves.

At the beginning of this chapter, we set out the landmarks of the 'errant path' that Don Quijote and Kafka's protagonists had each passed along the way. We can now sum up the current chapter by outlining the same landmarks that modernity passes:

*Homelessness:* the modern subject emerges from the sundering of the unity between the human and natural realms, of man from the cosmos, corresponding approximately to Foucault's transition from the Renaissance to Classical *episteme*. However, the unity between man and the cosmos was not a naive, original unity, but a limited unity that was under reconstruction

*Repression:* just as, in Bordo's account, all the epistemological categories that had made union with the world possible were radically rejected, just as in all three stories to date, the hero had taken flight from the mother, so modernity rejects the similitude that had been the staple of Renaissance epistemology. Furthermore, madness and myth were both cast out in an analogous manner to Georg Bendemann's friend in Russia, becoming modernity's dialectical opposites.

*Causa Sui:* the Enlightenment subject constituted itself as sovereign, divesting and generalising sovereign power. Furthermore, as Horkheimer and Adorno contended, the subject presumed itself to be the equal of God.

*Justice:* We encountered two instances in which transgressions were automatically self-punished. Firstly, the Copernican shift, in which man discovered that he was no longer centre of the universe, made the previous harmony of the Renaissance untenable. Furthermore, by constituting himself as sovereign, the Enlightenment subject took upon itself the burden of being *homo sacer*, modern man becoming the "principle of his own subjection" (DP,202)

*Progressive regression:* In its repression of its dialectical opposites, myth and madness, the Enlightenment sought to stave off the threat of regression. As already encountered in our analysis of the 'errant path', it was precisely this flight and its fantasy of unbridled progress that precipitated its progressive regression.

# CONCLUSION

The preceding thesis set out to demonstrate the existence of, and illuminate thoroughly, a shared narrative in Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and Kafka's *Der Proceß* and *Das Urteil*, but to demonstrate the relevance of that narrative for the intervening years, as an allegory for modernity. We characterised this shared narrative as one of 'errancy', the outline of which we derived from Kafka's aphorism on *Don Quijote*, while attempting to substantiate it, in psychoanalytic terms, as a problem of subject formation: the *causa sui* project, which was dialectically opposed to the traditional Freudian account of the Oedipal project. We argued, following Norman O. Brown, and set out to corroborate through our reading of the primary texts, that the project of self-constitution through radical separation from the object world rejected the principles of both motherhood *and* fatherhood.

Self-constitution through the *causa sui* project, it was argued following Brown, was a failed attempt to mature, an unrealistic project of independence producing an ego that remained perennially infantile and regressively oriented. This circularity was the essential feature of this 'errant path'. 'Errancy' was, in our analysis, a progressive regression, a circuitous and self-punishing journey unto death that began with self-constitution and a radical rejection of the maternal but precipitated a 'homesick' nostalgia, in other words: a death wish. The project of self-causation was inextricably bound to a self-punishing and self-destructive desire, which went beyond the mere matter of finitude, the tendency of all life to return to lifeless matter.

We set out demonstrate the ways in which Cervantes' and Kafka's writing intersected in this narrative of 'errancy', beyond Kafka's brief but powerful interpretation of *Don Quijote*, by employing it as an interpretive framework for our primary texts. Let us now review the outcome of this analysis chapter by chapter. In our first chapter, we focused on Cervantes' knight-errant, *Don Quijote*. We located *Don Quijote*, following the examples of Marthe Robert, Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault and György Lukács, amongst others, at the moment of a radical shift in Western European consciousness at the turn of the 17th century which, in the terminology of Susan Bordo, was described as a 'flight from the feminine', explicitly modelled on the *causa sui* project. This moment of separation from the 'feminine' was intensified within Spain, as Ruth El Saffar has argued. Conducting a close reading, we interpreted *Don Quijote*, following James A. Parr, as a 'flight from the feminine' that was simultaneously a project of self-causation. On the one hand, Don Quijote authored himself from the *logos* of his beloved romances of chivalry and became 'father of himself'. However, this rupture with his own past was regressively oriented from its outset, as he declared his mission to be the restoration a bygone age of chivalry and, beyond that, of an idealised anterior paradise of maternal symbiosis, the Golden Age, in which there was no room for a father. His nostalgia for the Golden Age was shared with the representatives of the pastoral genre, the friends of the mock-shepherd Grisóstomo who, like Don Quijote, idealised his lady while turning her into his torturer. Don Quijote served an ethereal, idealised and virgin femininity in Dulcinea, who was entirely his invention, while taking flight from physical and particularly maternal femininity. The chivalric and pastoral modes, it was argued, represented dialectically opposed solutions to the problem of 'homesickness': on the one hand, the pastoral's passive habitation of a *locus amoenus* that recalled the Golden Age and on the other hand, Don Quijote's active mission of renouncing paradise in order to restore it. Consistent both with his idolisation of virgin femininity and with our thesis of the *causa sui* project, Don Quijote aspired to the place of God on earth, elevating himself to divine grandeur and reaching the height of *hubris* in the process. By presuming to dispense absolute justice, Don Quijote promoted his ideals as an absolute Good to be imposed on society. This was reflected linguistically in his tendency to impose his 'meanings' on the world. His mission was thus anathema to the principles of language as intersubjectivity and, hence, anathema to fatherhood.

However, Don Quijote's hubristic errancy was his self-condemnation and he was punished without the need for a judge, reaping the wages of his folly. While presuming to take on the role of divine redeemer, he internalised the urge to suffer on God's behalf, claiming moral virtue in so doing. Don Quijote yearned for an absolute justice that stood on 'her' own ground, not mediated by arbitrary judgement, just as the Golden Age provided unmediated

access to the First Mother's bounty. Presuming to serve her as he serves Dulcinea, justice becomes Don Quijote's tormentor, for his folly is punished without the intervention of a judge. His masochistic profession, particularly his voluntary enslavement to a non-existent lady, was self-punishment enough and led him inexorably towards death, back towards the origin. This all became apparent in *Part II* in which, as Foucault had already argued, Quijote's narrative turns back on itself. Another double, Samson Carrasco, assumed authorship of the knight's adventures, hereby decentring his fantasy of self-authorship. Part II was read as a gradual return along the 'errant path' to a death that was augured many times along the way. Firstly, there was an ominous encounter with the parliament of Death. Then, there was Quijote's battle with his double, Samson Carrasco as the Knight of the Mirrors, in whose costume he saw his own image reflected and whom he vanquished. Don Quijote's adventure in the Cave of Montesinos, furthermore, symbolised the 'errant path' coming full circle, the uterine return achieved. However, instead of finding ideal femininity, he was confronted, in his dream, with the grotesque, bodily femininity from which he had taken flight. Furthermore, the cave saw his confrontation with his own mortality in the dead knight Durandarte. Quixote's double Samson Carrasco had his revenge as the ominously entitled Knight of the White Moon, ending the knight's chivalric career, which reversed immediately into a short-lived melancholic project of pastoral imitation. Finally, Quijote's 'errant path' brought him to his death-bed, upon which he renounced his *causa sui* project and was reconciled with his proper name and former identity, making peace with God the father before death.

We began our analysis of Kafka by locating him within a cultural context analysed in terms of a crisis of 'return', suggesting both 'flight' and 'repression' coming full circle. On the one hand, we considered the crisis of language and selfhood that has become a commonplace of discussions on the Habsburg *fin de siècle*. Hugo von Hofmannsthal's fictional letter from Lord Chandos to Francis Bacon, one of the best-known representations of this crisis, was cited as testament to its origins at the turn of the 17$^{th}$ century, in the crisis out of which Don Quixote emerged. We discussed the manner in which Barry Murnane located Kafka within the *fin de siècle* crisis of subjectivity from the perspective of the Gothic genre. The rational *Ich* which, we argued, dates back to the turn of the 17$^{th}$ century with the Cartesian *cogito*, is 'haunted' by revenants, those parts of the self that had been repressed in its formation. Of particular importance to our argument was the Gothic's status, in Murnane's view, as the dialectical 'shadow' of modernity. Where Murnane placed Kafka in the later stage of the German Gothic, as a "post-Romantic shadow" of modernity, we identified a comparable role for Don Quijote as a proto-Romantic shadow of modernity, at the moment of 'flight' or 'repression'. As such, Don Quijote finds himself banished to the margins of modernity and, in turn, declares himself to be

avowedly anti-modern. Furthermore, we noted the well-established importance of Don Quijote to the German Romantic movement, as discussed by Anthony Close in *The Romantic Approach to Don Quixote*. On the other hand, Quijote's *causa sui* project holds an uncanny mirror up to the corresponding project being undertaken at the moment of modernity's inauguration, as became even more apparent in our final chapter. As such, it was argued, the historical leap between Cervantes and Kafka could be viewed as both repetitive and linear. On the one hand, two great authors writing at moments of cultural crisis, the second appearing as the first crisis having come full circle. On the other hand, there was continuity in their roles as dialectical shadows of modernity. Don Quijote preceded and evidently inspired the Romantic movement that took off in Germany some 150 years later, while Kafka could be viewed as belonging to a "dark Romantic" literary tradition of haunting modernity. Furthermore, from Scott Spector's *Prague Territories*, we ascertained the proliferation of 'homesick' nostalgia in Kafka's immediate intellectual and artistic circle, the 'Prague Circle' of German speaking Jews. In its longing for an *ur*-home, its invocation of absolute justice and its asymmetrical idealisation of the feminine, this longing appeared more than a little Quixotic.

As a preface to Kafka's stories about the 'economic men' Georg Bendemann and Josef K., we considered Kafka's suggestive analysis of the figure of Sancho Panza. Based on Sancho's blatant materialism, Salvador de Madariaga's famous thesis of *quijotización* and *sanchificación*, and bearing in mind the dialectical relationships that had been at issue hitherto in the dissertation, we acknowledged the temptation to view Quijote and Sancho as another dialectical pair of corresponding opposites. However, Bakhtin had told us explicitly that Sancho was not yet *homo economicus* and Kafka, in his aphorism, is likewise clear on the point that Sancho does not succumb to Quixotism's demonic, self-destructive tendencies. We thus pre-emptively differentiated Sancho from Josef K. and Georg Bendemann, both of whom do, in fact, reveal the economic man's Quixotism. Whilst Sancho succeeded in liberating himself from his daemonic side, he did not, Kafka tells us, repress and disown him but followed him out of a sense of *Verantwortung* (responsibility). This marked a sharp contrast to Georg Bendemann and Josef K., both of whom disowned their Quixotic daemon and ended up on the 'errant path' as a result. While Madariaga pointed towards the convergence of Don Quijote and Sancho Panza, we highlighted one important respect in which Sancho differentiated himself from his master and from Josef K. in particular. By pretending to punish himself in exchange for payment, Sancho extricates himself from Quixotic masochism. He quickly learns not to repeat unpleasure and, furthermore, recognises that he can get out of the bind in which Quixote wants to place him, hereby exercising an agency that is lacking from Josef K.'s dealings with the court.

Nonetheless, while he does not succumb to his daemon, the *quijotización* of the rational and materialistic man was established and found full expression in Kafka.

The short story, *Das Urteil*, was remarkable for fitting one circuit of the 'errant path' into ten pages of text. In it, we found the trajectory of 'flight', dialectical shadowing and 'return' presented with remarkable economy of means. Following the death of his mother, at which he exhibited remarkably little grief, a young businessman called Georg Bendemann reinvented himself as a self-made man, *causa sui*. At the same time, his friend, whom we read as his double or dialectical opposite, his repressed daemonic self, was living a miserable existence in a Russian nether-realm, failing in business, celibate and moribund. Georg's successes in business and marriage came at the expense of his elderly father, who was marginalised in his room in analogy to the friend in Russia. As such, Georg's marriage becomes a veiled Oedipal struggle, with his fiancée, like Dulcinea, becoming a mother-substitute. Georg's Oedipal displacement, however, took the form not of a hostile takeover but a perfidious project of care-taking, motivated not overtly by desire for his mother but by its disguised form, guilt. This guilt, it was argued was the product of Georg's introjections of his father as super-ego. However, Georg's Oedipal *causa sui* project is turned on its head as his father stages an uncanny return from the near-dead (in Georg's eyes at least) with greater power than ever and assumes, externally, the role of punishing judge that is the correlate to Georg's super-ego. Furthermore, Georg's revenant father proclaims his alliance with Georg's disowned friend in Russia. However, rather than mediating against regressive *jouissance*, Georg's father punished him by sentencing him to a regressive death by drowning. Since his *causa sui* project was implicitly regressive in any case, we argued that the sentence constituted the fulfilment of a death wish and must therefore be considered just. Like Don Quijote, Georg Bendemann's 'errant' journey was inherently self-punishing.

In *Der Proceß*, we analysed, following Walter Sokel, Josef K.'s arrest as the attachment to his childhood self that he had attempted to disown by rejecting his mother's affections and leaving home, an "unchanging village" beyond the processes of time, at a young age. We also remarked upon the lack of paternal care he had received as a child, noting that K.'s scant prehistory contained the ingredients of a *causa sui* project. One morning, K. awoke to be to informed of his condition of arrest by two guards, whom we interpreted as doubles. Following John Zilcosky's analysis, we noted the link between the condition of being on trial and the state of 'errancy'. Furthermore, our core argument rested on the dialectic between Josef K.'s overtly nostalgic and regressive urge to visit his mother and his voluntary cooperation with the court, complying far beyond any violent compulsion to do so. Like Zilcosky, we understood K.'s nostalgic urge to visit his mother as a death wish and as the locus of utopian escape. However,

unlike Zilcosky, we insisted on the ultimate unity of K.'s nostalgia for his mother's village and his 'errant' journey unto death delivered by his trial. This helped to explain his voluntary cooperation with a court that did not require anything of him. Through his trial, K. sought the affirmation of his innocence, with all the regressive connotations of innocence, through an absolute acquittal, an outcome that would imply the return to primordial myth since it was otherwise unheard of. Josef K.'s protestation of his innocence was tied, furthermore, to the fantasy of abdicating agency, of not being responsible for one's actions, of being helpless to act. It is in this precise sense that Josef K. was to be distinguished from Sancho Panza: Sancho quickly learned from experience how to escape his flogging by realising how unnecessary it was. For all that the court could be seen as the correlate of a punishing super-ego, we insisted that his fate would have been eminently avoidable by exerting agency, just as the man from the country was eminently free to enter the Law but did not exert the agency required to do so. Josef K.'s death could thus be viewed as the immediate consequence of his failure to help himself, the punishing Other required by his disposition towards victimhood, just as Don Quixote had internalised a God that demanded acts of martyrdom on account of His justice and masochistically served a lady that did not exist. As such we concluded that Josef K.'s punishment, like Georg Bendemann's and Don Quijote's, was entirely just, since it was the immediate consequence of his transgression.

We set out in the final chapter to portray modernity as standing in an allegorical relationship to the narrative that bound Cervantes and Kafka and was delivered most efficiently in *Das Urteil*. Modernity was characterised as another narrative in which the 'errant path' was taken, a narrative that set out around the time of Cervantes' *Don Quijote* and came full circle around Kafka's time. We devoted significant space to an analysis of Foucault's account of the Renaissance *episteme* in order to illustrate both the appropriateness and inappropriateness of describing the period prior to the turn of the 17$^{th}$ century through the metaphors of birth and infancy, as Susan Bordo did. In fact, our detailed analysis revealed that, prior to setting off on the 'errant path' of modernity, the Renaissance constituted a well-established epistemology, however primitive it may appear to the modern reader. Thus we can suggest that, just like all three of the literary protagonists in our study, the project of self-reinvention, of breaking with the past, was initiated in adulthood. While the Renaissance did appear to see itself as inhabiting a *chora*, it was a symbiosis under construction. We did not find a naive non-differentiation from the universe but the painstaking reconstruction of an order of things. Totality was the inspiration, but it was a productive inspiration that drove the pursuit of knowledge. However, the transition to Foucault's Classical *episteme* saw the enactment of what we interpreted as a repetition of a Fall, of the obtainment of forbidden knowledge, of *curiositas* reaping the wages

of its folly. Just as we had previously argued that the acquisition of knowledge of Good and Evil made Eden uninhabitable without the need for reference to divine judgement, the expulsion being the direct consequence of the consumption, so humankind's discovery that it was not at the centre of the universe surely made the Renaissance order of things untenable. Yet again, then, we saw in operation the model of justice first suggested in our analysis of Don Quijote: the punishment was the immediate consequence of the transgression.

The project of beginning anew in the 17th century, modernity's response to the aforementioned Fall, set in motion yet another journey on the 'errant path', which was supposed to constitute a leap to maturity but precipitated a regressive nostalgia and a developmental 'arrest'. Like Georg Bendemann, but unlike Sancho Panza, modernity disowned its daemon. We observed that Don Quijote exemplified for Foucault the two 'daemonic' tendencies that were disowned as the modern subject constituted itself: similitude, which had dominated epistemological consciousness during the Renaissance, and madness, which had found itself embraced as more general dimension of the human condition during that time. The Classical *episteme*, which inaugurated rational modernity, banished both similitude and madness to the periphery, only for them to play a constitutive role as the excluded other.

It was in Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, however, that modernity's dialectical relationship with its pre-history, which it disowned and failed to heed, was spelled out most clearly. The rational Enlightenment constituted itself by disowning myth, liberating itself from barbarism, from its subjugation to nature and attempting to install humankind as masters. In so doing, it failed to heed the lessons of myth and ended up repeating the mythical. In its break with the old, the Enlightenment subject elevated itself to God's equal, just as Don Quixote had done in his *causa sui* fantasy. Yet the project of mastery only succeeded in reinforcing man's subjugation. In analogous fashion, we considered another dialectical opposition: between the sovereign subject and Agamben's *homo sacer*. By installing itself as sovereign, the Enlightenment subject took upon itself the burden of being *homo sacer*. As Foucault expressed it, man became "the principle of his own subjection" (DP,202). Again, the punishment was the immediate consequence of the transgression, as man became the "principle of his own subjection. Fearing regression and the return of its dialectical opposite, myth, Enlightenment guarded itself against the lure of all pleasure, like Don Quijote making abstinence an end in itself. Putting unlimited faith in progress and fearing regression, Enlightenment's progress never took it far beyond myth and, via the 'errant path', precipitated a regression to the barbarism it had sought to escape.

With the preceding summary hopefully clarifying the manner in which the narrative of 'errancy' repeats itself in all three chapters, let us now restate succinctly the relationship that we have drawn between Cervantes and Kafka, the Quixotic and the Kafkaesque: Kafka and Cervantes were united both thematically and temporally by the 'errant path'. On the one hand, the narrative of 'errancy' constituted the intersection between their writing; on the other hand, 300 years of 'modernity' separating the two authors formed another narrative of 'errancy'. The juxtaposition of two authors as far removed as Kafka and Cervantes, it must be acknowledged, appears an unlikely and arbitrary pursuit, yet this dissertation revealed a very robust and substantial intersection between our chosen primary texts and hopefully persuaded the reader of the validity of reading them together. My comparative project undertook the task of close reading a large volume of text from two of the greatest writers in the European canon, writing 300 years apart, both of whom have generated huge volumes of critical commentary. Furthermore, the very nature of this enterprise made a close reading of texts essential in order to yield results that would be in any way persuasive. The focus of this project has been, from the outset, comparative. My specific interest has been the intersection between Cervantes and Kafka. I would ask that any dedicated *Cervantista* or Kafka specialist judge this project on those terms. Some compromises had to be made in order to yield a viable thesis. Parameters needed to be set. Ideally, this dissertation could have taken a broader view of Kafka's work, incorporating a detailed analysis of *Der Verschollene* in particular, but this would have gone beyond the constraints of a doctoral thesis. Ideally, this dissertation could have given greater consideration to Romanticism: a detailed study of an author taken as representative of German Romanticism would clearly have been desirable as a mid-way nexus between Cervantes and Kafka, but again, this would have taken this dissertation far beyond a justifiable length. Nonetheless, I would submit that the revelation of and elaboration upon the common narrative between Cervantes' and Kafka's texts, as well as the allegory this intersection represents for modernity, represents a considerable achievement.

In close analogy to Cervantes' and Kafka's texts, we established that Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic* is the narrative of an Enlightenment that never really was, of a civilizational maturity that was never reached. What would an actualised Enlightenment look like? It would be an exaggeration to suggest that a comparative literature project could yield any sort of detailed vision of a truly enlightened society. If anything, the preceding dissertation serves as a testament of the persistent failure of subjectivity to actualise itself but, as such, we have considered in abundant detail the tendencies that must be overcome and outgrown (not simply repressed, since this merely perpetuates the dialectic) in order for a genuinely enlightened

subject to emerge: those tendencies associated with the *causa sui* fantasy and the 'errant path'. Logically, then, an actualised Enlightenment that did not regress would have to be based on a subjectivity that is truly adult, rather than a subject that simply disowns its childhood or prehistory; a subject that accepts that becoming adult is a process, not a state that is achieved by severing all ties with infancy; a subject that does not repress its daemons but takes ownership of them and outgrows subjugation to them, as we suggested that Sancho Panza did in Kafka's analysis.

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