

Dreams of Different Things:

*The Experience of Schizophrenia as Represented in Journals, Clinical Accounts  
and Fiction in the Early Modern Period*

David Toomey

Blacksburg, Virginia

A.B. Hamilton College, 1978

M.A. University of Massachusetts, 1986

A Dissertation Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the University of Virginia  
in candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

English

University of Virginia

August, 1998

Donalyn Day  
Gina Hild  
John R. Hill  
Ed Hill

## **Abstract**

My dissertation examines schizophrenia as it was discovered, understood, explained and represented by a loose constellation of psychologists, diarists, and novelists during the modern period. The foremost purpose of this project is to suggest that as Modernism explored the generalized mental experience, so there was, within Modernism, an intellectual and artistic undercurrent which explored the particular mental experience of schizophrenia. The process begins in diaries and clinical accounts of schizophrenia at the turn of the century, is given energy by Surrealists, is formalized and legitimated by aesthetic theories and formal psychology in the 1920s, and reaches its earliest (and perhaps greatest) culmination in the 1930s in the work of William Faulkner.

The project also has two ancillary goals. One is simply to bring certain fascinating texts to light, each a story from a strange and distant realm of human experience. Another is to describe the strategies texts from a variety of genres adopt to overcome problems inherent in communicating the experience of schizophrenia.

## Table of Contents

### Introduction

1. Understanding Schizophrenia
2. Diaries and Case Studies
3. Psychoanalysis and Literary Circles
4. Surrealism and Schizophrenia
5. Faulkner's first approaches to schizophrenia: "Carcassonne," *The Sound and the Fury*  
and *As I Lay Dying*
6. Faulkner's *Light in August* and a "try for the impossible"

### Afterword

### Works Cited

## Introduction

*There are always two or three of my personalities who do not sleep, although during sleep I have fewer personalities; there are some who sleep but little. These personalities have dreams, but the dreams are not the same: I feel there are some who dream of different things.*

*-- a patient diagnosed as schizophrenic*

(Jung, *Psychogenesis Coll Works* vol. 3, 91).

My dissertation examines schizophrenia as it was discovered, understood, explained and represented by a loose constellation of psychologists, diarists, and novelists during the modern period. The foremost purpose of this project is to suggest that as Modernism explored the generalized mental experience, so there was, within Modernism, an intellectual and artistic undercurrent which explored the particular mental experience of schizophrenia. It begins in diaries and clinical accounts of schizophrenia at the turn of the century, is given energy by Surrealists, is formalized and legitimated by aesthetic theories and formal psychology in the 1920s, and reaches its earliest (and perhaps greatest) culmination in the 1930s in the work of William Faulkner.

The project also has two ancillary goals. One is simply to bring certain fascinating texts to light, each a story from a strange and distant realm of human experience. Another is



to describe the strategies texts from a variety of genres adopt to overcome inherent in communicating the experience of schizophrenia.

It is a truism that Modernist literature sought a fresh means to represent psychological experience. It may also be the case that a certain stream of Modernism sought a fresh psychological experience to represent. The modernist impulse shares with aspects with the schizophrenic experience, the most obvious of which is interiorization. Beyond this, both involve a recognition of primacy of the observer in understanding experience, the disappearance of a unified self and will, the de-realization of the shared world, a disengagement from conventions of space and time, hyperreflexivity, and a paradoxical regard for language as being disconnected from reality and (simultaneously) creating and shaping it.<sup>1</sup> Generally, I will suggest that from about 1900-1930, literary and artistic culture recognized the experience of schizophrenia, assimilated, normalized and naturalized it. Some of the process

---

<sup>1</sup> Schizophrenic stream-of-consciousness is directed by a heightened verbal allusiveness. Sass reports one patient saying: "I try to read even a paragraph in a book ... but it takes me ages because each bit I read starts me thinking in ten different directions at once" (178). For schizophrenics, normally irrelevant features of language like sound of words, sound of *parts* of words, actually determine meaning. The gesture is inescapably poetic, recalling metaphysical wit, and (as Sass suggests) twentieth century social constructivism. This impulse, taken to a postmodern extreme, arrives of course at Derrida's ideas concerning the independence and ambiguity of language -- specifically, Derrida's suggestion that a reader make herself open to all possible meanings and to dismiss consideration of auctorial intent. Derrida's ideas, as has been widely observed, bear little correlation to common experience: most people in their general use of language (even, so far as I know, poets and semioticians), are seldom paralyzed or overwhelmed by consideration of the infinite ambiguities inherent in every word. Significantly, however, that is precisely the experience described by many schizophrenics.

was deliberate; some was accidental and indirect. Although the beginning of the process may be traced to the time of the identification of schizophrenia as a mental disease (1809), and although the process is still underway (most aggressively perhaps, in certain science fiction sub-genres), most of it occurred during the first half of this century -- what is commonly termed the modern period.<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, it is this period with which I will be most concerned.

\* \* \*

Even when identified as a discrete disease entity, schizophrenia is a complex experience. And as with most phenomena, it becomes more complex when regarded from various viewpoints. Giving some attention to each type provides a means to illuminate aspects of the disease from various angles, and so throws an overall conception into better relief. And so in some sense this project posits a kind of discourse among texts whose subject is the experience of schizophrenia. Towards this end, it is necessary to examine not just a variety of representations but a variety of *types* of representations -- specifically: 1) *diaries*, 2) *clinical accounts*, 3) *literary treatments by persons diagnosed or suspected schizophrenic*, 4) *literary treatments derived from clinical accounts* and 5) *literary treatments which describe psychological states or world views akin to those of schizophrenics*.

Diaries offer a rendering which is either minimally interpreted or interpreted only by the person experiencing schizophrenia. Clinical accounts aspire to objectivity, and attempt to

---

<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, earlier texts describe or seem to describe the schizophrenic experience (Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" is an example), I think that they are to the central works figured here as, for instance, *Tristram Shandy* is to postmodernist texts. In other words, they anticipate developments and concerns which by the modern period, become fairly pervasive.

locate cases within the contexts of other mental illness.<sup>3</sup> Literary treatments by persons diagnosed as or suspected schizophrenic may offer a compression and distillation of the experience, and may contextualize the experience within or against other mental experience and/or society. Literary treatments derived from clinical accounts also contextualize the experience, but they are perhaps most interesting as a product of an anxiety of influence: many seem to me to have been undertaken as new experience to represent.<sup>4</sup> Literary treatments which describe psychological states or world views akin to those of schizophrenics are interesting as products of an indirect intellectual lineage: rather than drawing directly from diaries or clinical accounts, they distill aspects of modern culture which for a variety of reasons is congruent with the experience of schizophrenia.<sup>5</sup> Boundaries between any of these types are, of course, permeable. For instance, clinical studies employ many aspects of

---

<sup>3</sup> Of course, the objectivity of Freud and early practitioners of psychoanalysis and analytical psychology has been much disputed of late, and professional insecurities forced an appearance of objectivity in places where little existed.

<sup>4</sup> I will explore an interesting correlate of this anxiety experienced directly and painfully by a schizophrenic: many schizophrenics (Schreber among them) hallucinate that they are forced to think or speak in clichés.

<sup>5</sup> One of the most pronounced aspects of the schizophrenic experience is its effect on visual perception: inanimate objects may seem supra-real, imbued with a harsh, almost unbearable light. And for this reason it is not surprising that visual art and film enter into the mix. And so although the medium central to this study is the written word, I should at least recognize the contributions of de Chirico and the early Surrealist painters. Similarly, I cannot completely disregard the contribution of film to literary representations, or the reciprocal effect of literature upon film. Finally though, the written word does seem to me to be the locus of the process -- the place where most of the action is, so to speak -- and so we may be justified in fixing upon it.

conventional literary narrative, and diaries may use the terminology of clinical studies. And of course, the influences are both multi-branched and reciprocating. The influence is in many places diffuse. At other places its effect is focused and particularized, determining the structure and details of a work. I am interested in effects large and small, and so some chapters fly high over this landscape, discussing larger movements and culling examples from many works; others stay nearer the ground: Chapter Six, for instance, attempts close reading of a single work.

With certain exceptions, the works I treat within these genres follow a rough chronology -- diaries (1903-1917) and clinical accounts (1911-1924), literary treatments derived from clinical accounts (1929, 1932), and literature which describes world views akin to those of schizophrenics but which is not based directly on either studies or the author's experience (post 1940). I do not mean to imply that these tendencies are uniformly purposeful -- they are not. Mostly, they are impelled and directed by forces outside themselves which they may not recognize and which derive from many social and cultural realms. Although I cannot insist upon cause-effect relation in each case, I can, I think, prove cause and effect in at least in certain instances: for instance -- Freud and Jung's pieces in the 1920s were used by Faulkner for several works published between 1929-32. And I raise the possibility -- if not likelihood -- that at least examples of each type made possible examples of a subsequent type. On the whole, though, I do not intend the chronology to suggest cause and effect, so much as to allow for that suggestion.

Chapter One, "Understanding Schizophrenia," traces an intellectual history of the definition of schizophrenia from its beginnings in the early nineteenth century to present, and attempts to recover the original, clinical understanding of the term. It also describes two separate and competing means to understanding. On the one hand is the work of clinical psychologists, which approaches schizophrenia mostly through means to treatment, appeals to

authorities of the American Psychiatric Association and each other, and which traces its intellectual lineage from Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), Eugen Bleuler (1857-1939), and to a lesser degree, C. G. Jung (1875-1961). Among these I count Irving I. Gottesman's *Schizophrenia Genesis: the Origins of Madness* (1991), E. Fuller Torrey's *Schizophrenia and Civilization* (1980) and John S. Strauss and William T. Carpenter's *Schizophrenia* (1981). And on the other hand is the work of the group I term the *phenomenologists of schizophrenia* -- a kind of loose intellectual stream whose source may be found in Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) and Adolph Meyer (1855-1950), and which was revived in the 1960s by R. D. Laing. Although like the clinical psychologists, these researchers are concerned with treatment and cures, they also make sustained efforts to understand the *experience* of schizophrenia, asking the question 'what is it like?'

The first significant texts which offered detailed representations of the schizophrenic experience appeared near the turn of the century -- these were diaries and clinical accounts. To the reading public the diaries had an obvious sensational value. And in terms of the intellectual history of the schizophrenic experience, they offered a view which was unprecedented -- a view from within. Not coincidentally, many clinical accounts of the same period -- perhaps most famously Freud's Dora and Wolf Man and Rat man cases -- also enjoyed sensational appeal. Like diaries of schizophrenics, clinical accounts of mentally diseased individuals as a whole engaged readers for their treatment of the patients' view; if they did not answer the question "what is it like?", then they at least provided the reader the tools to make an educated guess.

Chapter Two, "Diaries and Case Studies," examines three pairs of texts which may be said to have been produced by negotiation between analyst and analysand and which, at the same time, represent that negotiation. It examines two sets of texts written in opposition, each an account of a schizophrenic experience by an analysand juxtaposed to an account of the

same experience by his or her analyst: Daniel Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903) "versus" Sigmund Freud's "Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)" (1911), and Frank Miller's "Some Instances of Subconscious Creative Imagination" (1907) "versus" C. G. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916). Finally, it opposes two accounts whose provenance was not paired: Mary MacLane's *I, Mary MacLane, A Diary of Human Days* (1917) against three brief case studies from Eugen Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry* (1924). My intent in forcing this opposition is to allow MacLane to give voice to the schizophrenics Bleuler describes. These texts are records of epistemological struggles which were neither abstract nor academic, but which on the contrary were emphatically immediate, and whose outcome had tangible consequences for both participants. And because they regard the experience from different and mostly irreconcilable positions, they create between them a charged imaginative space -- the space which, we might say, will generate the more purely literary treatments to follow.

Chapter Three, "Psychoanalysis and Literary Circles," attempts to bridge formal studies of schizophrenia with its appearance in modern literature. This is an interim chapter, suggesting that in the 1920s and 1930s -- in both America and Europe -- an interest in the schizophrenic experience may have arisen from the new understandings of the mind offered by psychoanalysis. Towards the first end, it reviews the influences of psychoanalysis and its figures upon literary circles of the period.

Chapter Four, "Surrealism and Schizophrenia," explores correspondences between Surrealism and the experience of schizophrenia. The manifold valences between modernism and psychoanalytic theory -- an emphasis upon the validity of subjective experience and a privileging of stream-of-consciousness as the stylistic mode which would best represent it and/or allow access to it -- have been explored at length by many, and commented on by the

Modernists themselves.<sup>6</sup> But the perceptual mode described by Surrealism seems remarkably congruent with the experience of schizophrenia.<sup>7</sup> My intent here is to suggest the existence of parallel intellectual or artistic offshoots -- that is, as schizophrenia is a variety and perhaps an exaggeration of the non-schizophrenic mind as described or elucidated by psychoanalytic theory, so Surrealism is a variety and perhaps an exaggeration of Modernism.

Among the authors who have attempted to portray insanity, Faulkner merits special attention for several reasons. He is the only English or American author of the Modern period whose work seems consistently interested in representations of mental illness, and his representations are meticulous in their fidelity to the experience as it is represented in published case studies. Chapter Five, "Faulkner's first approaches to schizophrenia: "Carcassonne," *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying*," reviews what is known of Faulkner's interest in formal psychology and schizophrenia. And it reads parts of three of Faulkner's works -- "Carcassonne," *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* -- as representations of the experience of schizophrenia based upon case studies of Jung, Bleuler and Freud and even (perhaps) Schreber.

One critic commented that Faulkner did not experiment with conventional narrative -- rather, he dismissed it. Indeed, the full effect of Faulkner's narrative experiments on

---

<sup>6</sup> See especially Faulkner, Peter, ed. *A Modernist Reader*. Also Edel, Leon. *The Psychological Novel*, and Steinberg, Edwin R. *Stream-of-Consciousness in the Modern Novel*.

<sup>7</sup> To my knowledge, Louis Sass's *Madness and Modernism* is the only text which seriously investigates this resemblance, and even it does so only in the margins -- placing all Surrealists within the larger group of the avant-garde, and paying little attention to the historical moment of Surrealism's appearance.

subsequent literature is difficult to overestimate. Chapter Six, Faulkner's *Light in August* and a "try for the impossible," will argue that the novel is an ambitious and unprecedented narrative experiment: an attempt to portray the experience of schizophrenia from within for the length of a novel. *Light in August's* numerous peculiarities may be understood as the logical consequences of two conditions: 1) the narrative represents the interior monologue of a paranoid schizophrenic as it undergoes a kind of spontaneous and self-induced therapy, and 2) Faulkner's portrayal of the disease is informed by Freud and Janet, but drawn mostly along lines suggested by Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* and "Psychology of Dementia Praecox," and Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry*.

The afterword briefly addresses the similarities between the schizophrenic experience and modern and post-modern condition as represented in the tradition of the Absurd. It also discusses similarities between the experience of schizophrenia and worldviews presented in the sub-genre of science fiction called "cyberpunk," suggesting that several such works seem to describe an externalization of the schizophrenic experience.



## Understanding Schizophrenia

---

### 1

Schizophrenia is a word much used, and little understood. Most colloquial use alludes to a quality of indecision, self-contradiction, or at most a profound and destructive ambivalence. It is in part only an updated revision of the metaphoric use of "insane," carrying or seeming to carry the authority of formal psychology. Such use is allowed by the ambiguities and uncertainties regarding the nature of schizophrenia, and encouraged by a persistent, atavistic response to mental illness as less deserving of sympathy than more purely physical illness. In *Illness as Metaphor*, Susan Sontag explains her title: "My point is that illness is *not* a metaphor, and the most truthful way of regarding illness -- and the healthiest way of being ill -- is one most purified of, most resistant to, metaphoric thinking" (3). Although Sontag limits her argument to physical ailments, we might appropriate it here to inveigh against the use of schizophrenia as a trope which if anything, is more widespread and at least as pernicious. This chapter will trace understanding of schizophrenia as it developed from 1809 onward, and discuss recent approaches to understanding the experience of schizophrenia.

Clinical psychology defines schizophrenia as a mental condition involving isolation, loneliness, a sense of disengagement, a loss of natural vitality, and a sense that reality has no

meaning other than what a person chooses to impart to it. It may also involve an alienation from self, a dissolution of self, a sense of consciousness as constituting the world, an extreme relativism which may end with paralysis, nihilism and all-pervading irony, extinguishing of standard conventions of time, and the annihilation of an external and shared reality:

All these aspects of the condition are present in various artistic orientations towards existence in the industrial and post-industrial ages, and a number of literary historians have regarded the parallels as meaningful -- some going so far as to call modern society itself schizophrenic. Such use confuses the schizophrenia with "multiple-personality disorder," (a type of hysterical neurosis unrelated to schizophrenia), clouds our understanding of both the disease and the experience of those afflicted, and implicitly dismisses its very real (i.e., non-metaphorical) pain. I am suspicious that the transposition away from individual psychology may be facile, and may have allowed these writers to overlook influences which are both more significant and more direct; for that reason my first purpose in this chapter is to recover the clinical definition of schizophrenia.

In the 1990s most experts agree that schizophrenia is a complex psychological illness which can cause personality changes and disabilities. It is a life-long disease characterized by severe disorganization of thought, feeling and behavior. Schizophrenic persons experience hallucinations (a perceptual experience without an actual stimulus), delusions (firmly held false beliefs resistant to contrary evidence) and thought disorder (disruption in organization of thought as evinced in incoherent or bizarre speech). These symptoms may be mild, moderate or severe.

At present schizophrenia is still diagnosed as it was at the turn of the century -- by its psychopathology -- i.e., abnormal patterns of thought and perception as indicated by speech and behavior. No blood test, no brain-imaging scan can detect schizophrenia, and no neurological

origin (chemical or anatomical) has yet been identified. Presently, the cause is suspected to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors. No cure for schizophrenia exists, although since about 1953, its symptoms may be controlled with various drugs. The most complete recovery possible -- "complete social recovery" -- is not a return to predisease condition.

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that schizophrenics comprise 27% of the total admissions to inpatient services in United States mental hospitals -- the total being 1.2 - 1.3 million a year. Data regarding incidence and prevalence of schizophrenia in the general population is less reliable, but most put the number at one percent. A recent estimate is somewhat higher -- suggesting that between 14 and 20 of every 1,000 children born in the United States will be hospitalized at some point in their lives with schizophrenia.<sup>8</sup> The most reliable studies suggest that schizophrenia occurs at about the same rates worldwide, in all societies and at every socioeconomic stratum. It also occurs with equal frequency in males and females, although for unknown reasons the average age range for onset in males (21 to 28) is five to six years lower than the average age for onset in females (27 to 33).

Diagnoses of schizophrenia are controversial because schizophrenic-like symptoms may be produced by other mental illnesses, stress, even prescription medications. A comprehensive view of speech and behavior is included in *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders -- Revised* (or, more commonly, *DSM-III-R*). The manual defines schizophrenia as a mental disease which includes the following:

*A. Presence of characteristic psychotic symptoms in the active phase: either (1), (2), or (3) for at least one week:*

---

<sup>8</sup> Stills, David L., ed. *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol. 14. New York: The MacMillan Company and the Free Press, 1968.

*(1) two of the following:*

*(a) delusions*

*(b) hallucinations throughout the day for several days or several times a week for several weeks, each hallucinatory experience not being limited to a few brief moments*

*(c) incoherence or marked loosening of associations*

*(d) catatonic behavior*

*(e) flat or grossly inappropriate affect (emotional tone)*

*(2) bizarre delusions (i.e., involving a phenomenon that in that person's culture would be regarded as totally implausible. e.g., thought broadcasting, being controlled by a dead person)*

*(3) prominent hallucinations [as defined in (1b) above] of a voice with content having no apparent relation to concomitant depression or elation, or a voice keeping up a running commentary on the person's behavior or thoughts, or two or more voices conversing with each other.*

*B. During the course of the disturbance, functioning in such areas as work, social relations, and self-care is markedly below the highest level achieved before the onset of the disturbance.*

*C. Schizoaffective disorder (a combination of schizophrenic and mood symptoms) and mood disorder (depression or mania) with psychotic features have been ruled out.*

*D. Continuous signs of the disturbance for at least 6 months.*

E. *It cannot be established that an organic factor (e.g., brain tumor or trauma, drug intoxication, etc.) initiated and maintained the disturbance.*

F. *If there is a history of autistic disorder (a childhood onset psychosis), the additional diagnosis of schizophrenia is made only if prominent delusions or hallucinations are also present.*

John Haslam (1764-1844) and Philippe Pinel (1745-1826), are credited with the first clinical descriptions of what we now call schizophrenia. Curiously, although they were working independently (Haslam in England, Pinel in France), the studies of both appeared in the same year --1809. In 1857 Benedict-Augustin Morel (1809-1873) used the term *démence précoce* to describe a mental deterioration which begins in adolescence, and his corresponding clinical description was of a case which would now be called schizophrenia.

The concept of schizophrenia as a clinical entity -- that is, a distinct disease for which existed a specific structural pathology or causative agent -- derives from Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926), whose categories of abnormal behavior compose the basis of contemporary psychopathology. In the sixth edition of *Compendium der Psychiatrie* (1899), he defined and clearly opposed manic depression and what he called *dementia praecox* as the two great psychotic disease complexes, a division which remains almost universally accepted. Kraepelin characterized *dementia praecox* mainly by precocious mental retardation, and included as additional symptoms delusions, hallucinations, social withdrawal and bizarre behavior. He classified patients according to symptoms and the course of their illness. Ordered from most severely afflicted to least, patients were *hebephrenic*, *catatonic*, *paranoid* or *simplex*.

In Kraepelin's classification scheme, a *hebephrenic* patient displayed disorganized

behavior. Delusions and hallucinations were present, but were unorganized and changeable. Speech was fragmented and often incomprehensible. A *catatonic* patient displayed behavioral extremes -- violent motor excitement vacillating with immobility. He could keep postures for days, even months. He may have believed himself in heaven or hell, and yet have been aware of and sensitive to his actual surroundings. A *paranoid* patient had delusions of reference (beliefs that most or all events occur to affect him), delusions of persecution, and auditory hallucinations, all of which may have been organized, detailed and internally consistent. A patient classified as *simple* gradually lost interest generally, and developed irresponsible behavior. Other symptoms included disturbances of association, inappropriate emotional response, and ambivalence.<sup>9</sup>

Interest in schizophrenia during the first decades of this century was heightened and greatly focused by the publication of Daniel Paul Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903), a personal account of the author's eight-year struggle against schizophrenia and against the doctors who institutionalized him. *Memoirs* seemed at once to confirm contemporary understandings of paranoia, and to provide a text which, because it was accessible to all, could be used and discussed as a kind of communal patient. *Memoirs* was quickly appropriated by psychiatrists as a classic example of paranoia. The work describes the circumstances of Schreber's illness, including his eight years in institutions and his legal efforts to have himself removed from their care. It also deals with his "personal experiences" -- including delusions that he is dead and that his body has begun to rot, that his penis has been

---

<sup>9</sup> Kraepelin's contemporaries were not as influential and perhaps not as successful, but they were extremely industrious: between 1850 and 1910 nearly twenty researchers were involved with some aspect of dementia praecox -- much of it attempted definitions. A coherent and fairly comprehensive review appears in the first section of Jung's *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox* (1907).

twisted off, and that he is occasionally surrounded by devils. And it presents a detailed physical and causal description of a private cosmos.

Schreber's memoirs were the subject of Sigmund Freud's (1856-1939) only exclusive investigation of schizophrenia -- "Psychoanalytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)" (1911). Freud regarded schizophrenia as regression into the earliest auto-erotic stage of psychosexual development and as a disorder which was fundamentally narcissistic. He interpreted Schreber's illness as a result of a conflict over unconscious homosexuality and an associated implied threat of castration. (Bleuler quickly rejected this hypothesis, and subsequent researchers have agreed, suggesting that Freud's conclusions tell us more about Freud than Schreber.) Because Freud regarded the schizophrenic as incapable of transference, and like nineteenth century psychologists suspected that the cause of schizophrenia was a brain toxin, he regarded the disease as inaccessible to psychoanalysis, and so devoted little attention to it. Nonetheless, indirectly, Freud provided many of the instruments through which Eugen Bleuler (see below) undertook the first surveys of schizophrenia: ideas concerning narcissistic fixation and regression, dream interpretation, defense mechanisms and psychosexual developmental stages.

Perhaps the most significant advances in understanding schizophrenia were accomplished by Eugen Bleuler (1857-1939). His classic work *Dementia Praecox or the Group of Schizophrenias* (1911) defined the disease at length, and offered detailed case histories of scores of patients he had treated at the Burghölzli Hospital in Zurich.

The term schizophrenia itself was first proposed by Bleuler in his 1908 paper "*Die Prognose der Dementia Praecox (Schizophreniegruppe)*." In *Textbook of Psychiatry* (1924), the first of Bleuler's works to appear in English, he justified the change from Kraepelin: "As the disease need not progress as far as dementia and does not always appear *praecociter*, i.e.

during puberty or soon after, I prefer the name schizophrenia" (373). Bleuler meant the term -  
 - literally, "split-mind" -- not to refer to the multiple personality by which schizophrenia is  
 popularly misunderstood, but to the separation of intellect and emotion: "[Schizophrenia] is  
 characterized by a specific kind of alteration of thinking and feeling, and of the relations with  
 the outer world which occur nowhere else" (373).

Bleuler's work at the Burghölzli Hospital provided him the material with which he  
 identified the primary challenge of researchers into schizophrenia -- that is, distinguishing  
 between primary functions (which are part of the disease process), and the accessory  
 symptoms (which develop only as a reaction of the afflicted psyche, and are amenable to  
 psychologic treatment). Bleuler determined schizophrenic primary functions as *disturbances of*  
*association, affectivity, and ambivalence.*

By disturbances of association, Bleuler meant that normal associative links diminish in  
 number and strength, and are replaced by others. Thinking becomes disconnected or, at least,  
 has the appearance of being disconnected. Ideas and memories which are normally separate  
 seem condensed, in that they are represented by a single word -- "gruesor" from gruesome and  
 sorrowful, for instance (375). Slight resemblances or similarities between objects cause the  
 schizophrenic to confuse them completely. In some cases a symbol completely replaces thing it  
 represents: a schizophrenic woman who believes she is pregnant, for instance, claims instead  
 to hear the stork clapping inside her. The train of thought has no discernible objective, and  
 sometimes proceeds through alliterations and similar-sounding words. Thoughts seem unable to  
 escape a subject or certain words, resulting in train of associations which repeat: "Love, dove,  
 name, sane, love, dove, names, dame, love ... " (378). Because associations are weak, desires  
 and fears are enabled to control the train of thought, and allow the formation of delusions and,  
 eventually, hallucinations.



By disturbances in affectivity, Bleuler meant that schizophrenics show no emotional response, an irritability which seems exaggerated and disingenuous, or utter indifference. He insisted that the assumption that schizophrenics are without emotions is mistaken, as is seen when something occurs which touches upon their complex: "[O]ne can very often provoke, even in apparently very indifferent cases, lively and adequate reactions, and in the dereistic ideas of apparently merely vegetating patients one finds fulfillments of active wishes and endeavors and even of fears" (380). He proposed that the emotional state of schizophrenics is determined from within -- what occurs outside, unless it somehow arouses a complex, is so irrelevant (or so unreal) as to merit no response or recognition.

By disturbances of ambivalence, Bleuler meant that schizophrenics can simultaneously hold conceptions and behavioral responses which are normally mutually exclusive: love towards a person alternating with hatred towards the same person, wanting to eat and *not* wanting to eat, believing (in the words of one patient) "I am a human being like you" and "I am not a human being like you" (382). Bleuler noted that such ambivalence extended to awareness itself: "Although they imagine themselves in a prison or in hell or in a church, they nevertheless know that in some other connection that they are in the ward of the insane asylum" (383).

Bleuler observed that among accessory symptoms are delusions of persecution and of grandeur. *Delusions of persecution* may involve imagined enemies or people the schizophrenic knows regarded as enemies, and they may be a subset of delusions of reference -- the schizophrenic's belief that events near and far (actions taken by persons in the vicinity of the patient, or a distant war described in a newspaper) occur for him. *Delusions of grandeur* have a variety of manifestations -- schizophrenics have believed themselves God, Napoleon, and various empresses.

Another accessory symptom is sense deception -- imagined bodily sensations, and auditory hallucinations. Often these last occur as "voices" which speak abruptly and in short sentences: "They scold, threaten, console, they criticize as 'voices of conscience,' or also say the opposite of what the patient wills or thinks ... The voices come from all sorts of places, from heaven and hell, or from ordinary places, where people are; but they are also situated in the walls, in the air, in the clothes or in the body of the patient himself" (387). Visual hallucinations in chronic conditions are rare, and fragmentary: "a head, angels as large as wasps, and hands appear before the patient, sometimes also a sexually symbolic animal, a snake, an elephant, a horse." In more acute and delirious conditions, the hallucinations may overwhelm reality: "an entire background is hallucinated; paradise, hell, a castle, a dungeon, all with acting inmates. At the same time, reality may be hallucinated out of the way, or illusioned to correspond with the hallucinated milieu" (388). As suggested above, both worlds may be real to them; some cases can consciously keep the two separate. Other cases regard their own, subjective world as the real one, and the other as an imaginary place populated by artificial constructs which the patient calls "masks," or "hastily constructed people," for instance. Milder cases can function normally; the severest cannot be torn from the dream world even for the simple activities like eating and drinking.

Bleuler identified a final accessory symptom as the loss of any conception of a stable ego: "They seem quite different to themselves, and feel that they must look in the mirror to see if they are still themselves, and even then their own images appear strange" (139). Some schizophrenics experience a *disintegration of personality*: "The [normal] restriction of the ego when contrasted with other persons, even things, and abstract conceptions, may be obliterated; the patient can identify himself not only with many other persons, but with a chair, or a staff. His recollections are split into two or more parts; the one set of his experiences he ascribes to the real John Smith; the other to his new personality which was born in Charenton and is named Midhat Pasha" (393).

Bleuler himself considered his work preliminary, his categories of functions and symptoms provisional. But since his work, surprisingly little has been added to the corpus of knowledge about the disease. Subsequent definitions -- including those enumerated in *DSM-III-R* -- have merely shifted simple functions to accessory symptoms and vice versa, re-ordered symptoms, or made some as subsets of others. Even the two debates which dominated research in Bleuler's day -- the degree to which schizophrenia has its origins in physiology or in behavior, and the possibilities for understanding the schizophrenic and communicating with her -- still occupy the attention of current researchers, and recent articles which quote from Bleuler's case studies are implicit testaments to his enduring authority.<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \*

Central to my thesis are the problems inherent in understanding and communicating the experience of schizophrenia. So far, all I have offered are lists of functions and symptoms, tentatively grouped according to unproved etiologies. To read these lists is a frustrating exercise: one tries to identify links, to get "inside" them and to imagine the view from within. But they resist linkage, and one cannot put the parts into any consistent whole -- there is no

---

<sup>10</sup> Bleuler was modest regarding his contribution: "The whole conception of dementia praecox originates with Kraepelin; we owe to him alone the grouping and descriptions of individual symptoms . . . A major part of attempting to enlarge the pathology further is nothing but the application to dementia praecox of Freud's ideas." But Gottesman suggests that Bleuler's work is important despite Freud's influence, not because of it: "It must be said that much of Freud's doctrine has been overly generalized by his disciples and followers ... This has confused the study and understanding of schizophrenia by delaying biological and genetic research, and we have lived with that confusion for much of the twentieth century" (15).

view to make sense of. And still we have no answer to the simplest question about schizophrenia: *What is it like?*

By all accounts, the experience of schizophrenia is bizarre. In the words of one patient, it is "a country, opposed to Reality, where reigned an implacable light, blinding, leaving no place for shadow; an immense space without boundary, limitless, flat; a mineral, lunar country, cold as the wastes of the North Pole" (Sass 47). Certain schizophrenic experiences and modes of perception -- a sense of strangeness about the world, a paranoia -- may be apprehended by any of us in some degree; even schizophrenic hallucinations may resonate with common dreams or nightmares. But others seem utterly beyond comprehension. What, for example, are we to make of this passage from a diary: "Once I went for a walk and it seemed to me that I saw some blood on the snow. I followed the traces of the blood and sensed that somebody who was *still alive had been killed*" ? (Sass 17). Or the patient who claims to have removed his own head, climbed down through his throat and explored his own inner organs? (Sass 14). Or this self-diagnosis: "There are always two or three of my personalities who do not sleep, although during sleep I have fewer personalities; there are some who sleep but little. These personalities have dreams, but the dreams are not the same: *I feel there are some who dream of different things*" (*Psychogenesis Coll Works* vol. 3, 91).

There are logical paradoxes and impossibilities inherent here. In what sense may a person still alive be killed? Given that one can remove one's head and enter one's own body, what does one enter it *with*? Like Zen koans, these stories seem designed to dismiss rational thought. The schizophrenic "senses" that somebody alive has been killed -- and we wonder what such a "sense" must be like. We wonder what motivation one might have for removing one's head and entering one's own body. And we wonder what might cause one, assuming one had many personalities, to suspect -- but not be certain -- that some of those personalities had a dream of which the personality describing the situation cannot know. Making these

experiences stranger still is that they offer no means to empathize, no means to understand motivations or responses. In part the situation results from what Bleuler termed "separation of affect and intellect" -- the schizophrenic has no emotional response, or an inappropriate one, even to her own experiences.

It is not surprising that although certain schools of thought regard schizophrenia as a mere exaggeration and heightening of emotional and intellectual states familiar to anyone, others see it as a condition which is essentially and irretrievably alien. Jaspers regarded it -- alone among psychological disorders -- as beyond comprehension:

Among all this ununderstandable material search has been made for a central factor. All the unexpected impulses, incomprehensible affects and lack of affect, the sudden pauses in conversation, the unmotivated ideas, the behaviour so reminiscent of distraction and all the other phenomena which we can only describe negatively and indirectly ought to have some common base. Theoretically we talk of incoherence, dissociation, fragmenting of consciousness, intrapsychic ataxia weakness of apperception, insufficiency of psychic activity and disturbance of association, etc. We call the behavior crazy or silly but all these words imply in the end that there is a common element of "the ununderstandable." (581-82)

American psychologist Harry Stack Sullivan (1892-1949) expressed faith in the possibility of understanding, he nonetheless admitted difficulties: "These referential processes seem so bizarre to people who have not had them that the schizophrenic way of life is often described as unpsychological and completely beyond understanding (53). Laing has a similar reaction: "One of the greatest barriers against getting to know a schizophrenic is his sheer incomprehensibility: the oddity, bizarreness, obscurity in all that we can perceive of him" (175). On occasion even Bleuler acknowledges a problem: "One feels emotionally more in touch with an

idiot who does not utter a word than with a schizophrenic who can still converse intellectually but who inwardly is unapproachable" (381).

But both Sullivan and Bleuler argue that understanding is both possible and desirable as a basis upon which to effect a therapy. And Jung argues that understanding is a means to appreciate the human condition:

Though we are still far from being able to explain all the relationships in that obscure world, we can maintain with complete assurance that in dementia praecox there is no symptom which could be described as psychologically groundless and meaningless. Even the most absurd things are nothing other than symbols for thoughts which are not only understandable in human terms but dwell in every human breast. In insanity we do not discover anything new and unknown; we are looking at the foundations of our own being, the matrix of those vital problems on which we are all engaged.<sup>11</sup>

In the last decade, studies of schizophrenia seem to have fallen into two camps. On the one hand there is the work of clinical psychologists. These approach schizophrenia mostly as a means to treatment. They appeal to authorities of current work (i.e., each other), trace their intellectual lineage from Kraepelin and Bleuler, and to a lesser degree, Jung. Among them I would count Irving I. Gottesman's *Schizophrenia Genesis: the Origins of Madness* (1991), E. Fuller Torrey's *Schizophrenia and Civilization* (1980) and John S. Strauss and William T.

---

<sup>11</sup> Jung, C.G., (1919). "On the problem of psychogenesis in mental disease." *Collected Works*, 1960. 3.

Carpenter's *Schizophrenia* (1981).<sup>12</sup>

And on the other hand is the group we might call the *phenomenologists of schizophrenia* -- a kind of loose intellectual stream whose source may be found in Karl Jaspers (1883-1969) and Adolph Meyer (1855-1950), and which was revived in the 1960s by R. D. Laing.<sup>13</sup> They

---

<sup>12</sup> Psychoanalytic concepts of schizophrenia have followed psychoanalysis in general. Initially, emphasis was on libido and its repression; more recent theories have involved differentiation of self-representations from object-representations and a "learned" approach to an environment. At present, it is clear that psychoanalysis cannot cure schizophrenia, and in fact Gottesman, among others, regards it as entirely inapplicable.

<sup>13</sup> Adolph Meyer was the dominant American contemporary of Bleuler, differing from Bleuler in that he considered schizophrenia not so much an illness as a set of behavior and thought patterns which he called a *reaction type*. Meyer argued that reaction types might be revealed by studies of the life history of schizophrenic patients. Although Bleuler and Jung both approached the subject of means to cure schizophrenia, they could not defeat the prevailing pessimistic sentiment regarding therapy, which grew from a suspicion of anatomical irregularity or brain toxin. Meyer's advocating of psychotherapy in a milieu which was "normal" and "socializing" countered such pessimism, and survives today as an aspect of the typical American approach to treatment.

R. D. Laing (1927- ), a leading exponent of the phenomenological approach to psychoanalysis, offers a conception of schizophrenia as behavioral strategy. He maintains that schizophrenia may result from ambiguous and contradictory environmental processes, and is a protective device for living in an otherwise overwhelmingly confusing environment. It is, in short, not a disease or pathology (both terms which Laing studiously avoids); but rather a means for survival: "The cause of schizophrenia is to be found by the examination, not of the

have more faith in psychoanalysis as a treatment, and are in general inclined to believe that the disease might have environment as a cause -- suggesting that its evident sudden appearance at the beginning of the nineteenth century seems to indict industrialization, and/or fragmentation of families and traditional communities.<sup>14</sup> Further, they are interested in the resemblance between the experience of schizophrenia and what we might call "the experience of being alive" in the modern and post-modern era, and suspect that schizophrenics may have something to teach non-schizophrenics. They find parallels to the schizophrenic experience in literature and art, perhaps especially in Sartre and the existential condition. Most significantly for my thesis, they are concerned with understanding the experience of schizophrenia. For this reason, the working definition of schizophrenia adopted by this project will be derived from them.

The relativistic posture of the phenomenologists derives somewhat from Michel

---

progressive diagnosee alone, but of the whole social context in which the psychic ceremonial is being conducted" (66).

<sup>14</sup> The suggestion that schizophrenia first appeared near the beginning of the nineteenth century would seem to indict the Industrial Revolution as a cause or as a contributing factor. The debate is complicated, of course, by problems with identification and definition. In pre-technological societies, persecutory delusions often involve supernatural forces. It is interesting that at least in technological societies, the corresponding delusions center around technologies: many paranoid schizophrenics imagine that the forces operating against them operate through machines. Indeed, what is perhaps the most well-known paranoid delusion in literature involves windmills. Matthews (1810) conceives of an "air loom," and Schreber (1907) writes of "nerve probes" and "electrical devices." It is interesting that in both cases the technology itself is not the enemy -- it is only a tool, and that those who use it possess an expertise far above everyone else.



Foucault's influential *Madness and Civilization* (1967), a work concerned with the history of notions of insanity from the late sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. And the phenomenologists' work feeds back, if not into art and literature, at least as far as literary critics -- many of whom look to Laing's *The Divided Self* (1960) for a definition of schizophrenia.

Laing defines schizophrenia and schizoid "phenomenologically and existentially" (16) as a split between self and self, and self and world. Laing's ideological framework is the existential tradition, as is his vocabulary. Among researchers cited, Laing seems to me most interested with the experience of schizophrenia. He allows patients to describe their experience, is careful not to presume an easy understanding, and offers interpretations carefully and provisionally. Further, Laing's theory -- especially in its system of "true selves" and "false selves" -- seems coherent.

The moment-to-moment experience of schizophrenia is vastly different from anything most of us know. While western cultures condition us to experience existence as part "self" (mind and body) and part "not self" (everything outside), the schizophrenic experiences a real "true self" utterly separate from an "outer self" or set of outer selves. The true self may be associated and/or represented by the mind or spirit or soul, the false self in the body. The split between the selves is wide: a schizophrenic may lose the sense that he is initiating his actions, or feel that she must look in the mirror to see if she is still herself, and even then her own image may appear strange. In some cases the true self is severed also from certain mental processes: a schizophrenic may feel that his thoughts are not his own. Perhaps most strange, the schizophrenic may regard his body as no more part of him than an inanimate object or another person. In other words, the schizophrenic may experience his body and certain of his mental processes as belonging to the aspect of existence which is the "not self."

The [schizophrenic] individual in the ordinary circumstances of living may feel more unreal than real; in a literal sense, more dead than alive; precariously differentiated from the rest of the world, so that his identity and autonomy are always in question. He may lack the experience of his own temporal continuity. He may not possess an over-riding sense of personal consistency or cohesiveness. He may feel more insubstantial than substantial, and unable to assume that the stuff he is made of is genuine, good, valuable. And he may feel his self as partially divorced from his body.

(43)

For Laing, the root of schizophrenia is the subject's fear that his existence, his "true self," is threatened with annihilation. The schizophrenic experience seems to be a reaction to perceived threats against the self. The "inner" or "true" self is extremely vulnerable, and threatened by events most of us would consider mundane -- conversations, even inanimate objects. And it may be attacked not only spatially but temporally: there may result what Sass calls "a dissolution of all sense of one's own cohesiveness, separateness, or continuity over time" (215). In response, the schizophrenic severs his true self from the shared world, and creates a false self or "system of false selves" which he permits to interact with that world. These may appear as roles -- exaggerated, mannered behavior -- which seem to an observer ridiculously artificial.

If the whole of the individual's being cannot be defended, the individual retracts his lines of defense until he withdraws within a central citadel. He is prepared to write off everything he is, except his "self." But the tragic paradox is that the more the self is defended in this way, the more it is destroyed. The apparent eventual destruction and dissolution of the self in schizophrenic conditions is accomplished not by external attacks from the enemy (actual or supposed), from without, but by the devastation caused by the inner defensive manoeuvres themselves. (Laing 80-1)

To greater and lesser degrees, schizophrenics surrender contact with the threatening shared reality and develop an internal, private reality. Schizophrenics participate in the shared reality to various degrees. In extreme cases there is autism. In milder (schizoid) cases it is not that the subject is "losing contact with reality" -- rather that he has assigned his own hierarchy to the significance of phenomena: otherwise unremarkable events become profoundly meaningful in that they either contribute to his self or threaten to annihilate it.

Generally, the need to seek affirmation of the existence and durability of the self produces *delusions of reference*: schizophrenics may come to believe that they are somehow at the center of events. They may regard a random phenomenon as a signal. A sense of a threat to the self may produce *delusions of persecution*: a schizophrenic may believe that persons known and unknown are plotting against him -- usually their motive is the destruction of the true self. (Certain schizophrenics express satisfaction that their enemies cannot harm them merely by attacks on their bodies.)

A true self separate from the shared world is allowed to fantasize without restriction: it may respond to the threat with *delusions of grandeur*. The schizophrenic may, for instance, believe that he is god or is as important as god; he may imagine that he or his mind envelops, even *is*, the cosmos: a patient explains "Many thousands of persons and 'everything' from the largest to the smallest is contained in me" (271). Accompanying these delusions may be imagined bodily sensations, and auditory hallucinations. Delusions of persecution are supported by hallucinations. Delusions of grandeur concern cosmic events or themes. It is not uncommon for both omnipotence and persecution to be felt simultaneously; in fact, Bleuler suggested that one could not appear without the other.

The schizophrenic himself may also disdain this behavior as artificial because (in his

view) it operates only to satisfy the shared reality which is unreal.<sup>15</sup> These selves are more a part of the shared reality than they are of him, and they are just as false. The true self also observes (and sometimes criticizes) the false self or selves: thus the schizophrenic is likely to be extremely self-conscious -- "watching himself watch himself" as it were. Ultimately the strategy is counter-productive in that the schizophrenic comes to regard these roles as further eroding the true self. Gradually the sense that the shared reality and the false selves are unreal, mechanical and dead seeps backwards, and infiltrates the real self. Ironically, the means to protect the self work to annihilate it. And so the schizophrenic may come to regard his self as empty, as dead.

Among recent work of the phenomenologists of schizophrenia, influenced by Laing, is John Vernon's *The Garden and the Map* (1973). Vernon suggests that schizophrenia is a polarized worldview which he represents by the map (a means to view the world as measurable and quantifiable) and by the garden (a means to view the world as an organic whole). Vernon's work involves an indictment of Western civilization as itself schizophrenic: because schizophrenia involves "the absolute separation of reality and unreality, and of sanity and insanity, [it] makes reality something unreal and makes the structures of classical Western thought that instituted that separation insane -- that is, schizophrenic" (28).

A more recent and more thorough treatment is Louis Sass's *Madness and Modernism* (1993).<sup>16</sup> Sass offers a view of schizophrenia and modernism which encompasses visual arts

---

<sup>15</sup> Laing writes of schizophrenics pretending to be insane, others not seeming eccentric so much as seeming to be *playing at* being eccentric.

<sup>16</sup> One might also include here Thomas S. Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* (1974). The division I am positing between clinical psychologists and phenomenologists is rough -- for instance, Gottesman, whom I would place among the formal psychologists, takes care to offer

as well as literature. Sass is a psychologist, and his approach begins in formal psychology, and his definition derives from Laing and from Bleuler and Kraepelin. He contends that schizophrenic thinking is not dementia, and in fact might be best understood as the opposite of dementia: it is in many respects a *hypertrophy* of consciousness and self-consciousness (265). (In this regard Sass is saying nothing new: as early as 1908 Bleuler had asserted "The schizophrenic is not simply demented, but merely demented with respect to certain questions, at certain times and in response to certain complexes" (1908, 452-53); Jung likewise wrote of the marked intelligence of schizophrenics.) Sass's real contribution may be his reiteration that many if not most of the symptoms of schizophrenia appear in paired opposition.<sup>17</sup> For instance, a schizophrenic may at one moment regard her self as fragmented, at another as all-powerful and all-embracing. She may at one moment experience a dissolution of self, at another a certainty that her consciousness constitutes the world. She may at one moment admit no connection between words and their referents, at another regard the world as linguistically constructed. She may at one moment sense that the world issues from her own mind, at another sense that she is imagined by someone else. Beyond these, Sass finds cause to differentiate aspects of the experience which previous researchers had incorporated in other categories.

Schizophrenics may experience a *heightened awareness*. For schizophrenics a collection of facts "present all the appearance of a signal . . . a distinct sensation that something momentous, something essential depends on them" (65). Ordinary objects appear

---

testimony from both persons diagnosed as schizophrenic and from members of their families; and Sass, whom I would place among the phenomenologists, has a background in clinical psychology.

<sup>17</sup> Sass's comparison of schizophrenia to modernism will be discussed in a later chapter.

somehow heightened: one comments upon his condition with a typical self-consciousness and ambivalence: "It is silly, how the power of a thread or a spot of rust can absorb me altogether ... when they insist ... I hold fast to my spot and drown myself in it down to its very atoms" (65). Schizophrenics may experience *disengagement from conventions of space and time*. Schizophrenics experience a time differently than do normal personalities -- in some cases as a kind of continual present (160-1). Schizophrenia involves a profound *distanciation* -- an "experiential attitude that severs the word from any intention-to-signify" (203). For the schizophrenic, language seems utterly irrelevant and even deceptive (186). A patient explains "words have their own textures, which may not be the same as the texture of the things they represent" (203). The schizophrenic also adopts the contrary view, a willingness to extend the use of a term in quasi-metaphoric fashion with no concern for its conventional meaning. At times this habit appears as "glossomania," a condition which Bleuler described, in which the flow of speech is channeled by acoustic qualities or semantic connotations: for example, a schizophrenic associates freely "Demise -- dim eyes" (178). A schizophrenic may hallucinate his body as fragmented, and this hallucination may take many forms. For example, a schizophrenic may lose the sense that he is initiating his actions: "When I reach my hand for a comb it is my hand and arm which move, and my fingers pick up the pen, but I don't control them" (214). Alternately, Sass suggests, in some cases there appears "a more general fragmentation, a dissolution of all sense of one's own cohesiveness, separateness, or continuity over time" (215). And there occurs its evident opposite -- the schizophrenic delusion that they or their mind envelops, even *is*, the cosmos: a patient explains "Many thousands of persons and 'everything' from the largest to the smallest is contained in me" (271). Schizophrenic individuals often believe they are being watched (235). Schizophrenia can involve "a profound transformation in the coordinates of experience itself -- an ontological unhooking that nullifies reality by reducing everything to a troubling and insistent process of 'seeing'" (286). The schizophrenic experiences paranoia which may involve a sense that all existence is somehow artificial (284). Sass quotes a patient complaining: "I felt trapped . . . It was all like a story"

(286). The sense may become a kind of hyperreflexivity -- in which the schizophrenic watches himself watch himself and a hyperconsciousness evolving into catatonic paralysis (236).

Contrarily, "some patients come to feel that the self exists only as a perception, perhaps in their own or perhaps in someone else's consciousness" (313). Sass is interested in two delusions peculiar to schizophrenia. Schizophrenics may come to believe that although their consciousness is awake, it is somehow *not alive* -- they have become a "corpse with insomnia" (309-10). Also, schizophrenics may hallucinate an apocalypse. It emerges from a preoccupation with cosmic events and grand themes, is associated with the sense of being somehow at their center. <sup>18</sup>

For reasons of clarity and at the risk of oversimplification, this project will define schizophrenia as a mental disease involving the aforementioned delusions and hallucinations, and sharing with the Modernist impulse interiorization, a recognition of primacy of the observer in understanding experience, the disappearance of a unified self and will, the de-realization of the shared world, a disengagement from conventions of space and time, hyperreflexivity, and a paradoxical regard for language as being disconnected from reality and (simultaneously) creating and shaping it. <sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Generally, Sass is concerned not so much with ascribing cause and effect as with examining the numerous points of correspondence between schizophrenia and modern and modernist thought. He concludes by speculating upon the relation of schizophrenia to modernist (and modern) society, describing arguments that the disease may be produced or somehow nourished by industrial and postindustrial society, or -- more problematically -- that schizophrenia itself produces modernist society.

<sup>19</sup> Schizophrenic stream-of-consciousness is directed by a heightened verbal allusiveness. Sass reports one patient saying: "I try to read even a paragraph in a book ... but

Historically, the lay reader's first exposure to the experience of schizophrenia came through diaries and personal accounts, filtered through and set against, the interpretations of clinical psychologists. These will be the subject of the next chapter.

---

it takes me ages because each bit I read starts me thinking in ten different directions at once" (178). For schizophrenics, normally irrelevant features of language like sound of words, sound of *parts* of words, actually determine meaning. The gesture is inescapably poetic, recalling metaphysical wit, and (as Sass suggests) twentieth century social constructivism. This impulse, taken to a postmodern extreme, arrives of course at Derrida's ideas concerning the independence and ambiguity of language -- specifically, Derrida's suggestion that a reader make herself open to all possible meanings and to dismiss consideration of auctorial intent. Derrida's ideas, as has been widely observed, bear little correlation to common experience: most people in their general use of language (even, so far as I know, poets and semioticians), are seldom paralyzed or overwhelmed by consideration of the infinite ambiguities inherent in every word. Significantly, however, that is precisely the experience described by many schizophrenics.



## Diaries and Case Studies

---

### 2

*(T)here remains, beyond the empty forms of positivist thought, only a single concrete reality: the doctor-patient couple in which all alienations are summarized, linked, and loosened.*

(Foucault, *Madness and Civilization*, 222)

When the polarities of sanity and insanity are confused or reversed, the premises of psychiatry -- that it can diagnose and treat mental illness, that its view of the world is rational and correct, and its goal is not so much persuade as to *correct* the view of the mind it terms insane -- are undermined. Of course, the view of insanity as merely "incorrect" is profoundly problematic, and always has been. In western culture certain traditions regard insanity as a condition approaching the divine -- these are manifest, for instance, in the ecstatic saint and the mad poet. The recognition that schizophrenia in particular and insanity in general are socially constructed has long history, and has been offered in various forms by Meyer, Laing and (most recently) Thomas Szasz. This view was also appreciated by Bleuler,

the psychologist whose research on the condition shaped our understanding more than any.<sup>20</sup> My own position, like Bleuler's, is moderate. The radical relativism which considers schizophrenia a mere "orientation" seems to me only the most recent avatar of the misguided romantic image of madman as source of primal, creative energies -- legitimated by the schools of social epistemology. I think it is no coincidence that most of its advocates are speaking at a comfortable distance from schizophrenics, the most severely afflicted of whom are profoundly dysfunctional -- unable to perform simplest actions necessary to continue living. Still, I concede that a relativistic approach, at least in milder cases, is in some ways essential: communication between schizophrenic and non-schizophrenic necessarily proceeds through negotiation. And while I think that Foucault may go too far when he claims that the only "concrete reality" is the "doctor-patient couple" (222), I also think that he usefully draws attention to the intense and exclusionary focus the participants may bring to bear on their relation, and the fact that each necessarily defines his position in terms of the other.

The relation between analyst and schizophrenic analysand is a subject which merits attention because it defines the shared and charged space in which communication and understanding are attempted.<sup>21</sup> Many texts composed by schizophrenics attempt to define

---

<sup>20</sup> "There are no borderlines for insanity, no more than for any other disease. In every person a tubercular bacillus occasionally takes hold; one or the other of the microbes may even divide once or twice. How many bacteria must be present, how much living tissue must have been destroyed before the individual should be called tubercular?" (*Textbook of Psychiatry*, 170).

<sup>21</sup> According to Felman, this is something like what Jacques Lacan says about psychoanalysis -- that the activity of reading belongs to both analyst and analysand, and that analysis presumes the unconscious to be capable both of reading and of learning how to read:

their experience against actual and perceived interpretations of the analyst.<sup>22</sup> And the clinical study by the analyst is a mirror image -- an attempt to understand and explain, but also to frame the report of the schizophrenic within his own interpretation.

When the analysand in question is schizophrenic, that space becomes still more charged,

---

"The [psychoanalytic] reading is revolutionary in that it is essentially, constitutively dialogic. It is grounded in a division; it cannot be synthesized, summed up in a monologue" (23).

<sup>22</sup> In fact, certain schizophrenics are extraordinarily adept at such communication, going so far as to adopt the specialized vocabulary of persons against whom they imagine themselves struggling. Of the schizophrenics discussed in this chapter alone, John Haslam used the vocabulary of mesmerism, Daniel Schreber used psychiatry, and so many of Bleuler's patients used legal terminology that he termed a category of schizophrenia "litigious." (But because a schizophrenic participates in a shared reality does mean he accepts it as real. Indeed, he is likely to believe that the circumstances he deigns to recognize are artificial and constructed, and it is perhaps for this reason that the tone of his communication may be ironic and condescending.)

In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault discusses the power inherent in written description; Foucault's context, of course, is the prison; but the point is as applicable to asylum:

For a long time ordinary individuality--the everyday individuality of everybody--remained below the threshold of description. To be looked at, observed, described in detail, followed from day to day by an uninterrupted writing was a privilege. The chronicle of a man, the account of his life, his historiography, written as he lived out his life formed part of the rituals of his power. The disciplinary methods reversed this relation, lowered the threshold of describable individuality and made of this description a means of control and a method of domination" (191).

and communication within or across it becomes extremely difficult and--in the opinion of some--impossible. Sass remarks: "In the presence of normal people, as well as with patients of nearly every other psychiatric diagnosis, one feels an immediate sense of a shared humanity, whereas the schizophrenic seems to inhabit an entirely different universe; he is someone from whom one feels separated by a 'gulf which describes description'" (14). But Sass, at least, tries. Other analysts have exacerbated the problem of communication by failing to recognize that the schizophrenic's interior reality is to him vivid, changing and complex--as real or more real than the exterior shared reality. In this regard as in many, Jung was a pioneer. In *The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease* (1928), he manages both to cross the gulf and describe the view from the other side:

Her baroque jumble of words can now be seen in a different light: they are fragments of an enigmatic inscription, bits and pieces of fairy-tale fantasies, which have broken away from hard reality to build a far-off world of their own. Here the tables are ever laden, and a thousand banquets are held in golden palaces. The patient can spare only a few mysterious symbols for the dim, dismal realm of reality; they need not be understood, for our understanding has long ceased to be necessary for her. (177)

The case to which Jung refers is the most extreme--a near-complete autism. Cases which are more moderate move between private reality and a shared reality, or live in a reality which in some way partakes of a shared reality. Bleuler explains:

[I]t is strange that schizophrenics even in the deeper deliria and twilight states usually show the proper orientation together with the morbid. Although they imagine themselves in a prison or in hell or in a church, they nevertheless know in some other connection that they are in the ward of the insane asylum; although they look on and treat the visiting parents as devils, nevertheless they can later tell that their parents

have been there; the patients know that the wife and child whom he murders are his household relatives; but he knows 'also' that they are both devils." (383) <sup>23</sup>

The ability of many schizophrenics to engage each reality simultaneously or alternately assists this communication. In fact, certain schizophrenics are extraordinarily adept at such communication, going so far as to adopt the specialized vocabulary of persons against whom they imagine themselves struggling. Daniel Schreber (discussed below) used psychiatry, and so many of Bleuler's patients used legal terminology that he termed a category of schizophrenia "litigious." But because a schizophrenic participates in a shared reality does mean he accepts it as real. Indeed, he is likely to believe that the circumstances he deigns to recognize are artificial and constructed, and it is perhaps for this reason that the tone of his communication may be ironic and condescending.

Consequently, analysts wishing to communicate with the schizophrenic must to some degree acknowledge his private world. Jung's recommended therapy involves configuring an exterior world to reflect the interior one, and Laing asserted: "one has to be able to orient oneself as a person in the other's scheme of things rather than only to see the other as an object in one's own world, i.e. within the total system of one's own reference" (25). The respective acknowledgments of analysand and analyst may begin with a tentative exchange of views, and develop into instruction (each of the other), or open conflict. Many texts composed by schizophrenics attempt to define their experience against actual and perceived interpretations of others, in many of these cases, the analyst. The clinical study of the analyst, of course, is a mirror image--an attempt to understand and explain, but also to frame

---

<sup>23</sup> Another testament to Bleuler and Sass's assertion that schizophrenia is not mental atrophy but rather a *hypertrophy*, is that while the analyst must *feign* a double orientation, the schizophrenic seems to possess it easily and naturally.

the report of the schizophrenic within his own interpretation, and so perhaps devalue it.

\* \* \*

This chapter will examine paired texts which offer opposing representations of the experience of schizophrenia, each a record of an epistemological struggle which is neither abstract nor academic, but which on the contrary is emphatically immediate, and whose outcome has tangible consequences for both participants. It will examine two sets of texts written in opposition, each an account of a schizophrenic experience by an analysand juxtaposed to an account of the same experience by his and her analyst: Daniel Schreber's *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903) "versus" Sigmund Freud's "Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)" (1911), and Frank Miller's "Some Instances of Subconscious Creative Imagination" (1907) "versus" C. G. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1916). It will also oppose accounts whose provenance was not paired: Mary MacLane's *I, Mary MacLane, A Diary of Human Days* (1917) against three brief case studies from Eugen Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry* (1924).<sup>24</sup>

Each of these texts has historical import. Freud and Jung are probably the two most influential figures in psychology, Bleuler may be the single most important researcher in schizophrenia, and Mary MacLane's *I, Mary MacLane, A Diary of Human Days* seems the first published collection of essays by a person diagnosed as schizophrenic which was not published

---

<sup>24</sup> These choices were influenced by my desire to present a historical context. More recent accounts of the experience of schizophrenia may be found in Chapter Three of Gottesman's *Schizophrenia Genesis* (1991), and in many issues of *Schizophrenia Bulletin*, a professional quarterly journal which has a standing invitation to schizophrenic persons to submit personal accounts.

merely *because* its author was schizophrenic.<sup>25</sup>

## I. Schreber and Freud

Among the authors dealt with, Schreber is unique in that both interior and exterior descriptions of his experience are extensive. His own account, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903), was quickly appropriated by psychiatrists as a classic example of paranoia. It seemed at once to confirm contemporary understandings of paranoia, and made the subjective experiences of a patient accessible to anyone who cared to read it. Max Weber, in his introduction to the 1988 edition, wrote: "[Schreber's] autobiography has the advantage of being complete to an extent no case history taken by a physician can ever be: its material is not selected or subject to elaboration or omission by an intermediary between the patient and his psychosis, and between both and the reader ... Indeed the *Memoirs* may be called the best text on psychiatry written for psychiatrists by a patient" (25). Schreber's work is still greatly valued as a singular product of an unlikely convergence of circumstances: "[Schreber's] intellect, his determination to grapple with his madness, his training in logical thinking, his inborn quest for truth, his integrity, absolute frankness, and finally admirable courage in laying his innermost thoughts and feelings bare before other people, knowing that they thought him mad" (7).

---

<sup>25</sup> The texts of the schizophrenics discussed here were composed under various circumstances. Schreber composed during his hospitalization and the years during which he was suffering his greatest discomfort. Miller composed as she was recovered and at leisure. And MacLane composed some years after her diagnoses, in circumstances which although physically comfortable, were emotionally disturbing.

Daniel Paul Schreber was born to a distinguished German family in the second half of the nineteenth century. He married, and for most of his working life was a practicing judge. In 1884 he was defeated as a candidate to local political office. Later that year he became extremely hypochondriacal, particularly afflicted with an idea that he was becoming emaciated. He was soon admitted to the Psychiatric Clinic at the University of Leipzig, where he remained until June 1885. Records during those six months cite speech impediments, hypersensitivity and two suicide attempts. Upon his release he returned to his work as a judge, and resumed marital relations which he reported as generally happy. Gradually, though, his neuroses returned, this time accompanied by insomnia and anxiety. In 1893 he was again hospitalized at the Leipzig Clinic, where his condition worsened. The medical bulletin which describes his condition upon entry into the clinic remarks:

At first more hypochondriacal complaints, that he suffers from a "softening of the brain, will soon die," etc., at the same time mixed with delusions of persecution, that "he has now been made happily insane." Also hallucinations now and then . . . He thinks he is dead and has begun to rot, that he is no longer in a condition "fit for burial" . . . that his penis has been twisted off by means of a "nerve probe"; he thinks he is a woman, but also often claims he must repulse energetically "the homosexual love of certain persons." All of these things tormented him so greatly that he wished for death . . . The auditory and visual hallucinations sometimes became so strong that he spent hours at a time in a chair or in bed completely inaccessible, squinting his eyes. The delusions of his senses apparently were of ever-changing content, referring in the more recent period of his stay at the Leipzig Clinic to his belief that he was being tortured to death in a ghastly manner. He lost himself more and more in a mystic-religious dimension, maintaining that God spoke openly to him, that vampires and devils make game of him. He said he wanted to convert to the Roman Catholic Church in order to avoid being persecuted. He then saw apparitions, heard sacred music and, finally,



apparently thought he was in another world. At last he considered everything around him to be spirits, taking his environment to be a world of illusions ...

Dr. Guido Weber (no relation to author of the introduction to the 1988 edition) was charged with Schreber's care; he described Schreber's remarkable ability to negotiate between his private reality and a shared reality.

Since for the last nine months Herr Schreber has taken his meals daily at my family board, I have had the most ample opportunities of conversing with him upon every imaginable topic. Whatever the subject was that came up for discussion (apart, of course, from his delusional ideas), whether it concerned events in the field of administration and law, or of politics, or of art, or of literature, or of social life--in short, whatever the topic, Dr. Schreber gave evidence of a lively interest, a well-informed mind, a good memory, and a sound judgment; his ethical outlook, moreover, was one which it was impossible not to endorse. So, too, in his lighter talk with the ladies of the party, he was both courteous and affable, and if he touched upon matters in a more humorous vein he invariably displayed tact and decorum." (Freud, 394)

During the eight years which followed Schreber became increasingly isolated, and involved with inventing (or, as he would have it, *discovering*) a private cosmography which was utterly baroque in its complexity and detail. The same years marked attempts to communicate. Schreber began "bellowing," expressing desires in "indecipherable written characters" (xiii) and drafting the manuscript which would become the *Memoirs*. Ultimately, Schreber argued successfully for his own release before the Superior Country Court in Dresden. In 1902 he was released, but in 1907 he was hospitalized at Leipzig a third and final time. He died there in 1911.

Schreber's *Memoirs* have presented difficulties to its audiences. In chapters with names like "Crisis in God's realms? Soul Murder" and "God and Immortality," *Memoirs* presents a detailed physical and causal description of a private cosmos whose strangeness and complexity rival William Blake's later works.<sup>26</sup> The text is made more difficult because Schreber's concerns are seldom clearly delineated, and alternate rapidly. But a summary is nonetheless possible.

Briefly, Schreber believed that he had a mission to restore the world to its lost state of bliss; to do so, he had first to be transformed into a woman. Schreber's cosmos--God, human beings and the world--consist mainly of material structures of extraordinary fineness called "nerves." People consist of bodies and nerves; God, on the other hand, is entirely nerve. After Creation, God limited his activities to attracting to himself the souls of the dead. These souls pass through a purification process during which they learn the "root-language" spoken by God--evidently a type of German. Recently, a flaw in the cosmic design has manifest itself: the nerves of living men may attract the nerves of God in such a way that entangle him and may threaten his existence. (Schreber is aware that his expression is heretical : "This state of things ... I am convinced, is once more to be ascribed to the fact that God was, *if I may so express it*, quite incapable of dealing with living men, and was accustomed to intercourse with corpses. . ." [my italics; 141].) Schreber's God is flawed: not only is he is unable to judge living men correctly--he is unable to learn from experience.

At first, Schreber understands that "rays" work a conspiracy against him whose end is to alter his gender (through nerves), making him a female prostitute to sate the carnal desire

---

<sup>26</sup> The analogy may merit more than passing consideration: Vernon suggests that Blake was afflicted with a benign schizophrenia manifested as a healthy, "liberated" state of consciousness.

of Dr. Paul Emil Flechsig, the director of the Leipzig Clinic. The transformation of gender requires a variety of actions which gradually destroy his physical integrity. Among these are an attempt "to pump the spinal cord out, which was done by so-called "little men" placed in my feet (135)"; a different heart, and "either an animal-like being or a soul-like creature" in the lungs (150). There were extraordinarily severe headaches; the skull was sawn to pieces, pulled apart, squeezed together, and drilled. But such bodily harm is temporary, and repaired by "miracles." These damaging phenomena have ceased, to be replaced by changes of sex--the development of female breasts and genitalia: "Twice at different times ... I had a female genital organ, although a poorly-developed one, and in my body felt quickening like the first signs of life of a human embryo" (4). Schreber realizes that his enemies misunderstand the purpose of the emasculation. Schreber alone has been chosen to begin the repopulation of the earth after an apocalypse, and to do so he must give birth; to give birth, he must become a woman. Thus, his transformation is essential to "the basic plan on which the Cosmic Order seems to rest" (72), and in fact makes possible the survival of the human species. The process will require decades, perhaps centuries. Schreber can procreate asexually only after he himself had died and been reborn, and he imagines himself dead. By the conclusion of *Memoirs*, Schreber has experienced the destruction of the world, and persons surrounding him are non-living, temporary fabrications he calls "fleeting-improvised men." The sun, trees, and birds ("bemiracled relics of former human souls") speak to him.

*Memoirs* itself is clear evidence for Bleuler's and Sass's assertion that schizophrenia is not mental atrophy. It demonstrates erudition (a knowledge of astronomy, folklore, literature, scripture, even psychiatry [Schreber refers briefly to Kraepelin's *Textbook of Psychiatry* (89) all of which are called upon to support its claims]). Further, it is meticulous in its differentiation of certainty from speculation, as evinced in the following passage:

Equally I dare not say whether the celestial bodies themselves (fixed stars,

planets, etc.) were created by God, or whether divine creation is limited to the organic world; in which case there would be room for the Nebular Hypothesis of Kant-Laplace side by side with the existence of a living God whose existence has become absolute certainty for me. Perhaps the full truth lies (by way of a fourth dimension) in a combination or resultant of both trends of thought impossible for man to grasp. In any case the light and warmth-giving power of the sun, which makes her the origin of all organic life on earth, is only to be regarded as an indirect manifestation of the living God; hence the veneration of the sun as divine by so many peoples since antiquity contains a highly important core of truth even if it does not embrace the whole truth.

<sup>27</sup> (46)

In its appreciation for the implications of its theories on history and religion, *Memoirs* is astonishingly thorough. Nonetheless, Schreber's schizophrenic symptoms are undeniable. There are, for instance, delusions of grandeur. As the *Memoirs* make clear, Schreber regarded himself as unique in human history. Near the conclusion of the work, he asserts: "And so I believe I am not mistaken in expecting that a very special palm of victory will eventually be mine. I cannot say with any certainty what form it will take. As possibilities I would mention . . . that great fame will be attached to my name surpassing that of thousands of other people much better mentally endowed" (214). And "It occurred to me only much later, in fact only while writing this essay did it become quite clear to me, that God Himself must have known of the plan, if indeed He was not the instigator, to commit soul murder on me, and to hand over my body in the manner of a female harlot" (77). Schreber expected the examination of his body to confirm his conviction that he was gradually changing from male to female, and believed that such a transformation would be evidence of the existence of God, and of God's nature and

---

<sup>27</sup> The Kant-Laplace Nebular Hypothesis is a theory of the formation of the solar system -- a derivation of which has become the accepted model.

power.<sup>28</sup>

Schreber also experienced a delusion of persecution, with an identifiable source. Dr. Paul Emil Flechsig was the director of the Leipzig Clinic, and Schreber's first and second admissions to the clinic were under Flechsig's care. The *Memoirs* assert existence of a hundred-year-old feud between the Flechsig and Schreber families, both belonging to "the highest nobility of heaven" (55). When an earlier Flechsig managed to gain control of God (Schreber speculates), "a conspiracy may have arisen ... to the detriment of the Schreber race ... perhaps in the direction of denying them offspring or possibly only of denying them choice of professions which would lead to closer relations with God such as that of a nerve specialist" (57).<sup>29</sup> As mentioned above, the goal of the conspiracy is to have his body transformed into a female and surrendered to Flechsig for his sexual pleasure. Because Schreber gradually comes to repel the assaults even as he accepts the transformation, his position on Flechsig softens. And the published work contains, between the preface and table of contents, an "open letter to Professor Flechsig." It begins:

---

<sup>28</sup> Schreber's stated rationale in the work's preface:

I started this work without having publication in mind. The idea only occurred to me as I progressed with it; however, I did not conceal from myself doubts which seemed to stand in the way of publication: mainly consideration for certain persons still living. Yet I believe that expert examination of my body and observation of my personal fate during my lifetime would be of value both *for science and for knowledge of religious truths* (italics mine).

<sup>29</sup> Because the word "nerve" has a peculiar and important meaning to Schreber (it is fabric of his cosmos), what he might mean by a "nerve specialist" is unclear, but one doubts it is a common profession.

I take the liberty of enclosing a copy of "Memoirs of a Patient Suffering from a Nervous Illness", which I have written, and beg you to examine it in a kindly spirit.

You will find your name mentioned frequently, particularly in the first chapter, partly in connection with circumstances which might be painful to you. I very much regret this but unfortunately cannot make any changes without from the very outset precluding making myself understood. In any case it is far from me to attack your honour, as indeed, I do not harbour any personal grievance against any person.

Schreber asserts that voices shout the name Flechsig "hundreds of times every day" as an instigator of attacks. He offers his evolving theory of the persecution--essentially, that Flechsig enacted a hypnotic power over Schreber's nerves, ceasing upon realizing that other forces were involved. And Schreber puts forward an admission of confusion and a tentative apology:

But it is possible that in this process (Flechsig's cessation of control) a part of your own nerves--probably unknown to yourself--was removed from your body, a process explicable only in a supernatural manner, and ascended to heaven as a "tested soul" and there achieved some supernatural power ... It is possible therefore that all those things which in earlier years I erroneously thought I had to blame you for ... are to be blamed only on that "tested soul" (34).

Finally, Schreber implores Flechsig to state whether he heard supernatural voices or experienced any visions or impressions similar to those reported in the body of the manuscript. All this, Schreber does again in the interests of science and religion--he turns an enemy into an authoritative witness and, from another perspective, co-creator of this cosmos.

Schreber's hallucinations--the imagined bodily sensations and auditory hallucinations which are discussed above--support the delusion and are, in turn, supported by the delusion. It is clear that at some point Schreber, like many schizophrenics, has hallucinated an apocalypse.

As discussed in Chapter One, the schizophrenic experiences *depersonalization*, a loss of ego and *disintegration of personality*--the obliteration of the ego boundaries. To Schreber, the deterioration of ego had an active and identifiable cause. He believed that certain forces in the form of "rays" which were attempting to destroy his mind by compelling a peculiar kind of compulsive thinking. The forces put into his mind uncompleted phrases, forcing it to attempt to finish them and so exhaust his mental powers: "(W)henever expressed in a grammatically complete sentence, the rays would be led straight to me, and entering my body . . . temporarily increase its soul-voluptuousness. Not-finishin-a-sentence has apparently the effect that the rays are, as it were, held up half way" (173). Although the language arises from without, its experience seems determinedly internal. It seems a kind of pre-speech best imagined "when one thinks of the processes by which a person tries to imprint certain words in his memory in a definite order, as for instance a child learning a poem by heart which he is going to recite at school, or a priest a sermon he is going to deliver in church. The words are repeated silently ... that is to say a human being causes his nerves to vibrate in the way which corresponds to the use of the words concerned, but the real organs of speech ... are either not set in motion at all or only coincidentally" (69). That the experience seems so internal is some measure of ability of Schreber's enemies to insinuate themselves. Schreber's defense is also the word: "the human language (spoken aloud) . . . is the *ultima ratio* for preserving the sanctity of my house." <sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> In this belief Schreber is rather typical. Language is so fundamental to the schizophrenic experience that Gregory Bateson terms the disease a disorder of communication. The subject may come to regard the language belonging to the shared reality as irrelevant,

Schreber is concerned with language--deeply and ambivalently. At moments he complains of its limits and failures, at others he attributes to it supernatural powers. In fact, Max Weber suggests that Schreber's illness progresses *through* modes of language. His autistic tendencies begin with a need to listen to verbal hallucinations: "It was observed in the garden how he placed his hands on his ears, listening intensely" (M xxii). Then, he speaks and refuses to speak. Schreber did not communicate his visions because he believed that their complexity and intensity exceeded linguistic capacities. He screams his name and his official title.

Finally, of course, he writes *Memoirs*. The diary began not as plans for a published book, but more modestly, as a set of notes. A fossil of his original purpose survives in the introduction to the published work.

It is ... necessary to give those persons who will then constitute the circle of my acquaintances, an approximate idea at least of my religious conceptions, so that they may have some understanding of the necessity which forces me to various oddities of behaviour, even if they do not understand these apparent oddities. (41)

Schreber assumes his behaviour will not be dismissed outright as "insane," but will be made a

---

deceptive and/or simply inaccurate, and she may replace that language with her own. On the other hand, the schizophrenic may *extend* the use of a term without concern for its conventional meaning; or she may invent words outright, and certain patients may take to repeating long narratives, gradually compressing several words into one, omitting others. Finally, the schizophrenic is likely to refuse to participate in what Bateson calls "metacommunication," indications of the sort of message being transmitted: a schizophrenic will offer no hint as to whether her communication is literal or metaphoric, ironic or direct.



subject of interest and study. A footnote to this paragraph both explains the widening purpose and observes that certain particulars of the work serve a more intimate end:

During the course of writing the present essay it occurred to me that it could perhaps be of interest to a wider circle. Nevertheless I have left the preamble because it was my original motive to acquaint my wife with my personal experiences and religious ideas. This explains also why I have frequently thought it right to give circuitous explanations for facts already known, to translate foreign words, etc., which would really have been unnecessary for the scientifically trained reader (41 n).

We note again Schreber's profound need to be understood by specialists, generalists, unknown audiences and one intimate reader, and his need to have all readers appreciate his efforts at making himself intelligible.

Of course, no small part of the *Memoirs'* purpose is a means to gain release. Part of Schreber's case before the court rested upon his contention that he was not mentally ill but *nervously* ill--a distinction much emphasized in his manuscript's title. We cannot know whether Schreber intended the text as evidence for his release during its composition, but he wielded it as such afterwards, adding a postscript "In What Circumstances Can a Person Considered Insane Be Detained in an Asylum against His Declared Will?", and submitting the text as testimony in the appeal proceedings, and--not incidentally--both winning the case and establishing a legal precedent.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> In 1900, when Schreber began to work to gain his release from the sanatorium, Guido Weber wrote reports recommending against it:

---

His mind is collected, his memory is excellent, he has at his disposal a very considerable store of knowledge (not merely upon legal questions, but in many other fields), and he is able to reproduce it in a connected train of thought. He takes an interest in following events in the world of politics, of science, and of art, and is constantly occupied with such matters ... In spite of this, however, the patient is full of ideas of pathological origin, which have formed themselves into a complete system; they are now more or less fixed, and seem to be inaccessible to correction by means of any objective valuation of the actual external facts (quoted in Freud, 393).

In his asylum and district medical officer's report, Weber approaches the subject of the manuscript itself.

But the patient harbours the urgent desire to have his "Memoirs" ... printed and made available to the widest circles and he is therefore negotiating with a publisher--until now of course without success. When one looks at the content of his writings, and takes into consideration the abundance of indiscretions relating to himself and others contained in them, the unembarrassed detailing of the most doubtful and aesthetically impossible situations and events, the use of the most offensive vulgar words, etc., one finds it quite incomprehensible that a man otherwise tactful and of fine feeling could propose an action which would compromise him so severely in the eyes of the public, were not his whole attitude to life pathological, and he unable to see things in their proper perspective, and if the tremendous overvaluation of his own person caused by lack of insight into his illness had not clouded his appreciation of the limitations imposed on man by society. (M 282-283)

But the immediate function of *Memoirs* seems to be as a weapon in the struggle against imagined forces. Significantly, the others also use the written word as weapons -- they have written of him and perhaps against him.

*Books or other notes* are kept in which for years have been written-down all my thoughts, all my phrases, all my necessities, all the articles in my possession or around me, all persons with whom I come into contact, etc. I cannot say with certainty who does the writing down. As I cannot imagine God's omnipotence lacks all intelligence, I presume that the writing-down is done by creatures given human shape on distant celestial bodies after the manner of the fleeting-improvised-men, but lacking all intelligence; their hands are led automatically, as it were, by passing rays for the purpose of making them write down, so that later rays can again look at what has been written.

. . . .

The writing-down-material, mainly my previous thoughts besides a few constantly recurring additions of more or less senseless and partly offensive phrases, vulgar terms of abuse, etc., serves to fill in these pauses ... I will perhaps append an anthology of these phrases to the present essay in order to give the reader at least some inkling of the nonsense my nerves have for years had to put up with (122).

Schreber's enemies seem to him to be working to compose a complete inventory of his

---

Even before its publication then, Schreber's *Memoirs* were devalued as though it were a literary text--that is, on grounds that it failed to recognize its audience, that it failed to communicate, and that it failed (in fact, did not attempt) self-censorship.

thoughts, but "the aim of the whole policy remains totally obscure" (122). Interestingly, the voices implicitly criticize Schreber for clichéd thoughts. The rays often respond to a thought with "We have this already"--a slightly sarcastic suggestion that Schreber's own thought is clichéd and exhausted, and to which Schreber responds almost triumphantly: "this of course quite absurd, because human thinking is inexhaustible" (122).<sup>32</sup> In fact, there is a suggestion that his own writing has a therapeutic effect.

The talk of voices I hear changes continually, it varied even during the short time while I was writing this book. Few of the previously used phrases are heard now, and hardly ever those referring to the "not-thinking-of-anything-thought." The talk of the voices has slowed down even more since my description of it in Chapter XVI, so that it is almost nothing more than a *hissing* in my head; I could hardly distinguish individual words, if--I must say unfortunately--I did not always know in advance from experience what senseless phrases to expect" (202).

And so the *Memoirs* themselves become his struggle against other forces, his assertion of integrity, and, finally, the prize in his struggle for himself.<sup>33</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> John Vernon (The Garden and the Map: *Schizophrenia in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture*) goes some way in suggesting that the imaginative flights John Barth has termed the "literature of exhaustion" are inherently schizoid or schizophrenic. Emblematic of the impulse to exhaustion is Borges' Library of Babel in his short story of that title; it contains every combination of words and letters mathematically possible, including, for instance, this sentence and all possible refutations of it. We might say that for Schreber, the forces are attempting to construct such a library, attempting to anticipate his thoughts, but they cannot; for it is Schreber himself who contains the library.

<sup>33</sup> On the subject of language, Schreber would agree with Foucault:

\* \* \*

Sigmund Freud conceived of schizophrenia as regression into the earliest auto-erotic

---

*"The examination, surrounded by all its documentary techniques, makes each individual a 'case': a case which at one and the same time constitutes an object for a branch of knowledge and a hold for a branch of power. The case is no longer, as in casuistry or jurisprudence, a set of circumstances defining an act and capable of modifying the application of a rule; it is the individual as he may be deduced, judged, measured, compared with others, in his very individuality; and it is also the individual who has to be trained or corrected, classified, normalized, excluded, etc.*

For a long time ordinary individuality -- the everyday individuality of everybody -- remained below the threshold of description. To be looked at, observed, described in detail, followed from day to day by an uninterrupted writing was a privilege. The chronicle of a man, the account of his life, his historiography, written as he lived out his life formed part of the rituals of his power. The disciplinary methods reversed this relation, lowered the threshold of describable individuality and made of this description a means of control and a method of domination. It is no longer a monument for future memory, but a document for possible use. And this new describability is all the more marked in that the disciplinary framework is a strict one: the child, the patient, the madman, the prisoner, were to become, with increasing ease from the eighteenth century and according to a curve which is that of the mechanisms of discipline, the object of individual descriptions and biographical accounts."

*(Discipline and Punish, 191-2)*

stage of psychosexual development and as a disorder which was fundamentally narcissistic. Because he regarded the schizophrenic as incapable of transference, and like many 19th Century psychologists suspected that the cause of schizophrenia was a brain toxin, he declared the disorder inaccessible to psychoanalysis, and so devoted little attention to it. Indirectly, Freud provided many of the instruments through which both men undertook the first surveys of schizophrenia: ideas concerning narcissistic fixation and regression, dream interpretation, defense mechanisms and psychosexual developmental stages.

Freud's only exclusive investigation into schizophrenia was an analysis of Schreber's memoirs--"Psychoanalytic Notes upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)" (1911). Freud works to distinguish Schreber from other cases, and outlines several particulars of his delusion. But the essence is that these are outgrowths of a single trunk. Freud suggested that the cause of Schreber's illness was a passive homosexual love for Flehig, and interprets Schreber's illness as a result of a conflict over unconscious homosexuality and an associated implied threat of castration:<sup>34</sup>

[T]he exciting cause of the illness was the appearance in [Schreber] of a feminine (that is, a passive homosexual) wish-phantasy, which took as its object the figure of his physician. An intense resistance to this phantasy arose on the part of Schreber's personality, and the ensuing defensive struggle [assumed] a delusion of persecution.

Freud concludes with an note interesting for its admission of relative and oppositional nature of the texts with which he is concerned: "It remains for the future to decide whether

---

<sup>34</sup> Bleuler quickly rejected this "homosexual" cause for schizophrenia, and subsequent researchers have agreed.

there is more delusion to my theory than I would like to admit, or whether there is more truth in Schreber's delusion than other people are as yet prepared to believe" (466).<sup>35</sup>

In that Schreber acknowledges and dismisses suggestions of homosexuality, we might say that he speaks to Freud. Further, Schreber's own voice in essential ways defies Freud's reductionism. To read through the detailed accumulation of beliefs and private cosmic history is to live inside Schreber's world and to grow accustomed to it. At moments a reader commiserates with Schreber's complaints of the residents of the asylum, only to remember that he is also a resident, and a particularly difficult one. Still, the work is lengthy enough that a reader actually grows accustomed to his cosmos, and Schreber's humanity is much in evidence--his gratitude at brief visits with his wife, his pity for other patients, etc. In certain important aspects then, Schreber's work is irreducible to anecdote, and defies attempts at analysis.

## II. Miller and Jung

Frank Miller was an American woman who experienced certain unusual psychological phenomena, and consulted a Geneva psychiatrist named Theodore Flournoy. At Flournoy's request, Miller composed an account of her experience, which he subsequently published as

---

<sup>35</sup> Of course, Freud did not have the last word. In *The Content of the Psychoses* (2nd 1914 edition, English trans. M.D. Eder), Jung commends Freud's analysis of Schreber, but observes that it neglects the "enormous symbol-formation in dementia praecox" (*Collected Papers* 1917, 337).

"Quelque faits d'imagination creatrice subconsciente" in *Archives de psychologie*, V (1906).<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Thomas Flournoy contributes to Miller's piece an introduction, a parenthetical comment, and an afterward. His introduction is telling in that while it admires Miller's rationality, it regrets that that rationality denies us *stories*:

It needs no more than this for persons of such a constitution, and imbued with occultism, or of an intelligence less mistress of itself and slower to re-assert itself, to serve as the germ for those curious stories of "anteriority," which, once born, develop like mushrooms and invade the entire "hypnoid" imagination. As a spiritualistic medium, Miss Miller would certainly be the reincarnation of some princess of historic or prehistoric antiquity (perhaps even several) and she would not have failed to furnish us with interesting revelations of her Egyptian, Assyrian and even Aztec pre-existence ... If it were only the question of the picturesque, I could not help regretting that the firmness of her reason counterbalancing the inclination of her temperament should have always kept her from being wrecked on the flowery slopes of occult philosophy and would thus have robbed us of quite a number of fine subliminal romances! Let us console ourselves for this loss by the fragments of sane psychological observations which we owe her ... (289-90)

So Flournoy's interest seems more than (or *other* than) merely scientific--accompanying the stated regret we might assume there is also hope that a more occult process is at work.

(Flournoy was much concerned with supernatural phenomena--he was the author of the account of automatic writing *From India to the Planet Mars* [1900]). And whether or not Miller was aware of the framing narrative Flournoy provided for the published article, she seems to write against it: the explanations which follow each description take pains to counter any suggestions of the supernatural. The following is typical:



Miller's article is sixteen pages long; it describes four experiences in which her unconscious plays large roles. Each is given a section.

In the first section, "Phenomena of Passing Suggestion and of Instantaneous Autosuggestion," the author describes moments during which she seems to experience the impressions and feelings of another so vividly that those impressions and feelings seem her own. Merely by listening to a description, she is able, for a moment, to be repulsed by foods she normally craves and to enjoy scents she normally finds disagreeable. As an audience, she experiences empathy which actually affects her physically: watching "Cyrano," for instance, she feels pain when Christian is stabbed. Further, her imagination may be stirred easily. Shown a photograph of a steamer in mid-ocean, she is overwhelmed with a physical memory of a voyage: she feels the pulsation of the waves, the roll of the ship. Glimpsing her towel-wrapped head in a mirror as she prepares for a bath, she sees herself as an Egyptian statue. Miller attributes each experience to a "nervous, imaginative, sympathetic temperament" (296).

In the second section, "GLORY TO GOD.' Dream poem," the author offers an account of a dream which produced twelve lines of verse.

---

In comparing this poem which came to me in the state of half-dream on the one hand with those which I write being fully awake; and, on the other hand with the preceding piece which came to me in complete sleep, these three categories appear to me to form a perfectly natural series: the intermediary case forms a simple and easy transition between the two extremes and thus removes all suspicion of "occult" intervention ... (303)

"[S]lowly, distinct words arose from this chaos and they then appeared in three verses, in my writing on a piece of ordinary writing paper, blue-lined, on a page of my old note book in which I write my verses and which I always carry with me;--briefly told they appeared to me precisely as they were in truth a few minutes later."

Upon awakening she quickly finds the notebook and writes out three stanzas (which she later revised to be more faithful to her memory of the dream):

When the Eternal first made Sound  
 A myriad ears sprang out to hear,  
 And throughout all the Universe  
 There rolled an echo deep and clear:  
 "All glory to the God of Sound!"

The two subsequent stanzas parallel this, first substituting "Sound" with "Light," and then with "Love." Miller then offers her own analysis, suggesting that the poem arose from a mingling of memories of literature (*Paradise Lost*, *The Book of Job*), music (Haydn's oratorio "The Creation"), a sermon, and the impressions of a sea voyage.

In the third section, "'THE MOTH TO THE SUN.' Hypnagogic poem," Miller describes being very nearly asleep when she hears the poem in a half-waking dream, spoken by a moth to the sun: "I longed for Thee when first I crawled to consciousness. / My dreams were all of Thee when in the chrysalis I lay." It continues in this fashion for eight more lines. Miller explains this as resulting from a blend of immediate experiences (seeing an actual moth), half-remembered quotations, and fragments of poems.

In the fourth section, "CHI-WAN-TO-PEL, a hypnagogic drama," Miller describes her experience of a "half-dream"--in her words "[b]orderland phenomena, or if you prefer, the composition of the brain in a state of half-dream" (303). The "half-dream" itself involves a figure whose appearance recalls "carvings on Mexican monuments" (304) and who seems to be named "Chi-wan-to-pel." He appears, then there is a confusion of images--"horses, a battle" (304). The figure reappears, is nearly killed, and recites a lengthy history of his relations with various women, which ends in lamentation : "In the entire world, there is not even one!" (305). Miller attributes this experience also to a reworking of memories and impressions: "[M]any efforts are not needed to conceive that this mosaic was formed of itself, by means of the thousands of impressions which are met necessarily in a very busy life, and that it should have taken this form of a dream fantasy" (308). In this case, as in the three previous, her description and analysis are exacting: in Flournoy's words, "Miss Miller wisely knew how to avoid both literary metaphor and scientific pedantry" (293). <sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>37</sup> In his introduction, Flournoy comments on the fortunate convergence of a fascinating analysand and competent analyst in a single person:

As is well known from numerous anecdotes, cases of unexpected apparition, when dreaming or half-waking--works of imagination which possess a certain esthetic or literary value--are not extremely rare. What is rarer still, is that individuals, favored by phenomena of this kind should have enough curiosity and psychological sense to undertake the analysis of these products of the automatic activity of the brain (or of their mind), to essay an elucidation of their origin, going back to anterior impressions, sometimes very distant which might have served as points of departure or as food to their subconscious inspiration. (288)

Clearly, Miller is not schizophrenic to the degree that Matthews and Schreber are--but her experiences do seem to have schizoid qualities. Sass suggests that delusions of reference are the schizophrenic's own rationalization of an otherwise inexplicable sense of the meaningfulness of random phenomena. Miller's powers of empathy may have been a response to such a sense. Many schizophrenics experience an "apophany"--a feeling that something momentous is about to happen. Miller's may have such an experience in during the dream of Chiwantopel--which begins: "Then the impression that something was about to be communicated to me" (304).

Schizophrenic hallucinations often involve cosmic themes. Miller's poem "Eternal first made Sound" seems a commingling of *Genesis* and Haydn's "The Creation." Images of horses in a great battle resonates with the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse and with Armageddon. Moreover, Miller's extraordinary powers of empathy with the figure of Christ, the strange image of herself in the mirror, the ready adoption of other identities--all suggest types of depersonalization and particular symptom called "loss of ego boundaries"--that is, confusion of the self with others. Finally, several of Miller's fantasies seem significant for their emphasis upon the importance of sound and words. The creation poem makes sound and language a cosmic fundament:

A myriad ears sprang out to hear,  
 And throughout all the Universe  
 There rolled an echo deep and clear:  
 "All glory to the God of Sound!"

\* \* \*

C. G. Jung (1875-1961), in his forward to the unrevised second edition of *Psychology*

of the *Unconscious* (1925), asserted "an American colleague was treating Miss Miller for the schizophrenic disturbance which had broken out after her sojourn in Europe." The clinical term appeared again in the 1952 revision, whose subtitle became "An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia." <sup>38</sup>

Frank Miller was not the first schizophrenic whom Jung studied; in fact, he had published an important work concerning a more severe case in the paper "Über die Psychologie der Dementia praecox: Ein Versuch" (Hall A. S., 1907). But by offering the mythic material to support the themes of *Psychology of the Unconscious* and lay the foundation of Jung's "archetypal" approach to schizophrenia, Miller would mean much more to the ultimate direction of Jung's interests. <sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>38</sup> Significantly, there is nothing in Miller's account that is unequivocally schizophrenic (a reader is inclined to agree with Miller's own assertion that her experiences may result from nothing more than a sensitive temperament). And in fact, the text of the 1912 *Psychology of the Unconscious* (Trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle. New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1916) does not assert explicitly that Miller is schizophrenic; rather, it uses Miller's fantasies as representative of the unconscious--including the schizophrenic unconscious. It is interesting that patient should be receive subsequent diagnoses by a single analyst that seem gradually to crystallize around a particular designation, and interesting that the fact that a stable text -- as opposed to a living and changing analysand -- allows retroactive analysis.

<sup>39</sup> Miller's article appeared in the June 1907 *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*. Because Jung was elected an honorary fellow of that organization in Fall of that year, he probably had been receiving its journal in June. But he may have read the original; John Kerr suggests that it was "late winter of 1910" (Kerr, "Beyond the Pleasure Principle and Back Again: Freud, Jung and Sabina Spielrein," in *Freud: Appraisals and Reappraisals* (Contributions to Freud Studies, vol. 3, 1988).

Kerr suggests that in the fall of 1909 Jung anticipated composing the definitive psychoanalytic work on mythology, and that even as he was overwhelmed with material from older sources, he had little success locating clinical evidence from living patients, until 1910, when he discovered the article by Miller. On December 13 of that year he wrote to Freud: "The second half, the so-called drama of Chiwantopel, has proved to be so rich in archeological material that I haven't yet been able to put everything in order ... the material is falling into a surprising pattern" (quoted in the 1991 intro. to *Psychology of the Unconscious*, xx).

Initially, what surprises a reader about Jung and Miller's texts is their relative length. Miller's article is a mere sixteen pages; the 1912 *Psychology of the Unconscious* is 566. The Hinkle translation terms each section, the longest of which is two pages, a "chapter." If, then Freud's project with *Memoirs* involved substantial editing, then Jung's work involved extensive elaboration and embellishment. Regarding this work, Jung wrote to Freud: "The second half, the so-called drama of Chiwantopel, has proved to be so rich in archeological material that I haven't been able to put everything in order ... the material is falling into a surprising pattern. Too much shouldn't be revealed yet. But be prepared for some strange things the like of which you have never heard from me ..." (xx) His conclusion finishes (as much convincing himself that so much could be made from so little?): "My conscience is clear, I have done honest work and drawn nothing out of a hat."

The study of schizophrenia offered Jung an entry into psychological formulation; it is no exaggeration to say that Jung's earliest ideas were offered by the problems presented by schizophrenia. Moreover, although Jung's work with the collective unconscious was compelled by his own inclinations, those inclinations were first made evident to him through schizophrenia

and what he regarded as its archaic representations.<sup>40</sup> Jung regarded schizophrenia as a product of emotional over-involvement and regression not only into infantile stages of development, but into the collective unconscious itself. He concluded that all symptoms pointed to the same central disturbances: disintegration of consciousness and personality, and fixation. In *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox* (1907),<sup>41</sup> Jung observed that the autonomous complexes of schizophrenia are stronger and more distorted than are those of the normal subject -- and suspected that such features indicated a pathological unconscious source. Jung observed that the schizoid subject increasingly associates himself with a pathogenic complex, until all his psychic activities are absorbed by it. In other words, he loses interest in objective events and so increasingly alienates himself from society and from a shared reality. Jung analyzed a typical case of paranoid schizophrenia, and proposed three complexes moving between conscious and unconscious states; in essence, these are Bleuler's complexes re-

---

<sup>40</sup> Most conceptions of schizophrenia in the late nineteenth century were materialistic -- attributing the cause to brain lesions or anatomical irregularities. In his lecture *Der Inhalt der Psychose* (delivered in 1908 and first translated into English as *The Content of the Psychoses* in 1916), Jung offered evidence that such conceptions were unfounded:

In the last four years we have admitted 1,325 mental patients to Burghölzli Mental Hospital . . . Forty-five per cent of the patients suffer from the authentic and common disease known as dementia praecox. . . The clinical picture is incredibly varied; usually there is some disturbance of feeling, very often there are delusions and hallucinations. As a rule there is nothing to be found in the brain. Even in cases of the most severe type, lasting for years, an intact brain is not infrequently found post mortem (160-61).

<sup>41</sup> The work was first translated into English by Frederick W. Peterson and A.A. Brill in the *Nervous and Mental Disease Monograph Series* (no. 3; New York, 1909).

arranged and interrelated. The conscious level is dominated by the *complex of grandeur*, ideas stemming from the belief that one is extraordinarily important, or sinless. The unconscious is dominated by a *complex of injury* (Bleuler's "persecution") -- ideas stemming from the belief that one is persecuted unjustly. Fragments of this complex appear as hallucinations. Many schizophrenics inflate the grandeur complex to the point where they believe themselves Christ. This particular delusion, effectively coupling of the omnipotent with the persecuted -- allows for a synthesis of both complexes. A third complex is "correcting" and "ironical," and takes the form of the auditory hallucination which comments upon and mocks the earlier fantasies. Here Jung made a connection Bleuler did not, regarding the last as a manifestation of a "semi-normal ego-remnant." <sup>42</sup> *Psychology of the Unconscious* proposes for schizophrenia a kind of psychotherapy involving an unconscious collective memory, and a single, shared narrative called the "libido myth."

The libido myth originates as a response to a universal fear of death, a fear so great that were it not sublimated into the unconscious, it might paralyze us. The unconscious answers this fear by seeking rebirth, and has developed its own peculiar but logical means to that rebirth: impregnation of one's mother. The deepest stratum of the unconscious -- the collective unconscious -- tries to realize this desire by creating a story of a search for rebirth, and the mother who can effect it. The searcher himself (he is always male) embodies the desire for life and its continuance: often the searcher ages as the individual in whom he lives ages, and the desire assumes different emphases -- nutrition and the mother during infancy, sex during adolescence, desire for rebirth during adulthood. Jung calls this desire libido (his broadening of Freud's exclusively sexual definition of the same term contributed much to their split); he refers to the figure who embodies the libido as (logically) the libido figure or libido hero, and the story of his search for rebirth as the libido myth.

---

<sup>42</sup> *Psychology*, 149-50.



The myth is manifest in the collective unconscious of everyone, and in oral myths and legends. Jung explains that pieces of the myth percolate into conscious thought slowly but inexorably, through inevitable gaps in memory between storyteller and listener. The Legend of Gilgamesh, *Beowulf*, Christ's life within and without Scripture, Pinocchio, and the North American Indian myths synthesized to become Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha*, all lived for a time as legends communicated orally. All are libido myths.

*Psychology of the Unconscious* presents Jung's work to discover an over-arching theory which would explain certain aspects of psychoanalysis, religion and literature, and it introduces the twin concepts of the collective unconscious and the archetype. Toward these ends, it widens Freud's conception of the libido, and defines and discusses symbols used by the unconscious--including symbols of the mother and of rebirth. Throughout the work, Jung draws on religious myths and works of literature, regarding them as variations on the same themes presented in the "Miller phantasies."

Briefly, Jung engages Miller's own interpretation: he notes Miller's contention that these are the mere product of a "nervous temperament" (in fact, on page 37 he quotes her), and quickly dismisses the idea. And if there is a "conversation" between the texts at all, it is decidedly one-sided.

### III. Bleuler and MacLane

Having become familiar with opposition in which analyst and analysand each have a voice, we are prepared to examine two texts in which the opposition is unvoiced and in some sense absent, and which necessarily invite the reader to imagine or become the opposing voice.

Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry* (trans. 1924) offers case studies of various schizophrenics and so regards their behavior from without (although as will be seen, Bleuler did allow and even feel the necessity to record the patients' descriptions of their experience). Mary MacLane's essay collection *I, Mary MacLane, A Diary of Human Days* (1917), describes the schizophrenic experience from within, and its author does not (and perhaps cannot) acknowledge any point of view outside herself.

Bleuler's *Textbook* arose from exhaustive analysis of 647 cases treated at Burghölzli over eight years. It includes a long chapter describing individual twenty cases, several accompanied by photographs. There is a woman wearing a handmade headdress, looking directly at the photographer with an expression of hopelessness. Bleuler's terse but strangely evocative caption: "Fig. 42.--Mixed condition in a debilitated case. Inconstant euphoria. Motor retardation which crowds out the euphoric expression of the face but nevertheless permits the patient to decorate herself with necklaces made of mountain ash berries." Beneath a photograph of a vigorous-looking elderly man, Bleuler offers: "Fig. 43.--Imbecile, somewhat microcephalic. He could repeat whole sermons after once hearing them. Despite the strong vivacity and the many folds the facial expression is very simple, and coarse." The twenty case studies range in length from a paragraph to two pages. They are curious narratives in that, like the picture captions, they are necessarily impressionistic, and if they do not require the reader to fill in the gaps, they certainly allow her to do so.

Although some work has been done in the realm of case-studies-as-short stories (see Lacan *et. al.* and more recently, Brooks' *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling*), most have approached Freud almost exclusively. Oliver Sacks's *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* (1990) and *An Anthropologist on Mars* (1995) claim to attempt to redress the situation--but their success is for the reader to decide. In some lights, Sacks's tales have an air of unreality as great or greater than those of Borges; Sacks' very subjects seem to lend themselves to the

anecdotal and sensational. By contrast, Bleuler's descriptions--precisely *because* of their restraint and economy--can evoke worlds of unspeakable pain. Two examples:

*Paranoid.* Railroad employee. Medium intelligence. At first spinner, then railroad worker where he rose to train conductor. Always particular, silent. Toward the end of his thirties he began to be mistrustful towards his wife. At the same time a better position with the owner of a factory who was a free-mason was offered him by intimation from a workingman who was very "sympathetic" toward him; finally other positions right in the lodge were offered him. Years ago he was supposed to have seen a free-mason in a compromising situation (in reality a woman had merely entered a railroad compartment after him); some allusions were supposed to be made to it in the newspapers. But he had kept quiet about it and now the freemasons want to reward him for it. Because he did not accept the reward, they persecute him. Furthermore years ago he once made unfavorable remarks about the free-masons. All sorts of things are said to him on the street in passing; remarks are also made elsewhere which he understands only later. At night he hears voices. In a mysterious way his thoughts are read. The free-masons are after women; they use his wife also. He demanded from her with threats the money that she had obtained in that way; once he wanted to cut open her stomach with a razor. His sister-in-law is sometimes pale and sometimes red; that is on his account. Theatricals and thoughts are made for him while awake and especially while dreaming . . . (414-15).

*Hebephrenia with Transition to the Paranoid Form.* As a child somewhat apathetic. Lost her parents early. While in a foreign boarding school a "nervous disease" appeared for which she was treated successfully for a year, with persuasion. But she was seized with a morbid feeling for the physician and had to be taken away from him almost with force. She came to another physician's house, then to a relative

where she busied herself with house-work. At twenty-four she went to England to board where she had several sentimental and pious friendships. "For convalescence and also for work" she returned to Switzerland at thirty-three, then went to a relative in America, let a friend of his cheat her of her money, but returned in time to Switzerland, because she had lung trouble. Later she was operated [on] for an internal growth. In the hospital she was depressed and cut her throat with a pen-knife, whereupon at thirty-five she was admitted to the clinic. Here she was fearful, liked to stand at the door in her shirt, called to everybody that passed that she had to go on the street in her shirt. Finally she did not want to put anything on, tore her shirts because they were too beautiful. She had to be tube fed, and slept very little. When the door opened, she always thought now someone was coming to torture her to death. She did not want to urinate because she was being watched through the windows. Active auditory and somatic hallucinations concerning which, however, she spoke little. After four months she was somewhat quieter. But the voices forbade her to speak loudly. She was always glad to return from visiting relatives. The voices tell her they are not the right relatives. She has to be assured that she has not a cat and a dog in her bowels. During sleep she is transported to many places, once with the room and all to a river, then again to a place where there is snow. "The furniture has wilted because of the rays from her green eyes." After a while the sad mood changes to a mildly manic which in the course of a year makes way for a very apathetic one, but always with brief fluctuations upward and downward. She is to be destroyed purposely, she hears many voices, mistakes people, is afraid to go into the open where there are people who shoot her; the physicians do dreadful things to her body. Nevertheless with mild protesting she is very pleasant, as far as her indifference permits. The friend from America, in the form of a nurse, has sneaked up to her. She is given poison and disagreeable things to eat. Her uncle was in a tree opposite the window and wanted to shoot her; but an angel protected her. She is being hypnotized, cats' eyes have been put

into her. The nurses talk about her. Her passport has been forged. An illegitimate child has been put over on her. Men dressed as nurses come in, bind her, pour poison into her eyes, throw stones at her. Aside from this she is very quiet, busies herself with womanly tasks and copying. (428-29)

*Textbook* is a remarkable work, in part because Bleuler's feelings toward the patients and their lives is complex. He is bewildered, sympathetic, and outraged at the inadequacy of the hospital facilities. At the same time, he is fascinated. Like Jung, Bleuler seems to sense in some schizophrenics a certainty and a vividness of being.

One case study (*Catatonia with Rapid Dementia*) is roughly two pages long. The first third describes the patient's history as a quiet teacher at a private institute and then at a primary school. His mental state is unremarkable, if troubled--until he breaks into a tramway station to sleep, and is brought to the hospital. The second third describes the patient's behavior in the hospital: "Stands up and stamps hard on the platform, screams in an oratorical tone: 'Oh, my dear Blapsen, you are my dearest Klapsen.' He must go away; he walks away singing quietly, 'One has left.'" (425). Refraining from analysis, Bleuler hands the final third to the patient, and ends the study allowing the patient a voice--the study concludes with the patient's letter to an aunt:

Dear Kind Aunt Schufeli:

I hope you no longer have to work so hard for the capitalists in St. Gall; because here in Burghölzli (hospital) I still hope to find in the socialistic centre of the world in Zurich--wiedikon, a position as upper grade teacher for Italian children; although I was brought here against my will per (police automobile) "by the watch dog of clericalism for the Zurich ministers (K)" and here I have to perform work of not the least use ...

Signaturely I can only then excuse it as I got here in a milieu, in which my own love of nature was violently stolen only with technical devilish means and in contradiction to the laws of the milieu. So long as I don't get the power over these "accursed" laws and conditions (As Hans calls them) I can accept them only hypothetically as technical-devilism."

(425)

In recent years psychologist and author Oliver Sacks has, quite rightly, garnered respect and attention for an unusually humane approach to patients. The introduction to *An Anthropologist on Mars*, Sacks's 1995 collection of anecdotes of mental illness, advises: "Ask not what disease the person has, but what person the disease has." We might say that this is what Bleuler was doing all along. Nonetheless, a reader has a sense that something is missing-- what it might be like to see the camera through the eyes of the figure in that photograph, to hear the psychologist through the ears of the subject.

\* \* \*

Mary MacLane is best known as the Canadian/American author of *The Story of Mary MacLane* (1902). Derived from diary excerpts, the book sold nearly 100,000 copies in its first month; MacLane published two more books (*Annabel Lee* [1903] and *I, Mary MacLane* [1917]), and wrote for the *New York World* and the *Chicago Sunday Tribune*. In 1917 she wrote and starred in *Men Who Have Made Love to Me*, an autobiographical film.

*I, Mary MacLane* is a collection of essays on existence in general and on the author in particular. There are light pieces on particulars like the joy afforded by a "cold boiled potato," and the life of the Finnish woman who cleans; there are darker pieces on loneliness and her own wished-for imaginary child, and short essays that delight in matters most would find

disturbing--one's own burial. Finally, there are pieces which seem at once weirdly powerful, and self-consciously trivial: when her room has been newly painted she ponders (for two pages) the lingering smell of turpentine, and concludes:

In all my Soul and bones and Mary-MacLaneness it is damn-the-Smell-of-Turpentine as  
a bastard murderous hurt.

I have an odd feeling God has no more power over it than have I.

It half-calls for a *different* Turpentine God.

I am shakily mad tonight, I believe, from a so slight sticky matter."

(157)

MacLane is straightforward, and self-consciously Whitmanesque: "I sing only the Ego and the individual. So does in secret each man and woman and child who breathes, but is afraid to sing it aloud ... So I write this book of Me--my Soul, my Heart, my sentient Body, my magic Mind: their potentialities and contradictions" (2-3). But instead of the astonishing Whitmanesque energy, there is a languidness and inertia:

Unless impelled to violent action by a violent reason--like love or hatred or jealousy or a baby or humiliated pride or rowelling ambition--a woman follows the line of least resistance. I have followed it these years with outward acquiescences and inward rages ... (10)

Several essays begin describing a haunting loneliness, but gradually work to an admission of self-love possible only in and through loneliness or alone-ness. A representative passage, beginning in a quiet resignation ("I suppose I'm very lonely") takes a slow turn:

"I live long hours of nervous profound passionate self-communion. I discover strange

lovely age-worn facets of my Soul. I discover the subtle panting Ego--the wonderful thing that lives and waits in its garbled radiance just beneath my skin. To ask oneself and make answer out of oneself is the most delicious of this life's mental delectations."  
(72)

Certainly it is possible to understand and even to have experienced any of these feelings without being schizophrenic--indeed, one may read long passages without encountering any assertion that might be other than hyperbole. But at moments MacLane seems aware that she may be schizoid (although she does not use the term): "A thought achieves itself in my roiled-and-placid brain: that one half of me is Mad, but the other half is doubly Sane and someway over-Sane, so that in it all I break a little better than even" (46). Indeed, the text seems to evince numerous symptoms of schizophrenia.

Certainly MacLane has established a private reality that overwhelms all else: "The adventures of my spirit are realer than the outer things that befall me" (31). And there are moments which recall the more severe imaginative flights of Bleuler's patients, and--as in this passage--a consciousness of one's self as a place of infinite and frightening mysteries:

"My life is a vast stone bastile [sic] of many little rooms in which I am a prisoner. I am locked there in solitude on bread and water and let to roam in it at will. And each Room is tenanted by invisible garbled furies and dubious ecstasies. I run with echoing footsteps from Room to Room to escape them: but each Room is more uninhabitable than the last. There are scores of little Rooms, each with its ghosts, each different (137)."



Further, there is a delusion of grandeur (or at least, an immodesty): "I am a fascinating creature" (176). In certain passages MacLane presents her solipsism as Whitman presents his--she is the subject she knows best, she is fascinating simply because she is a person, and all people are fascinating. But in other passages she seems unashamedly egotistic: "I'm by odds the Cleverest human being I know: more than likely one of the Cleverest who ever lived in this world" (264).<sup>44</sup>

MacLane does not believe herself dead, as may many schizophrenics--but she can *imagine* herself dead easily and convincingly. For MacLane such thoughts seem wholly comforting--it is the fantasy of which Jung writes--death as an easement.

But the sleep of the dead. Its sound by itself without the thought is Restful--And the thought is Restful . . . . I imagine me wrapped in a shroud of soft thin wool cloth of a pale color, laid in a plain wood coffin: and my eyelids are closed, and my Tired feet are dead feet, and my hands are folded on my breast. And the coffin is nine feet in the ground and the coffin is nine feet down in the ground and the earth covers it. Upon that some green sod: and above, the ancient blue deep sheltering sky: and the clouds and the

---

<sup>43</sup> Laing: "[The schizophrenic's] outward behaviour is a defensive system analogous to innumerable openings to underground passages which one might imagine would take one to the inner citadel, but they lead nowhere or elsewhere" (176).

<sup>44</sup> An earlier work is still more straightforward: "At the age of nineteen I know that I am a genius. I know I am a genius more than any genius that has lived. I have a feeling that the world will never know this. And as I think of it I wonder if angels are not weeping somewhere because of it" (*The Story of Mary MacLane*).

winds and the suns and moons, and the days and nights and circling horizons--those above my grave.

And my Body laid at its length, eyes closed, hands folded, down there Resting: my Soul not yet gone but laid beside my Body in the coffin Resting. --might we lie like that--Resting, Resting, for weeks, months, ages--Year after long year, Resting. <sup>45</sup>  
(154-55)

The following passage is interesting among other reasons, because a split seems prerequisite to a conversation, which in turn seems prerequisite to certain self-knowledge:

We talk on many topics, of many things: I in worldly nervous ignorance and with a wishfulness to reach and compass and know: the Soul with poise and surety of attitude, a wearied patience and the chill sweet contempt.

She answers me from her cool old tranquil view-point, which is near me yet remote.

We talked last of some bygone persons I have been, some shapes she wore.

Said the Soul: "Early in the sixteenth century you were a ragged Russian peasant girl living in ignorance and filth in a hut by a swamp-edge. You had parents both of whom beat your body black-and-blue from your babyhood. And at eighteen you were a coarsened hardy wench tending a drove of pigs and goats on the sunny steppe."  
(216)

---

<sup>45</sup> Similar fantasies have been entertained by many members of the writing profession (e.g., Garcia Lorca and Katherine Anne Porter); of course, many -- most famously, John Donne, enjoyed posing in coffins.

Throughout the work, MacLane evinces a sense that her corporeal nature is quite separate from some more essential self.

"This body I live in is familiar and mysterious. It is like a book of poetry to read and read again. It has the owned sentientness of bone-and-flesh, and with it tremors fine as spirit-emotions. . . . And my Body feels consciously aloof and as a somehow separate individual: with inner organs as eternal hopes, smooth skin as emotion and drops of blood as thoughts--little drops of sparkling red virile sweet blood for its thoughts. . . . I so love my Body as it lives and breathes and moves about, with me and close to me. It is my so constant companion. It is an attractive girl, a human being of some charm (47-48).

In behavior typical of schizoid individuals, she senses the inadequacy of conventional words, and invents her own:

Having failed of the thought often I fail of the words. When I have a particularly M.-Mac-Lane thought to express I review the top tier of my vocabulary of words to find proper ones for it. They are all very nice words in that top-tier--neatly washed and dressed and hair-brushed and tidied-up, like the children in a small private school: words like Necessary and Irresolute and Crockery and Inconvenience and Broth and Apprise ...

Bleuler wrote of "synchronous" laughing and crying as manifestations of schizophrenic ambivalence. The ambivalence might be emotional (love and hatred toward the same person), physical appetites (the patients want at the same time to eat and not to eat; they do what they do not want to do) and even philosophical (in the same moment they think, "I am a human being like you," and "I am not a human being like you." God and Devil ... fuse into one idea." (Bleuler

382). There is, in MacLane, a similarly profound ambivalence which she seems actually to enjoy:

My damnedest damningest quality is Wavering--Wavering--I might say I prefer the dawn to the twilight or the twilight to the dawn ...

In the morning as I dress I draw on a stocking--a long black and white glistening stocking. I know I do it only because the mixed big world, which refuses to Waver, is pushing--pushing me. I would choose if I could--though loathing my choice--to stay with my bare foot and my stocking in my hand, Wavering. Between drawing it on and pausing barefoot, Wavering. I prefer not to draw on the stocking: I prefer not to be barefoot: I prefer Wavering--Wavering--(143-44)

The schizoid may feel profoundly hypocritical, and the inner self may grow to hate and fear the false selves, regarding them as threats to its integrity. MacLane repeatedly criticizes her own hypocrisy and "falseness": "This [book] primarily is the picture of one who is made false: False from her fingertips to her innermost concept" (316-17). Indeed, there is the fear of an "inner self" threatened on many fronts -- the book is (perhaps obviously) a means to assert the existence of this self. And yet -- in the typical paradoxical attitude -- simultaneously hidden.

This book is my mere Hidden Self--just under the skin but hid away closer than the Thousand Mysteries: never shown to any other person in any conversation or association: never would be shown: never could be ... Another if he reads will see Me: but not as I see Me. Instead, through many veil-curtains and glasses, very darkly. (164-65)

Indeed, this is genuine--for MacLane writes of the impossibility of communication--  
 "What do I know? / I know what I am. / Another may know what he is. / But I can't tell Me to  
 another and Another can't tell Himself to Me. / I can tell Me to myself and write it. Another if  
 he reads will see Me: but not as I see Me" (165). MacLane vaguely imagines kindred spirits--  
 other Mary MacLanes in other cities, and she may also compose to them. But she directly  
 suggests only that she is her own audience--and the writing recalls Schreber's in that it seems  
 a necessary and ritualistic therapy.

I don't know whether I write this because I wear two plain dresses or whether I  
 wear two plain dresses because I write it.

My life fell into a lowering mood which calls for but two dresses: which mood  
 compels me to write out these things that are in me as inevitably as heavy gathered  
 clouds come raining to the ground. The mood having overtaken me I can not keep from  
 writing this day after day, more than I can keep from brushing my hair every day, and  
 eating lumps of food every day, and picking up tiny white specks from my blue rug.

I love this book and I fear and hate it. I love the writing of it though it is a  
 finical unobvious task--more so than it looks. And often I fear to read it over lest I  
 hurt my own feelings ...

And it is what-should-I-do if I had not a writing talent to expend me upon from  
 day to day, and so rest me. I feel God around some corner but that feeling is no rest,  
 but only an odd terror which wants the dignity of terror.

Times I wonder if I shall have this published afterward for all to read and if so  
 what colors it will paint on my world--and what else may befall (189-90).

Finally, in a way MacLane herself did not realize, the book is self-definition--"But though I'm  
 the conscious analyst I can't quite tell whether I write the book because I wear two plain black  
 dresses or I wear those because I write it. The dresses are her identity and life as is the book"

(191). *I, Mary MacLane* contains a frontispiece photograph of the author, and it is in some sense clinical--she is head and shoulders, the right half in shadow, and she is staring directly forward with little or no expression. Redundantly, her signature appears beneath.<sup>46</sup> This, like the titles of her other works, may be more than mere egotism. Laing:

[A schizoid person] frightened of losing his identity ... uses his awareness of his self as a means of remaining detached and aloof. Self-consciousness comes to be relied upon to help sustain the individual's precarious ontological security ... [W]hereas the hysteric seems only too glad to be able to forget and to "repress" aspects of his being, the schizoid individual characteristically seeks to make his awareness of himself as intensive and extensive as possible." (119-20)

The conception of schizophrenia which has been fairly characterized as American (its proponents being Meyer, Sullivan and, later, Laing) regards it as a pattern of behavior which

---

<sup>46</sup> Aside from a struggle against a shared reality, the texts by schizophrenics were composed *for* various purposes that are complex and to some degree unknowable. MacLane, for instance, writes as one might write a diary -- to oneself, to kindred spirits, or to an audience in some place and time she cannot know. In each case, the relations among, functions and even identities shift. As patient becomes text, so analyst becomes reader. But the relations a heightened reflexivity deriving from a situation in which patient is also analyst, and reader reads herself. What is remarkable about the texts authored by schizophrenics -- even read apart from the texts which oppose them -- is the evident functional interchangeability of analyst, analysand, author and text. Frank Miller, for instance, was both author and analysand, but it is perhaps more accurate to say that not she, but the text she produced, was her analysand. And because the text itself is part description, part analysis of description, it is itself analyst.

responds to unbearable circumstances. It is not insanity so much as a means to *prevent* insanity. MacLane in several instances writes of being "tiredly sane"--it is in part a complaint familiar to all who lead a life of the mind, all who wish for romantic adventure and strangeness, but it is also a suggestion that insanity would be pleasant surrender:

I have been so long Sane it would be gay and sweet and resting to go Mad.

I would I could go Mad.

To a Mad-woman a Door is not a Door, probably: a Cat is not a Cat, belike: and

Tomorrow is not Tomorrow at all--it may be week-before-last, it may be next year, it may be an exquisite jest" (208).

To read MacLane "against" Bleuler's case studies is to begin to sense what a dialogue might involve--mostly it would be to gain an almost visceral appreciation that the schizophrenic's interior reality is as complex (if not more complex) that the analyst's.

\* \* \*

It is of some note that the some of the most important work of Freud and Jung on schizophrenia was based on patients each knew only through writing (Freud on Schreber and Jung on Miller).<sup>47</sup> Both acknowledged the situation, but only briefly. Freud's entire commentary on his use of Schreber's text (in lieu of Schreber) appeared as part of the introduction to his study:

---

<sup>47</sup> (Coincidentally, Part I of *Psychology of the Unconscious* (as *Wandlungen und Symbol der Libido*) and Freud's paper on Schreber first appeared in the same issue of the journal *Jahrbuch*.)

Since paranoiacs cannot be compelled to overcome their internal resistances, and since in any case they only say what they choose to say, it follows that this is precisely a disorder in which a written report or a printed case history can take the place of personal acquaintance with the patient. For this reason I think it is legitimate to base analytic interpretations upon the case history of a patient suffering from paranoia (or, more precisely, from dementia paranoides) whom I have never seen, but who has written his own case history and brought it before the public in print" (387-88).<sup>48</sup>

Placing himself in precisely the same situation, Jung describes initial reservations, but concludes with a (poetic) assertion of the advantages afforded by forced objectivity. This too is Jung's entire comment on the matter; it appears as a footnote in an early chapter of *Psychology of the Unconscious*.

I will not conceal the fact that for a time I was in doubt whether I dare venture to reveal through analysis the intimate personality which the author, with a certain unselfish scientific interest, has exposed to public view. Yet it seemed to me that the writer would possess an understanding deeper than any of my critics. There is always some risk when one exposes oneself to the world. The absence of any personal relations with Miss Miller permits me free speech, and also exempts me from those considerations due woman which are prejudicial to conclusions. The person of the author is on that account just as shadowy to me as are her phantasies; and, like Odysseus, I have tried to let this phantom drink only enough blood to enable it to speak,

---

<sup>48</sup> Freud, Sigmund. *Collected Papers*, vol 3. Trans. Alix and James Strachey.

London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1957. To his credit, Freud was aware that his voice might overpower Schreber's own, and asks his readers to read *Memoirs* through "at least once" before reading this article.



and in so doing betray some of the secrets of the inner life.

I have not undertaken this analysis, for which the author owes me but little thanks, for the pleasure of revealing private and intimate matters, with the accompanying embarrassment of publicity, but because I wished to show the secret of the individual as one common to all." *Psychology of the Unconscious*, 36. f)

Psychiatrists aware that the patient's view is unrepresented have thought to give it voice by removing the case history from strictly clinical and diagnostic language and adopting techniques of literary narrative. The case history--that is, the "story" of the course of a disease from its intimation to a crisis, and then to a happy or fatal conclusion--was first introduced by Hippocrates. But because Hippocrates' case histories concern themselves with physical ailments, they give little attention to the individual who suffers them. In the late twentieth century, the struggle to establish psychoanalysis as a legitimate (that is to say, empirical, science) has generalized the tone of case histories, which describe, for instance, a "patient A," case 231, etc. But with the beginnings of psychology in the nineteenth century there arose, briefly, a tradition of richly *human* clinical tales. Freud, Jung and co., appeared near the end of this tradition, and managed to exploit it even as they claimed to supersede it. They insisted that their work appealed to empiricism, verification by repetition--all the claims on truth made by the practitioners in the natural sciences. But many readers have felt that the works themselves often does no such thing. If they gain authority at all, they gain it as the New Testament, Dickens, Tolstoy gain it--that is, as narrative. And so perhaps it should not surprise us that Freud's and Jung's abilities as storytellers were impressive and much remarked-upon.<sup>49</sup> The similarities between case study and literary narrative may have

---

<sup>49</sup> "When Freud began to speak at eight that morning in Salzburg, the men listened absorbed. "I had never before been so oblivious," Ernest Jones noted, "of the passage of time."

experienced a parallel evolution for several reasons--obviously, both had the same needs--a vocabulary suited to a subject which was rich and subtle. For his part, Freud was aware of the resemblance:

It still strikes me as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science ... The fact is that local diagnosis and electrical reaction lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers enables me with the use of a few psychological formulas to obtain at least some kind of insight into the course of that affection.<sup>50</sup> (Freud and Breuer [1895])

Of course, Freud was concerned not only with the appearance of psychological themes in literature, but with the creative process itself; Jones' biography suggests Freud's admiration for creative writers bordered on awe. Freud's own abilities in this regard were

---

As Freud talked on in a low, conversational tone, he drew his listeners into the strange tale of one man's obsession ... They insisted he continue and it was almost one o'clock before Freud had finally stopped, five hours after he had begun" (Donn 86). Jung too remarked on Freud's manner of speaking: "[D]ifferent from anything I had ever heard before or since: full of pictures; one could call it biblical" (Donn 72). Martin Freud recalled Jung's presentation fifty years after: "The stories were nothing in themselves . . . but Jung's striking portrayals fascinated the children and Freud as well" (Donn 72).

<sup>50</sup> Freud's knowledge of literary themes and characters is well-documented, and -- indeed -- in evidence in most of his scholarly work. Less has been done with regard to the influence of literary styles upon Freud -- the best piece is perhaps (Muschg, Walter. *Psychoanalyse und Literatur*. Berlin: Dunker und Dururhaupt (1930).

estimable: he received the Goethe Prize for literature in 1930. And as Steven Marcus indicates, Freud's work on the famous case of Dora even evolved as does a literary text: with uncertain authorial attitude, much revision, and promises and pleadings with journal editors whom Freud hoped might publish it. The final form, too, is inescapably literary: part dramatic dialogue, part indirect discourse, part narrative, part straight exposition. And the particular type of literature is modernist in that its structure is not linear--it is plastic, recursive, and multi-valenced.

In several places, Jung allows an awareness that his studies offer a partial story--and laments his limitations in the art of description.

[I]t is always a risky business to publish these cases at all, for it requires considerable literary talent to lend an air of plausibility to subjective impressions. It is an unfortunate fact ... that the observer cannot convey to the reader all the detailed nuances of the picture--the changing facial expression, the attitude, verbal response, and so forth. (*Psychiatric Studies*, 159-60)

To various degrees other work, too, was modernist in a literary sense--sometimes in ways that were problematic. Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* (1912) is in parts almost impossibly convoluted, so much so that Jung himself was bothered by it, and eventually revised it to half its length. Jung's dissatisfaction suggests this was not a deliberate attempt on the part of these authors to introduce a new literary form--rather that the contingencies, uncertainties and anxieties associated with the epistemology of their subject made such a form necessary and inevitable. This circumstance will be the subject of the following chapter.

## Psychoanalysis and literary circles

---

### 3

*Be who, farther potential? and so we grisly old Sykos who have done our unsmiling bit  
on 'alices, when they were yung and easily freudened ...*

-- *Finnegans Wake* (115)

In 1934 James Joyce consulted Jung regarding his daughter Lucia. Lucia was suffering a mental illness which had been diagnosed as schizophrenia. Jung, her twentieth physician, studied Lucia at length, and agreed with previous diagnoses. He based his conclusion in part upon various uses of words in her poetry -- "linguistic deviances" which suggested that her mental capacities were diminished -- an "*abaissement du niveau mentale*."<sup>51</sup> Joyce was inclined to believe that his daughter was sane, or at least curable, despite behavior such as

---

<sup>51</sup> Although Jung's conception of schizophrenia did in many ways anticipate Sass's insistence that it is hypertrophy not atrophy, the language of his diagnosis reflects the more traditional definition.

setting fire to her room. And so he countered Jung's diagnosis, arguing that his daughter's poetry involved stylistic innovations which Jung either failed to appreciate or misunderstood altogether. Jung in turn acknowledged that certain words were remarkable, but merely accidental, and underlined his position with a metaphor: he said that while Joyce and his daughter were both going to the bottom of a river, Joyce was diving and Lucia was *falling*.

Richard Ellman suggests that Joyce's resistance to Jung's diagnosis was influenced by his reaction to Jung as a reader of literature -- Joyce's own literature. Five years earlier, Jung had been asked to compose an introduction to Stuart Gilbert's book on *Ulysses*; part of Jung's introduction seemed to misunderstand and even to dismiss the novel, its most notable slur being a suggestion that it could be read as easily backwards as forwards. Although the piece did not appear in print, Joyce saw it. It seemed to have cut deeply, because a kind of response appeared in this passage from *Finnegans Wake*: "The words which follow may be taken in any order desired" (121).

The story is rife with import for insanity and art, and the tragedy of a father whose facility with language was among the most provocative and supple in the twentieth century, and yet whose daughter's linguistic facilities -- at least in Jung's view -- must have seemed a grotesque parody. And as in the negotiation of realities discussed in the previous chapter, here again an expression of perception is read as might be a text -- and read in opposing ways. Here, it is interesting that Jung and Joyce are acting as literary critics, the former trying to persuade (or remind) the latter that the difference between art and accident is agency. At any rate, this is an interesting place to begin an examination of literature and schizophrenia -- in that it acknowledges the similarities -- and it shows another place at which schizophrenia is regarded as merely a kind of perspective and, for that matter, a particularly artistic and perhaps privileged perspective.

\* \* \*

This chapter will suggest that an interest in the schizophrenic experience may have arisen from the new understandings of the mind offered by psychoanalysis. Towards that end, it will review the influences of psychoanalysis and its figures upon literary circles of the period. (The nature of these influences are much examined in two older but still valuable works -- F. Hoffman's *Freudianism and the Literary Mind* [1945] and Claudia C. Morrison's *Freud and the Critic* [1968] -- both of which guided me to many of the works mentioned below.)

It is interesting that during first two decades of this century America was more receptive to psychoanalysis than was Europe. The work of psychologists of Freud's circle first entered America through specialized journals -- Clarence P. Orberndorf reports that although several articles mention Freud in passing, the first appreciable treatment was Boris Sedis' 1906 abstract of Freud's *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (52). Orberndorf himself, who learned of Freud's work while doing post-graduate study in Europe, was among the first to introduce Freud to American psychological circles. Similarly, in 1907 A.A. Brill spent a post-graduate year at Burghölzli, where Jung and Bleuler were applying psychoanalysis. Upon his return he became the first practitioner of psychoanalysis in the United States, and began to introduce the concepts to associates.

But the real beginning of psychoanalysis in the United States may be traced to the invitation to Freud from G. Stanley Hall to speak at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts. Freud was accompanied by Jung and Hungarian neurologist Sandor Ferenczi; over a course of several days in September 1909, each made presentations. The audience included several established figures in psychology and the social sciences, others who would gain their reputation within a few years -- among them were Franz Boas, Ernest Jones, Adolph Meyer, William James and A.A. Brill. Freud expressed some surprise at the invitation and the

welcome -- both of which indicated that America was at the time more receptive to his ideas than Europe. Jung was likewise astounded at the degree to which psychoanalysis was already understood. He wrote his wife: "Today I had a talk ... with two highly cultivated elderly ladies who proved to be very well-informed and free-thinking ..." (*Memories* 367). The Clark lectures were translated from the German and published in the April, 1910 issue of *The American Journal of Psychology*. For several years these were the only work of Freud in English -- but mentions in contemporary journals suggest they were widely read.

Also present at Clark was James J. Putnam, a greatly-respected Harvard neurology professor who, in *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, would publish a piece favorable to Freud called "Personal Impressions of Sigmund Freud and His Work." Morrison suggests that perhaps more than any other single factor, Putnam's recognition of Freud (in this paper and in a subsequent address) enhanced and may even have created his American reputation (11). In the years immediately following the presentations at Clark there was a sudden proliferation of articles and books on psychoanalysis for both popular and specialized audiences. Between 1909 and 1912, *The Nation*, *The Dial*, and *Harper's Weekly* all contained articles introducing or discussing psychoanalysis.

At about this time discussions of Freud and psychoanalysis -- and psychoanalytic treatment itself -- were becoming fashionable in American intellectual circles. In *Homecoming* (1933), Floyd Dell writes of Greenwich Village society in 1913:

Everybody in the Village had been talking the jargon of psychoanalysis ever since I came. We had played the parlor games of 'associating' to lists of words, and had tried to unravel dreams by what we supposed to be the Freudian formula" (291) ... Most of my friends were presently being psychoanalyzed, and we could talk together

without being thought mad" (294). <sup>52</sup>

The Thursday evening "salons" organized by Mabel Dodge Luhan provided many New York intellectuals with their first exposure to psychoanalysis -- Walter Lippmann and Lincoln Steffens participated. Their interest could be well-informed: they discussed not popularizations so much as original work, and A.A. Brill was invited to speak. Lippmann was particularly impressed with the possibilities of Freud's ideas, and his *A Preface to Politics* (1914) proffered psychoanalysis as a remedy for otherwise intractable social problems. Lippmann's praise was unrestrained: he suggested that Freud's work was perhaps the greatest advance ever made toward understanding human character.

During these years there appeared English translations of what would become the most influential works of psychoanalysis. <sup>53</sup> Freud's *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life* and *The*

---

<sup>52</sup> Kuttner was analyzed by Brill; and Luhan and Eastman both were for a period, analysands. Exactly who is psychoanalyzing the latter (or, for that matter Dell's other acquaintances) is unclear. There was a modest growth in practitioners following Brill's lead -- but one doubts enough to treat Greenwich Village society.

<sup>53</sup> A chronology of English translations, popularizations and important studies: dates of non-English works indicate date of translation; others indicate original publication.

1908 Jung's *Psychology of Dementia Praecox*.

1910 Freud's *Three Essays on the Theory of Sex*.

1911 A.A. Brill begins the New York Psychoanalytic Society

1912 Ernest Jones's *Papers on Psychoanalysis*.

1913 Freud's *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*.



*Interpretation of Dreams* both appeared in English in 1913. Freud's *Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious* and Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* both appeared in 1916. Between 1916 and 1918 these works were reviewed in a variety of publications.<sup>54</sup> There were, of course, numerous popularizations. Max Eastman, for instance, authored an article for *Everybody's* magazine -- "Exploring the Soul and Healing the Body" (1915) -- which described psychoanalysis as a new but already established means to cure mental illness. Eastman's article was perhaps the best of its type -- but it was far from alone. The interest was both high-brow and middle-brow (popularizations appeared in *Good Housekeeping* and *The Ladies Home Journal*), and the prurient aspects of psychoanalysis were not lost on the public; the frank acknowledgment of sexuality had its sensational aspects, and many persons regarded psychoanalysis as condoning sexual promiscuity, and condemned it accordingly. Of course, such moral judgments infected criticism -- *Current Opinion* contained a piece called "American

---

Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*.

1916 Freud's *Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious*.

Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*.

1919 Conrad Aikens' *Skepticisms*.

1920 Freud's *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*.

1923 Jung's "On the Relation of Analytic Psychology to Poetic Art"

1924 Freud's *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*.

<sup>54</sup> We have grown so accustomed to Freud that we may need reminding of its newness at the time of its introduction -- and for this reason alone it is enlightening to read the advice to the reader new to Freud by Alfred Booth Kuttner: although the ideas of psychoanalysis may seem strange, one may be most effectively converted by "candid self-examination" (review of *The Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, *New York Times*, Sec. 5, p. 10).

Expert's Indictment of American Dream Analysis as Psychological Humbug" (1916), which remarked "We must hold the entire 'sex' theory with its many ramifications as standing upon the same ground as the green cheese hypothesis of the composition of the moon" (35).

In at least certain circles, Freud and psychoanalysis rather quickly achieved a status of near unimpeachability. It is interesting that, if we are to believe Jung, such was the fulfillment of Freud's intentions. Jung's autobiography describes a meeting during which Freud (still, at the time, the younger man's mentor) tried to elicit from him a promise "never to abandon the sexual theory." "That," Freud is reported to have said, "is the most essential thing of all. We must make a dogma of it, an unshakable bulwark!" (*Memories* 150). As early as 1916, Freud's intent seems to have been realized, at least in America. Alfred Booth Kuttner remarked: "[G]ross abuse of Freud is no longer considered altogether good form" ("The Freudian Theory" 183). And Lippmann, who authored many of the period's most informed reviews on the subject, declared: "the evidence for the Oedipus complex is too overwhelming to permit anyone the pleasure of rejecting it out of hand" (22). In fact, certain followers of Freud adopted something approaching zealotry -- anyone objecting to the assumptions of psychoanalysis would be dismissed, their protest regarded as evidence of repressed anxieties.<sup>55</sup>

In general, it is difficult to judge how certain subtleties of the psychoanalytic movement were perceived. Morrison suggests that the 1913 split between Freud and Jung was rather difficult to understand. The reason is not always clear: for instance, although in a

---

<sup>55</sup> Some indication of the impact of any movement is given by the quantity (if not necessarily the quality) of humor it evokes. Morrison writes of a satire by "Wilbur P. Birdwood" entitled *Euclid's Outline of Sex*; and an equally satirical review called "The Scandal of Euclid: A Freudian Analysis." Both works posited that Euclid was disturbed by various complexes associated with various geometrical shapes (42-3).

chapter of *Psychology of the Unconscious* entitled "Aspects of the Libido," Jung draws the distinction between himself and Freud quite clearly, a 1916 *New York Times* review of that work considered Jung's differences with Freud insignificant (217) .

Throughout all this, the degree of understanding varied greatly -- from Walter Lippmann's appreciation, to confusion. Certain subtleties went unappreciated, and the whole was both accepted and dismissed for the wrong reasons. But among all these reactions there was at the very least a shared sense that whatever was going on was important. In 1915 Lippmann himself was carefully prophetic: "From anthropology through education to social organization, from literary criticism to the studies of religions and philosophies, the effect of Freud is already felt. He has set up a reverberation in human thought and conduct of which few as yet dare to predict the consequences" ("Freud and the Layman," 10).

\* \* \*

The interrelation of psychology and literature yields three subjects -- *the psychology of artistic production, psychoanalytic criticism and psychoanalytic literature*. All were of interest to intellectual societies in the first two decades of the century. We will be mostly concerned with the last -- but the first two, in that they impact the last -- demand at least a brief retrospective here.

In the 1920s there appeared from many quarters a recognition that psychoanalysis might offer a means to understand the mind of the artist -- indeed, a means to explain creativity and genius. There were many aspects to the discussion, and as many questions. Did the artist have a supra-normal ability to translate the unconscious into something universally - - and consciously -- intelligible? Or was he merely a neurotic who discovered a release in artistic expression? Was art a kind of "wish-fulfillment" of unconscious desires? If the

source of art was unconscious, did the creative process somehow change it in order to make it conscious? Did the unconscious play a role in the creative process at all? If so, what was it, and where was it? These questions had occurred, of course, to Freud, Jung, and Alfred Adler. Freud made at least passing remarks concerning the relation of psychoanalysis to the artist in *The Interpretation of Dreams, Wit and Its Relation to the Unconscious* and *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. His position may be best summarized in a 1914 paper entitled "The Claim of Psychoanalysis to Scientific Interest":

The motive forces of artists are the same conflicts which drive other people into neurosis ... Where it is that the artist derives his creative capacity is not a question for psychology ... The artist represents his most personal wishful fantasies as fulfilled; but they only become a work of art when they have undergone a transformation which softens what is offensive in them, conceals their personal origin, and by obeying the laws of beauty, bribes other people with a bonus of pleasure ...

Art is a conventionally accepted reality in which, thanks to artistic illusion, symbols and substitutes are able to provoke real emotions. Thus, art constitutes a region half-way between a reality which frustrates wishes and the wish-fulfilling world of the imagination, a region in which, as it were, primitive man's strivings are still in full force." (187-88)

Jung did the same in many of his works -- among them *Psychology of the Unconscious*. To Freud's original circle, this seemed -- finally -- a subject which was interesting but inconsequential. Of them, only Jung treated the subject extensively in an essay entitled "On

the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetic Art," first printed in English in 1923.<sup>56</sup> The essay's conclusion neatly summarizes similar ideas from earlier work, and may be as near Jung ever comes to a definition of art:

The impact of an archetype, whether it takes the form of immediate experience or is expressed through the spoken word stirs us because it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices; he enthralls and overpowers, while at the same time he lifts the idea he is seeking to express out of the occasional and the transitory into the realm of the ever-enduring. He transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, and evokes in us all those beneficent forces that ever and anon have enabled humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night.

That is the secret of great art, and of its effect upon us. The creative process, so far as we are able to follow it at all, consists in the conscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life. Therein lies the social significance of art: it is constantly at work educating the spirit of the age, conjuring up forms in which the age is most lacking.

---

<sup>56</sup> The essay appeared first as a lecture given in Zurich in 1922; it was published in German in September of that year. It was first translated into English by H.G. Baynes in the *British Journal of Psychology* (Medical Section) (Cambridge), III:3 in 1923, and reprinted in *Contributions to Analytical Psychology* in 1928. The phrase "analytical psychology" -- was Jung's coinage, reflecting his attempt to distinguish his theories from those of psychoanalysis.

Because intellectual circles were interested in art and creativity, the work of Freud and Jung *et al.* on the subject attracted attention almost immediately. There was a flood of short essays and several books, arguing the nature of the artist and the artistic impulse and availing itself, to greater and lesser degrees, of psychoanalytic theories.

In an essay appearing in *The Seven Arts* (1917), Kuttner suggested that the artist demonstrated neurotic traits, but was saved from full-blown neuroses because his artistry functioned as therapy. Further, society was ambivalent towards the artist because he was a reminder of its nearness to infantile impulses it would rather not recognize. James Oppenheim, in the same issue, argued that Kuttner's implication that the artist was neurotic implied that he should be "cured" of his art. He went on to suggest that we should teach or encourage in the artist not repression, but sublimation.<sup>57</sup> In the subsequent issue Kuttner argued that the artist could not and should not be normal, and that if he should be "cured" at all, he should be cured only of whatever neurosis might interfere with his art. Further, the artist himself was not himself neurotic; rather, he had access to neurotic impulses and an ability to communicate these impulses harmlessly -- and in fact with therapeutic effect both for himself and society. Over the next several years Kuttner's thesis would, in various forms, be made by many psychological critics, some with qualifications: in a 1923 article, for instance, Walter Stekel suggested that creative activity was a "process of healing," but also asserted that the artist was after all, psychologically unsound -- exhibiting "hysteria, repression, incest fantasies [and] anxieties" (206).

---

<sup>57</sup> That both Kuttner and Oppenheim made much use of psychoanalytic terms ("sublimation," "repression," etc.) is another indication of the degree to which Freud's theories had been assimilated by literary and artistic circles.

There were several works devoted to the subject of Freud and creativity. The best may have been F. C. Prescott's *Poetry and Dreams* (1912) and its later companion work *The Poetic Mind* (1922). The stated purpose of both is to discover connections between poetry and the dream, and -- with the aid of comments by poets themselves -- use Freud's theories to examine and explain the creative (or poetic) process. Prescott reached Kuttner's conclusion via a sounder chain of argumentation: "[P]oetry is the expression of repressed and unconscious desires; and ... the function of poetry, biologically considered, like that of dreams, is to secure to us mental repose and hence health and well-being" (32). Prescott argued further that much as the dream represents a compromise between the repressed wish and the "censor," so poetry represents a compromise between interior (e.g. poetic inspiration) and exterior (e.g. lyric conventions). A poem's adherence to such conventions assured the reader that its creator was not controlled by emotions.

Prescott departed from Freudians in that he allowed that the unconscious desires which were the fount of poetry could be other than sexual. Prescott dismissed the question of the artist's relation to insanity as unanswerable largely because of the insoluble problems associated with defining mental states. He did, however, acknowledge that the connection seemed logical: "It is not strange ... that poets should be, as we have seen, great dreamers, since their mental condition is one approaching a neurosis" (Morrison 55). And his conclusion admitted that the development of categories and terminology was an improvement upon earlier conceptions of the "poet/madman": "We have made some progress ... if instead of calling it merely 'celestial inspiration,' we connect it with other things with which we are familiar, and recognize in this matter also the common character of poetry, dreams, and the manifestations of hysteria" (71).

In *The Poetic Mind*, Prescott adopts a position very like Jung's: "There is a disposition in this age of science to doubt the mystic's vision as a source of truth, as there is to doubt the

dream as such a source, which the ancients believed in ... " (83). Later, he concluded: "The greatest poetry is inspired by our highest and most nearly universal desires" (130).<sup>58</sup>

Prescott was bothered by the implication of the Freudians (if not necessarily, Freud himself) that the unconscious was amoral. He took a position which he seemed not to recognize as somewhat aligned with Jung -- the unconscious as morally superior to the conscious because it partakes of a "deeper wisdom and morality" (117). *The Poetic Mind* had attracted much attention from a variety of sources; it was reviewed by the *Times Literary Supplement*, *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology* and *The Dial*. Some indication of the force of contemporary psychoanalytic theory is that several reviews criticized it for failure to use Freud *enough*. Prescott's contribution, with Freudian critics, was to clarify the cathartic process (alluded to by, among others, Lord Byron), and to apply concepts of *displacement* and repression. John Thorburn's article "Art and the Unconscious" (1921) and Maud Bodkin's article "Literary Criticism and the Unconscious" (1927) both argued, like Prescott, for a recognition of the unconscious as a fount of knowledge upon which a great artist necessarily (if unknowingly) draws.

The view that the artist created a private reality did not arise with Modernism, but it was given broader understanding by Modernist insistence upon the validity or "truth" of subjective experience. (For discussions of Modernist subjectivity see Percy Lubbock's *The Craft of Fiction*, Melvin J. Friedman's *Stream of Consciousness: A Study in Literary Method*, Leon Edel's *The Psychological Novel, 1900-1950* and Wayne C. Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction*.) The impulse is evident in much that comprises human experience in the twentieth century -- cultural, political, economic practices, as well as private behavior and experience. What is perhaps its clearest and most radical articulation -- by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) -- has

---

<sup>58</sup> In fact, Prescott refers to *Psychology of the Unconscious* and -- strangely -- criticizes it because it "depreciates the phantasy and its products" (68, n.).



been regarded as an exaggeration of Descartes' insistence upon the active engagement of the mind as the basis of all possible knowledge ("*Cogito ergo sum*"). For Kant, consciousness is not merely the way to knowledge; rather, its creations -- categories of time, space and causality - - actually become the means by which knowledge is created.<sup>59</sup>

Precisely how Kant produced (or was produced) by this *Weltanschauung* has been the subject of numerous studies. Suffice it here to say that conceptions of the psychology of artistic production in 1920s and 1930s seemed to contain a variety of this particular intellectual current -- a conception of the mind of the artist as a creator and so as something like a god. Alfred Adler, in particular, suggested that the artist had godlike aspirations, and in 1925 British critic Herbert Read expanded the premise: "[the artist] takes this goal of godlikeness seriously, and is compelled to flee from real life and compromise to seek a life within life; and he is an artist in virtue of the form and ideal perfections which he can give to his inner life" (Read 97).

Many regarded the experience of dreams and the experience of insanity as similar in that both were the experience of a dominant unconscious. The artist differed from the neurotic in that he could make his fantasies concrete and communicable. (This is in some ways a retreat from Kant -- in that the world created is determinedly internal -- nonetheless, it is in many senses as real, as authentic and as significant as the external world.) The "life-within-life" was manifest in dreams. John Thorburn, in *Art and the Unconscious* (1925), compared the cosmos created by the artist to that imagined by the dreamer -- and, taking a decidedly Romantic (and Surrealist) position, found the dreamer's to be superior in that it lacked all

---

<sup>59</sup> Sass writes of a schizoid artist who encountered Kantian philosophy in a college course, and derived from it great comfort: "Kant," he explained, "has been where I'm going" (93-4).

artifice:

The denizens of the dream are 'real' people .... By real, I mean that they are not inventions, or in any sense artificial .... They are centers of vitality whose self-motion is not to be controlled by the dreamer .... The best of novelists or playwrights occasionally lapses into a logical fabrication, or is guilty of a logically consistent heroine. The dream, never. All in that realm are themselves, exactly as the Almighty created them, and they show no trace of the artificially devising touch of man. (12-13)

Thorburn, following Jung, argued that the role of the artist was to reconcile his archaic past, manifest in unconscious "racial" knowledge, with his conscious mind. For Thorburn and Prescott both, the problem with the Freud -- or more precisely with the *followers* of Freud -- was that they treated art as a pathological phenomenon. Thorburn in particular argued that such a view was pernicious and contrary to all experience of art. In a 1927 piece, Bodkin agreed:

If, with Jung, we believe that the archaic images appear in dream and phantasy with a prospective significance, undergoing transformation in accordance with the urgencies of the inner life of the moment, then there is opportunity for conscious purpose to ally itself with all there may be promise of in these unconscious productions. (457)

A technique in which a subject surrenders deliberate, willful control of her speech or writing was recognized as a means by which the unconscious might be accessed. Called variously "*automatic writing*" and "*word association*," it was a nexus whereby literary production and psychology met. Literary artists were aware of its therapeutic uses, and psychologists acknowledged its artistic aspect. Freud's 1920 paper "A Note on the Prehistory

of the Technique of Analysis" acknowledged instructions for automatic writing composed in 1823 as an artistic forebear to psychotherapeutic word association.<sup>60</sup> Jung's description of automatic writing suggests potential for creativity: "In experiments with automatic writing ('psychography') we can see very clearly how the unconscious plays with ideas (*Complete Works*, Vol. 3. 77 n.).

Literary critics recognized psychoanalysis as a means both to understand literary characters and their creator. Such applications were recognized from the beginning -- indeed, Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) uses Hamlet's vacillation to explain the Oedipus Complex. Freud took the same exercise further in a landmark work called "Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's *Gravida*" (1907) in which he demonstrated that the delusion and dream of a character of fiction could be analyzed as though the character were a real person -- with associations made during therapy sessions being replaced by clues furnished by the author. Freud suggested that the artist understood the unconscious, although he (the artist) may not have been fully cognizant of its laws: "Either both of us, the writer and the doctor, have misunderstood the unconscious in some way, or we have both understood it correctly" (239).

<sup>61</sup> It was a watershed in the brief history of psychoanalytic criticism, beginning the approach

---

<sup>60</sup> Take a few sheets of paper and for three days on end write down, without fabrication or hypocrisy, everything that comes into your head. Write down what you think of yourself, of your wife, of the Turkish war, of Goethe, of Fonk's trial, of the Last Judgment, of your superiors -- and when three days have passed you will be quite out of your senses with astonishment at the new and unheard-of thoughts you have had.

<sup>61</sup> Of course, Freud made other forays into literary criticism -- "The Three Caskets" (1913) discussed *Merchant of Venice* in the contexts of universal fantasies, "The Exceptions" (1916) discussed Richard III as standing outside social mores, and "Dostoevsky and Parricide" (1928) discussed the subject of the title.

adopted by psychoanalytic critics which -- like much of Freud's work -- now seems intuitively obvious. In America one of the first hints of the possibilities offered criticism by psychoanalysis appears in a 1916 article by Florence K. Frank which gave voice to a view which was increasingly widespread: "The Freudian searching into motives is the accredited material of the novelist; the use of dream symbols the very stuff of the poet" (16).

By most accounts the first real piece of psychoanalytic criticism was Ernest Jones's "A Psychoanalytical Study of Hamlet," appearing in 1910 as an article in *The American Journal of Psychology*, and further developed for a 1923 collection entitled *Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis*. It is regarded as one of the best examples of its kind; certainly it was (and remains) one of the most influential. And it is some measure of the speed at which psychoanalysis was assimilated that a work of this caliber should appear as early as 1910.

Jones admitted the influence of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*. He took as his subjects both Shakespeare's psychology and those of his characters -- regarding them as interdependent. Jones applied psychoanalytic theory to Gertrude's feelings for her son, Hamlet's relation with Ophelia, and Hamlet's regard for Claudius' murder. Perhaps his most provocative conclusion was that the play's power was largely repressed and inaccessible to conscious thought -- "So we reach the apparent paradox that the hero, the poet and the audience are all profoundly moved by feelings due to a conflict of the source of which they are unaware" (27). Jones -- like the Freudians -- posits that catharsis may occur outside the audience's conscious thought, but be no less effective.

Conrad Aiken was attracted to psychoanalysis because it offered, he believed, a means to liberate literary criticism from its subjectivity -- offering in its place a means to truly objective assessment. But strict psychoanalytic criticism -- that is, criticism modeled after Freud's suggestion that art was merely the expression of wish-fulfillment -- led to the unhappy

possibility that the critic's views, like the artist's, were only the manifestation of unconscious desire. In other words, if a critic's unconscious should be in accord with the manifest wish-fulfillment of a certain work, then the critic would find himself approving of that work; contrarily, if a critic's unconscious should be disturbed or unmoved by a work, then the critic would dismiss it. And so a strict psychoanalytic approach seemed to make critical relativism inevitable, and to render criticism itself -- at least as an evaluator of art -- worse than useless.

In a 1923 essay "A Basis for Criticism," Aiken posits a rhetorical question:

It has been urged that in the daydream, or art, we do not really seek to escape from ourselves, but, precisely, to find ourselves. But what part of ourselves is it we find? Is it not exactly that part of us which has been wounded and would be made whole; that part of us which desires wings and has none, longs for immortality and knows that it must die ...? (61-2)

For Aiken, the concept of "catharsis" boasting a classical pedigree and applied to the sophisticated reaction of a sophisticated audience, and the concept of "wish-fulfillment," commonly applied to the juvenile reaction of a juvenile audience -- were all but indistinguishable. Both the unrefined audience and the intellectual sought in art a fantasy that conditions might be otherwise. The only significant difference, according to Aiken, was that continued exposure had rendered the intellectual less able to suspend disbelief, more disturbed by cliché, and so more needful of subtlety. And the particular type of intellectual known as the critic, unable to escape his own desires, would of necessity have to discover a more "scientific" means of evaluation.

Of course, other schools of psychology also allowed insights into literature -- and as

with psychoanalytic criticism, many began with their founders -- Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* may be justifiably called the first example of Jungian literary criticism in that it analyzes Miller's poems.

It is a truism that *Sons and Lovers*, *Ulysses*, and *To the Lighthouse* would have been written had Freud never lived.<sup>62</sup> Modern literature and Freudian analysis are commonly understood as either as products of parallel evolution or as cross-fertilization between intellects and sensibilities working in parallel fields. For certain authors, though, the influence was more direct. Many were interested in Freud as a source, and certain writers deliberately and without apology shaped their works along concepts of psychoanalysis. Lincoln Steffens reports that at the salon "several discussions ... introduced us to the idea that the minds of men were distorted by unconscious suppressions, often quite irresponsible and incapable of reasoning or learning. The young writers saw a new opening for their fiction ..." (665). Understandings of the unconscious seemed a certain means to tap the wellsprings of the mind. But just how to employ Freud and at the same time prevent art from degenerating into the mere application of a formula was for artists -- and perhaps especially for critics -- a problem.

Although, clearly, many authors in the first two decades of the century applied psychoanalytic theory to bear on the creation of characters, few recorded their thoughts about the process. Literary critics, on the other hand, had many doubts, and attacked authors on grounds that they were employing psychoanalytic theory as a template. Novelist Waldo Frank in particular drew criticism as an artist who used (and perhaps misused) Freudian psychology.

---

<sup>62</sup> Each of these is a special case -- Lawrence had developed his own system of human psychology; Woolf, at least at the time of *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), seemed to base psychological portraits on her experience rather than upon published studies; and Joyce read much of Freud, Jung *et al.* -- and dismissed it.

In a 1922 piece called "Instant Note on Waldo Frank," Matthew Josephson suggested that Frank was attempting to "catapult himself, through Freudian formula, into the ultimate sappy core of reality" and failing: the result was not so much characters as "slack balloons appended to bulbous genitals" (57). Critic Alyse Gregory attacked Sherwood Anderson for similar reasons: "Where Mr. [Theodore] Dreiser like a giant mole with strong flat hands tore up the soil and prepared the ground for a more liberal treatment of sex in American literature, Mr. Anderson, nervous and mystical, follows along like the anxious white rabbit ... clasping instead of a watch the latest edition of Sigmund Freud" (246). In fact, between 1920 and 1922 there appeared several articles which took American fiction in general to task for writing to a formula.<sup>63</sup>

But there was at the same time a developing recognition that assimilation of Freudian psychoanalytic theory into literature was inevitable -- and not necessarily pernicious. In 1924 John Crowe Ransom, for instance, suggested that psychoanalytic theory was used well by Sherwood Anderson, Rebecca West and D.H. Lawrence -- and went so far as to speculate that had Henry James and Joseph Conrad been familiar with psychoanalysis, they might have given their characters even greater depth.

Stylistically, the most significant aspect of psychoanalysis upon literature was the technique of stream-of-consciousness. From the realms of literary theory and practice, stream-of-consciousness offered a means to represent experience and to convey the richness and subtlety of thought. The interior monologue itself had beginnings which preceded

---

<sup>63</sup> Among them was a review in a university newspaper: "Writing people are all so pathetically torn between a desire to make a figure in the world and a morbid interest in their personal egos -- the deadly fruit of the grafting of Sigmund Freud." Its author -- as will become significant in the next chapter -- was a part-time student at the University of Mississippi named William Faulkner.

psychoanalysis by several decades: Victor Egger's "La Parole Interieure" (1881) is generally credited as the first known philosophical treatise on the subject. And the term describing the stylistic offspring of the interior monologue -- "stream of consciousness" -- seems (perhaps appropriately) to have parents in both psychology and in literature. One source may have been William James's *Principles of Psychology* (1890):

Every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that flows around it. The significance, the value of the image is all in this halo or penumbra that surrounds and escorts it . . . Consciousness does not appear to itself chopped up in bits .... It is nothing joined ; it flows . . . . Let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of the subjective life."

Most point to the first literary use of the term "stream-of-consciousness" as May Sinclair's review of Dorothy Richardson in 1918. The most celebrated description of stream-of-consciousness is that through which Virginia Woolf reacted against the conventional narrative of the Victorian novel. Like subsequent discussions of the style, it stresses its authenticity.

Look within and life, it seems, is very far from being "like this." Examine for a moment an ordinary mind on an ordinary day. The mind receives a myriad impressions -- trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms . . . . Life is not a series of gig-lamps, symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end." (*A Modernist Reader*, 108)



Freud claimed that psychoanalysis offered, among other things, "a translation of the paranoiac mode of expression into the normal one" (M xvii). Psychoanalysis was a translation from incomprehensible to comprehensible -- from alien to familiar, from them to us. And to intellectuals in the first decades of this century, the unconscious was an exciting, strange and alien country. But the excitement, for some, was short-lived: indeed, the world which was utterly alien had grown not merely comfortable, but -- as the parodies like *Euclid's Outline of Sex* implied -- almost trite. And yet there remained another country -- far less accepting of outsiders, far stranger, far more distant: schizophrenia.

In the twenties and thirties, anyone much interested in the psychoanalytic movement would sooner or later read two early works which treat schizophrenia in some detail: Jung's *Psychology of Dementia Praecox* (English translation 1908), and *Psychology of the Unconscious* (English translation 1916). *Psychology of the Unconscious* was widely reviewed -- in part because it signified Jung's break with Freud (a fact which may not have been evident to many readers), and in part because it began to expand psychology to include myth and the larger culture. Walter Lippmann, who had a greater understanding than most of the nuances of the psychoanalytic movement, was impressed only by aspects of the work: in a contemporaneous (1916) review he concluded that the whole represented "a personal adventure in search of a philosophy, far more than a contribution to psychoanalytic understanding" (22). But in the same year James Oppenheim defended Jung by appealing to the authority of G. Stanley Hall, who (Oppenheim said) believed the book "without a doubt a most important contribution to the whole realm of psychoanalytic literature" (68).<sup>64</sup> Several critics -- implicitly invited to

---

<sup>64</sup> A second source of information regarding schizophrenia -- not as widely read but certainly as useful -- was Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry*. It appeared in English in 1924.

choose between Freud and Jung -- chose the latter as offering a more expansive view of the imagination.<sup>65</sup>

As has been mentioned, Freud himself regarded schizophrenia as inaccessible to psychoanalysis. And were we interested in tracing a rigorous intellectual history, we would here encounter a schism between strict (Freudian) psychoanalysis and schizophrenia. But it is fair to say that interest in psychoanalysis allowed an interest in schizophrenia simply because it inspired a curiosity in the life of the unconscious. Many persons interested in psychoanalysis did not regard Freud's pronouncement as a serious impasse -- indeed many did not regard it at all. There were several reasons. First, Prescott and others were inclining their interests more in the direction of Jung, who seemed to offer more possibilities to the artist and whose theories seemed to present a more agreeable view of the nature of artistic production. Second, although there were followers who took Freud's word as gospel, for the most part developments in psychology had about them a democratic air -- a sense that here was a subject accessible to all -- including those without specialized scientific instruments, without a laboratory, without even training. These circumstances seemed to bestow license to anyone with sufficient interest.<sup>66</sup> Third and finally, if one required legitimation for applying

---

<sup>65</sup> While Eugene O'Neill disavowed most deliberate use of Freud, in a 1931 letter he wrote "The book that interested me the most of all those in the Freudian school is Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* which I read many years ago. If I have been influenced unconsciously it must have been by this book more than any other psychological work" (Chabrowe 103).

<sup>66</sup> In fact, Freud responded to this development with a work entitled *The Problem of Lay-analyses* (1927). Even the presumptuous layperson was likely to regard schizophrenia as another matter -- requiring specialized training, and resources of time and accessibility unavailable to most writers. A 1919 work for the layperson

---

entitled *What is Psychoanalysis?* is arranged like a catechism -- and addresses schizophrenia briefly:

Q. Is it possible to help a case of dementia praecox by psychoanalysis?

A. Only early, mild or latent cases of dementia praecox are suitable for psychoanalytic treatment ... (115)

But Jung seems if not to assert then at least to suggest that with regards to schizophrenia, all that is necessary is an ability to empathize, to think creatively (i.e., poetically) and a willingness to trust that meaning is there somewhere.

Another patient's story revealed to me the psychological background of psychosis and, above all, of the "senseless" delusions. From this case I was able for the first time to understand the language of schizophrenics, which had hitherto been regarded as meaningless ... At the age of thirty-nine she succumbed to a paranoid form of dementia praecox, with characteristic megalomania. When I saw her, she had been in the institution for twenty years. She had served as an object lesson to hundreds of medical students ... I tried with all my might to understand the content of her abstruse utterances. For example, she would say, "I am the Lorelei"; the reason for that was that the doctors, when trying to understand her case, would always say "*Ich weiss nicht, was soll es bedeuten.*" \* Or she would wail, "I am Socrates' deputy." That, as I discovered, was intended to mean, "I am unjustly accused like Socrates." Absurd outbursts like "I am the double polytechnic irreplaceable," or, "I am plum cake on a corn-meal bottom," "I am Germania and Helvetia of exclusively sweet butter," "Naples and I must supply the world with noodles,"

psychoanalysis to schizophrenia, it was there -- in the published work of Bleuler and Jung.<sup>67</sup>

And so in previous centuries the comparison of madman to artist was a rather vague -- beyond the obvious shared qualities -- a passion, incomprehensibility, disdain for and rejection of social norms, and the creation of a private world. But these resisted attempts at further parsing -- and there were no precise and agreed-upon tools with which to accomplish it. With the advent of psychoanalysis and the work of Kraepelin, Bleuler and Jung, types of abnormal psychology and characteristics of those types could for the first time be identified. And schizophrenia may have been particularly interesting to literary circles because certain of its attitudes and orientations might be characterized by the same qualities present in an artistic movement of the 1920s and 1930s: Surrealism. The nature of this influence will be the subject of the following chapter.

---

signified an increase in her self-valuation, that is to say, a compensation for inferiority feelings. (*Memories* 125-26)

\* "I know not what it means": the first line of Heine's famous poem "Die Lorelei." (Jung's note)

<sup>67</sup> Probably the most eloquent proponent of psychoanalysis as a treatment for schizophrenia was the American psychologist Harry Stack Sullivan.

## Surrealism and schizophrenia

---

### 4

*I rise at 7:18; am inspired from 10:30 to 11:47 . . . Dinner is served at 7:16 and finished at 7:20. Afterward from 9:09 to 9:59 symphonic readings out loud . . . I go to bed regularly at 10:37.*

-- Surrealist composer Erik Satie

*He was not simply eccentric: I could not escape the impression that this young man was playing at being eccentric.*

-- Laing speaking of a schizophrenic patient.

The manifold valences between modernism and psychoanalytic theory -- an emphasis upon the validity of subjective experience and a privileging of stream-of-consciousness as the stylistic mode which would best represent it and/or allow access to it -- have been explored at

length by many, and commented on by the modernists themselves.<sup>68</sup> My intent in this chapter is first to demonstrate that the perceptual mode described by Surrealism seems remarkably congruent with the experience of schizophrenia,<sup>69</sup> and second to suggest the existence of parallel intellectual or artistic offshoots -- that is, as particular strain of modernism called Surrealism is a variety and perhaps an exaggeration of Modernism, so the specific mental condition of schizophrenia is a variety and perhaps an exaggeration of the non-schizophrenic mind as described or elucidated by psychoanalytic theory.

Generally speaking, Modernist works treat consciousness or awareness as fragmented -- a complex array of sense impressions, memories, thoughts and half-formed thoughts.<sup>70</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> See especially Faulkner, Peter, ed. *A Modernist Reader*. Also Edel, Leon. *The Psychological Novel*, and Steinberg, Edwin R. *Stream-of-Consciousness in the Modern Novel*.

<sup>69</sup> To my knowledge, Louis Sass's *Madness and Modernism* is the only text which seriously investigates this resemblance, and even it does so only in the margins -- placing all Surrealists within the larger group of the avant-garde, and paying little attention to the historical moment of Surrealism's appearance.

<sup>70</sup> Philosophically, Modernism is an existential vision of an absurd and meaningless cosmos, a sense of humanity at the end of history, an extreme subjectivism. It gave voice to a sense of despair, and a skepticism regarding the continuity of Western Civilization. Stylistically, it involves an impulse towards experimental techniques: breaks in narrative continuity, violations of traditional syntax and narrative coherence by using (most famously) stream-of-consciousness. And the philosophy, of course, determined the style: Eliot's 1923 review of *Ulysses* said that the conventional chronology in a literary work as insufficient to depict "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history." Modernism

This tendency reaches an extreme in certain Surrealist works -- or more precisely, Surrealist works, like *Nadja*, may revel in the resultant chaos. The direct progenitor of Surrealism was Dadaism, a movement which was, among other things, a disillusioned response to the irrationality of the twentieth century as evinced in the horrors of World War One. Dadaism defied the very pretense of rationality, and mocked most if not all art. This nihilistic essence assured that it would be short-lived. It may be said to have begun in 1912 and faded (at least as a movement) after 1922. Surrealism, both an evolution from and a rebellion against Dadaism, tried to move beyond disillusionment towards spiritual and artistic regeneration. Like Blake, one of the few poets they admired, the Surrealists believed that if rationality could be circumvented, there would appear the ultimate reality -- which they called *surreality*. Surrealist art was an expression of the unconscious, and its intended appeal was to the unconscious.

Because I am interested here in the suggestions that Surrealism and schizophrenia share an intellectual and cultural context, I am concerned specifically with the beginnings of Surrealism during the 1920s and 1930s -- what may be called the official Surrealist

---

works to defy authority and convention. Although a similar pose was struck by the Romantics, the Modernists had made the impulse endemic -- one might say that an audience of a modernist piece could almost expect that such a stance. Modernism has been called the "tradition of the new"; Pound's defined the impulse as he condoned it with the dictum "Make it new." Octavio Paz moved further -- to be certain one is making new, one may make it strange -- Paz called the Modern is "a bizarre tradition and a tradition of the bizarre" -- a tradition manifest in, for instance, Pound's Vorticism, Cubism, Zaum poetry and early performance art. Each of these works strive for the most fundamental differences -- questioning fundamental assumptions about art, perception and interpretation.

movement. Unlike many literary and artistic schools, the Surrealists were conscious of themselves as such, and defined and redefined themselves. Further, they were an actual community, befriending each other, collaborating artistically, and appearing in each other's plays and occasionally, banishing one of their number from the group. In 1924 the Surrealist *centrale* included Louis Aragon, Francois Baron, André Breton, Jacques Boiffard, Giorgio de Chirico, Robert Desnos, Paul Eluard, Max Morise, Pierre Naville, Raymond Queneau, Philippe Soupault and Roger Vitrac. While Surrealism is perhaps generally known for its painting (Magritte and Dali), it has branches in sculpture, film and live theater; and its root and trunk are literary -- manifestoes, literary magazines and closet dramas.

Probably the greatest inspiration for Surrealism was non-rationality as manifest in dreams. In the early twentieth century dreams were already an artistic preoccupation; among the sources were the Romantic tradition, the work of Gérard de Nerval (whose novel *Aurélien* [1855] was transcribed "dream matter"), and Freud's early investigations. André Breton -- perhaps the principal writer of the Surrealists -- in 1922 defined Surrealism as "a certain psychic automatism that corresponds rather closely to the state of dreaming" (Rubin 121). Breton became interested in psychoanalysis while serving in the Saint-Dizier psychiatric hospital, where he interviewed deranged war veterans who, he remarked, produced remarkable images, as though taking dictation from a genius within. The experience fueled an existing interest in the unconscious which led to a 1921 visit with Freud in Vienna. Although Breton was disappointed with the meeting, he returned to Paris with ideas for art and expression of the unconscious, and began experiments in hypnotic sleep. Much as the intellectual circles discussed above explored their own unconscious, so Breton and the Surrealists tried to exploit theirs. Breton and Paul Éluard, for instance, composed *L'Immaculée Conception* (1930) from a self-induced temporary insanity (41). Robert Desnos trained himself to enter trances in which he could produce streams of poetry and monologues (Sandrow 40-1). Several issues of the Surrealist journal *Littérature* were devoted to transcriptions of things said under hypnosis; and



the Surrealists themselves termed the years 1922-23 the *époque des sommeils* (period of trances).

Surrealism's concern with inanimate objects derived much from Giorgio de Chirico, whom Breton came to consider a source of the Surrealist movement: "[I]t is to [de Chirico] that credit must go for preserving for eternity the memory of the true modern mythology which is in formation." (130).<sup>71</sup> Breton claimed to learn from de Chirico a means to remove objects from familiar contexts and arrange them in strange and provocative juxtapositions. De Chirico was something of a theorist himself, and in prose descriptions of his work which were adopted by early Surrealists as aesthetic principles, he explained that inanimate objects manifest both outward and inward aspects:

Every object has two appearances: one, the current one, which we nearly always see and which is seen by people in general; the other a spectral or metaphysical appearance beheld only by some rare individuals in moments of clairvoyance and metaphysical abstraction, as in the case of certain bodies concealed by substances impenetrable by sunlight yet discernible, for instance, by X-ray or other powerful artificial means. (Rubin 131)

Elsewhere he offers a prescription for the second kind of perceiving this "other" appearance: "One must picture everything in the world as an enigma, not only the great questions one has always asked oneself ... But rather to understand the enigma of things

---

<sup>71</sup> Recent critics have added qualifications: Rubin, for instance, suggests that de Chirico's "enigmatic juxtaposition of objects [and] diving perspectives and hallucinatory lights and shadows" operated as precedent only to some Surrealists -- and not necessarily the best (130).

generally considered insignificant ... *To live in the world as if in an immense museum of strangeness*" (quoted in Sass, 43; my italics).

Giorgio de Chirico was known to have displayed schizoid behavior. According to Sass, a mental disability excused him from serving in World War I (n. 11, 424); James Soby asserts that "in compensation for his isolation from the life around him, he developed an extraordinary reverence for inanimate objects" (5). Perhaps then it is not too much to suggest that the art of de Chirico is a view of schizophrenia -- and that in some sense Surrealism is itself a product of schizophrenia.

[insert De Chirico]

Nonetheless, the Surrealists were not interested in schizophrenia in particular; insofar as I know, none of their writings mention it.<sup>72</sup> But their desire to concretize the world of dreams was an experiment which realized formal psychological thought on schizophrenia more than they knew. In 1907, Jung had written: "Let the dreamer walk about and act like a person awake, and we have the clinical picture of dementia praecox (*Jung, Coll. Works, Vol. 3*). If the Surrealists did not attempt to replicate schizophrenia *per se*, certain of their attempts at externalizing unconscious experience had a similar effect.

In schizophrenia, what seems an extreme individuality manifest in eccentric behavior and speech, might be compensation for a deeper, hidden conception (and fear) that the self is

---

<sup>72</sup> The Surrealists regarded many of the asylum residents as wrongfully held. In *Preface for a Reprint of the (First) Manifesto* (1929), Breton writes:

(T)he insane owe their incarceration to a tiny number of legally reprehensible acts ... (T)heir profound indifference to the way in which we judge them, and even to various punishments meted out to them, allows us to suppose that they derive a great deal of comfort and consolation from their imagination, that they enjoy their madness sufficiently to endure the thought that its validity does not extend beyond themselves ... Christopher Columbus should have set out to discover America with a boatload of madmen. And note how this madness has [sic?] taken shape, and endured (5-6).

Recognition of the connection between the surreal and insanity in general is also evident in the opening of the *Second Manifesto of Surrealism* (1930), in which Breton adopts the persona of a psychologist authoring a letter to a professional journal, stating that the patients of the asylum with which he is associated are reading Breton's *Nadja*.

dissolving or that it is somehow being annihilated. The schizophrenic may hallucinate that she is growing inaudible and invisible: a patient explains the experience:

Patients kick and scream and fight when they aren't sure the doctor can see them. It's a most terrifying feeling to realize that the doctor can't see the real you, that he can't understand what you feel and that he's just going ahead with his own ideas. I would start to feel that I was invisible or maybe not there at all. I had to make an uproar to see if the doctor would respond to me, not just to his own ideas. (Laing 178-79)

The cause, according to Laing, is a kind of conflicted exhibitionism:

The more he keeps his "true self" in hiding, concealed, unseen, and the more he presents to others a false front, the more compulsive this false presentation of himself becomes. He appears to be extremely narcissistic and exhibitionistic ... He is constantly drawing attention to himself, and at the same time drawing attention away from his self ... All his thoughts are occupied with being seen. His longing is to be known. But this is also what is most dreaded. (Laing 122)

There is much in Modernism which involves a similar dynamic -- an assertion of self and simultaneous annihilation of self. The first is evident in the "subjectivist tradition" -- one name for the Cartesian regard for the self as the locus of all genuine knowledge and meaning. In the first years of the twentieth century the public sensibilities of the Victorians had been replaced by personal conceptions of value, and the novels of Woolf and Joyce did not assume a worldview, so much as construct one. This required that the author create first a structuring principle, an "organizer" whose inclinations were individual if not idiosyncratic -- quite unlike the relatively conventional and familiar inclinations of a narrator like that of, say, Fielding's *Tom Jones*. And precisely because the Modernist artist employed personal structuring

principle, he could also dismiss another individual quality -- the appearance of the artist's persona as part of an artistic production. In "Tradition and the Individual Talent," T. S. Eliot called poetry "not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality" (Norton 2212). He made the analogy of a chemical catalyst which although essential to the reaction, does not appear in the resulting solution: "the more perfect the artist, the more completely separate in him will be the man who suffers and the mind which creates; the more perfectly will the mind digest and transmute the passions which are its material" (2210). Indeed, the absence of an identifiable narrative persona is a prominent feature of Eliot's emblematic Modernist poem *The Waste Land*.

It may be in this very paradox that Surrealism seems especially schizophrenic; it involves *an exaggeration of personality and a simultaneous and paradoxical annihilation of personality*. According to Breton, a practitioner of Surrealism necessarily involved in his art his own appearance and behavior.<sup>73</sup> In an extension of the Romantic tradition whereby the artist is identified by an unusual or idiosyncratic "life style," the Surrealist artist (like his near-contemporary Oscar Wilde) contrived a cult of the self, making an artistic production of the personality. Toward this end, Surrealists engaged in peculiar activities -- riding trains all day, suddenly departing on trips to the South Seas, acting in general in ways which were at least peculiar and at most shocking. For some the behavior was sustained over long periods: Alfred Jarry (whom Nahma Sandrow in *Surrealism: Theatre, Arts, Ideas* [1972] calls a "proto-Surrealist") maintained his role even on his deathbed, when his last request was for a toothpick (Sandrow 31). And in some cases the persona was entirely a fiction. Surrealist Composer Erik Satie offered his daily schedule, which reads in part:

---

<sup>73</sup> The masculine third person pronoun is accurate here -- all the Surrealists in the group of which we are concerned were men.

I rise at 7:18; am inspired from 10:30 to 11:47 . . . Dinner is served at 7:16 and finished at 7:20. Afterward from 9:09 to 9:59 symphonic readings out loud . . . I go to bed regularly at 10:37. Once a week I wake up with a start at 3:15 A.M. (Tuesdays) . . . I eat only white foods . . . I breathe carefully (a little at a time) and dance very rarely . . . (Shattuck, 179-80).

Satie, obviously, is satirizing daily schedules, autobiographies, voyeuristic interests, perhaps the role of the artist. But he also reminds us that there *is* an interest in the artist, and that the most detailed knowledge of the particulars of an artist's life would offer little help in understanding the creative act. In short, it is an assertion that the essential self, equated here with the creative self, is inviolable. In fact, Satie's schedule recalls an observation Laing made regarding the schizophrenic patient described above: "He was not simply eccentric: I could not escape the impression that this young man was *playing* at being eccentric" (73). In other words, the schizophrenic is observing himself *acting*; he is, to use Sass's term, hyperreflexive. Like Satie, the schizophrenic is assuming *a role of a role*.

But countering the Surrealist creation of a cult of self is an impulse less evident, a gesture towards annihilation of the individual, at least as author. In the 1924 Manifesto, Breton relegated authors to the roles of "impartial interlocutors" (35) and "simple receptacles of so many echoes, modest *recording instruments*" (*Manifestoes* 27-28). He describes a paired creative act in which he participated, and declares the results remarkable, valuable and successful precisely *because* they show nothing like an auctorial persona: "All in all, Soupault's pages and mine proved to be remarkably similar: the same overconstruction, shortcomings of a similar nature, but also, on both our parts, the illusion of an extraordinary verve, a great deal of emotion" (*Manifestoes* 23). The same impulse led Surrealists to devise methods for creating poems from random combinations of words from several authors. The result, ideally, was a

poem which demonstrated a universal, "deeper" will reminiscent of Jung's collective unconscious. In *Nadja*, Breton announces: "Let the great unconscious, in all its vitality and reverberation, the unconscious which inspires my only convincing acts, dispose forever of all that I am" (quoted in Caws, *André Breton*, 71).

The Surrealist worked to annihilate individual artistic will by a second means: the surrender to chance. Paul Masson and Man Ray, for instance, created visual art by techniques dependent upon phenomena beyond their control -- the action of wind, the random strikes of a machine, etc. Marcel Duchamp's wedding gift to his sister, "Readymade Triste" ("Unhappy Readymade" n.d.), was a book fastened in place, out of doors, so that weather changed and gradually destroyed it.

In certain moods, this surrender of individual will could become a deliberate (if contrived) search for ontological uncertainty reminiscent of the ontological self-doubt inherent in schizophrenia. Some Surrealists tried to regard their very persons as unreal; Breton writes, for instance, of Philippe Soupault's attempt to locate himself: "Soupault went into any number of impossible [sic] buildings to ask the concierge whether Philippe Soupault did in fact live there. He would not have been surprised, I suspect, by an affirmative reply. He would have gone and knocked on his door" (*Manifestoes* 45 n). Soupault's behavior was in all likelihood feigned: for him, and vicariously for Breton, it seemed to offer an existential thrill generated by the prospect of losing oneself and finding oneself in a kind of Borgesian alternate universe. And it is here perhaps that Surrealism and schizophrenia part ways: the congruent experience for the schizophrenic, as we have seen in Schreber and Laing's patient, is both genuine and terrifying.

Schizophrenics may come to regard the shared world as contrived and artificial -- and their response to the situation may be complex -- they may offer the persons in the shared



reality obscure words and references; they may participate with an attitude of irony, as though circumstances of daily interactions are a game; they may adopt an attitude of superiority; finally, they may simply refuse to participate in *any* behavior which is conventional. Certain schizophrenics seem to obscure their own inner worlds and their own terms -- they also substitute terms of the shared world with language that is all but impenetrable. Sass quotes a passage written by a patient:

The subterfuge and the mistaken planned substitutions for that demanded American action can produce nothing but the general results of negative contention and the impractical results of careless applications, the natural results of misplacement, of mistaken purpose and of unrighteous position, the impractical serviceabilities of unnecessary contradictions. For answers to this dilemma, consult Webster.  
(179-80) <sup>74</sup>

Jung quotes a study in which a schizophrenic patient defines a square as an "angular quadrate" (*Collected Works, Vol. 3, 24*). The pretentious language may have several causes. One may be related to the subject's need to appear superior. Another may be that certain schizophrenics don't *want* to be understood because they believe that their experience is simply incommunicable. Finally, some researchers also suggest that this behavior protects the inner self, a contention confirmed by a patient of Laing: "'We schizophrenics say and do a lot of stuff that is unimportant, and then we mix important things in with all this to see if the doctor cares enough to see them and feel them'" (Laing 176).

---

<sup>74</sup> The last sentence, evidently self-mocking or at least self-conscious -- may suggest the double-awareness: that is, the subject's appreciation that his understanding is difficult.

And the contrived obscurity of the Surrealist -- like that of the schizophrenic -- may be regarded as a kind of test for observers.<sup>75</sup> Many of the Surrealists' activities were intentionally playful, nothing more; but the Surrealists also had genuine aspirations to social reform. Surrealists sought to establish themselves as the avant-garde wing of the imminent Revolution and as part to the French Communist Party, with which they were briefly associated. Specifically, they advocated the abolition of class distinctions and bourgeois institutions, including those of established artists. Although their inclinations were perhaps too unstructured and diffuse, and the Surrealists themselves were too undisciplined, to have measurable social effects, Breton and Soupault called the project the beginning of an artistic and social revolution, and for this reason thought it important that Surrealist art be exhibited in public arenas.<sup>76</sup> And so, as schizophrenic obscurity is designed to test the analyst's sincerity, a cry from the schizophrenic who wants to know the analyst cares about him, so Surrealist obscurity, at least in certain moments, is a similar test and cry, asking the observer/audience/reader to care about society.

To the schizophrenic inhabiting a world in which everything seems artificial and contrived, there is a sense that all behavior and activity is not only overly determined, but actually mechanical. Thus the schizophrenic regards much speech as so clichéd that he may assume its speaker is being ironic, and he may respond in kind: "At times one almost has the

---

<sup>75</sup> Of course, Modernism itself attempts a deliberate obscurity, in some parts the legacy of the late nineteenth century "high-brow" suggestion that art becomes greater precisely when it cannot be understood. It is famously evident in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and perhaps it is not surprising that Eliot should regard Charles Baudelaire, for his disdain for the sociability of the masses and the bourgeoisie, as ahead of his time, a sort of proto-Modernist.

<sup>76</sup> See especially Breton's *Political Position of Surrealism* (1935).

sense that such patients ... are experiencing words, both their own and those of others, as if they were perpetually surrounded by quotation marks" (Sass 205). A patient described by Laing regarded all behavior -- including his own -- as artificial: "If I open the door of the train and allow someone to enter before me, this is not a way of being considerate, it is simply a means of acting as much as I can the same as everyone else" (150).

[H]is wife would give him a cup of milk at night. Without thinking, he would smile and say, "Thank you." Immediately he would be overcome with revulsion at himself. His wife had simply acted mechanically and he had responded in terms of the same "social mechanics." (155)

The Surrealists likewise find much language clichéd, and employs clichés themselves, thus participating in conventions while maintaining an ironic distance. Luis Bunuel and Salvador Dali's film *Un Chien andalou* (1928) uses captions -- a convention of silent film -- which have no obvious connection to the images which precede and follow them. Many Surrealist titles invoke irony. The title of the journal *Littérature* was itself an ironic play on Verlaine's passage "tout le reste est *littérature*" (Rubin 113). Several works contrast solemn titles with whimsical subjects -- the subject thereby ironically distanced from its referent. Others use titles which subvert a viewer's natural (the Surrealist would say "conditioned") attempt to look to the title for assistance in understanding, an attempt which is explicitly mocked in a 1957 René Magritte painting -- a phallic fusion of a bottle and a carrot -- entitled "The Explanation." Contrarily, the convention of evocative contrast between subject and title may be avoided altogether, also to ironic effect: Méret Oppenheim's construction *Fur-covered Cup, Saucer and Spoon* (1936), for instance, is exactly that.

An ironic or mocking adoption of convention was also evident in the Surrealist persona, as in, for instance, Satie's daily schedule. A better-known example is Magritte, whose typical

dress, bowler hat and business suit, was a deliberate adoption of conventional bourgeois dress, its irony demonstrated in the similarly dressed figure who appears in several of his paintings (*L'assassin menacé* [1927] and *Les reveries du promeneur solitaire* [1927]).

Bleuler notes that schizophrenics show a pretension in written communication -- handwriting which is "overly decorated or entirely affected" (398). Jung's description of typical schizophrenic behavior demonstrates other types of pretentiousness -- all manifestly artificial:

Among the characterological disturbances in dementia praecox we might mention affectation (mannerisms, eccentricity, mania for originality, etc.). ... A very common form of this affectation is the pretentious and artificial behaviour of women of a lower social position -- dressmakers, nurses, maids, etc. -- who mix with those socially above them, and also of men who are dissatisfied with their social status and try to give themselves at least the appearance of a better education or of a more imposing position. These complexes are frequently associated with aristocratic airs, literary and philosophic enthusiasms, extravagant, "original" views and utterances. They show themselves in exaggerated mannerisms, especially in the choice of language that abounds in bombastic expressions, technical terms, affected turns of speech and high-sounding phrases. (75)

The last two sentences, particularly, might be a description of the behavior of the Surrealist *centrale*. As to "aristocratic airs," monocles were fashionable among them, and although most came from well-to-do families, their dress was dandyish, in many instances a parody of the aristocracy. Their "enthusiasms" were of course both literary and philosophical, and originality was of course a defining feature of the Surrealists, a group whose stated purpose was to begin culture anew. The disdain for the commonplace, present in the avant-

garde of any period almost by definition, may have reached its furthest Modernist extreme with the Surrealists, who regarded themselves as superior to whatever position or cultural artifact they regarded as a product of bourgeois institutions and thought -- which is to say, very nearly everything.<sup>77</sup> The sense is perhaps best exemplified by Marcel Duchamp's *L.H.O.O.Q.* (1919) -- the *Mona Lisa* with a goatee.

Schizophrenics display what Bleuler called "negativism" -- that is, behavior which opposes that which is expected or requested, and which may be impolite in the extreme.

Neither on command, nor in accordance with the rules of the hospital do they want to get dressed or undressed or come to meals or have their meals; but if they can perform the same acts outside of the required time or somehow contrary to the will of the environment, they often do them ... They eat the soup with a fork or with the dessert spoon, the dessert with the soup spoon ... It can develop into a real impulse to tease, into an active impulse to anger incessantly those about them in the most

---

<sup>77</sup> Interestingly, as with schizophrenic behavior, it is difficult to determine precisely where the parody of convention turns to serious belief: Breton's 1924 *Manifesto* is by turn pretentious and self-mocking:

And ever since I have had a great desire to show forbearance to scientific musing, however unbecoming, in the final analysis, from every point of view. Radios? Fine. Syphilis? If you like. Photography? I don't see any reason why not. The cinema? Three cheers for darkened rooms. War? Gave us a good laugh. The telephone? Hello. Youth? Charming white hair. Try to make me say thank you: "Thank you." Thank you. (46)

ingenious manner ... In some cases one can with certainty bring the patient to do the desired act if one forbids him to do it ... (*Textbook* 406)

As Bleuler notes, all this suggests that someone is deliberately attempting to play the part of an insane person. And it may be precisely that -- the schizophrenic double-awareness allows the possibility that a schizophrenic person can know he is schizophrenic and exaggerate behavior in accord with his analyst's expectations. But schizophrenic negativism also has a deeper, more genuine and more disturbing aspect. Bleuler reported schizophrenics suffering an *internalized* negativism which forced them to counter their own wills -- a patient begins to eat and "the spoon is arrested half way up to the mouth and must finally be put down again" (407).

There is in Surrealism an impulse very like negativism. As a response to artificiality and convention, the Surrealist adopted an antagonism towards etiquette and civility: "Poetic Surrealism ... has focused its efforts ... on reestablishing dialogue in its absolute truth, by freeing both interlocutors from *any obligations of politeness*" (*Manifestoes* 35). Indeed, the impolite behavior of the Surrealist persona was a kind of tradition, inspired perhaps by Vaché ... and having its more formal beginnings perhaps with Breton's bringing food and loud conversation into Paris moviehouses. The Surrealist artist was on occasion obscene. Sandrow supplies a partial list of Surrealist inversions of propriety: "Boxer/poet Arthur Cravan's deliberately undressing himself onstage while belching loudly, Philippe Soupault's yelling insults from the stage into the house, Jacques Rigaud's counting aloud the automobiles and the pearls of the lady visitors as they entered a show of Max Ernst's collages ... " (85). <sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> Taken out of context, a Surrealist artwork and a schizophrenic creation may all but indistinguishable, especially in scatological attempts to shock -- in 1917 Duchamp, as "R. Mutt," sent a readymade urinal titled "Fountain" to the Society of

Surrealist artistic creation reconciles the artist's expression of Surreality with the perception of his audience, so that the experience of Surreality is mutual. Surrealist art was the means by which the Surrealist experience was shared, the means by which the artist allowed the audience "in." And so to determine the nature of the Surrealist creative experience we may be justified in looking to our own experience of the art. (Practically, in fact, we may have no other choice.)

The meaning of Surrealism was first codified by Breton's *First Surrealist Manifesto of 1924*. Breton offered the movement a kind of philosophical grounding and described the experience of Surrealism:

SURREALISM, n. Psychic automatism in its pure state, by which one proposes to express -- verbally, by means of the written word, or in any other manner -- the actual functioning of thought. Dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern ... Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of the dream, in the disinterested play of thought. It tends to ruin once and for all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in solving all principal problems of life (26).

The definition merits close reading -- it seems to promote four modes of artistic behavior, each of which has a cognate in schizophrenic experience: *the validation of subjective experience as a "superior reality," the privileging of stream-of-consciousness, the disinterested play of*

---

Independent artists exhibition; a patient of Jaspers wrote a piece called "The Toilet Paper" (Sass 111) which took as its subject, indeed, toilet paper.

*thought, and a gradual overwhelming of other thought processes.*

Schizophrenia may involve various degrees of autism. Severe cases are entirely occupied by their imaginary world -- the shared world is abandoned. But even the schizophrenic who participates in the shared world (as in the case of Schreber) considers his hallucination as real or *more* real than that world. The richness and detail of such hallucinations make them credible even to an outsider, as is evident in the following passage (Jung prompted a patient by naming one of her self-proclaimed identities -- "Empress Alexander" -- and asked her to associate freely):

That expresses von Escher and von Muralt -- owner of the world -- as Empress Alexander I become owner of the silver island -- a Mrs. F. said I had to send the family of the Russian Czar a hundred thousand milliards -- I have ordered them to make money exclusively of the silver island -- I am three empresses, von Stuart, von Muralt, von Planta and von Kluger -- because I am owner of the world I am Empress Alexander -- I am three Excellencies -- I am the highest Russian lady -- Catheter, Chartreuse, Schatedral, Carreau -- I saw a carreau of white horses on the hill -- beneath the skin they had half-moons, like little curls -- they were hungry -- the Emperor von Muralt was up there too -- I became engaged to him in the dream -- they are Russians, it was a battle attack -- on the carreau of horses were gentlemen like Mr. Sch. in U., with long lances -- like a battle attack." (*Psychogenesis*, 139-40) <sup>79</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Jung was unfailingly impressed by the detail of the worlds imagined by schizophrenic patients:

These examples by no means exhaust the delusional ideas of the patient. But they will give you, I hope, some idea of the richness of her inner life



Surrealistic art tried artificially to achieve for its audience what schizophrenia achieved for its victim -- envelopment within a kind of solipsistic universe. The Surrealist used techniques of disorientation, hallucinatory images, and repetition to force the audience to surrender rational thought. To the same end certain surrealist artists produced whole environments in which the audience would be immersed. This was realized to a modest degree with the "theater event" -- involving participation of audience members and the fusion of film with live actors. And it was imagined, perhaps most ambitiously, by Kurt Schwitters as a total environment in which everything was the stage and in which actors and audience were undifferentiated. Schwitters' own home evolved into such a space. Rubin:

Beginning in 1919, Schwitters' walls had begun to overflow with collages and reliefs, and shortly afterward his floors became crowded with free-standing objects . . . The distinction between the reliefs as independent entities and the walls as backdrops for any interesting junk that Schwitters happened to find soon disappeared. At the

---

although she was apparently so dull and apathetic, sitting like an "imbecile" for twenty years in her workroom, mechanically darning her linen and occasionally mumbling a few meaningless phrases which nobody had been able to understand. Her baroque jumble of words can now be seen in a different light: they are fragments of an enigmatic inscription, bits and pieces of fairy-tale fantasies, which have broken away from hard reality to build a far-off world of their own. Here the tables are ever laden, and a thousand banquets are held in golden palaces. The patient can spare only a few mysterious symbols for the dim, dismal realm of reality; they need not be understood, for our understanding has long ceased to be necessary for her. (*Psychogenesis*, 177)

same time, the piles of free-standing junk grew constantly, refreshed with every new *trouvé* of the painter. This improvised environment gradually obliterated the architectonic sense of Schwitters' house. Then, toward 1925, the Merz <sup>80</sup> walls and concretions in the center of the house began to be surrounded by a stalactite-like growth of wood and plaster ... which in time extended through two floors of the building and down to a cistern. (109)

The previous chapter offered remarks upon stream-of-consciousness by James, Woolf, Jung and Freud. Each figure was concerned with what Woolf called "an ordinary mind on an ordinary day." What then of a mind *not* "ordinary"? Contemporary research in schizophrenia was also using word association. In *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, Jung suggests that a schizophrenic mind, because it operates so much of the time independently, and because a "complex" develops, stream-of-consciousness channeled to an unusual degree by verbal associations. <sup>81</sup> And although these connections may seem incomprehensible to another, they are perfectly reasonable to the schizophrenic herself.

As soon as the patient thinks in terms of the complex she no longer thinks with normal energy or distinctness, but indistinctly, dreamily, as normally happens in the unconscious or in dreams. As soon as her associations enter the realm of the complex

---

<sup>80</sup> Schwitters' coinage for art-as-environment; he called the house *Merzbau* ("merz" structure").

<sup>81</sup> Word association tests were begun by Freud, and greatly suspect. In large part they were legitimated by Jung's work between 1902 and 1909 at Burghölzli. *Studies in Word Association* was a result of experiments carried out under Jung's direction at the Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Zurich, beginning about 1902. They were fundamental to Jung's subsequent investigations into schizophrenia.

the hierarchy of the directing idea ceases, and the stream-of-thought moves forward in dreamlike analogies which, in the self-evident way of dreams, are equated with reality. The complex functions automatically in accordance with the law of analogy; it is completely freed from the control of the ego-complex, and for this reason the ego-complex can no longer direct the associations; on the contrary, it is subordinated to the complex and continually disturbed by defective reproductions (thought-deprivation) and compulsive associations (pathological ideas). (*Psychogenesis*, 113)

Specifically, Jung held that stream-of-consciousness which was verbalized would evince "superficial connective elements." These were "clang associations" (the relating of distinct subjects by two similar-sounding words which refer to them), and "preservations" (repetition and neologisms). Jung describes word association tests whose subjects were non-schizophrenic and whose attention was relaxed.

[S]ubjects had to talk at random into a phonograph for one minute, saying just what came into their heads. At the same time they were not to pay attention to what they said. A stimulus-word was given as a starting point . . . These tests brought interesting results to light: The sequence of words and sentences immediately recalled the talk (as well as the fragments of writing) we find in dementia praecox! A definite direction for the talk was ruled out by the way the experiment was conducted; the stimulus word acted for only a very short time as a more or less indefinite "theme." Superficial connective elements predominated strikingly (reflecting the breakdown of logical connections), there were masses of preservations (or else repetitions of the preceding word, which amounts to the repetition of the stimulus word in our experiment); besides this there were numerous contaminations, and closely connected with them neologisms, new word-formations . . . It is especially worth noting that [there appeared] numerous conglomerations of words or sentences occur which can be

described as contaminations. For example:

. . . especially a meat one cannot get rid of, the thoughts one cannot get rid of, the thoughts one cannot get rid of, especially when one ought to persevere at it, persevere, sever, Severin [etc.]. (*Psychogenesis*, 23)

In brief, non-schizophrenic word association, when the subject is relaxed, greatly resembles schizophrenic word association. For Jung, this was some evidence that schizophrenic waking thought is like non-schizophrenic dreaming thought. Schizophrenic stream-of-consciousness is characterized by three qualities -- *repetition, heightened allusiveness and omission of connective and transitional passages.*

Jung and others describe repetition as characteristic of all word association. He quotes a non-schizophrenic:

The storks stand on one leg, they have wives, they have children, they are the ones that bring children, the children whom they bring home, of this home, an idea that people have about storks, about the activity of storks, storks are large birds, with a long beak and live on frogs, frogs, fresh figs, the frigs are frugs first thing, first thing in the morning [Fruh], fresh for breakfast [Frustuck], coffee, and with coffee they also drink cognac, and cognac they also drink wine, and with wine they drink everything -- possible ... (*Collected Works*, Vol. 3. 22) <sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>82</sup> A transcription of schizophrenic word association would demonstrate still more repetition. Its cause is unclear. In some cases it seems a manifestation of "poverty of thought" -- an absence of ideas to which the schizophrenic responds by repeating a word produced by himself or by another. In some cases the repeated words

Schizophrenic stream-of-consciousness is directed by a heightened verbal allusiveness.

Sass reports one patient saying: "I try to read even a paragraph in a book ... but it takes me ages because each bit I read starts me thinking in ten different directions at once" (178). For schizophrenics, normally irrelevant features of language like sound of words, sound of *parts* of words, actually determine meaning. Bleuler and Jung both discuss the activity termed "clang-association."

By means of a clang-association the patient . . . presents a train of thought which is altogether typical of the unclear thinking in dementia praecox: "The bazaars are extraordinarily good businesses -- Czars . . . have their income from these bazaars." Here the clang-association Czar/bazaar is obviously a meaningful one for the patient. She says: "The sons of the highest in Russia, dressed up as Czars, hence the word bazaar." (*Psychogenesis*, 142-43)

Clang-associations, of course, are known and experienced by persons not schizophrenic. Here, for instance, is Jung and/or his translator explaining a patient's association and inadvertently making his own: "Schiller's 'Bell' is the greatest work of the greatest master . . . she has achieved the highest *rung*" (my italics; *Psychogenesis*, 175). But whereas the non-schizophrenic is likely to dismiss such associations as accidental and meaningless (if he considers them at all), the schizophrenic, often quite aware that he has made the association, attributes to it a certain importance. The gesture is inescapably poetic,

---

seem especially important or powerful, and their repetition seems to invoke that power.

recalling metaphysical wit, and (as Sass suggests) twentieth century social constructivism.<sup>83</sup> To the schizophrenic, such associations seem entirely natural and utterly effortless.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of stream-of-consciousness is that it seems not to recognize audience. It omits transitions and connections. It operates without framing devices, beginning *in medias res* and avoiding social, temporal and practical contexts. Even the subject may be presupposed. All these qualities suggest that its purpose (at least its first purpose) seems not to be communication *per se* so much as pure expression. In schizophrenia there is a similar elimination of transitions -- with what is evidently the same impulse towards cleansing language of all that is unnecessary. Jung:

The voices and delusional ideas "degenerate" in a very similar way. The "word salad" arises in the same manner. Sentences that were originally simple become more and more complicated with neologisms, are verbigerated loudly or softly, and gradually become more and more muddled, until finally they turn into an incomprehensible jumble that probably sounds like the "stupid chattering" about which so many schizophrenics complain.

A patient under my observation, recuperating from an acute attack of dementia praecox, began telling herself quietly how she would pack her bags, go from the ward to the asylum gate, then out into the street and to the station, how she gets into the

---

<sup>83</sup> The usage and its implication that words possess an ontological basis independent of that given by their speaker or author seems to anticipate the particular appreciation of language advocated by Derrida. Of course, reality created by language is a prominent motif in folklore: the children's couplet "Step on a crack, break your mother's back," for instance, predicates a magical cause and effect on rhymed words.

train and reaches her home, where the wedding is solemnized, and so on. This story grew more and more stereotyped, the separate stages got mixed up, sentences were left incomplete, some of them abbreviated into a single catchword; and now, after a year, she uses a catchword only occasionally, all the other words have been replaced by "hm-hm-hm" which she utters in a stereotyped manner in the same tone and rhythm as before when she told her story. (*Psychogenesis Coll. Works* vol. 3, 95)

"Degenerate" is in quotes, obviously, because they degenerate only as communication - they become a bridge to the a memory of a story, a shorthand. In a sense, they are a *hyperdeveloped* communication -- albeit, of course, a profoundly ineffective one.<sup>84</sup>

In his 1924 Surrealist Manifesto, Breton assumes stream-of-consciousness as an authentic or "true" representation of thought and advocates a technique of writing as "a monologue spoken as rapidly as possible, on which the subject's critical spirit brings no judgment, which is subsequently unhampered by reticence, and which is, as exactly as

---

<sup>84</sup> On this subject Jung has a surprising (one might say Surrealist) notion:

In normal speech the formation and acceptance of technical terms is a slow process, and their use is generally dependent on certain requirements of intelligibility and logic. In the patient this process has taken place with pathological speed and intensity which far exceed the understanding of people in her environment . . . I have the feeling that a philologist would be able to make valuable observations on speech-confused patients which would help us to understand the normal changes that have occurred in the history of language. (*Psychogenesis*, 146-47)

possible, spoken thought" (Nadeau 88).<sup>85</sup> He offered step-by-step instructions:

After you have settled yourself in a place as favorable as possible to the concentration of your mind upon itself, have writing materials brought to you. Put yourself as passive, or receptive, a state of mind as you can. Forget about your genius, your talents, and the talents of everyone else. Keep reminding yourself that literature is one of the saddest roads that leads to everything. Write quickly, without any preconceived subject, fast enough so that you will not remember what you're writing and be tempted to reread what you have written. (*Manifestoes* 29-30)<sup>86</sup>

Surrealist prose and poetry, in part because it made use of the word association technique described by Jung, unwittingly imitated schizophrenic stream-of-consciousness. It too, is characterized by repetition, heightened allusiveness and omission of connective and transitional passages.

---

<sup>85</sup> A particularly interesting account of the phenomenon of automatic writing is offered in Theodore Flournoy's *From India to the Planet Mars*.

<sup>86</sup> Breton's novel *Nadja* dramatizes the same activity: the title character addresses the narrator and proposes an associative word game:

"[S]ay something. [. . .] Anything, a number, a name. Like this (she closes her eyes): Two, two what? two women. What do they look like? Wearing black. Where are they? In a park ... And then, what are they doing? Try it, it's so easy, why don't you want to play? You know, that's how I talk to myself when I'm alone, I tell myself all kinds of stories. And not only silly stories: actually, I live this way altogether."



"Sound poems" were arrangements of nonsense words chosen purely for the sound. They were authored and performed first by Dadaist precursors to the Surrealists -- some of whom, like Tristan Tzara, became Surrealists. The hypnotic effect was designed to encourage the listener to surrender logical thought. Toward this end sound poems employed repetition: the performance of "Admiral Seeks a House for Rent" (1916), for instance, included interludes in which the performers beat percussion instruments as they chanted "*hihi Yaboumm*" and "*rouge bleu*" (Rubin 73). In other words, it was an attempt to induce in an audience a mental state akin to schizophrenia, and of which schizophrenic repetition is a manifestation.

When Surrealism frees itself of the common and coherent discourse, the distinction between relevant and irrelevant associations is lost, and there results a heightened allusiveness. Breton asserts that a turning point in the development of his own Surrealism was when he could "cherish words excessively for the space they allow around them, for their tangencies with countless other words I did not utter" (20).<sup>87</sup> He insisted that such associations were not and could not be trivial:

---

<sup>87</sup> This impulse, applied to language and taken to a postmodern extreme, arrives of course at Derrida's ideas concerning linguistic independence and ambiguity -- specifically, the suggestion that a reader open herself to all possible meanings and at the same time dismiss consideration of auctorial intent. Derrida's ideas, as has been widely observed, bear little correlation to common experience: most people in their general use of language (even, so far as I know, poets and linguists), are seldom paralyzed or overwhelmed by consideration of the infinite ambiguities inherent in every word. Significantly, however, that is precisely the experience described by many schizophrenics.

And let everyone understand that we say "play on words" when it is our deepest justifications which are in play. Besides, the words have finished playing.

The words are making love. (quoted in Caws, *André Breton*, 40)

Stream-of-consciousness of mainstream Modernist writers allow a reader gradually to recognize patterns of thought and reappearing images, and so grow accustomed to the mental activity presented. But Surrealist prose, continually shifting frames of reference, and omitting connective and transitional passages, concedes far less to the reader. This is the opening of Breton's 1923 prose piece *Soluble Fish*.

The park, at this time of day, stretched its blond hands over the magic fountain. A meaningless castle rolled along the surface of the earth. Close to God the register of this chateau was open at a drawing of shadows, feathers, irises. The Young Widow's Kiss was the name of the country inn caressed by the speed of the automobile and the drapings of horizontal grasses. Thus the branches dated the year before never stirred at the approach of the window blinds, when the light sends the women hurrying to the balcony. The young girl from Ireland, troubled by the jeremiads of the east wind, listened in her breast to the seabirds laughing. (*Manifestoes* 51)

The quality which contributes most to the difficulty for the reader is the shifting not merely of subject, but of whole frames of reference. Each sentence -- and in some places each phrase -- seem to arise from a separate context. For the Surrealist, the advantage of the absence of connections is that it forces an emphasis upon image. Breton's sometime-mentor Pierre Reverdy asserted that the closer the elements of an image, the greater and more profound the overall effect. Accordingly, he proposed to "pixelate" language, eliminating linking words adjectives and adjectives, so that the shock of contrary images is better felt.

The schizophrenic experiences a profound separation of intellect and affect.

Schizophrenics may be interested in various matters, but it is an interest without desire, and utterly without emotion. Bleuler:

In the severer forms of schizophrenia the "*affective dementia*" is the most striking symptom. In the sanatoria there are patients sitting around who for decades show no affect no matter what happens to them or to those about them. They are indifferent to maltreatment; left to themselves they lie in wet and frozen beds, do not bother about hunger and thirst. They have to be taken care of in all respects. *Toward their own delusions they are often strikingly indifferent.* (my italics; 378)

In certain cases there seems an awareness of this indifference. Jung made observations in reference to a patient of Pierre Janet:

"It seems to me that I shall not see my children again; everything leaves me indifferent and cold, I wish I could despair, cry out in pain. I know that I ought to be unhappy but I cannot be so, I have neither pleasure nor pain. I know that a meal is good but I swallow it because it is necessary, without finding in it the pleasure I would have found before ... " (85)

Bleuler makes the same observation (also invoking children as barometers of sentiment).

Consequently the joy of a schizophrenic does not transport us, and his expressions of pain leave us cold. This becomes especially plain if one has occasion to observe the reaction of little children to such expressions. Just as little do the patients sometimes react to our affects ... One feels emotionally more in touch with an idiot who does not utter a word than with a schizophrenic who can still converse well intellectually but

who is inwardly unapproachable. (380-81)

In other schizophrenics there seems a deliberate and comprehensive rejection of sentimentality which involves a parody of sentiment in expressions which are "somewhat unnatural, exaggerated, or theatrical" (Bleuler 380).

In the influential essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), Eliot remarks that poetry "is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion" (2212) -- by which he means, among other things, that the emotions of a talented poet are not evident in the poem she produces. In subsequent years, similar views were expressed elsewhere; during the twenties there grew in several critical circles a belief in the importance of distancing; the central tenet of the critical stance termed formalism is that art was disinterested. In *The Artist and Psychoanalysis* (1924), Roger Fry suggests that the wish-fulfillment of which Freud spoke may be the impetus of *popular* art, but that truly *great* art detaches itself from such impulses:

Instead of manipulating reality so as to conform to the libido, [great artists] note the inexorable sequence in life of cause and effect, they mark the total indifference of fate to human desires, and they endeavor to derive precisely from that inexorability of fate an altogether different kind of pleasure -- the pleasure which consists in the recognition of inevitable sequences ... a pleasure derived from the contemplation of the relations and the correspondences of form (12).

Likewise, most Surrealist subject matter disallows empathy. Sandrow observes that an audience responds to "a "metallic, still, ascetic quality ... experience purified of emotions and flesh" (75). In painting, human figures are rare; those that do appear (as in de Chirico's "The Enigma of a Day" [1914]) are shadowy and distant or are replaced by broken or partially disassembled dressmaker's dummies (de Chirico's "The Astronomer" [1915]). More often, the

presence of humans somewhere outside the frame is merely indicated by inanimate objects -- de Chirico's "The Song of Love" (1914), for instance, includes a glove nailed to a horizontal surface. Similar effects are present in Surrealist literature: few characters are developed or sustained. (And not surprisingly, Surrealism experimented mostly with brief literary forms -- lyrics and short plays; by Surrealist standards Breton's novella *Nadja* is lengthy.) Indeed, although a viewer of a Surrealist painting or a reader of Surrealist poetry may experience a jarring cognitive shift, if the response is emotional at all it is not conventionally emotional: it involves neither pathos nor sentimentality. The appeal of Surrealist art is purely cerebral.

Schizophrenia may seem gradually to overwhelm all other mental activity. Jung: "When we are dominated by a complex only the ideas associated with it have full feeling-tone, i.e., full clarity; all other perceptions within or without are subject to the inhibition, so that they become unclear and lose their feeling-tone" (86).

Breton regarded Surrealism not merely as an artistic movement but as a means to approach experience -- he suggested that to adopt a Surrealist approach one had necessarily to purge other, conventional orientations. But he also suggested that in some sense such an action is unnecessary, because the orientation required by Surrealism seems to generate its own hold on practitioners: "Surrealism does not allow those who devote themselves to it to forsake it whenever they like. There is every reason to believe that it acts on the mind very much as drugs do ... " (*Manifestoes* 35-36). Surrealism "tends to destroy the other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in the solution of life's principal problems" (26). But Breton means that it offers a kind of paradise, and its nature is addictive -- in his own comparison, very much like hashish (36).

The schizophrenic can develop a conviction that the contrivance and artificiality he imagines in the shared world are being imposed, threatening the integrity of the self. Jung

terms the phenomenon "compulsive thinking," and describes its experience: "Weird or absolutely senseless thoughts force themselves on the patient, which he is compelled to ponder and to go on thinking" (*Collected Works*, vol. 3, p. 87). Bleuler speaks of it as a generalized schizophrenic symptom:

The feeling of "thought pressure" [is one in which] the patient has the feeling that he has to think, where against his will "it" thinks within him, and where thoughts are incessantly "made" for him; all of this is usually accompanied by an unpleasant feeling of strain. (378)

One of Laing's patients resented having to behave in such a manner and reviled himself for acquiescing to social norms. "He ... felt that the thoughts in his "brain," as he always put it, were not really *his*. Much of his intellectual activity was an attempt to gain possession of his thoughts; to bring his thoughts and feelings under his control" (155). For many schizophrenics, the imposed thoughts are trite and repetitive. Recall Schreber's complaint of the "talk of the voices" quieted to a *hissing* whose words he can distinguish only because he has suffered their repetition so often (202).

For their part, the Surrealists regarded common, everyday language in speech or writing as mechanical, puppetlike, and deadening.<sup>88</sup> (The visual equivalent may be Magritte's

---

<sup>88</sup> The relation of the Modernists towards clichés, trite expressions, and colloquial speech is vexed. Eliot and Joyce used such language to naturalize literature - their use served to heighten everyday speech, and suggest the presence of the divine in the commonplace, and also to demonstrate the chasm between the modern age and the figures of history and myth. "In the room the women come and go/ Talking of Michelangelo" offers tired rhythm as ironic counterpoint to the sublimity of the art of

*L'assassin menacé* [mentioned above], in which an army of identical men in bowlers and business suits seems to fall from the sky.) If the Surrealist participates in conventional language at all, it is as the schizophrenic participates: ironically and merely with his "public self." His "inner self" remains aloof and untouched. In fact, as Schreber complained of the tyranny of the hissing voices, as Bleuler's patients suffered "thought pressure," so Breton resents the particulars of realistic fiction as *intrusions*:

The circumstantial, needlessly specific nature of each of their notations leads me to believe that they are perpetuating a joke at my expense . . . I am spared not even one of the character's slightest vacillations ... And the descriptions ... are nothing but so many superimposed images taken from some stock catalogue, which the author utilizes more and more whenever he chooses; he seizes the opportunity to slip me his postcards, he tries to make me agree with him about the clichés (*Manifestoes* 7).

Breton was moved to propose a new kind of communication -- an interchange in which both or all participants either reject or refuse to recognize the premises of the other or others -- and looked to mental pathologies as models. He imagines a dialogue between "the doctor and the madman" in which the "doctor" asks "what is your name?", and the "madman" replies "Forty-five houses" (*Manifestoes* 34). In Breton's view, the speech of the "madman," freed of social constraints, becomes entirely truthful. If both participants were conversing in such a fashion, the resulting communication would not be an exchange of information and feelings so much as cognitive dissonance broken occasionally by a shared epiphany. Words would become "springboards for the mind" (35). (As Breton was aware, this experiment had more formal precedents. Rimbaud's *Les Illuminations* had attempted to construct a language which would

---

the Italian Renaissance. Pound's sensibility equates convention not with mere artifice but something much more unpleasant -- a corpse given a kind of falsified veneer of life.

allow communication "from the soul to the soul," and Mallarmé had distinguished "immediate speech" for everyday use from "essential speech").

Schizophrenics may perceive a numinous aura around inanimate objects, and may regard the particulars of the world as important, strange, and in some inexplicable way -- profoundly disturbing. Sass quotes from a patient's memoir:

My perception of the world seemed to sharpen the sense of the strangeness of things. In the silence and immensity, each object was cut off by a knife, detached in the emptiness, in the boundlessness, spaced off from other things. Without any relationship to the environment, it began to come to life. It was there, facing me, terrifying me.

(67)

and another:

When ... I looked at a chair or a jug, I thought not of their use or function -- a jug not as something to hold water and milk, a chair not as something to sit in -- but as having lost their names, their functions and meanings; they became "things" and began to take on life, to exist ... This existence accounted for my great fear. In the unreal scene, in the murky quiet of my perception, suddenly "the thing" sprang up. The stone jar, decorated with blue flowers, was there facing me, defying me with its presence, with ... its existence. To conquer my fear I looked away. My eyes met a chair, then a table; they were alive too, asserting their presence. (49)

As mentioned in Chapter One, Sass described a patient who could be absorbed by "the power of a thread or a spot of rust" (65). Like these, most of Sass' examples speak to the experience as threatening. The following is excerpted from an account by a schizophrenic for whom the



experience could, at least at moments, be otherwise:

Should I let anyone know that there are moments, just moments, in the schizophrenia that are "special"? When I feel that I'm traveling to someplace I can't go "normally"? Where there's an awareness, a different sort of vision allowed me? ... [C]olors appear brighter, alluring almost, and my attention is drawn into the shadows, the lights, the intricate patterns of textures, the bold outlines of objects around me. It's as if all things have more of an existence than I do, that I've gone around the corner of humanity to witness another world where my seeing, hearing, and touching are intensified, and everything is a wonder. (Gottesman 43)

The layperson is likely to characterize the Surrealist image as of objects which seem severed from each other and their contexts, objects existing in a hermetic world which is as real or more real than the shared world.<sup>89</sup> It is a partial description, but essentially correct.

---

<sup>89</sup> In their concern with the image, several strains of Modernism seem to recommend that an artist adopt a similar orientation, and try to convey it to an audience. The most notable of these, perhaps, was Imagism. In 1913, F.S. Flint described Imagism as a "direct treatment of the 'thing,' and avoidance of any word which "did not contribute to the presentation." Although definitions of Imagism varied among proponents, defenders and practitioners, all emphasized the importance of the clear, sharply etched image. In *Tendencies in Modern American Poetry* (1917), Amy Lowell prescribes the movement's goals: 1) to employ the exact word, not the nearly-exact, 2) to avoid cliché, 3) to create new rhythms as expressions of a new mood, 4) to allow absolute freedom in subject, 5) to present an image, 6) to strive for concentration, 7) to suggest but not offer complete statements. Ezra Pound dismissed this as "Amygism," and asserted: "I should like the name 'Imagisme' to retain some of

In the 1924 *Manifesto*, Breton quotes Reverdy:

*The image is a pure creation of the mind.*

*It cannot be born from a comparison but from a juxtaposition of two more or less distant realities.*

*The more the relationship between the two juxtaposed realities is distant and true, the stronger the image will be -- the greater its emotional power and poetic reality ... (20)*

In *Surrealism and the Literary Imagination* (1966), Mary Ann Caws explains: "[I]n order for the Surrealistic image to provoke us out of our passivity, it must have a strength greater than the mere comparison of two similar things. It gathers its peculiar intensity from an inner contradiction powerful enough to free the imaginer from banal ways of judging a familiar phenomenon" (56). The experience of Surrealism, like the experience of schizophrenia, is not abstract -- it is in fact grounded in a material world, and the objects of that world are its concern. The characteristic of Surrealism which is surreal (thereby achieving what Breton called "a kind of absolute reality" [*Manifestoes* 14]) in its propensity to

---

its meaning. It stands, or I should like it to stand for hard light, clear edges. I can not trust any democratized committee to maintain that standard." In recent years T. E. Hulme has become increasingly regarded as a representative of the Imagists; for him, the image was the means to distinguish poetry from prose: "Prose is in fact the museum where the dead images of verse are preserved ... Poetry, on the other hand, "always endeavors to arrest you, to make you continuously see a physical thing ..." (Levenson 44). Hulme regarded prose as the schizophrenic might regard conventional speech -- as so mechanical as to be dead: in fact, Hulme's rather striking description has the peculiar ring of a schizophrenic pronouncement.

juxtapose lucid representations of concrete objects. A heightened regard for the image was a root of Surrealism. The image figured most obviously in painting and film, but also in the Surrealist text, which -- in Simpkins' phrase, "desiring only to shock the reader through wildly discordant imagery and purposeless -- yet graphically imaginative -- rambling" (244).

Breton's *Soluble Fish* proceeds not through plot, but through a series of images.

As previous chapters discussed, the schizophrenic may come to regard the language belonging to the shared reality as irrelevant, deceptive and/or simply inaccurate.<sup>90</sup>

Contrarily, the schizophrenic may *extend* the use of a term without concern for its conventional meaning; and certain patients may take to repeating long narratives, gradually compressing several words into one, omitting others. She may invent words outright. Jung writes of the schizophrenic use of "power-words" [one patient's telling term for her own neologisms] as emphasizing and accentuating the personality. For patients they may have a incantatory quality, and may be used as threats, as in the exclamation of a patient of Jung: "I, the Grand Duke Mephisto, shall have you treated with blood vengeance for orang-outang representation" (*Psychogenesis* 75-76)

A similar paradox is at the core of the Surrealist approach to language. Magritte's commentary might be that of a schizophrenic: "An object never serves the same function as its image --or its name ... [T]here is little relation between an object and that which it represents" (Rubin 205). Indeed, Magritte's *The Wind and the Song* (1928-29) is an image of a pipe above

---

<sup>90</sup> The schizophrenic assumption that language is irrelevant may be a symptom of developing autism, the result of which is refusal to employ a shared language or a private one: Bleuler: "The most important reason for protracted mutism is undoubtedly, that the patients have lost contact with the outer world and have nothing to say to it" (Bleuler 394).

the words "Ceci n'est pas une pipe." It is not a pipe, of course, in the sense that it is an image of a pipe; but there is a deeper subversion at work -- within the picture frame is represented a world, and within it, pipes are something other than pipes. The air of certainty about the assertion produces in the viewer a kind of epistemological doubt. Magritte's *La Clef des Songes* (*The Key of Dreams*) (1930) takes us a step further. It offers six images and corresponding labels, contained within six frames -- two across and three down. The labels do not describe the images: to a rendering of a woman's high-heeled shoe, for instance, is appended the phrase "la lune" (*the moon*). One effect, like that of *La Clef des Songes*, is a potent demonstration of the arbitrariness of signs and referents. Another effect is of a schoolchild's primer, and the suggestion being that if we are to regard the cosmos rightly, we must re-educate ourselves.

The contrary view -- that is, language as shaping reality -- is also Surrealist. In his study of *Nadja*, Roger Cardinal notes:

The notion of a correspondence between language and material events had been a preoccupation of the surrealists ... the group's experiments in automatic writing had led to startling results, the free dictation of the unconscious prompting several poets to experience spectacular forms of hallucination. Robert Desnos in particular specialized in prophetic utterances made while in a state of trance, and Breton speaks admiringly of their 'valeur absolue d'oracle' (31-2).

Like Magritte, many Surrealist painters incorporated words into the art, one effect being a request that the viewer to reconsider their relationships. Breton's "*Collage poem Pour Jacqueline*" (1937), for instance, combines found objects with scraps of paper upon which is written lines of poetry. The Kantian appreciation of language as shaping reality is realized artistically by the Surrealists in their revival of the "shaped poem" or calligramme. Guillaume Apollinaire's "*Poeme du 9 février 1915*" is an example -- part of which is a portrait entirely in

script -- with the words "eye," "nose" and "mouth" assuming the position and shape of the features they name.

Schizophrenia may involve a delusion that all is controlled by outward forces. It may also involve the obverse delusion: that one controls the entire environment -- the scratching of a cat, the changing of a traffic light. A fairly common schizophrenic delusion, of which Schreber's "fleeting-improvised men" were a variety, is that people are puppets or (in their more recent incarnation) robots. The patient of Laing who despised himself for thanking his wife for a glass of milk referred to her, during sessions, as "it."

Again, Surrealism adapts traditional art form in such a way that the result reproduces an aspect of schizophrenia. An audience's experience of theater is willing surrender -- the range of experience is, for the duration of the performance, utterly surrendered to the outside force of the spectacle. And certain Surrealist theater was little more than a moment of chaos in which the director/artist allowed the actors to behave as they chose, in which audience members invited to participate would act unpredictably, etc. Other Surrealists employed techniques by which they imitated the obverse delusion -- that the cosmos is controlled by them. Certain dramatists retained total or near-total control by authoring characters without names, without motivation, and which defeated any attempt of actors towards individual characterization and invention (82). This impulse may reach its extreme in the Surrealist use of marionettes, a practice by which any remaining freedom of the actors was dismissed . . . with the actors.

A delusion common to schizophrenia is of corporeal dissolution. Sass quotes a patient:

When I am melting I have no hands ... It is as if something is thrown in me,  
bursts me asunder. Why do I divide myself into different pieces? ... Everything pulls

me apart ... The skin is the only possible means of keeping the different pieces together  
(Sass 15)

Many Surrealist paintings took as their subject parts of bodies or distortion of bodies. But the theme entered other genres. Even by Surrealist and Dadaist standards, Tristan Tzara's *The Gas Heart* (*Le coeur à gaz*) (1921) is a strange work. Sandrow calls it "absolutely plotless" (88), the names of its characters -- "Nose," "Ear," "Eye," etc. -- "inexplicable" (89). But all these features -- the confused sequence of events without evident cause and effect, the disjunction of bodily parts -- replicate a schizophrenic hallucination. The title itself is an uncomfortable compression of the mechanical and the bodily -- a part which had in earlier periods a connection with emotion -- suggesting a separation of affect and intellect.<sup>91</sup>

It is not surprising that a great number of Surrealists experimented with the new medium of film; the director and editor could enjoy even greater control over the experience of the viewer.<sup>92</sup> And many techniques operated to make that experience like schizophrenia. Many of the first efforts in this medium were merely filmed plays, with a stationary camera directly in front of the proscenium. But filmmakers quickly discovered the possibilities offered by shorter and longer focal lengths, camera angles and editing. We may fail to appreciate that

---

<sup>91</sup> *The Gas Heart* includes a speaker who comments on the play: "It's charming, your play, but one can't understand a word of it" (Sandrow 67). The speaker is (literally) over the audience's heads -- thus he is invisible and his voice seems to come from somewhere near them. The experience for the audience must be very like that of the schizophrenic hearing what Jung calls the "ironic, correcting voice."

<sup>92</sup> Among them were André Breton, Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Salvador Dali, Yvan Goll, Philippe Soupault, Robert Desnos, Louis Aragon and Francis Picabia (Sandrow 83).

such techniques, now so well assimilated into the common visual discourse, were at the time of their introduction radical and strange. Further, their implications were as great as the corollary experience in the novel -- an audience which understands such radically shifting viewpoints must first surrender a single, stationary point of view, it is to begin to unfasten the foundation of the self-as-viewer. In other words, it is to begin to become schizophrenic.

Surrealist film takes advantage of the medium's ability to distend, compress and (in flashbacks) confuse temporal experience. Antonin Artaud's unproduced script *18 Seconds* would yield a film that would run for over an hour. Yet for the duration of that time, the central figure watches eighteen seconds pass on a clock -- in other words, the time of the shared reality within the film is eighteen seconds, but as those seconds pass, the viewer is allowed into the central figure's imagination, and the subjective, hour-long experience (Sandrow 76). Similarly, the captions of *Un Chien andalou* announce: "Eight Years Later," and "Sixteen Years earlier" with no correspondence to the (quite different) chronology of the subjects of the film.

It is perhaps too much to say that the medium of film itself exploits reflexivity, but certainly the Surrealists found ways to shape it to that end. One of the most familiar film images is the razor slicing the eye from *Un Chien andalou*. The enormous eye on the screen forces the audience into the schizophrenic experience of being watched. But at the moment the razor approaches, the eye becomes our own. The startling effect is achieved by an image of a razor nearing the woman's eye, flash cut to the same razor slicing the eye of a dead cow. And this sequence is preceded by an image of a cloud beginning to obscure a full moon. And so there is a compression of moon, cow and woman -- all as aspects of an eye. <sup>93</sup>

---

<sup>93</sup> The effect recalls a passage from *Psychology of the Unconscious*, a passage which may explain its power:

Of course, like schizophrenia, film bestows upon everything a quality which is luminous and supra-real. There were many experimenters with film at its beginnings, and they had different interests. As might be expected, the Surrealists were interested in film primarily as a means to explore the experience of images. We might say that viewing a Surrealist film involves perceiving images strangely juxtaposed, not in space -- as with a painting -- so much as in time. Here too, there is the obverse experience. The schizophrenic response to the shared reality is that it is *not* real or that it is removed from them: "It is as though I saw things through a veil, a mist, or through a wall which separates me from reality" (Jung 85). Similarly, the film viewer looks mildly autistic, a fact evident to anyone who has suddenly entered a room in which a group of people are silently watching television. The viewer is forced to hold a focus on a few degrees of the normal field of vision --an activity which recalls the schizophrenic concentrating on a thread.

Thus far I have drawn resemblances between schizophrenia and Surrealism -- both as regarded from the outside and as experienced from within. The resemblance is of course imperfect -- and it remains for us to determine how it is imperfect -- i.e., where the

---

The day of the beginning of autumn is ... the day in which "the goddess Mehnit completes her work, so that the god Osiris may enter into the left eye." (By which the moon is meant.) The day is also called the filling up of the sacred eye with its needs. The heavenly cow with the moon eye, the cow-headed Isis, takes to herself in the autumn equinox the seed which procreates Horus. (Moon as keeper of the seed.) ... The "pupil" in the eye is a child. The great god becomes a child again; he enters the mother's womb in order to renew himself.

(300-1)



Surrealist artist's self-immersion in a Surrealist experience -- leading towards a schizophrenic experience -- stops short.

Breton's *Nadja* has been called the representative Surrealist work both in that it involves itself with Surrealist themes of meaning, images and insanity, and in that because it is autobiographical, it commingles art and life. Although its fidelity to details may be faulted, most researchers have agreed that on the whole the work accurately represents events in Breton's experience, and that the narrator and Breton are for most purposes the same. The work concerns events surrounding Breton's search for his self, and a relationship with a woman given the (apparent) pseudonym "Nadja." That Nadja is mentally disturbed is evident to Breton, and Cardinal has suggested that her symptoms are those of schizophrenia.

The evidence is indisputable. She has auditory and visual hallucinations (two of her drawings, "Le Reve du chat" and "Le Salut du diable," being records of the latter ...) She has delusions of reference, panic fears, deliriums, acute lapses of attention ("absences"). Her conversation drifts away into associative monologue . . . One utterance suggests dissociation between mind and body . . . Her drawings are also consistent with a diagnosis of incipient schizophrenia, or they contain an abundance of the stylistic features often associated with the art-works of schizophrenics. These include geometricization; studied insistence on outlines; compound images (the doodle on page 147 is a conglomerate of some two dozen pictorial signs); and the enigmatic insertion of isolated letters or words inside the drawing. (47) <sup>94</sup>

One of the curiosities of the book is that the eponymous Nadja is at best a secondary

---

<sup>94</sup> Nadja's art, symptomatic of schizophrenia, of course also shares much with Surrealistic work.

character; before the narrative ends she enters an asylum, never to be mentioned again, and Breton discovers another mistress. The real central character is Breton himself, and, interestingly, his own mental state seems decidedly schizoid. He reads random phenomena as significant and symbolic; for instance, Nadja says that their kiss is a communion in which her teeth are the host, the following day Breton receives a postcard on which is printed Vecello's "The Profanation of the Host," and Breton regards the postcard as a sign. Further, Breton seems to believe that he is controlling the shared reality: when he happens to meet Nadja on the streets for two consecutive days, he declares: "It is clear that she is at my mercy." As he walks along the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, he sees objective correlatives of his internal impulses. (This in fact was evidence for Breton's theory of "Objective Chance" -- in which the shared world responded to the desires of the inner world -- "found objects," for instance, were materials existing in the shared world which answered inner needs.) Although Cardinal and others have described these ideas in Freudian terms -- i.e., as a meeting of the pleasure principle and the reality principle -- it seems better explained by schizophrenic symptomologies.

If, as Laing posits, the tangle of psychic divisions, ontological confusion, and various delusions which are the consequences of schizophrenia have as their root a threatened self, then *Nadja* seems to begin at that root: its first line, spoken by Breton, is "Who am I?" Further, Breton seems to sense a false self operating to separate him from an inner self: "[He] seems to be experiencing the sense of not being fully in touch with his total personality and hence of being "haunted" by an unknown alternative self within his being" (Cardinal 21). Before long, this perception is exactly reversed, and a far stranger situation is revealed: the "unknown alternative self," is in fact the true self, and the part which Breton knows as tangible is the false self. This is a situation discussed in earlier chapters, perhaps most memorably Mary MacLane's complaint that the false self has so overtaken consciousness that the true self is unknown.

But whether the work is read as autobiography, psychological novel, love story, or case study -- its climax is described, interestingly enough, in a long footnote. It occurs when Breton, with Nadja as passenger, is driving. Nadja places her foot over his, depresses the accelerator further, covers his eyes and embraces him. Breton describes the gesture as pure in its refusal to admit all that is trivial, and to sacrifice all for passion. And although he would "*ideally*," like to participate in such activity, he does not. He claims that the reason he refrains is that he does not love Nadja enough (Cardinal 37). Later, Breton concludes that Nadja's genius though amply present, is indiscriminate and uncontrolled. Finally then, his conclusion regarding the relation of art to insanity (reached in a manner grounded in experience) was aligned with the rather more theoretically-derived determinations of Prescott and Thorburn.

I do not wish this congruence to be overly neat. In fairness, there were two important ways in which Surrealism's congruence with schizophrenia is more problematic. First, the Surrealists believed in the transformative power of human love. Such concerns are quite beyond the reach of schizophrenics.<sup>95</sup> Second, a goal of Surrealist art was a renewed sense of wonder at the familiar they termed "*le merveilleux*." Magritte proffered that the value of Surrealism was exactly that it had reintroduced the quality of the marvelous. Although at moments schizophrenia may indeed at offer such an experience (The patient of Gottesman, recall, wrote of moments when "everything is a wonder" [43]), it seems infrequent.

\* \* \*

---

<sup>95</sup> And yet it is something like Laing's prescription that the analyst offer understanding. Laing would say that the schizophrenic desires love, but is incapable of articulating the desire.

Vernon, Sass and Torrey have each approached the question of what degree industrial and post-industrial civilization may have produced schizophrenia -- perhaps as interesting is the obverse: to what degree has schizophrenia produced the modern world? On the surface, the latter suggestion seems an exaggeration of the much-discredited "great man" theory of history -- but in fact it may have considerably more merit. There was too, perhaps, already a vague hint that the experience of the unconscious was essential in understanding human existence in the twentieth century. Moreover, there were other influences -- from philosophy and from the new medium of film -- which seem conducive to the experience of schizophrenia and which seem to have externalized and institutionalized that experience.

At any rate, it seems clear that during the 1920s and 1930s -- in both America and Europe -- the ground was prepared for a literary interest in the experience of schizophrenia. From the realm of psychoanalytic theory came an interest in the unconscious and a new and validated appreciation of mind as creator; stream-of-consciousness; and -- less directly -- from the realm of Surrealism came a demonstration that the unconscious had a palpable and fresh aesthetic power.

## Faulkner's first approaches to schizophrenia:

### "Carcassonne," *As I Lay Dying*, and *The Sound and the Fury*

---

#### 5

*The patient was one of a large family of children. ... [W]hen she was about eight years old, her ten-year old brother suggested a pleasant game for a hot afternoon. They dragged a laundry tub into the back yard, filled it with cold water, stripped naked, and played together in the tub of water. The tub of water, not the nakedness, as she recalls it, was the central point of interest. . . . She then saw approaching a grown-up person (identity not yet recalled when the survey terminated) who seemed to be greatly shocked by what had been going on . . . It was impressed upon her that this was the most shameful thing that a little girl could do -- to expose her naked body to a little boy, even though he were her own brother (31).*

-- from G.V. Hamilton's 1921 study of  
psychological patients in Mississippi

She was wet. We were playing in the branch and Caddy squatted down and got her dress wet and Versh said,

"Your mommer going to whip you for getting your dress wet."

"She's not going to do any such thing." Caddy said.

"How do you know." Quentin said.

"That's all right how I know." Caddy said. "How do you know."

"She said she was" Quentin said. "Besides, I'm older than you."

"I'm seven years old." Caddy said, "I guess I know."

"I'm older than that." Quentin said. "I go to school. Don't I Versh."

...

"You just take your dress off." Quentin said. Caddy took her dress off and threw it on the bank. Then she didn't have on anything but her bodice and drawers, and Quentin slapped her and she slipped and fell down in the water. When she got up she began to splash water on Quentin, and Quentin splashed water on Caddy. Some of it splashed on Versh and me and Versh picked me up and put me on the bank. He said he was going to tell on Caddy and Quentin, and then Quentin and Caddy began to splash water at Versh.

-- *The Sound and the Fury*, 1929 (12-13)

\* \* \*

At the 1950 Nobel Prize ceremony, President of the Swedish Academy Gustaf Hellström introduced recipient William Faulkner as "unrivaled master of all living British and American novelists as a deep psychologist" and "the greatest experimentalist among twentieth-century novelists" (Blotner 1364). Indeed, among modern authors of note, Faulkner is perhaps the most interested in mental illness and its representations. The first part of this chapter will 1) review what is known of Faulkner's interest in formal psychology, 2) suggest that

Faulkner's assertions regarding the proper materials of artistic production (his own and others) are congruent with, and may be derived from, those articulated by Carl Jung, and 3) suggest that the relation of abnormal psychology and artistic creation discussed in the previous chapter may be evident in certain of Faulkner's works. The second part will read three of Faulkner's works -- *The Sound and the Fury*, *As I Lay Dying* and "Carcassonne" -- as representations of the experience of schizophrenia which seem based in some part upon two of the published accounts discussed in Chapter Two.

Faulkner stood apart from his age, but he was also very much of it. And it is, I think, probable that Faulkner may be one of many authors who read formal psychology and assimilated it into their work. Chapter Three had recounted the widespread reading that Waldo Frank had attempted to employ psychoanalytic theory into his work, and the result had been an embarrassment. I want to suggest that Faulkner attempted a similar project -- far more ambitious for two reasons. First, he seemed somewhat familiar with the work of several researchers and with competing theories; his sources seem to have included Bleuler, Jung and even Schreber, as well as Freud. And the artistic application of those theories demonstrate remarkably careful and imaginative compromises. Second, Faulkner's concern was specifically with *abnormal* psychology, and so with experiences which presented difficult problems to an author attempting a coherent presentation.

The quotes which begin this chapter are meant to suggest that formal psychiatric studies -- and perhaps also a general interest in psychology -- was present in Mississippi in the 1920s. The resemblance between Hamilton's subject and Faulkner's Caddy Compson is striking; and as the unrecalled adult introduces the concept of shame (even perhaps "sin") into the girl's world, so Quentin will introduce it into Caddy's. I am not prepared to suggest that Faulkner read Hamilton; and two more likely possibilities present themselves: the "pollen of ideas" to which Faulkner referred may have been thicker than readers have realized, or it was simply

the case that such events are common enough in any childhood -- and that Faulkner's and Hamilton's interests were merely congruent.<sup>96</sup>

Faulkner moved in intellectual circles only for brief periods; although he did not much discuss his work, only rarely dropping the pose of natural wit, he seems to have profited greatly by these encounters, as well as from the tutelage of mentors like Sherwood Anderson and Phil Stone. To various degrees each of the figures and groups in Faulkner's universe was intrigued by the conversations across the Atlantic, to which they were both eavesdroppers and critics. As Chapter Three suggested, for a student of the mind the early part of this century -- and perhaps especially the 1920s -- was exciting and unprecedented. For the first time there were available accounts of various mental diseases which attempted fidelity (albeit visibly problematic fidelity) to the actual experience of those diseases. The major schools were only a decade old; reverberations from the fragmentation of Freud's original Zurich circle were still being felt; and debate among schools was politely indirect but nonetheless so intense that the Ninth Congress of Psychology felt compelled to call the situation "one of the scandals of contemporary science" (Schultz 312). Such accounts would offer a subject and a source to which Faulkner would be irresistibly attracted: the concerns of psychology (dreams, incest,

---

<sup>96</sup> "Early in 1921 it became possible to set aside a year for intensive studies of nervous patients ... A city of about 30,000 inhabitants was chosen as the field for my year of research. It is a typical Mississippi Valley small city and the majority of its inhabitants have the traditional background and general scheme of values with which I was familiar during my boyhood and young manhood. . . . No psychopathologist had ever practiced in this community and during my entire year of work there I did not encounter a single patient who knew anything about psychoanalysis, and only a few who had even a smattering of any other kind of speculative psychopathology." (Hamilton, G. V. *An Introduction to Objective Psychopathology*. St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1925, 21.)



adolescence, humor, artistic creation and -- particularly for Freud and Jung -- the supernatural) are the concerns of Faulkner.<sup>97</sup>

Indeed, Faulkner's explicit statements about psychology at the University of Mississippi (1919-1920) suggest that he (as well as his local readership) were more than a little interested in the subject. Shortly thereafter, in 1921, Faulkner was introduced to another intellectual society, in New York. In the fall of that year he stayed a few blocks from MacDougal Street in Greenwich Village where the Provincetown Players had already produced fifteen of Eugene O'Neill's plays (the playwright claimed to have based certain of his work on Jung's studies); during those months Faulkner worked in a bookstore which had many early works of psychology on its shelves. A few years later, in 1924, Faulkner began to associate with Sherwood Anderson's circle in New Orleans, where, he acknowledged, psychology was much discussed (*LIG* 251). But in the 1920s one would not have had to be in a cultural center to gain such exposure. Actual psychological studies were being undertaken in the hinterlands -- in fact, one of the first studies of psychopathologies within a community (G.V. Hamilton's study which resulted in his *An Introduction to Objective Psychopathology* [1925] cited above), was very near Faulkner's own "little postage stamp of native soil."

Generally, much work has been accomplished in the area of Faulkner's involvement with psychology. The Eighteenth Annual Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha Conference (1991) took as its theme "Faulkner and Psychology," and from it was produced the 1994 collection of the same name. Most of the essays in the volume presume that Faulkner was somewhat familiar with formal psychology and psychoanalysis. The position derives from several earlier studies which offer considerable evidence -- circumstantial but persuasive -- that Faulkner knew Freud's

---

<sup>97</sup> As a child Faulkner had been fascinated with the brain; Blotner offers a quote: "I learned that it had parts -- a section for speech, for touch, and so on" (34).

work. Neil Polk observed "arresting" similarities between passages in *Sanctuary* and Freud's "Wolf Man" case; John Irwin noted that the discussion of Freudian concepts in *Mosquitoes* seems informed (5); and Judith L. Sensibar offered much evidence of a Freudian influence reaching Faulkner by way of the poems of Conrad Aiken.<sup>98</sup> All these are worthy studies, but

---

<sup>98</sup> Although Faulkner's few statements on the subject deny a Freudian influence, they seem inconsistent. An answer to a question at Charlottesville, for instance, pleads total ignorance ("What little of psychology I know the characters I invented and playing poker taught me. Freud I'm not familiar with" [Faulkner, *Faulkner in the University* 268]); a response during a 1956 interview suggests a Faulkner taking offense at the suggestion that his characters should require so artificial a prop: "Everybody talked about Freud when I lived in New Orleans, but I have never read him. Neither did Shakespeare. I doubt if Melville did either, and I'm sure *Moby Dick* didn't" (*LIG* 251). Yet a passage from an early critical essay evinces a hostility which seems possible only through acquaintance ("Writing people are all so pathetically torn between a desire to make a figure in the world and a morbid interest in their personal egos--the deadly fruit of the grafting of Sigmund Freud" [Faulkner, *EPP* 93]). Faulkner's evasions on matters concerning his art is notorious (the denials seem, and may be, part of the oft-adopted guise of country wit); such remarks should not dissuade us. Perhaps more troubling is the testimony of Faulkner's friend Phil Stone, who said of the subject "He wouldn't read Freud. I tried to get him to. I taught *at* him, but he wouldn't listen. He wasn't interested in psychology" (Richardson, 210). In a letter to Carvel Collins, Stone wrote that Faulkner told him that he had "never read Freud" (155). Would Faulkner have deceived Stone? Possibly--many would say quite probably. That neither Stone nor Estelle knew Faulkner was writing *The Sound and the Fury* (Minter 94) suggests that his genius could require great measures of privacy.

The only hint from Faulkner himself that he was interested in Freud is related by Carvel Collins. In a number of essays, Collins argues for a Freudian reading of *The Sound and the Fury*.

none assumes Faulkner's acquaintance with contemporaneous studies was more than casual. Neither do those in the collection. I think there is ample reason to suspect that Faulkner's reading was wider and deeper, and that his portrayals of certain characters drew upon published cases.

Many of the themes explored by Alfred Booth Kuttner, James Oppenheim, Walter Stekel, Frederick Clarke Prescott and John M. Thorburn appear somewhere in Faulkner's longer pre-Yoknapatawpha works: *Soldier's Pay* (1926), *Mosquitoes* (1927) and *Elmer* (abandoned in 1926). In these pieces one may find Freud's idea that artistic production sublimates drives which might move a non-artist into neurosis; Kuttner's complimentary suggestion that the artist was saved from full-blown neuroses by his artistry; Stekel's suggestion that creative activity was a "process of healing"; Prescott's assertion that the function of poetry, like that of dreams, is to ensure mental health; Alfred Adler and Herbert Read's suggestions that the artist had godlike aspirations; and Thorburn's comparison of the cosmos created by the artist to that imagined by the dreamer. If as Broughton suggests, Faulkner in the 1920s was familiarizing himself with critical theory, it seems probable that he was acquainted with some of their ideas. Of course it is as likely that he arrived at similar conclusions independently --

---

His introduction to the 1978 edition of *Mayday* declares that Faulkner read those essays, and "courteously avoided making any objections" (MD 37). But a subsequent action implies tacit approval: Faulkner suggested to his London publisher that Collins' work deserved attention. It is reasonable to assume that -- at least -- the author in no way felt maligned to be associated with Freud (as his 1922 comment would suggest), and that Collins' interpretations were not misreadings. At most, it suggests that in creating *The Sound and the Fury*, Faulkner drew upon his knowledge of Freud, and felt that that aspect of his work was unappreciated.

some are, after all, only short leaps from Freud.<sup>99</sup>

It is a truism that wars inspire literature, and a commonplace that modernist thought derived much from the First World War, some by indirect routes. Freud thought of the war as a kind of laboratory in which his central claims received validation, psychologist Kurt Goldstein treated brain-damaged war casualties (Sass 122), and as was discussed in Chapter Three, Surrealist André Breton was inspired by the images conveyed by war veterans. Circumstances denied Faulkner direct participation in the war, but it had lasting effects upon him. His brother was missing in action for several weeks; Faulkner himself trained with the RAF in Toronto, and returned to Oxford feigning a limp and speaking occasionally of a metal plate in his skull. At the very least, the war seemed to add a kind of immediacy to his interest in psychology, an immediacy evident in his first published novel, *Soldier's Pay* (1926), which has at its center a brain-damaged veteran.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>99</sup> Faulkner's interest in the psychology of the artist seems to have been deep and abiding -- it persists throughout his career. Besides Elmer, Faulkner's artist characters include almost everyone in *Mosquitoes*, Horace Benbow in *Flags in the Dust*, Darl Bundren (an art student) in *As I Lay Dying*, and Gail Hightower in *Light in August*. There are also craftspersons or tradespersons: the reporter in *Pylon*, Harry Wilbourne and Charlotte Rittenmayer in *Wild Palms*, Cash (a carpenter) in *As I Lay Dying* and Ike McCaslin (another carpenter) in *Go Down, Moses*.

<sup>100</sup> *Soldier's Pay* shares much with *Mrs. Dalloway* -- characters responding to effects of W.W.I, one secondary figure (Faulkner's Donald Mahon and Woolf's Septimus Smith) suffering psychological or mental scars, and, curiously, main characters (Septimus Smith and Januarius Jones) each of whose combined names alliterate, whose first names are Latinate, and whose surnames are the two most common in English.

Faulkner's second novel, *Mosquitoes* (1927) is a burlesque of New Orleans intelligentsia and its sometimes superficial flirtation with formal psychology. Certain characters undergo a "night-sea journey" which seems particularly Jungian, and all the novel's action is threaded through a conversation which seems to mimic and to parody the intellectual climate examined here in Chapter Three. Further, several characters discuss actual published psychological studies, Freud's "Wolf Man" case being the most prominent.

During his 1925 European tour, Faulkner began the composition of a vaguely autobiographical novel called *Elmer*, although the work was abandoned and survives only as a collection of fragments, it has been studied for indications of Faulkner's later directions: it contains prototypes for Caddy Compson and (perhaps) Anse Bundren, and it experiments with temporally disjointed narrative. And because *Elmer* is a work in progress of a young writer, some of the strings may be showing. Michael Zeitlin demonstrates that *Elmer* partakes of the "master narrative" of Freud -- a dramatic conflict involving family relations, and impelled by a fantasy life (*Faulkner and Psychology* 219-41).<sup>101</sup> I think that if *Elmer* derives much from Freud, it probably borrows as much from published works of other psychologists. Much of Elmer's mildly pathological behavior is explained by Jung's assertion that artwork is produced by the same psychological conditions which produce neuroses (*Collected Works*, vol. 15, 67).<sup>102</sup> The sentiment was reiterated by Jung in many contexts, and variations were posited by

---

<sup>101</sup> He also shows enough parallels between *Elmer* and Joyce's *Ulysses* that a case is made that Joyce was a source for (at least) certain sections.

<sup>102</sup> Faulkner said of *Elmer* "it wasn't funny enough" (Meriwether, "Foreword," *Elmer*); critics have long agreed, but certainly it has humorous moments -- especially when regarded against the contexts of psychology. Zeitlin and other readers sound rather too solemn, and seem to miss the inherent comedy of a boy-man who collects and eats cigar stubs,

critics discussed in Chapter Three. Faulkner's 1935 revision, a story entitled "A Portrait of Elmer," contains a final scene in which the aspiring artist defecates and, finding no tissue in his vicinity, sacrifices his portfolio to the needs of hygiene.<sup>103</sup> This too may be a dramatization of a theory. In *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung claims that a child considers defecation an act of creation because its result seems to appear *ex nihilo*. If nothing else, a Jungian interpretation raises the story's conclusion above the level of farce or fabliau. Faulkner may have been trying to suggest that the eponymous artist had found himself trapped in a pathetic fallacy: his physical circumstances exactly described his retarded artistic maturity.

At any rate, what I think is most significant about these three works is that they treat psychology at an ironic distance: in each work there appear characters who have decided -- with little or no legitimate provocation and against much immediate evidence to the contrary -- that formal psychology has everything to do with their lives. In *Soldier's Pay* the character Januarius Jones speaks glibly of "complexes,"<sup>104</sup> while those surrounding him politely negotiate the social consequences of Donald Mahon's debilitating head wound. The characters of *Mosquitoes* use psychological terms to disguise and explain actions they seem not to understand. And part of the joke of *Elmer* and its variations is that the main figure seems to have read Freud as actual preparation for his adolescence. There is in each of these works a sense that formal psychology is like what Lena Grove will think of her recent history: "*just a lot of words that never even stood for anything, were not even us, while all the time what was*

---

has castration complexes, is seduced by a woman he finds repulsive, and harbors a fetish for paint tubes.

<sup>103</sup> Thomas L. McHaney suggests that Bennett Cerf at Random House rejected the piece, perhaps in part because of this "mildly scatological ending" (Faulkner, *Manuscripts* 1, xxix).

<sup>104</sup> The term was Jung's coinage for a collection of interconnected ideas.

us was going on and going on without even missing the lack of words" (LIA 380). If Faulkner's early works indicate an interest in the mind itself, they also suggest a deep skepticism in the language and strategies commonly used to approach it. But more fundamentally and perhaps more importantly, they indicate a serious interest in mental states and their depiction.

I want to suggest that Faulkner's interest in abnormal psychological states probably began during these years, and that his understanding of schizophrenia and his related understanding of effects of art on the mind were shaped as well by others in Freud's original Vienna circle -- perhaps by Jung more than any. I know of no direct evidence that Faulkner read Jung; but I think that circumstantial evidence is at least as persuasive as that which suggests that he read Freud.<sup>105</sup> It may be useful to revisit the time and places in which Faulkner's artistic impulses were nourished.

During the years between 1920 and 1925 Faulkner had embarked, with the help of his friend Phil Stone, upon a program of self-education. Panthea Reid Broughton claims that before 1920, Faulkner's reading was primarily his own "great books" program and that shortly thereafter, perhaps because he was writing reviews for the *Mississippian*, he began to read literary and artistic theory, an activity through which he formed various aesthetic values (*New Directions* 327). Broughton posits that Faulkner's early artistic sensibilities (that is,

---

<sup>105</sup> In a speech given at Notre Dame in 1974, Carvel Collins stated that Faulkner had read Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*, but refrained from offering the source of his information. That Faulkner *could* have read it is easily demonstrated. It was published in New York in 1916, and again in 1925. (Faulkner's own library did not contain the book, and -- insofar as we know it -- neither did Sherwood Anderson's. It is not included in the short list of books Stone ordered in 1922 -- presumably in part to assist Faulkner's education.)

those evident between 1920 and 1925) were derived in part from Clive Bell's *Art*.<sup>106</sup> It seems to me that although certain aspects of Bell's theory are congruent with Faulkner's, many are not. Bell's suggestion that particulars are unimportant conflicts sharply with the detail Faulkner bestows upon his apocryphal landscape, and Bell's assertion that human emotions are irrelevant to art seems contrary to sentiments Faulkner expressed often -- most memorably perhaps, in the Nobel Prize speech. But Judith Sensibar argues convincingly that Bell's influence upon Faulkner is evident in the idea that there exists a *formula* for great art.

Phil Stone insisted that Willard Huntington Wright's *The Creative Will: Studies in the Philosophy and Syntax of Aesthetics* was an estimable and long overlooked influence upon Faulkner.<sup>107</sup> Indeed, as Blotner so well demonstrates, Faulkner seems to have put into practice much of Wright's advice -- specifically, that the great writer imagine "a terrain" before he imagines characters, that the writer of fiction must become a kind of god creating and controlling his own world, and that the life of an artist is essentially and necessarily solitary. Perhaps most interestingly, Wright asserts that although an artist cannot look to a "science" of aesthetics to learn to produce great art, great art might nonetheless be "corroborated and analytically explained" by such a science (Blotner 321). Indeed, this particular inclination seems to have been shared by the young Faulkner, writing in *The Mississippian* from February 16, 1921.

---

<sup>106</sup> On his Atlantic crossing, Elmer brings "Clive Bell [and] *The Outline of Art*, by Elie Faure" (3). Bells' *Art* appeared in 1914 and was revised in 1920; Faure's *History of Art* appeared in 1921; a 1922 printing was in Faulkner's library.

<sup>107</sup> We know Phil Stone's aesthetic judgments from numerous letters and interviews; we also know that Stone regarded himself as Faulkner's first and most influential mentor. We do not know exactly how Faulkner regarded Stone.



(A)esthetics is as much a science as chemistry ... there are certain definite scientific rules which, when properly applied, will produce great art as surely as certain chemical elements, combined in the proper proportions, will produce certain reactions.

(EPP 69)

Whether Bell's and Wright's treatises provided Faulkner with his first encounter with the idea of a formula for art, or merely offered themselves as rather authoritative confirmations of a position towards which he had been moving, I don't know. My point here is only that the passage suggests that Faulkner in 1921 seemed to believe that such a formula existed, and his ostensible influences from the same period seem to have agreed. What Faulkner did *not* seem to know -- as the *Mississippian* essay admits -- was the nature of the formula. Much later in his career, Faulkner seems to have alluded to the concept again. During his 1955 visit to Japan, the writer was asked: "In your Pulitzer prize-winning work *A Fable*, you wrote about the resurrection of a soldier. The Japanese writers consider that this is a new trend in your work. [Do you?]" His answer:

No, I don't think so. I simply used a *formula*, a proven formula in our western culture to tell something which I wanted to tell, but that's no new trend. I simply used an old story which had been proved in our western culture to be a good one that people could understand and believe, in order to tell something that I was trying to tell. (my italics; LIG 99-100) <sup>108</sup>

---

<sup>108</sup> Curiously, the same metaphor is used by Mr. Compson in *Absalom, Absalom* to argue that life escapes such reduction:

"It's just that incredible. It just does not explain. Or perhaps that's it: they don't explain and we are not supposed to know. We have a few old mouth-to-mouth tales; we

The Faulknerian formula then, is "an old story" -- in *A Fable*, of course, it is the story of Christ.

In the early twenties an artist aware of the interests of intellectual circles, and searching for a theoretical model for great art, would sooner or later have encountered Jung's

---

exhume from old trunks and boxes and drawers letters without salutation or signature, in which men and women who once lived and breathed are now merely initials or nicknames out of some now incomprehensible affection which sound to us like Sanskrit or Chocktaw; we see dimly people, the people in whose living blood and seed we ourselves lay dormant and waiting, in this shadowy attenuation of time possessing now heroic proportions, performing their acts of simple passion and simple violence, impervious to time and inexplicable -- Yes, Judith, Bon, Henry, Sutpen: all of them. They are there, yet something is missing; *they are like a chemical formula* exhumed along with the letters from that long forgotten chest, carefully, the paper old and faded and falling to pieces, the writing faded, almost indecipherable, yet meaningful, familiar in shape and sense, the name and presence of volatile and sentient forces; *you bring them together in the proportions called for, but nothing happens; you re-read, tedious and intent, poring, making sure that you have forgotten nothing, made no miscalculation; you bring them together again and again nothing happens:* just the words, the symbols, the shapes themselves, shadowy inscrutable and serene, against that turgid background of a horrible and bloody mischancing of human affairs (my italics; 100-1).

*Psychology of the Unconscious* and its description of the *libido myth*.<sup>109</sup> Briefly, the work posits that in the unconscious of everyone lives a set of symbols which represent a search for rebirth, for immortality. Taken together, they compose a story termed the *libido myth*. Jung believed that the inclusion of the myth and its parts endowed any story with strength and longevity. For this reason, the myth might easily be seen as an especially powerful aesthetic formula. And the myth is, indeed, an "old story": according to Jung, the legend of Gilgamesh, Beowulf, Christ's life within and without Scripture, Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* (a synthesis of North American Indian myths), and Pinocchio all are libido myths.

Jung's essay "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetic Art," first printed in English in 1923,<sup>110</sup> neatly summarizes similar ideas. Because it may be as near Jung ever comes to a definition of art, it is worth quoting at length:

The impact of an archetype, whether it takes the form of immediate experience or is expressed through the spoken word stirs us because it summons up a voice that is stronger than our own. Whoever speaks in primordial images speaks with a thousand voices; he enthralls and overpowers, while at the same time he lifts the idea he is seeking to express out of the occasional and the transitory into the realm of the ever-

---

<sup>109</sup> The work was published in 1916 in both London (by K. Paul Trencher & Company) and in New York (by Dodd, Mead). It was reprinted by K. Paul Trencher & Company in 1922, reprinted by Dodd, Mead in 1925 and again in 1931.

<sup>110</sup> The essay appeared first as a lecture given in Zurich in 1922; it was published in German in September of that year. It was first translated into English by H. G. Baynes in the *British Journal of Psychology* (Medical Section) (Cambridge), III:3 in 1923, and reprinted in *Contributions to Analytical Psychology* in 1928. The phrase "analytical psychology" -- was part of Jung's attempt to distinguish his theories from those of psychoanalysis.

enduring. He transmutes our personal destiny into the destiny of mankind, and evokes in us all those beneficent forces that ever and anon have enabled humanity to find a refuge from every peril and to outlive the longest night.

The sentiment and the words themselves resonate greatly with Faulkner's pronouncements on art, perhaps especially with the Nobel Prize Address.<sup>111</sup> It is not difficult to see here the same themes Faulkner repeated whenever asked to expound upon the significance of art -- that it is universal, that it will help us prevail. The myth is composed, after all, of what his Nobel Prize acceptance speech called the proper subject of writing: "the materials of the human spirit." And it is the part of us -- perhaps the only part -- which endures. But if the libido myth is a formula, it is a formula almost infinitely capacious (it contains, as will be seen, both Christ and Pinocchio). If it is rigid, it is rigid only in places: its product may be comic, tragic, or tragi-comic. And if we are to believe Jung, it is anything but inhuman: in fact, in that it is the only part of the psyche which all humans share, its existence may well *define* humanness. Faulkner put it another way: "I like myths because they are about people" (*LIG* 284).

Could Faulkner have read *Psychology of the Unconscious*? Certainly he had ample opportunity. It appeared English translation in 1916; O'Neill's mention of the work (see Chapter Three) suggests that Jung's book was "in the air" in Greenwich Village before 1921. Faulkner's comments on his own work are sufficiently vague to allow a multitude of interpretations. Still, certain of Faulkner's assertions seem more genuine and more cogent than others. Blotner remarks that especially during his visit to Japan, the author seemed particularly careful in all

---

<sup>111</sup> "... [O]ld universal truths lacking which any story is ephemeral and doomed -- love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice. Until he does so, he labors under a curse. He writes not of love but of lust ... He writes not of the heart but of the glands."

his interactions, and seems to have put away the role of the country wit. In fact, it was in Japan that Faulkner was asked in public whether or not he employed Jung's ideas (to my knowledge it was the only time). The question: "In your works, with your variety of characters, are you concerned with psychological type story [sic] of Jung, one of Freud's disciples, or do you create such characters entirely due to your observation and imagination?" Faulkner's response bears close reading:

A writer is completely rapacious, he has no morals whatever, he will steal from any source. He's so busy stealing and using it that he himself probably never knows where he gets what he uses. Probably no writer can say, "I was influenced by so and so." He can say, of course, "So and so encouraged me, I admired his work," and he might say, "I was influenced by him and no one else." But that writer is wrong, he is influenced by every word he ever read, I think, every sound he ever heard, every sense he ever experienced; and he is so busy writing that he hasn't time to stop and say, "Now, where did I steal this from?" But he did steal it somewhere. (*LIG* 128)

The answer is roundabout and careful, but seems, finally and essentially, affirmative. The only qualification I would make here is that -- I believe -- Faulkner did know where he was "stealing" it from.<sup>112</sup> Although I do not mean to suggest that Faulkner's comments about his work *must* be veiled allusions to the libido myth, I do mean to suggest the possibility, and that acknowledgment of the myth puts these comments in a very interesting light.<sup>113</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> Elsewhere he described a similar propensity: "[The artist] is completely amoral in that he will rob, borrow, beg or steal from anybody and everybody to get the work done" [*LIG* 239]).

<sup>113</sup> Faulkner may have referred to the architectonics of such legends when he spoke of a limited supply of artistic material:

Certain of Faulkner's comments seem to explain the source for his work by way of what looks to be the *collective unconscious*: "(S)ometimes I think there must be a sort of pollen of ideas floating in the air, which fertilizes similarly minds here and there which have not had direct contact" (*LIG* 30-31). Elsewhere, Faulkner suggested that he was influenced by something like genetic memory.

"They [readers] found symbolism that I had no background in symbolism to put in the books (sic). *But what symbolism is in the books is evidently instinct in man, not in man's knowledge but in his inheritance of his old dreams, in his blood, perhaps his bones*, rather than in the storehouse of his memory, his intellect. (italics mine; *LIG* 125-26) <sup>114</sup>

---

The artist is of no importance. Only what he creates is important, since there is nothing new to be said. Shakespeare, Balzac, Homer have all written about the same things and if they had lived 1,000 or 2,000 years longer, the publishers wouldn't have needed anyone since" (*LIG* 238).

They may be in agreement on another point. Jung's *libido myth* has as its central figure a characters who is eternally reborn; each of his existences involves him in the same sets of circumstances, the same characters. Faulkner: "The fact that I have moved my characters around in time successfully, at least in my own estimation, proves to me my own theory that time is a fluid condition which has no existence except in the momentary avatars of individual people" (*LIG* 255).

<sup>114</sup> Jung said something similar:

In an (evidently) similar mood, Faulkner alluded to a limited supply of stories, and spoke of artistic creation as a means to immortality.

*(M)an will do the best he can to be physically immortal as well as immortal in spirit, and to try to do more than he knows he can do, is the right aim. To do better than he knows he can do makes something better than it is. All artists, all writers, deal in some truth because there's not very many different phases of it, and it has been said before, and it is not enough just to want to say that as good as it has been said, to say this time just a little better, because you know you can't do it, but you can try.* (italics mine; LIG 106) <sup>115</sup>

---

That is the secret of great art, and of its effect upon us. The creative process, so far as we are able to follow it at all, consists in the conscious activation of an archetypal image, and in elaborating and shaping this image into the finished work. By giving it shape, the artist translates it into the language of the present, and so makes it possible for us to find our way back to the deepest springs of life. Therein lies the social significance of art: it is constantly at work educating the spirit of the age, conjuring up forms in which the age is most lacking. (*The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature.*)

...<sup>115</sup> Roth Edmonds's speech to Ike in *Go Down, Moses* speaks of a finite supply of material and an irresistible impulse to reuse it.

And the earth is shallow; there is not a great deal of it before you come to the rock.  
 And the earth dont want to just keep things, hoard them; it wants to use them again.  
 Look at the seed, the acorns, at what happens even to carrion when you try to bury it:

This might be a restatement of Jung: the libido myth has many manifestations in many cultures, but all are retellings of the same story.

Faulkner's earliest works -- *Soldier's Pay*, *Mosquitoes*, and his short stories -- evince a fin-de-siècle exhaustion like that evident in the work of, for instance, Yeats and Eliot. *The Waste Land* suggests that the way out of its desert is through ritual and religion -- but it is only a suggestion. To someone who cared to look, Frazer's *The Golden Bough* offered particulars, but lacked the immediacy and drama. I want to suggest that Faulkner was seeking a formula for great art, a narrative architectonic which would resonate powerfully in the psyche, and resonate too with his own beliefs regarding creativity, memory and narrative. And I want to suggest that he found them in Jung's libido myth.

To understand the myth, we need first to understand the conception of the psyche explained in *Psychology of the Unconscious*. This in itself is a foreboding task, in part because the book itself often seems muddled, confused and strained. Its defects have several likely causes. The theories were in their birth throes, and caused their author no small pain, in part because they began the first cracks in Jung's break with Freud. It was a break Jung felt inevitable, yet dreaded having to begin. And the strain under which the chapter entitled "The Sacrifice" was written has been evident to several of its readers. The opacity of certain of the book's ideas may too betray the onset of psychological disturbances which Jung was experiencing as he wrote. What makes matters worse is that the Brill translation (the one I suspect Faulkner read, and accordingly the one from which this study will work) does little to clarify Jung's concepts, and as more than one reader has complained, much to cloud them.

---

it refuses too, seethes and struggles too until it reaches light and air again, hunting the sun still (*GDM* 186).



Jung's biographer Vincent Brome has said that *Psychology of the Unconscious* is a difficult work even to summarize, and Jung himself remained so disturbed by the form of the work that in 1956 he revised it substantially under the title *Symbols of Transformation*.

The thesis with which I am concerned here, though, may be communicated fairly easily. Briefly, it suggests that each of us harbors an all but overwhelming fear of death, a fear so great that were it not sublimated into the unconscious, it might paralyze us. The unconscious answers this fear by seeking rebirth, and has developed its own peculiar but logical means to that rebirth: impregnation of one's mother. The deepest stratum of the unconscious--the collective unconscious--tries to realize this desire by creating a story of a search for rebirth, and the mother who can effect it. The searcher himself (he is always male) embodies the desire for life and its continuance: often the searcher ages as the individual in whom he lives ages, and the desire assumes different emphases--nutrition and the mother during infancy, sex during adolescence, desire for rebirth during adulthood. Jung calls this desire libido (his broadening of Freud's exclusively sexual definition of the same term contributed much to their split); he refers to the figure who embodies the libido as (logically) the *libido figure* or *libido hero*, and the story of his search for rebirth as the *libido myth*.

The following outline is based on the myth as it is discussed in *Psychology of the Unconscious*. The myth has many permutations, and some of the parts of each have associated symbols which I have omitted for the sake of brevity.

The hero is male, regardless of the possessor of the unconscious which produces him. The hero is immortal. He may seem to be born to woman, but he is in fact self-generated. The myth suggests this by somehow disassociating the hero's blood parents from his birth. Often the youth is orphaned, and raised by surrogate parents (step-parents or grandparents). If the mother at the hero's birth is associated

with a particular symbol, it is most often a tree. In this typology, the hero becomes a piece of wood carved from a tree and destined to return to it. Appropriately, heroes' fathers are commonly carpenters and woodcarvers.

Paradoxically, to find the mother of his rebirth, the hero must escape the mother of his youth. The moment of their separation is indicated by his ritual slaying of an animal -- a calf, a lamb, or a deer.

For most of his youth the hero wanders, unconsciously seeking the mother, and rebirth. As the hero nears the mother, he becomes of two minds, part of him desiring rebirth, part of him fearing the annihilation he must experience to achieve it. In some myths a figure appears who reflects or embodies this fear, and thus emblematically, the hero is split in two. The fearful half is commonly associated with alcohol, snakes, and onanism, while the more courageous half is associated with a horse. (The image of the hero riding the horse represents the controlled libido.) In many myths, the horse and the snake do battle. Although they may not realize it, and the myth itself may not mention it, they are fighting for the womb.

In his infancy, the hero had associated the mother with food. As he nears her now, he in some sense regresses, and becomes hungry. Once inside the womb -- that is, once inside whatever thing represents the womb--the hero eats what food it provides.

If this mother is represented by a symbol, it is a great fish, a dragon, a bear or (as before) a tree. Often she guards a treasure (a cache of gold or jewels) which represents the hero's life -- the life he must wrest from her if he is to be reborn. The younger hero may have struggled against this mother, but the mature hero enters her

womb -- and so accepts his death -- willingly.

The womb may have its own symbols: the mother's lair may be a cave, the sea, or an undersea cave. The hero's quest typically involves what Jung calls a "night-sea journey." (Jung speculates that the sun itself may be the model for all libido heroes, noting that numerous cultures consider the orb that rises each morning quite literally a different sun than that which set the previous evening.)

Often, the hero begins a fire within the womb. He then cuts open the mother's side, and so makes his escape. Outside, he notices that the sun is high in the sky and that it is morning (or, in some myths, spring). He notices too, that he has lost his hair.

Certain myths employ a more abstract symbolism. The hero may be reborn through a wind as a word, and that word may be conveyed by the wind.

The myth is manifest in the collective unconscious of everyone, in oral myths and legends, and in the personal unconscious (or dreams) of those suffering psychological disturbances. As regards the first and second cases, Jung explains that pieces of the myth percolate into conscious thought slowly but inexorably, through inevitable gaps in memory between storyteller, listener and storyteller. Any oral myth or legend, if it passes through enough tellings, will come to resemble the libido myth, and all libido myths lived for a time as legends communicated orally. Obviously, the myth might be regarded as a means to engage a mind directly and forcefully; as such it would offer a writer a powerful artistic tool. I think Faulkner uses the myth in all three types of manifestations; the myth as manifest in the collective unconscious and in oral myths and legends is evident in, among other works, *Go Down, Moses* (1940), *Pylon* (1935), and *The Wild Palms* (1939).

In several of Faulkner's works, characters' unconscious -- or more specifically, the myth within a character's collective unconscious -- is made to resonate with corresponding circumstances in the reality that character shares. One such corresponding circumstance is a peculiar sort of social grouping -- a kind of family brought together not by blood but by events: the flyers of *Pylon*, the tall convict and the pregnant woman of *The Wild Palms*, and Byron Bunch, Lena Grove and her child at the end of *Light in August*.<sup>116</sup> Faulkner's "circumstantial" families seem to possess a bond -- charged if ineffable.<sup>117</sup> In brief, these families imitate a paradigm made explicit in the libido myth -- an arrangement involving a woman, two men, and a male child whose paternity is uncertain or confused. The woman is the mother who determines the boundaries of the libido hero's life; the men represent the hero split into its halves. The fearful half in the families from the aforementioned works are, respectively, Shumann, the fat convict, and Lucas Burch. The willing half, of course, is reborn in the child. That he is usually *not* the child's blood father (the fearful half often is) insures that their relation is spiritual, and suggests that the birth was immaculate. The character in *Pylon* called "the reporter" is obsessed with the flyers who compose its circumstantial family; he tries to explain his behavior:

They aint human, you see ... And so the kid was born on an unrolled parachute in a hanger in California: he got dropped already running like a colt or a calf from the

---

<sup>116</sup> Faulkner's blood families seem failures by almost every standard by which a family may be judged; their members adhere not through love and not even through need, it seems, as much as through sheer inertia. See also Arthur Kinney's series on Faulkner's families, especially *Critical Essays on William Faulkner -- the McCaslin Family* (Boston: G.K. Hall, 1990).

<sup>117</sup> John N. Duvall's *Faulkner's Marginal Couple* goes a long way towards recognizing these.

fuselage of an airplane, onto something because it happened to be big enough to land on and then take off again. And I thought about him having ancestors and hell and heaven like we have, and birthpangs to rise up out of and walk the earth with your arm crooked over your head to dodge until you finally get the old blackjack at last and can lay back down again; -- all of a sudden I thought about him with a couple or three sets of grandparents and uncles and aunts and cousins somewhere, and I like to died. I had to stop and lean against the hangerwall and laugh. Talk about your immaculate conceptions: born on a unrolled parachute in a California hanger and the doc went to the door and called Shumann and the parachute guy. And the parachute guy got out the dice and says to her 'Do you want to catch these?' and she said 'Roll them' and the dice come out and Shumann rolled high, and that afternoon they fetched the J.P. out on the gasoline truck and so hers and the kid's name is Shumann (43-46).

In *Go Down, Moses* there appears another "circumstantial family." Two sections -- "The Old People" and "The Bear" -- describe spiritual rebirths which owe their success in part to the presence of Chickasaw -- members of an oral tradition steeped in the myth -- who revitalize the effete McCaslin line.

The two Chickasaw, Issetehibbe and his nephew Ikkemotubbe, appear in stories or fragments of stories related by characters in the narrative present. Thus the mythic paradigm of which they partake may be created by (or at least emphasized by) the collective unconscious which shaped each successive telling. That Ikkemotubbe, for instance, takes the chieftom not from his father, but from his uncle, suggests that he is a child of the mythic trine of mother, blood father and spiritual or mythic father. (In fact, that Issetehibbe is in some stories Ikkemotubbe's father and in some his maternal uncle might reflect a confusion resulting from the unconscious's tendency to reshape memory to fit the myth.) Ikkemotubbe, in turn, is both mythic father *and* (at least at first) blood father of Sam Fathers; he relinquishes the latter role

when he makes the "quadroon" who is pregnant with Sam marry another man, consequently determining Sam's surname "Had-Two-Fathers." Further, Ikkemotubbe sells Sam to Carothers McCaslin, and so allows Sam the mythic separation from his parents (indeed, Sam cannot remember his father's face). Thus Sam is at once a child of the mythic trine, and an immaculate conception.

Some of the mythic images in the life of Sam Fathers occur in the shared reality outside the minds of any of the characters. Still, their origin may nonetheless be in the collective unconscious. Like the other hunters, Sam respects and imitates the traditions and rituals of the hunt. Those traditions and rituals are preserved only imperfectly, through stories (the telling of which occupies much of "The Old People" and "The Bear"). Because the myth gradually shapes the stories after itself, and the hunters pattern their rituals on those stories, the rituals -- and so the hunt itself -- become the myth realized. And because Sam lives according to the dictates of the same rituals, his life becomes a powerful confluence of the mythic and the real. Sam's death--resulting (the doctor says) from "swimming rivers in December" (256)--recalls the night-sea journey, and his attitude towards that end is proper to the hero: Sam "just quit" (246). On his deathbed, he seemed trapped within the womb: "he said clearly: 'Let me out. Let me out'" (245), and Major Compson replied as though familiar with the needs of the hero in that place: "He hasn't got any fire" (245). The hunters undressed him and found his body "almost hairless" (246), and the following morning brought the mythic rebirth of nature.

The rain had stopped during the night. By midmorning the thin sun appeared, rapidly burning away mist and cloud, warming the air and the earth; it would be one of those windless Mississippi December days which are a sort of Indian Summer's Indian Summer. (247)

Sam's wishes concerning care of his corpse are also mythic, and they are obliged: his body is

hung between trees.

Jung says the libido figure may age as the individual in whom he lives ages, and the desire both harbor assumes different emphases at different stages of life -- nutrition and the mother during infancy, sex during adolescence, desire for rebirth during adulthood. In a mind sufficiently prepared, the myth may be aroused by a random event.

Ike McCaslin first enters the Big Woods at age ten, the beginning of adolescence. It is a time (Jung says) when the healthy libido should move from a concern with nutrition to a concern with sex. It is a time, too, when a mind which has repressed its desire to impregnate the mother may find it reflected in external circumstances, and may use those circumstances as props in a symbolic impregnation and rebirth. And indeed, when Ike enters the Big Woods and partakes of the mythic hunt, he discovers a world which mirrors the one living in him. At moments he seems to recognize this, seems at least briefly to recognize the collective unconscious itself: the circumstances surrounding the hunt nearly overwhelm him with déjà-vu, and the bear itself is to him "memory from the long time before it even became memory" (207). Since "The Bear" is told largely from Ike's perspective, we might expect that certain of the story's mythic images originate from the selective focus of Ike's unconscious. Others may be suggested to Ike by Sam Fathers; still others may be part of the hunt itself. In "The Hero in the New World: William Faulkner's 'The Bear,'" R.W.B. Lewis has indicated several such images,<sup>118</sup> but he may have underestimated their number; certainly he fails to discern the larger pattern of which they partake.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>118</sup> R.W.B. Lewis, "The Hero in the New World: William Faulkner's 'The Bear'" in Utley, Bloom and Kinney, eds., *Bear, Man & God* (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 306.

<sup>119</sup> Faulkner's own comments on the work may allude to the myth and to the collective unconscious:

Jung describes the woodpecker as an especially spiritual creature, writing that many cultures see its pecking at a tree as an attempt to enter it -- and as behavior, therefore, that embodies the hero's desire (*Psychology* 386). During Ike's first encounter with Old Ben a woodpecker taps conspicuously in the background (202-3). The hero's journey is repeated everywhere throughout time; appropriately, Ike relinquishes watch and compass. Further, the eponymous bear -- Ike's "alma mater" (210) -- seems to behave like an animal so unlike itself that their comparison -- were it not for their mythic relation -- would seem absurd: Ike watches it "as he had watched a fish ... sink back into the dark depths of its pool without even any movement of its fins" (209). (Significantly, the juxtaposition of images has qualities of the Surreal.) Ike's second encounter with the bear occurs as it stands against another maternal symbol--a tree. Ike is caught for a moment *beneath* the bear, in the symbolic position of the newborn to its mother, and again the circumstance reveals for him his collective unconscious: "It was quite familiar, until he remembered: this was the way he had used to dream about it" (211).

The myth as evident in the parts of *Go Down, Moses* demonstrates its presence is within the minds of normals (i.e., non-schizophrenics) -- Ike McCaslin, Sam Fathers. But as I

---

The bear was a symbol of the old forces, not evil forces, but the old forces which in man's youth were not evil, but that they were in man's blood, his inheritance, his (instinctive) impulses came from that old or ruthless malevolence, which was nature. His dreams; his nightmares; and this story was to me a universal story of the man who, still progressing, being better than his father, hoping that his son shall be a little better than he, had to learn to cope with and still cope with it in terms of justice and pity and compassion and strength. (*LIG* 115)



mentioned above, the myth is present too in the personal unconscious (or dreams) of those suffering psychological disturbances, perhaps especially schizophrenics. It is this manifestation of the myth which I think is most interesting, and with which I am most concerned. Most symptoms of schizophrenia are evident somewhere in Yoknapatawpha: it has become a critical commonplace to suggest that Darl Bundren of *As I Lay Dying* is schizophrenic (although those making the observation use the word with less discrimination than I've tried to practice here), Ineke Bockting makes a convincing argument that *The Sound and the Fury's* Quentin Compson is schizophrenic, and there are suggestions of schizophrenia or schizoid tendencies in many of Faulkner's other characters. The circumstantial families discussed above are psychologically healthy, and whatever their social status (I think), they seemed healthy to Faulkner because they had the abilities Faulkner admired -- the abilities to endure and to prevail. On the other hand, several of Faulkner's blood families are profoundly dysfunctional. And it may be no coincidence that many of their members seem either schizophrenic or schizoid.

Three works seem particularly important to this thesis -- I will discuss them here not in order of their composition, but in a rather more subjective order -- their difficulty: "Carcassonne" (1932), and *As I Lay Dying* (1930) and *The Sound and the Fury* (1929).

### **"Carcassonne"**

"Carcassonne" was first published in *These 13* in 1931. Noel Polk calls it Faulkner's "most perplexing and enigmatic story" (29). Indeed, it is fair to say that never before and never again was Faulkner's depiction of stream-of-consciousness as purely associative, as dense, as solipsistic and (of course) as Surreal. Faulkner himself regarded it highly: he said of it "there was the poet again," and when he arranged the order of the stories in *These 13* (1931) and *Collected Stories of William Faulkner* (1950), he chose "Carcassonne" to conclude

both. Strangely, little has been done with the work, and what has been written draws conclusions which are at best tentative. (Some readings strike me as unsupported: Bleikasten, for instance, describes the story as "the monologue of a dead or dying young man" [375]. In fact, certain stages of the schizophrenic experience may imitate dying -- and so the confusion is not surprising.) But some claims we may make with reasonable certainty. Most will agree that "Carcassonne" is an impressionistic account of an internal dialogue. One participant is a conflicted self, partly living in the shared reality (renting a garret from a woman who expects him to write poetry or be a poet), and partly desiring escape from said reality (preferring to sleep in order that he may dream of riding a "buckskin pony" into heaven). The other participant is a criticizing voice identified as his "skeleton." What the skeleton criticizes is the self's desire to succumb to the dream.

I want to suggest that "Carcassonne" is an attempt to represent a schizoid experience from within and also to represent the conflicting and paradoxical nature of schizoid inclinations. In fact, it dramatizes (and may be inspired by) this description from Bleuler:

In acute twilight states, schizophrenics sometimes occupy themselves in accordance with their imaginings or they submit passively to everything; they lie around catatonically, partly with a consciousness of the absence of reaction, partly as a result of kinesthetic hallucinations with the belief that they are doing something like the normal person in a dream" (Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry*, 390).

The story is made difficult by its *in medias res* opening beginning -- a description of a dream within an internal monologue already well underway -- forcing the reader to take it on its own terms:

*And me on a buckskin pony with eyes like blue electricity and a mane like*

*tangled fire, galloping up the hill and right off into the high heaven of the world*

His skeleton lay still. Perhaps it was thinking about this. Anyway, after a time it groaned. But it said nothing. *which is certainly not like you* he thought *you are not like yourself. but I cant say that a little quiet is not pleasant*

He lay beneath an unrolled strip of tarred roofing made of paper. All of him, that is, save the part which suffered neither insects nor temperature and which galloped unflagging on the destinationless pony, up a piled silver hill of cumulae where no hoof echoed nor left print, toward the blue precipice never gained. This part was neither flesh nor unflesh and he tingled a little pleasantly with its lackful contemplation as he lay beneath the tarred paper bedclothing.

The passage is typical of the complexity of thought; to a reader it seems almost hopelessly hermetic. But when read as a schizophrenic internal monologue, the story becomes clearer. Fundamentally, the schizophrenia is evident in that the subject is split from himself; the condition is reflected in the images of the twin spectacles and the horse cut in half. <sup>120</sup>

---

<sup>120</sup> A passage from R.D. Laing's *The Divided Self* may explain:

[T]here are individuals who do not go through life absorbed in their bodies but rather find themselves to be, as they have always been, somewhat detached from their bodies. Of such a person one might say that "he" has never become quite incarnate and he may speak of himself as more or less *unembodied*. (68)

*The Divided Self*, first appeared in 1960. The resemblance between Laing's case descriptions and Faulkner's characters is remarkable, and difficult to explain. It may be that both were using the same source or sources as yet unidentified, or it may be that we have, again, underestimated Faulkner's abilities as a "natural psychologist." Although both Laing

Several symptoms are evident. First, there is the ironic deflating voice -- here, in the person of the skeleton. And the skeleton, like most ironic voices, represents the healthy ego -- and counters and criticizes the desire of the subject to abandon the shared world for his dream. Second, there are delusions of grandeur, specifically, of being Christ: the self considers: "*the flesh is dead living on itself subsisting consuming itself thriftily in its own renewal will never die for I am the Resurrection and the Life ... what though to Me as a seething of new milk Who am the Resurrection and the Life.*" Third, there is the desire to abandon the shared existence for the private, imagined one.<sup>121</sup> Specifically, the conflict is between the dream world (here the desire to ride the horse, and the needs of mundane world -- rent, food and the "Standard Oil Company."<sup>122</sup> Fourth, the stream-of-consciousness associations contain a narrative logic

---

drew much from Bleuler (as I suspect did Faulkner), I think it may not be that Faulkner and Laing used the same sources so much that on the subject of schizophrenic experience, both are travelling on parallel paths. At any rate, references to Laing will, of course, not contribute to the aspect of this chapter which is a tracing of influences.

<sup>121</sup> "Carcassonne" refers to a village known a medieval walled city. Jung and others have regarded the city as a symbol of self; that this city is walled remind us that the schizophrenic desires to be protected from the world.

<sup>122</sup> The dreamer considers the shared reality the province of others; it is disdained, and its owners are resented.

Luis, who ran the cantina downstairs, allowed him to sleep in the garret. But the Standard Oil Company, who owned the garret and the roofing paper, owned the darkness too; it was Mrs Widdrington's, the Standard Oil Company's wife's, darkness he was using to sleep in.

which recalls that of free-association tests. As Chapter Three discussed, Jung's studies demonstrated that the waking associations of schizophrenics resemble and in many cases are indistinguishable from the dreaming associations of normals -- associations triggered by semantic resemblances, phrases repeated and eventually compressed into a few words or even a single word. These too, seem evident in the story.

It is instructive to appreciate the difficulty of what Faulkner attempted. A depiction of insanity from within presents an author a rash of problems -- among them, a locus of reality, a clear (or even an unclear) narrative line, and characters whose persons are stable and identifiable. On a stylistic level, the story shares much with Surrealist fiction like Breton's *Soluble Fish*. (In fact, it may be that the story has failed to attract much attention for the same reason Breton's work is not much read: it is simply difficult to convey the experience of a dream, no matter how numinous the experience seemed to the dreamer.) But especially considering these handicaps, it is a tribute to Faulkner's genius that "Carcassonne" has the dramatic elements of most fiction -- conflict (between withdrawal and acceptance) and resolution (as with many schizophrenics, withdrawal wins).

### ***As I Lay Dying***

As most readers know, the novel's title is from Book IX of the *Odyssey*. Faulkner quoted a speech to Odysseus by Agamemnon's spirit: "As I lay dying the woman with the dog's

---

The last sentence -- with Mrs Widdrington somehow "wife" to Standard Oil Company -- is a association nowhere explained. It may be that she is the wife of a manager or owner of the Standard Oil Company, and this is a schizophrenic "compression."

eyes would not close my eyelids for me as I descended into Hades." <sup>123</sup> It is haunting in that it describes a desire to lose consciousness or awareness (to close one's eyes) and suggests a desire to escape the gaze of another (the woman with the dog's eyes). The result is a sense of almost unbearable hyperreflexivity. And something like it appears in psychological literature: one of Bleuler's cases believed that "cats eyes [had been] put into her" (429). But Agamemnon's torture seems harsher still: he was watching himself being watched; he was a mirror facing a mirror, and he could neither break the mirrors, nor could he turn one away from the other. That the woman's eyes are dog's eyes makes them unreadable; there is no communication here, and none is possible; there is only a haunting sense of being observed and being *made* to be observed by someone or something who, like the guard at the central tower of the Bentham's Panopticon, is unknowable. <sup>124</sup>

As an allusion to an iteration by a spirit, the title prepares us for a world in which posthumous consciousness is possible. As strange and incomprehensible as such an experience may be to a normal, for the schizophrenic it may be utterly unremarkable. And in fact, schizophrenics commonly believe that they are dead, or that they have become some sort of

---

<sup>123</sup> Addie's soul, likewise, seems Hell-bound: Cora observes, "the eternal and the everlasting salvation and grace is not upon her" (7). Darl regards the world in the moments preceding Addie's death: "The sun, an hour above the horizon, is poised like a bloody egg upon a crest of thunderheads; the light has turned copper: in the eye portentous, in the nose sulphurous, smelling of lightning" (36).

<sup>124</sup> To explain the experience of schizophrenic paranoia, Sass describes Bentham's "Panopticon" -- a prison design which allowed guards hidden in a central tower to observe prisoners in windowed cells arranged around the tower. Prisoners' experience is exactly that common to schizophrenics: "One cannot experience one's own *bodily* being from within but only from without, from the imaginary position of an observer in the tower" (252).

animated corpse. Bleuler discusses a patient whose experience is typical of this type.

Unmarried woman, a chambermaid from a psychopathic family. Intelligent, has read much. Twenty-nine years old. After her mother's death she suffered from over-exertion and money losses. She believed falsely that a cousin wanted to marry her and always waited for him. After several months, manic excitations occurred which increased during eight days. She sang in an unseemly way, wrote a note to the effect that her brother-in-law should not bother her all night. Violent. *She said she had to die all the time and was not being buried.* (my italics; 419)

Delusions embody contradictions which are, to the normal, irreconcilable and beyond logic, and yet which the schizophrenic herself accepts as the way the cosmos is constructed: for instance, the schizophrenic may believe herself dead and at the same time believe herself *not dead*. This particular paradox seems evident in the Bundren episteme: Anse attributes Addie the corpse with both volition and expectation. Before Addie dies, Anse speaks conditionally of the time of her death -- "But if she dont last until you get back ..." -- and a reader unused to Anse's thought patterns may expect a main clause which is an admonition to Darl and Jewel. But Anse shocks us, concluding: "She [Addie] will be disappointed" (15).<sup>125</sup> Later, when Addie is a corpse he still endows her with a will: "I give her my promise ... Her mind is set on it" (101); and then "She is counting on me" (126). Anse is not alone in believing that the corpse remains somehow animate: Vardaman's holes are drilled in the coffin so that

---

<sup>125</sup> Indeed, in Anse's mind the dead can possess even expectation: "With that family burying-ground in Jefferson and them of her blood waiting for her thee, she'll be impatient" (17).

Addie may breathe. <sup>126</sup>

If we are to believe Laing, <sup>127</sup> then the development of Addie's schizophrenia is rather typical. The disorder begins with a hatred of everything, and indeed, a kind of universal hatred is evident at the beginning of Addie's monologue: "In the afternoon when school was out and the last one had left with his little dirty snuffling nose, instead of going home I would go down the hill to the spring where I could be quiet and hate them" (155). The schizophrenic wishes to separate herself from others. Such a desire much evident in Addie: Anse says "She was ever a private woman" (17), and Cora elaborates: "She lived, a lonely woman, lonely with her pride" (20). <sup>128</sup> For schizophrenics, the desire to separate oneself and protect oneself may translate

---

<sup>126</sup> Vardaman may have another motivation. In *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung writes of a case of "slight introversion psychosis" -- which he calls schizophrenic: "When [she was] only two years old ... instead of playing as other children, she began to bore a hole with her finger in the plaster wall of the house. She did this with little turning and scraping movements, and kept herself busy at this occupation for hours" (158). This activity marks the "epoch of displaced rhythmic activity" (160) -- transition between the stage nutrition and the stage of sexuality.

<sup>127</sup> See note 25.

<sup>128</sup> The impulse to isolate oneself is a schizophrenic strategy to preserve identity threatened by engulfment into another. Addie herself regards her students as solipsistic and alien: "*And when I would have to look at them day after day, each with his secret and selfish thought, and blood strange to each other blood and strange to mine ...*" (155). If the view is schizophrenic, it is also quintessentially modern. Eliot's notes for *The Waste Land* notes quoting F.H. Bradley [Sass 280]: (M)y experience falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside; and, with all its elements alike, every sphere is opaque to the others which surround it



into a hallucination that she is dead. Laing's explains the hallucination as "the most extreme defensive posture that can be adopted . . . Being dead, one cannot die, and one cannot kill" (191). 129

---

... In brief, regarded as an existence which appears in a soul, the whole world for each is peculiar and private to that soul."

And the desire to use death to protect the self presents a problem: death is private, but as Agammemnon's speech warns, it is also public. In many ways the end of life is the end of privacy; the condition of death, we might say, is very like the experience of the prisoner in the Panopticon -- being seen, but being unable to see. Of course there is in *As I Lay Dying* an embarrassment about Addie's corpse as there is an embarrassment about any corpse. Peabody, thinks of Addie: "[T]hat pride, that furious desire to hide that abject nakedness which we bring here with us, carry with us into operating rooms, carry stubbornly and furiously with us into the earth again" (42). And Tull considers the fish which Vardaman confuses with Addie: "It slides out of his hands, smearing wet dirt onto him, and flops down, dirtying himself again, gappmouthed, goggle-eyed, hiding into the dust like it was ashamed of being dead, like it was in a hurry to get back hid again" (27). Corpses are naked, we might say, "behaviorally" -- that is, a corpse is incapable of all and any behavior through which a living person protects herself. Second, it is naked as the carcass of the horse Nancy in *The Sound and the Fury*, because it is in the process of physical decomposition; and so it is in Benjy's term, "undressing."

129 Laing discusses Kafka's "Conversation with a Suppliant."

"[T]he suppliant starts from the existential position of ontological insecurity. He states, 'there has never been a time in which I have been convinced from within myself that I am alive.' The need to gain a conviction of his own aliveness and the realness of things is, therefore, the basic issue in his existence." (Laing 116).

But whatever form it takes, the separation between inner self and outer world inevitably generates other divisions: the 'inner' self becomes itself split, losing its own identity and integrity. Then, almost ironically, the self is attacked by its split-off parts, and the haven of self, created as a refuge, becomes a hell. Sass describes the consequences: "The apparent eventual destruction and dissolution of the self in schizophrenic conditions is accomplished not by external attacks from the enemy (actual or supposed), from without, but by the devastation caused by the inner defensive manoeuvres themselves" (80-1). It is not difficult to hear that experience of "Addie-as-corpse" echoed in a schizophrenic's description of the disease as experienced from within:

There is no gentleness, no softness, no warmth

in this deep cave.

My hands have felt along the cave's stony sides,

and, in every crevice, there is only black depth.

Sometimes, there is almost no air.

. . . .

I am imprisoned.

But not alone.

So many people crowd against me.

. . . .

I ache from being stepped on by the people,

in here, but they don't mean to step on me,

and it's just a careless mistake that they do,

I think, I hope. (Laing 182-84)

---

As the torturers violate this speaker, so the Bundrens violate Addie through "careless mistake" -- allowing her to rot above ground, drilling holes in her face, and losing the coffin in the flood.

There is the paradoxical opposite hallucination. The schizophrenic who retreats into a self may simultaneously believe either that her self consumes, envelops, and actually *becomes* the cosmos; or, similarly, she may believe that the cosmos is and always has been only an emanation of her mind. The landscape of *As I Lay Dying* seems part of a body: Vardaman describes a plank as "*bleeding*" (59), the land sweats (125), saws snore (42, 62), mud whispers on the wheels (95), and wheels whisper in mud (108). At moments the entire landscape suggests human anatomy: "The path looks like a crooked limb blown against the bluff" (38). It is a Surreal world suggestive of the work of, among others, Salvadore Dali.

As was discussed in Chapter Three, the schizophrenic may come to regard the language belonging to the shared reality as irrelevant, deceptive and/or simply inaccurate: words lose any connection to their referents, the schizophrenic adopts, in Sass's terms, "an experiential attitude which would sever the word from any intention-to-signify" (203). Both categorical and functional concepts of language seem utterly irrelevant; Sass cites a patient's first-hand description: "words have their own textures, which may not be the same as the texture of the things they represent" (203). Another of his patients describes the same experience:

"My eyes met a chair, then a table; they were alive too, asserting their presence. I attempted to escape their hold by calling out their names. I said, "chair, jug, table, it is a chair." But the word echoed hollowly, deprived of all meaning; it had left the object, was divorced from it, so much so that on one hand it was a living, mocking thing, on the other, a name, robbed of sense, an envelope emptied of content.

Nor was I able to bring the two together, but stood rooted before them, filled with fear and impotence." (Sass 49)

Certainly this attitude toward language is one of the most discussed aspects of *As I Lay Dying*, and Addie's thoughts on semiotics are among the most quoted sections of the novel. She thinks "That was when I learned that words are no good; that words dont ever fit what they are trying to say at" (157). Later: "I would think about his name until after a while I could see the word as a shape, a vessel, until the jar stood full and motionless: a significant shape profoundly without life like an empty door frame; and the I would find that I had forgotten the name of the jar" (159).

In sum, there seems considerable reason to regard Addie as the schizophrenic "imager" of the novel's action. Still, such a reading does not help with other problems, and they are considerable. The initial question posed by *As I Lay Dying* is perhaps so obvious and so familiar that many critics seem to have forgotten it is even there: the title itself. The "I" of the title would seem to refer to Addie, but the tense seems wrong: Addie is "dying" only for the first few sections -- for most of the book she is dead. Further, the title suggests that Addie is the work's narrator, or at least that she somehow backgrounds the narratives of Darl, Cash and the rest. But only one section is titled "Addie," and it is the fortieth, occurring well into the book. As troubling is the fact that this chapter is not differentiated stylistically or typographically from the narratives of the other, (apparently) living speakers. In fact, every path which promises some understanding seems only to generate more troubling problems -- or to circle back on itself. And we are forced to consider that perhaps our initial supposition is wrong -- that perhaps Addie is not the "I" of the title. There is small support for this reading too: after all, even in the sections which occur while she lives, many scenes are outside her presumed sphere of awareness.

In recent years there have been many qualifications of that titular pronoun, and suggestions that the condition we call death is itself called into question, or that identity is called into question, and so on. All these seem unnecessary and ultimately unsatisfying complications. I would like to invoke Occam's Razor here -- and suggest the possibility that the "I" of the title *does* speak for the whole book, and *does* find its locus in a particular figure -- and that figure is not Addie -- but Darl. In short, I want to echo the claims of numerous readers that Darl experiences many symptoms of schizophrenia,<sup>130</sup> but I also want to go

---

<sup>130</sup> Several readers have observed that insofar as we can compose an objective understanding of Darl, we may identify a number of symptoms of schizophrenia. Bleikasten offers a neat summary:

[His] monologues point to a precarious mental balance, and one might argue that nearly all the classic symptoms of schizophrenia are soon discernible: withdrawal from reality, loss of vital contact with others, disembodiment and splitting from the self, obsession with identity, sense of isolation and deadness, armageddonism (the sense that "the end of the world is nigh" apparent in Darl's account of the river scene) (191).

Curiously, while Bleikasten asserts that Darl seems schizophrenic, asserting that "[i]t hardly matters whether his psychotic syndrome is borne out by nosography" (191), and that Faulkner's appeal to neuroses is decidedly Romantic -- in other words, an abstract depiction of a generalized madness, used as a means to challenge conventional categories of thought. I think, on the contrary, that it matters tremendously that if Darl's neuroses are patterned upon actual cases, if his experience resembles the experience of schizophrenia. It means the difference between a watered-down symbolism and psychological realism, the difference between Darl as a thematic device and Darl as flesh and blood. I want to insist that Faulkner's portrayal of schizophrenia may have ramifications for modern and postmodern thought, but

further, and suggest that his monologues and those attributed to others may be generated from his (that is, Darl's) mind. This argument will be neither airtight nor lengthy; both space and the readers' patience prohibit an exhaustive reading, and the next chapter, which will defend a similar claim for *Light in August*, may at least prove that Faulkner was interested in such narrative experiments. My intent here is mostly to suggest an intriguing possibility.

Darl's experience of the world seems made of schizophrenic symptoms -- at least seven. First, Darl creates elaborate thought patterns, in isolation: Tull thinks of him: "[H]e just thinks by himself too much" (64). Second, Darl experiences (what seem) auditory hallucinations.

"I enter the hall, hearing the voices before I reach the door. Tilting a little down the hill, as our house does, a breeze draws through the hall all the time, upslanting. A feather dropped near the front door will rise and brush along the ceiling, slanting backward, until it reaches the down-turning current at the back door: so with voices. As you enter the hall, they sound as though they were speaking out of the air about your head." (18) <sup>131</sup>

Third, Darl has a terrifying ontological doubt. In a moment which echoes "Carcassonne," he regards much of the cosmos -- a cosmos of which he is part -- as disintegrating:

---

Darl is a postmodern thinker -- aware of arbitrariness of human experience, self-aware and able to negotiate freely the realms of experience. The schizophrenic experience -- mostly -- is painful and bewildering, and at times terrifying.

<sup>131</sup> Bleuler: "The voices come from all sorts of places, from heaven and hell, or from ordinary places, where people are; but they are also situated in the walls, in the air, in the clothes or in the body of the patient himself" (387).

In a strange room you must empty yourself for sleep. And before you are emptied for sleep, what are you. And when you are emptied for sleep, you are not. And when you are filled with sleep, you never were. I dont know what I am. I dont know if I am or not. (72) <sup>132</sup>

Fourth, Darl has "inappropriate affect," in the opinion of most researchers from Bleuler onward, a manifestation of the separation of emotion from intellect. <sup>133</sup> Pa recounts an episode: "Darl begun to laugh. Setting back there on the plank seat with Cash, with his dead ma laying in her coffin at his feet, laughing ... I turned and looked back at him and him setting there, laughing" (93); and later, as Darl put on the train for the institution in Jackson, he is laughing. Fifth, Darl experiences hyperreflexivity. Several of the novel's passages show him seeing himself, and the tone of resolution in his final monologue suggests he has established permanent residence outside his body: "Darl has gone to Jackson. They put him on the train, laughing,

---

<sup>132</sup> Darl's choice of the second person pronoun is intriguing here. It is an assumption that his experience may be universal, a tentative, even wishful supposition that what is happening to him also happens to others. Of course, this monologue goes to the heart of the Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment experience, emblemized by Descartes sitting alone in a room and practicing "extensive doubt": seeking an absolute truth, the mind supposes the non-existence of all things about whose existence it can have the slightest doubt, and the mind concludes, from the exercise that as it supposes this non-existence, it must itself exist: "*Cogito ergo sum.*" And it may be that Darl is merely extending Descartes' thought: if I am asleep I am not conscious and so cannot think. And so perhaps then I do not exist.

<sup>133</sup> Bleuler's observation "Among the affective disturbances compulsive laughter is especially frequent..." (*Textbook* 409) was among the first clinical descriptions of such behavior in schizophrenics.

down the long car laughing, the heads turning like the heads of owls when he passed" (235).

Sixth, several passages seem to indicate that Darl's moment-to-moment experience evinces a disengagement from conventions of space and time, resulting in what Sass calls an appreciation of time as a kind of continual present (160-1). Specifically, it is a fusion of motion and stasis which has come to be regarded as typically Faulknerian:

"Then they are rigid, motionless, terrific, the horse back-thrust on stiffened, quivering leg, with lowered head; Jewel with dug heels, shutting off the horse's wind with one hand, with the other patting the horse's neck in short strokes myriad and caressing, cursing the horse with obscene ferocity" (11).

Seventh and finally, Darl has many thoughts of an apocalypse: "It takes two people to make you, and one people to die. That's how the world is going to end" (35). At the edge of the flooded river, it seems to Darl "as though we had reached the place where the motion of the wasted world accelerates just before the final precipice" (132). And shortly thereafter, crossing the river, he imagines something like a Second Coming: "Cash looked back at me, and then I knew that we were gone. But I did not realise the reason for the rope until I saw the log. It surged up out of the water and stood for an instant upright upon that surging and heaving desolation like Christ" (134).

A case for Darl-as-narrator may begin with the observation that he narrates nineteen sections of the novel's fifty-nine, more than any other character. But how, exactly, might we explain Darl as the "imager" of monologues not explicitly attributed to him? Perhaps the consciousness identified as "Darl" is not a trunk to their branches, and is not even much one branch among many. Perhaps instead, "Darl" is simply the mode of awareness which this brachiating, schizophrenic awareness clutches most often. Sass describes such a condition:



The schizophrenic ... seems more often to have a simultaneous awareness of several possibilities, frequently moving, or hesitating, among what are experienced, at least implicitly, as alternative worlds or orientations toward experience, thereby demonstrating what one theorist has described as a characteristically schizophrenic tendency to shift not merely among a variety of objects or topics but among alternative frames of reference, universes of discourse, or semantic strata ... If consciousness can be compared to a searchlight beam, we might say that manic consciousness tends to pivot rapidly as it shifts focus from one object of attention to another, whereas schizophrenic consciousness actually slips out of any anchor point, floating about unstably among varying points of view" (131). <sup>134</sup>

Specifically, Darl's mental experience may be rather like that of a severe schizophrenic Laing discusses, a woman he calls "Julie" who believes that she is everything and nothing simultaneously. Within Julie's fantasy world, the wish to become someone else ("I'm Rita Hayworth, I'm Joan Blondell. I'm a Royal Queen ... I'm thousands" [221]) and no one ("I'm a no

---

<sup>134</sup> As Schreber's *Memoirs* demonstrate, the imaginative powers of the schizophrenic are impressive, perhaps beyond the experience of normal, conscious thought. A patient of Jung's testifies that parts of his mind have experiences which "he" -- an entity which is evidently an organizing principle, or whatever passes for an organizing principle -- can merely intuit.

"There are always two or three of my personalities who do not sleep, although during sleep I have fewer personalities; there are some who sleep but little. These personalities have dreams, but the dreams are not the same: I feel there are some who dream of different things." (*Psychogenesis* Coll Works vol 3, 91).

un'" [221]).

Certainly aspects of Darl seem present in the thoughts of others; in fact, schizophrenic symptoms are distributed liberally among the other narratives. Vardaman, for instance, seems to experience a dissolution of self, thinking "I am not crying now. I am not anything." (52). For Vardaman too, aspects of the external world disintegrate; a cow seems to fall apart.

It is as though the dark were resolving him out of his integrity, into an unrelated scattering of components -- snuffings and stampings; smells of cooling flesh and ammoniac hair; an illusion of co-ordinated whole of splotched hide and strong bones within which, detached and secret and familiar, an *is* different from my *is*. I see him dissolve -- legs, a rolling eye, a gaudy splotching like cold flames -- and float upon the dark in fading solution; all one yet neither; all either yet none." (52)

Dewey Dell also has moments of ontological doubt.

*When I used to sleep with Vardaman I had a nightmare once I thought I was awake but I couldn't see and I couldn't feel I couldn't feel the bed under me and I couldn't think what I was I couldn't think of my name I couldn't even think I am a girl I couldn't even think I ..."* (107)

Like Darl, Dewey Dell separates intellect from affect. She thinks of her mother's death: "I dont know whether I can cry or not. I dont know whether I have tried to or not" (58). And so it may be that the sections we know as "Dewey Dell" and "Vardaman" are what might be called Darl's "orientations" -- that is, Darl imagining himself as them.

Perhaps the strangest of schizophrenic experiences is the hallucination that he is dead.

I think that Darl does not exactly imagine that he is dead, but rather that he imagines the experience of being dead as it might be for one who, in the shared reality, actually *is* dead: Addie. In other words, as the Big Woods offered an objective correlative for Ike McCaslin's experience of adolescence, so Addie's Bundren's corpse and the behavior of those near it may offer Darl Bundren an objective correlative for his schizophrenic delusion. It is a displacement like Vardaman's displacement of Addie onto the fish: as Vardaman look at the fish and thinks of Addie, so Darl looks at Addie and thinks of himself.

Indeed, of Darl's "orientations" the one termed "Addie" seems to experience this linguistic distancing most profoundly. She is an appropriate figure onto which he may displace his ontological and linguistic anxieties; his ontological doubt is made more fundamental and therefore more painful because it is transferred onto his mother, the source of his own being. Thus Darl experiences not merely the disintegration of all certainty; he experiences also the disintegration of the *sources* of certainty.

And here, the ontological doubts lead to (and perhaps through) the libido myth. In *As I Lay Dying*, the libido myth is produced as it is produced in *Go Down, Moses* -- by the interaction of shared reality with a mind seeking the myth or pieces of the myth. Much like Ike McCaslin of "The Bear," Darl finds himself for a few days living within a world that reflects the one inside him. Aspects of the libido myth are everywhere in *As I Lay Dying*. There is a flood and a fire. There is a mother associated with wood (the coffin), and with a fish. Intriguingly, the same themes may pervade schizophrenic delusions:

There are many images used to describe related ways in which identity is threatened, which may be mentioned here, as closely related to the dread of engulfment, e.g. being buried, being drowned, being caught and dragged down into quicksand. The image of fire occurs repeatedly. Fire may be the uncertain flickering of the individual's own inner

aliveness. It may be a destructive alien power which will devastate him. Some psychotics say in the acute phase that they are on fire, that their bodies are being burned up. A patient describes himself as cold and dry. Yet he dreads any warmth or wet. He will be engulfed by the fire or the water, and either way be destroyed. (47) ?

In *As I Lay Dying*, perhaps more than any other of Faulkner's works, the myth appears as a means to replenish the wasteland. The terror of Dewey Dell's ontological doubt is assuaged by thoughts of a wind blowing over her (107) -- a mythic image of rebirth. Anse is a kind of pathetic Fisher King, always "looking out over the land," yet unable to replenish it.<sup>135</sup> And here the schizophrenic experience of fusing body and cosmos compliments and assists the experience of the libido myth. The sun is a "bloody egg" -- suggesting a violent and terrifying

---

<sup>135</sup> A version appeared in *Elmer* as "the elder Hodge": "He was a trifle awkward at first but soon he was able to shoot tobacco juice in a keen thin hissing into a parallelogram of troubled earth where someone had once tried to make something grow" (*Elmer* 41). Of course, Anse is a realistic portrayal, too. His refrain "If ever was such an unfortunate man" and its variations either disregards the obvious Old Testament predecessor, or identifies with him. "I have heard men cuss their luck, and right, for they were sinful men. But I do not say it's a curse on me, because I have done no wrong to be cussed by" (33). Interestingly, Jung suggests specifically that identification with Job may be neurotic:

Job's sufferings are not understood by his friends; no one knows that Satan has taken a hand in the game, and that Job is truly innocent. Job never tires of avowing his innocence. Is there a hint in that? We know that certain neurotic and especially mentally diseased people continually defend their innocence against non-existent attacks ..." (*Psychology* 59-60)

rebirth, the end of all rebirth or perhaps, in some strange way, both.

Addie herself seems to share much with a figure from Egyptian mythology whom Jung regards as a mother in one version of the myth:

"Nit, the ancient, the mother of god, the mistress of Esne, the father of fathers, the mother of mothers, who is the beetle and the vulture, the being in its beginning ... Nit, the ancient, the mother who bore the light god, Ra, who bore first of all, when there was nothing which brought forth." (*Psychology*, 271)

Addie Bundren is the "mistress" of not of "Esne" but of Anse; she is the mother of Dewey Dell, who is to become a mother, Addie's coffin on sawhorses is identified by Darl with a "cubistic bug" (201), <sup>136</sup> and Addie is followed by vultures. As many readers have observed, it is particularly interesting in history-saturated Yoknapatawpha, that the Bundren parents seem without a past, severed from all society and culture; Addie's family is in graves, and Anse tells her "I aint got no people" (157). With no memories which precede their own lives, they indeed seem the first people, who "bore first of all, when there was nothing which brought forth." They have about them an aspect of the myth, and as the banana-eating scene suggests, they seem evolutionary throwbacks, barely human. If we are to believe Jung, the libido myth was, in the minds of human ancestors, nearer the surface of conscious thought than it is in

---

<sup>136</sup> In fact, he sees a scarab -- and a vision not unlike Jung's own transformative dream: "I was stunned by this vision. I realized, of course, that it was a hero and a solar myth, a drama of death and renewal, the rebirth symbolized by the Egyptian scarab" (*Memories*, 179).

modern humans.<sup>137</sup> And so perhaps the reader is seeing the libido myth begin again -- a twentieth century recreation of circumstances which engendered the myth in prehistory.

Jung draws upon numerous cultures and numerous legends, arguing that many demonstrate aspects of the libido myth. He quotes, as an example of an aspect of the myth, an "old German riddle": "Who are the two, who travel to the Thing? Together they have three eyes, ten feet and one tail; and thus they travel over the land" (*Psychology* 309). One answer might be the Bundrens. Darl alludes to "the dead eyes of three blind men" (150) in reference to himself and two of his brothers. The character called Samson recounts the spectacle of the family limping across the landscape: "We were sitting on the porch when the wagon came up the road with the five of them in it and the other one on the horse behind" (98). There are then, "ten feet and one tail."<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> "[Schizophrenic ideas] which we consider as original and wholly individual creations are very often creations which are comparable with nothing but those of antiquity" (*Psychology* 159). And "[E]ven from the distance of the modern mind those early stages of the libido can regressively be reached. One may assume, therefore, that in the earliest stages of human development this road was much more easily traveled than it is today" (162).

<sup>138</sup> Jung continues along this line, discussing supernatural powers attributed to the horse, and concludes with a note which seems particularly significant for what I termed the novel's initial question.

Legends ascribe properties to the horse, which psychologically belong to the unconscious of man; *horses are clairvoyant and clairaudient*; they show the way when the lost wanderer is helpless; they have mantic powers . . . *They hear the words the corpse speaks when it is taken to the grave -- words which men cannot hear.* (my italics; 309)

As *I Lay Dying's* libidinal hero seems split among the three elder sons -- none of whom is clearly the hero and any of whose claims to the title is vexed. Cash is a carpenter (like Ike McCaslin), and he goes under the water and emerges. Likewise, Jewel associates with horses, tries valiantly to lead a horse across water, and has a name which may derive from the same phrase. But his claim to the role is vexed: Darl imagines him as a snake -- which is to say, as the fearful half of the hero. Darl lights the fire in the barn to burn Addie -- that is, to defeat the mother who holds them all in thrall. The myth becomes particularly evident as Darl, Cash and Jewel take the coffin across the flooded river. Darl perceives the water as maternal:

Before us the thick dark current runs. It talks up to us in a murmur become ceaseless and myriad, the yellow surface dimpled monstrosly into fading swirls travelling along the surface for an instant, silent, impermanent and profoundly significant, as though just beneath the surface something huge and alive waited for a moment of lazy alertness out of and into light slumber again" (127).

And Tull, watching them, imagines that those who have crossed the river have come from beneath the world:

"[L]ike it went clean through to the other side of the earth, and the other end coming up outen the water like it wasn't the same bridge a-tall and that them that would walk up outen the water on that side must come from the bottom of the earth" (123).

### ***The Sound and the Fury***

---

A young Faulkner observed that "Incest was not the horrible, hideous crime it was thought to be" (CNC 52). The statement may have been intended to shock, but it is essentially in accordance with Jung's view of the subject. For Jung, incest represents not so much a misdirected sexual urge, but a desire for rebirth. And indeed, the desire seems much present in the thoughts of both Benjy and Quentin, in both cases directed not at their mother, but at her surrogate -- Caddy. The minds of Benjy and Quentin are rife with mythic images, and in Quentin's case particularly there is an acting out of the myth -- or a version of it.

Caddy's suitor Dalton Ames is for a moment uncertain as to whether he is speaking to Quentin or Benjy (or he pretends he is): "listen buddy whats your name Benjys the natural isnt he you are Quentin" (125). He is confused with good cause: the Compsons suffer varieties of a single mental condition linked by concerns for Caddy, obviously, but also linked by subtler predilections, too. For one, Benjy and Quentin both notice butterflies. Benjy chases them (286 Viking) and Quentin merely regards them.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, Quentin thinks a little like Benjy and a

---

<sup>139</sup> "[Y]ellow butterflies flickered along the shade like flecks of sun" (95); "yellow butterflies slanting about them along the shade" (95); "another yellow butterfly, like one of the sunflecks had come loose" (109); "beyond them lights began in the pale clear air, trembling a little like butterflies hovering a long way off" (133). Curiously, Schreber regards butterflies as tests by the "voices":

"Whenever a butterfly appears my gaze is first directed to it as to a being newly created that very moment, and secondly the word "butterfly -- has been recorded" is spoken into my nerves by the voices; this shows that one [voice] thought I could possibly no longer recognize a butterfly and one therefore examines me to find out whether I still know the meaning of the word "butterfly." (Sass 262, quoting Schreber 188)



little like Jason. Quentin observes "crickets sawing away in the grass pacing me with a small travelling island of silence" (116); Benjy says "The grass was buzzing in the moonlight where my shadow walked on the grass" (35). Quentin thinks "I learned that the best way to take all people, black or white, is to take them for what they think they are, then leave them alone" (67). Jason thinks: "When people act like niggers, no matter who they are the only thing to do is treat them like a nigger" (141). <sup>140</sup>

Perhaps because the title is borrowed from a speech which continues "told by a fool," many readers have assumed Benjy part of a long tradition of fools who -- like Lear's -- are conduits for higher truths, upsetters of effete order, and/or bringers of life. (The analogy does not go far, at any rate: only one of the four sections represents Benjy's thoughts, and it is not "told" by Benjy, as Benjy cannot talk.) Little thought has been given to the possibility that

---

<sup>140</sup> Interestingly, the subject of word association within families was the subject of one of the lectures Jung presented at Clark University.

"One might think that in this experiment, where the door is thrown wide open to so-called chance, individuality would become a factor of the utmost importance, and that therefore one might expect a rich variety and freedom of association. But, as we have seen, the opposite is the case. The daughter shares her mother's way of thinking, not only in her ideas but also in her form of expression; so much so that she even uses the same words." (*Collected Works* 3, 469)

It would have been available to Faulkner in many forms. The lecture, with two others, was translated by A.A. Brill and published in the *American Journal of Psychology*, XXI (1910), in a Clark University anniversary volume.

Faulkner's fidelity to reality may have extended to psychological reality. I think it did, in a way that both assimilates and eclipses Romantic and pre-Romantic portrayals of insanity: Benjy experiences several symptoms of schizophrenia described in earlier or contemporaneous studies.

The schizophrenic experiences a general fragmentation, a dissolution of his or her own cohesiveness. A schizophrenic person may, for example, actually lose the sense of initiating his own actions: "When I reach my hand for a comb it is my hand and arm which move, and my fingers pick up the pen, but I don't control them" (Sass 214). The diction itself reflects fragmentation: "*I reach my hand.*" Sass offers a schizophrenic's own account: "I get shaky in the knees and my chest is like a mountain in front of me, and my body actions are different. The arms and legs are apart and away from me and they go on their own. That's when I feel I am the other person and copy their movements, or else stop and stand like a statue. *I have to stop to find out whether my hand is in my pocket or not*" (my italics; Sass 229). Benjy suffers similar alienation from self, also involved with hands and pockets: "*Keep your hands in your pockets, Caddy said. Or they'll get froze.*"<sup>141</sup> His description of his own vomiting evokes a terrifying sense that his body is something not merely beyond his control, but which is *not him*:

It was hot on my chin and on my shirt. ... It was hot inside me, and I began again. I was crying now, and something was happening inside me and I cried more, and they held me until it stopped happening (16).

---

<sup>141</sup> The phallic quality of Benjy's hands, of course, frightens the Compsons, and the refrain foreshadows his castration. The practice was common to the period, but by no means universally endorsed. Bleuler: "I never saw any good results but sometimes bad ones from the persistently proposed castration" (*Textbook* 445).

Several readers have observed that Benjy does not perceive cause and effect. It may be more accurate to say that, as a schizophrenic, Benjy regards the world as a chaos of discrete phenomena. Even his own actions -- putting out his hand and bellowing -- are things apart from him.

I put my hand out to where the fire had been.

"Catch him." Dilsey said. "Catch him back."

My hand jerked back and I put it in my mouth ... My voice went louder then and my hand tried to go back to my mouth, but Dilsey held it. My voice went loud. She sprinkled soda on my hand. (45)

The previous section discussed how Darl refused to recognize a connection between word and referent. Paradoxically, the schizophrenic he may as easily develop another, quite different, attitude towards language. He may extend the use of a term in quasi-metaphoric fashion with no concern for the word's conventional meaning. Further, his thought may itself be channeled by acoustic qualities or semantic connotations of words. Bleuler: "A name very easily rouses the idea of the person designated by it, while it frequently happens that the idea does not call forth the name (*Textbook*, 19). In *The Sound and the Fury's* famous opening scene, Benjy hears the golfers call "Here caddie," and the word transports him into a memory of his sister Caddy. Many of the temporal shifts of the Benjy section are semantically triggered, and for this reason it is fair to say that a prominent symptom of schizophrenia shapes the narrative.<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>142</sup> If Benjy displays behavior common to many schizophrenics, he also shares something with a particular case. Schreber would "break into a loud, incomprehensible, and seemingly uncontrollable bellowing" (Sass 245); the word is used often -- by Weber in his notes and by Schreber himself in his *Memoirs*. Benjy exhibits the same behavior -- and the

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), 9 n.) Freud describes a young child deriving great pleasure from making objects disappear from sight and reappear. In time the child finds that, by crouching before a mirror which does not quite reach the floor, he can perform the same act on himself. As Laing later suggests, the child is acting upon a schizoid proposition -- the existence of two separate selves: "That is to say, in overcoming or attempting to overcome the loss or absence of the real other in whose eyes he lived and moved and had his being, he becomes another person to himself who could look at him from the mirror" (124-25). Benjy too regards the mirror as containing another reality; in the following passage the Compsons have sold many of their possessions, and Benjy's sees the place on wall of the library where the mirror *was*:

We went to the library. Luster turned on the light. The windows went black, and the tall dark place on the wall came and I went and touched it. It was like a door, only it wasn't a door.

The fire came behind me and I went to the fire and sat on the floor, holding the slipper. The fire went higher. It went into the cushion in Mother's chair.

. . .

*Versh set me down and we went into Mother's room. There was a fire. It was rising and falling on the walls. There was another fire in the mirror...*

. . .

---

verb is the same: the last page of *The Sound and the Fury* reads in part: "For an instant Ben sat in an utter hiatus. Then he bellowed. Bellow on bellow, his voice mounted, with scarce interval for breath" (249). (The word "bellow" and its variations "bellowed" and "bellowing" appear nineteen times in the novel.)

"Come and tell Mother goodnight." Caddy said. We went to the bed. The fire went out of the mirror. (46-47)

And indeed, Quentin will think of his brother regarding the mirror as a door leading away from the nightmarish world into a place of peace: "How he [Benjy] used to sit before that mirror. Refuge unfailing in which conflict tempered silenced reconciled" (133).

As I mentioned above, Jung asserted that dementia praecox seemed by its nature to allow easier passage of the materials of the collective unconscious into conscious thought. He offers an example: "Honegger discovered the following hallucination in an insane man (paranoid dement): The patient sees in the sun an "upright tail" similar to an erected penis. When he moves his head back and forth, then, too, the sun's penis sways back and forth in a like manner, and out of that the wind arises" (*Psychology* 108-9).<sup>143</sup> Jung goes to some length speculating on the associations of the image -- the sun and the strange wind-generating penis as symbols of a rebirth longed after by their imaginer. It is significant, I think, that Benjy recognizes the same archetypal images, and locates them in the figure he in some half-conscious level desires as the means to his rebirth: "*Then I saw Caddy, with flowers in her hair, and a long veil like shining wind*" (29). This is Caddy as she appears to Benjy in the tree. In Jung's conception, the collective unconscious associates the mother with trees.<sup>144</sup> Indeed, the scene of Caddy in the

---

<sup>143</sup> *Soldier's Pay* has a similar passage: "sunlight was a windy golden plume about his bald head" (50).

<sup>144</sup> Jung offers a catalogue of mythic evidence:

The tree of life is probably, first of all, a fruit-bearing genealogical tree, that is, a mother-image. Countless myths prove the derivation of an from trees; many myths show how the hero is enclosed in the maternal tree--thus dead Osiris in the

tree trying to understand Damuddy's death, the scene which Faulkner famously termed the image which began the story, is a distillation of archetypes.

When Caddy wears perfume she does not smell like trees, but when she washes it off she does; similarly, when she kisses Charlie she does not smell like trees, and when she washes her mouth out after, she smells like trees again. The "cleansing" quiets Benjy. But when Caddy loses her virginity, she does not smell like trees again, and Benjy cannot be quieted. I think that the arboreal Jungian imagery suggests that like Quentin, Benjy does not desire sexual relations with Caddy so much as he wants her to remain a virgin, forever an emblem of possibility. In other words, Benjy believes that Caddy offers the possibility of rebirth when she smells like trees. Benjy's rape of the Burgess girl has suggested to some that Caddy might as easily been the victim -- but the fact of the narrative is she was not, and so the rape was what Freud might have called transference.

Some readers have asserted that Benjy is a mere "recording instrument," unable to interpret experience. Roskus suggests otherwise ("He knows lot more than folks thinks" [23]), and offers evidence: "He knowed they time was coming, like that pointer done. He could tell you when hisn coming, if he could talk. Or yours. Or mine" (23). Benjy, clearly, is concerned with the afterlife: he has a built a sort of "graveyard" of flowers and a bottle. If we assume that the selection of thoughts in the Benjy section is Benjy's own, then much of what he chooses to hear concerns death, rituals of burial and afterlife. Dilsey's regard for death as the great leveler ("Show me the man that ain't going to die, bless Jesus" [22]); Roskus' cryptic assertion of faith ("Dying aint all").

---

column, Adonis in the myrtle, etc. Numerous female divinities were worshipped as trees, from which resulted the cult of the holy groves and trees (*Psychology* 246).

Benjy is in fact capable of learning, and Faulkner may show us the very moment his faith is born -- insofar as faith is belief in the continued existence of something invisible. And that moment may be derived from a passage in another work in formal psychology-- Freud's account of the child playing before the mirror in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*:

The child had a wooden reel with a piece of string wound round it. ... [H]e kept throwing it with considerable skill, held by the string, over the side of his little draped cot, so that the reel disappeared into it, then said his significant "o-o-o-oh" and drew the reel by the string out of the cot again, greeting its appearance with a joyful "Da" (there). (146).

Faulkner has used the same object (a spool), but greatly complicated matters by having the taking and giving enacted among several children.

"Luster had some spools and he and Quentin fought and Quentin had the spools. Luster cried and Frony came and gave Luster a tin can to play with, and then I had the spools and Quentin fought me and I cried.

"Hush." Frony said, "Ain't you shamed of yourself. Taking a baby's play pretty." She took the spools from me and gave them back to Quentin." (22)

Of course, the tragedy of Benjy has much to do with frustrated or failed communication.

"I'm scared."

"He wont hurt you. I pass here every day. He just runs along the fence."

They came on. I opened the gate and they stopped, turning. I was trying to say, and I caught her, trying to say, and she screamed, and I was trying to say and

trying and the bright shapes began to stop and I tried to get out. (40)

Bleikasten calls Benjy's section "a narrative of an impossible narrative" (46) -- a story of how a story cannot be told, and suggests also that it is a prologue which, to be properly understood, must be read again after the fourth section, as an epilogue (70).

There are types of schizophrenia and degrees of mental functioning. If Benjy is near the lower end, his brother Quentin is certainly near the higher -- as his thinking is characterized by a *hypertrophy* of consciousness and self-consciousness (Sass 265). Readers have long regarded Quentin as having pathological tendencies, but exactly how he is sick? Ineke Bockting, John T. Irwin and Andre Bleikasten have each suggested that Quentin is schizophrenic. None, I think, is entirely persuasive. Bockting's piece seems to me a diagnostic patchwork, a random collection of symptoms matched to descriptions from (perhaps) so great a variety of sources that no coherent picture of schizophrenia emerges. Irwin, I think, uses the term loosely and rather inaccurately, as an extreme ambivalence (29). And Bleikasten's diagnosis blends commonly-understood symptoms and his own terms ("chronophobia"), so the upshot is that Quentin seems part actual person displaying symptoms familiar to depressives, and part an emblem of human experience in the twentieth century. I want to differ with each of these readers, and suggest instead that Quentin's schizophrenia is clinical, that Faulkner's evocation was careful and deliberate, and that Quentin cannot be rightly understood apart from his schizophrenia.

In a single sentence Quentin effectively describes the terrifying confusion which overwhelms his thought:

Sometimes I cold put myself to sleep saying that over and over until after the honeysuckle got all mixed up in it the whole thing came to symbolise night and unrest I



seemed to be lying neither asleep nor awake looking down a long corridor of grey half-light where all stable things had become shadowy paradoxical all I had done shadows all I had felt suffered taking visible form antic and perverse mocking without relevance inherent themselves with the denial of the significance they should have affirmed thinking I was I was not who was not was not who (132-33).

It is nearly a catalogue of schizophrenic symptoms. There is here the half-waking state, the substitution of unreal for real, the terrifying sense that being itself is unstable, the suffering, the paranoid delusion of mocking and, finally, at the core of it all, the ontological doubt, the way in which the voices which seem to have affirmed the schizophrenic existence compel him to undermine it. But as patients from Schreber on have reported, the experience itself may change from moment to moment. Recall the patient Gottesmann quotes, whom schizophrenia allows a marvelously heightened perception: "It's as if ... I've gone around the corner of humanity to witness another world where my seeing, hearing, and touching are intensified, and everything is a wonder" (43). Indeed, Quentin's mental experience seems to change rapidly and without warning. The sentence discussed above, one of the most frightening in the novel, is immediately followed by one which is almost heartbreakingly beautiful: "I could smell the curves of the river beyond the dusk and I saw the last light supine and tranquil upon tideflats like pieces of broken mirror, then beyond them lights began in the pale clear air, trembling a little like butterflies hovering a long way off" (133). As for Benjy, for Quentin the image of mirrors suggests a place elsewhere, promising peace.

Like Benjy, Quentin experiences the characteristic fragmentation of self, the sense that the body or certain of its parts are acting independently. He does not know he cuts his hand until he sees blood on his watch. During the memory/hallucination of his fight with Dalton Ames, Quentin perceives his corporeal self as fragmented: at various moments his thoughts are not unlike Benjy's: "my red hand coming up out of her face" (104); "But my throat wouldn't

quit trying to laugh" (109); "then I heard myself saying Ill give you until sundown to leave town" (124); and "my mouth said it I didnt say it at all" (125). Quentin also experiences the more generalized (and less corporeal) fragmentation manifest as the criticizing internal voice. In Quentin's case, this voice is his father's. The experience seems something like Jung's "compulsive thinking" or Bleuler's "thought pressure" -- an experience of having his will think within him, of having thoughts "made" for him.

As was evident in both Darl and Benjy, the schizophrenic fears that his existence, his "true self," is threatened with annihilation. One response may be the creation of poses and roles. Indeed, Quentin has many -- he himself makes reference to Christ <sup>145</sup> and Saint Francis, and considers his social obligations as a southerner. Like the sheriff from a Hollywood western, he tells Dalton Ames "Ill give you until sundown to leave town" (124). Quentin's acquaintances are aware of his roles. Spoade calls him "the champion of dames," and Herbert Head calls him a "half-baked Galahad." Bleikasten observes: "Insofar as there is still an ego at play, it is not at all the agent of mediation, integration, and adjustment" (74); indeed, Quentin seems a collection of provisional identities, and they are not controlled from within; in fact they are not controlled at all. The schizophrenic uses the false selves as foils and ruses, and regards those selves as unreal, mechanical and dead. This orientation too is suggested in Quentin's thought: "It kept on running for a long time, but my face felt cold and sort of dead" (128).

In Chapter One I mentioned Bleuler's observation that schizophrenics may be drawn to

---

<sup>145</sup> As mentioned in Chapter One, many schizophrenics imagine themselves to be Christ because that role fuses the grandeur complex to the persecution complex. There is, in Quentin, the barest suggestion of a Christ-complex: when Quentin removes his tie he thinks of the bloodstain: "maybe a pattern of blood he could call that the one Christ was wearing" (134).

mirrors to confirm their very existence. It is worth offering the whole context:

A strange disturbance of personality is de-personalization, in which the patients have lost the definite idea of their ego. They seem quite different to themselves, and feel that they must look into the mirror to see if they are still themselves, and even then their own images appear strange. This disturbance manifests itself especially through the fact that the patients do not feel their own will power and strivings, they feel like automatons; sometimes they are indifferent to it, but in most cases they perceive this state as extremely unpleasant. This syndrome appears in schizophrenia, perhaps also in neurasthenic-like states of psychopathic patient, and in a less pronounced degree it is also observed transitionally in epileptic twilight states. It is often connected with the analogous feelings of strangeness in regard to the outside world." (*Textbook* 139)

This goes a long ways towards explaining the mirrors and reflections (and too, the shadows) that seem to be everywhere in the Quentin section. In fact, Lawrance Thompson's incisive 1953 essay "Mirror Analogues in *The Sound and the Fury*" carefully enumerates most of the images in the novel. My only substantive emendation would be to challenge Thompson's causal explanation that the mirrors and reflections underscore thematic issues and suggest a variety of "correspondences, antitheses, parallelisms [and] analogues." I think that such may or may not be the *effect* of the images; but their cause within the world of the novel -- is simply that a schizophrenic, in trying to reassure himself of his reality, is drawn preferentially to mirrors and reflections.

In certain cases the schizophrenic may imagine that he does not exist over time, experiencing what Laing calls a "discontinuity in the temporal self." This is among the strangest of the experiences of schizophrenia, insofar as most normals are unlikely to have

known anything like it, even in milder forms. Laing cites a description of the experience:

The loss of a section of the linear temporal series of moments through inattention to one's time-self may be felt as a catastrophe. Dooley (1941) gives various examples of this temporal self-awareness ... One of her patients said: "I forgot myself at the Ice Carnival the other night. I was so absorbed in looking at it that I forgot what time it was and who and where I was. When I suddenly realized I hadn't been thinking about myself I was frightened to death. The unreality feeling came. I must never forget myself for a single minute. *I watch the clock and keep busy, or else I won't know who I am*" (my italics; Laing 116)

As Sartre notes, Quentin seems to slip in and out of time, his experience represented linguistically in that his statements are simple clauses, staccato and self-contained. (The many *ands* between them serve not so much to connect them as to make evident their disjunction.) But Quentin has also a contradictory awareness of time: as a means through which his existence is assured. His section begins: "When the shadow of the sash appeared on the curtains it was between seven and eight oclock and then I was in time again, hearing the watch" (59). It soon becomes clear that Quentin's concern for knowing the time of day has been ongoing: "father said that constant speculation regarding the position of mechanical hands on an arbitrary dial which is a symptom of mind-function. Excrement father said like sweating. And I saying All right. Wonder. Go on and wonder" (60). Although Quentin's methodical destruction of the hands on the watch is a liberation like young Ike McCaslin's abandonment of "watch and compass," it is more fundamentally his own necessary prelude to suicide; in destroying the watch he severs himself from time, and to his (schizophrenic) way of thinking, to sever oneself from time is to sever one's very existence.

There are two ways in which Quentin's use of language may be schizophrenic. Many

schizophrenic persons take to repeating long narratives, gradually compressing several words into one, omitting others. His thoughts repeat certain phrases ("*Did you ever have a sister*"; "*Father I have committed*"), then combine them with others. As the day progresses, phrases and litanies are abbreviated, made into a kind of shorthand. This type of thinking of course is not exclusively schizophrenic, nor is this type of stream of consciousness necessarily schizophrenic (much the same happens throughout *Ulysses*). But it is the case that verbal allusiveness of stream-of-consciousness is greatly heightened in schizophrenics. Sass reports one patient saying: "I try to read even a paragraph in a book ... but it takes me ages because each bit I read starts me thinking in ten different directions at once" (178). In the Quentin section, the passages which represent emotionally disturbing thought -- the imagined scene with Caddy, the imagined encounter with Dalton Ames -- appear with neither capitalization nor punctuation. Various readers have written of the effects of the technique, and one is certainly a leveling of language so that each word is given a force or weight equivalent to the words around it. And because most of the words are monosyllabic, each carries considerable force and weight. The effect is like that attempted by certain Surrealists, and suggests that the words themselves carry *too much* meaning. It is as though the meaning is too great for the voice to bear, and so the voice allows the words themselves to bear it. And one effect is that the reader or listener is made to see each word as a kind of component, and is made to see each word anew -- as a schizophrenic might.

Again as with Darl, Quentin evinces the separation of affect and intellect. Here though, Faulkner portrays the same experience from within, and so makes it all the more terrifying.

Then we ran beside the wall, our shadows running along the wall, and after a while we passed a piece of torn newspaper lying beside the road and I began to laugh again. I could feel it in my throat and I looked off into the trees where the afternoon slanted, thinking of afternoon and of the bird and the boys in swimming. But I still couldnt stop

it and then I knew that if I tried too hard to stop it I'd be crying and I thought about how I'd thought about I could not be a virgin, with so many of them walking along in the shadows and whispering with their soft girlvoices lingering in the shadowy places and the words coming out and perfume and eyes you could feel not see, but if it was that simple to do it wouldn't be anything and if it wasn't anything, what was I and then Mrs Bland said, "Quentin? Is he sick, Mr MacKenzie?" and then Shreve's fat hand touched my knee and Spode began talking and I quit trying to stop it. (114)

Quentin is aware of his inappropriate behavior and aware too of the likely consequences of stopping it. He is also sensitive to his ontological insecurity; thus the awareness of shadows again, and his resistance to defining himself as the virgin his father had called a "negative state." This line of thought builds to the inevitable and ultimately unbearable "[W]hat was I?", and the terrible ironic juxtaposition of the interruption at that moment by the aptly-named Mrs. Bland, asking a question of the schizophrenic that Bleuler, Jung, and Freud have all regarded as deserving of attention: "*Is he sick?*"

One answer to that question is provided by Quentin himself. Like Schreber, Quentin comments on his illness, defines it, and sometimes inverts the world around him -- or tries to. Quentin is assisted in these projects by the man he calls the "Deacon" who assists and befriends new Harvard students. Admiring the Deacon's perceptiveness, Quentin thinks "Talk about your natural psychologists." Significantly, it is this "natural psychologist" whom Quentin asks to be the unwitting conveyor of his suicide note. A few minutes after that exchange, Quentin chances to meet Shreve and informs him that he offered Deacon a note. Shreve asks "Did you go to Psychology this morning?" Quentin did not attend "Psychology," of course, because he was showing his broken watch to a jeweler and buying six-pound weights for his suicide; but the truancy is, on a symbolic level, a rejection of formal psychological authority for that of the Deacon.

Seen in its simplest, diagrammatic terms, Quentin's tragedy stems from his isolation from his mother (he thinks "*if I'd just had a mother so I could say Mother Mother*" [134]), and his substitution of Caddy in her place. This situation becomes the framework in which the libido myth, as manifest in Quentin's unconscious, plays out. Much as Joyce's *Ulysses* may be read as a decidedly cerebral version of Homer's *Odyssey*, so the day of Quentin's suicide is a particularly cerebral version of the libido myth. All the elements are here: the wandering, the unconscious seeking of the mother, the desire for rebirth counterpoised to a fear of its fatal precondition, the physical hunger, the representation of the mother as a great fish guarding a treasure, and the "night-sea journey" itself.

But the particulars are worth attention, among other reasons, for evidence of Faulkner's remarkable abilities of shaping psychological theory and psychological cases into art. Within the myth the hero may wound himself. Jung: "The curse of Chryse is realized in so far that Philoctetes, according to one version, when approaching his altar, injured himself in his foot with one of his own deadly poisonous arrows ... From then on he is ailing" (*Psychology* 332). Quentin, of course, bloodies his finger by twisting the watch hands (which are, after all, arrow-shaped indicators) from the dial. Other particulars are also in evidence. As the hero nears the mother he becomes hungry, but as a demonstration of his autonomy he refuses food. Quentin reports "I went over to town and went to Parker's and had a good breakfast" (64); later, he thinks "Eating the business of eating inside of you space too space and time confused Stomach saying noon brain saying eat oclock" (81). He recalls "When Versh and I hunted all day we wouldn't take any lunch, and at twelve oclock I'd get hungry. I'd stay hungry until about one, then all of a sudden I'd even forget that I wasn't hungry anymore" (87). And again in the present, he rejects food. During his walk, he buys bread, gives some to the little girl, and refrains from eating himself.

As in most myths, the mother is symbolized by a fish. Quentin is neither fisherman nor sailor, and yet Faulkner locates a fish and places it at what may be the emotional center of his day:

"I could not see the bottom, but I could see a long way into the motion of the water before the eye gave out, and then I saw a shadow hanging like a fat arrow stemming into the current. Mayflies skimmed in and out of the shadow of the bridge just above the surface."

The insect is proverbially known for its day-long life span, an emblem of mortality and so here an emblem of the young man contemplating suicide. It is also suggestive of the moth in Frank Miller's "Hypnagogic poem." And Quentin thinks

*"If it could just be a hell beyond that: the clean flame the two of us more than dead. Then you will have only me then only me the two of us amid the pointing and the horror beyond the clean flame* The arrow increased without motion, then in a quick swirl the trout lipped a fly beneath the surface with that sort of gigantic delicacy of an elephant picking up a peanut ..." (90). <sup>146</sup>

To defeat the mother is to gain the treasure, and there is a treasure here too: one of the boys fishing speaks of the trout to Quentin: "There's a store in Boston offers a twenty-five dollar fishing rod to anybody that can catch him" (91). In the larger narrative this treasure resonates with the twenty-five cents Luster sought in the golf course. Because the golf course had been Benjy's pasture, mortgaged to pay for Quentin's tuition, all the symbols for the

---

<sup>146</sup> The Surreal comparison of the fish and the elephant, a half-inversion of the simile of Old Ben and the fish -- has the effect of removing the trout from reality.



treasure are associated. Of course, to Quentin the fish evokes the rebirth promised in his image of Caddy, and the three boys represent Benjy, Jason and himself. When, later in the day, Quentin gives a quarter to the little girl, the symbols are fused: the Harvard education, the fishing rod, Benjy's pasture, and the quarter in the pasture.

The battle for the womb, for Quentin, is accomplished with Gerald Bland -- but Quentin hallucinates that he is fighting Caddy's husband-to-be, Dalton Ames. Certain particulars of the mythic battle are much in evidence -- the fight is on a bridge (literally over water), and Quentin first sees Ames breaking up a piece of bark and letting it fall into the moving water below, the suggestion being that the wood is the hero himself.

Jung: "The father, in the psychologic sense, merely represents the personification of the incest prohibition; that is to say, resistance, which defends the mother" (*Psychology* 364). Playing against this paradigm in a strange sort of false bravado, Quentin lies to his father, insisting that he and Caddy *did* commit incest. That Quentin is arrested for "kidnapping" begins to play out a possibility he had imagined -- a kind of elopement by himself, Caddy and Benjy. Jung describes a "policeman" in a patient's dream who, upon analysis, is revealed to represent the father (*Psychology* 363). And for Quentin, the sheriff represents the social prohibition to incest. For this reason Spode's comment on the matter is closer to the truth than he knows: "And the joke is, all the time Quentin had us all fooled ... All the time we thought he was the model youth that anybody could trust a daughter with, until the police showed him up at his nefarious work" (113-14).

Of course Quentin's suicide is through water, and it is the libido hero's surrender to the symbolic womb. As the daylight fades, Quentin is described as are many libido heroes, as though he *is* the sun: "As I descended the light dwindled slowly, yet at the same time without altering its quality, as if I and not light were changing, decreasing ..." (131). Jung: "This death

is no external enemy, but a deep personal longing for quiet and for the profound peace of non-existence, for a dreamless sleep in the ebb and flow of the sea of life" (*Psychology* 390).

Quentin thoughts of death seem an echo: "A quarter hour yet. And then I'll not be. The peaceablest words. Peaceablest words. ... I have sold Benjy's pasture and I can be dead in Harvard Caddy said in the caverns and the grottoes of the sea tumbling peacefully to the wavering tides" (136). <sup>147</sup> Jung: "The wish is that the black water of death might be the water of life; that death, with its cold embrace, might be the mother's womb, just as the sea devours the sun, but brings it forth again out of the maternal womb ... " (245).

Within the myth, identity is identified and preserved through names. Consequently, that Caddie names her daughter "Miss Quentin" suggests that -- at least within the context of the myth -- Quentin is reborn in her. Quentin's immortality is achieved. And the mythic paradigm -- the arrangement of two men, a woman and a child explored above -- appear in another, still stranger version. Of course, when Miss Quentin has the quarter, and it becomes clear that it is the most recent avatar of the treasure, it also becomes clear that this is a generation-long version of hide-and-seek game anticipated in Benjy's disappearing and reappearing spool.

But that the treasure is given, finally, to Luster, suggests that Faulkner is using the

---

<sup>147</sup> Elsewhere in *Psychology of the Unconscious*, Jung embellishes the idea.

"The blessed state of sleep before birth and after death is ... something like old shadowy memories of that unsuspecting, thoughtless state of early childhood, where as yet no opposition disturbed the peaceful flow of dawning life, to which the inner longing always draws us back again and again, and from which the active life must free itself anew with struggle and death, so that it may not be doomed to destruction" (362).

myth, and schizophrenia too, to create new resonances. Quentin's diagnosis of the behavior of southern blacks sounds like schizophrenia -- i.e., behavior unrelated to the self, and in fact contrived to guard and protect it, but which ultimately destroys that self. Likewise, his realization about the group is that they are not an entity so much as an appearance and an adaptation: "That was when I realised that a nigger is not a person so much as a form of behaviour; a sort of obverse reflection of the white people he lives among" (67). Later, he describes it as "that blending of childlike and ready incompetence and paradoxical reliability that tends and protects them it loves out of all reason and robs them steadily and evades responsibility and obligations by means too barefaced to be called subterfuge even and is taken in theft or evasion with only that frank and spontaneous admiration" (68).

Laing suggests that the schizophrenic's uncertainty of identity in time may account for the pre-eminent importance to the person of being *seen* (116). Recall that like Quentin, the Deacon is a player of roles, much concerned with being seen and having been seen. Quentin rather humors him, but one senses that Quentin has found someone who thinks as he thinks: indeed, their talk is about being seen.

"Haven't seen you in three-four days," he said, staring at me from his still military aura. "You been sick?"

"No. I've been all right. Working, I reckon. I've seen you, though."

"Yes?"

"In the parade the other day."

"Oh, that. Yes, I was there. I dont care nothing about that sort of thing, you understand, but the boys likes to have me with them, the vet'runs does. Ladies wants all the old vet'runs to turn out, you know. So I has to oblige them."

"And on that Wop holiday too," I said. "You were obliging the W.C.T.U. then, I reckon."

"That? I was doing that for my son-in-law. He aims to get a job in the city forces. Street cleaner. I tells them all he wants is a broom to sleep on. You saw me, did you?"

"Both times. Yes."

"I mean, in uniform. How'd I look?"

"You looked fine. You looked better than any of them. They ought to make you a general, Deacon." (76)

The interchange is one of the most playful in a book almost empty of play; but it is also Faulkner's condemnation of social conditions which have created a group who, like schizophrenics, have made an protective adaptation which is slowly destroying them. It is significant that the adaptation moves outward in greater circles -- Quentin's own thinking is likewise an adaptation -- "I used to think that a Southerner had to be always conscious of niggers. I thought that Northerners would expect him to" (67). He thus allows his very consciousness to be shaped by others' expectations, and suggests a generalization: as Southern blacks are conditioned by Southern whites to behave in a way that is schizoid, so Southern whites are conditioned by Northern whites to behave in a way that is schizoid.

\* \* \*

If Faulkner's had merely studied cases, mined mythic images from Jung, and combined them in aesthetically pleasing and/or dramatically powerful narratives, the accomplishment would be remarkable. I think Faulkner does all that; but he often does more. With Quentin he often employs a single image toward two ends simultaneously -- as schizophrenic symptom and as an enactment of part of the myth. Consider the watch hands. For Quentin the schizophrenic, they are indicators of the time he destroys. In the schizophrenic, unconscious desires may be thought to "pierce" -- Jung reports: "As a dementia praecox patient once said to me during his

recovery: "To-day a thought suddenly thrust itself through me" [*Psychology* 326-27]). But for Quentin the libido hero, the same watch hands are the arrows with which the hero wounds himself. In terms of the myth, Jung says, the act represents a

"phallic act of union with oneself, a sort of self-fertilization (introversion); also a self-violation, a self-murder ... [T]he wounding by one's own arrow means, first of all, the state of introversion. What this signifies we already know -- the libido sinks into its "own depths" ... and finds there below, in the shadows of the unconscious, the substitute for the upper world, which it has abandoned: *the world of memories* ... (329).

Or, consider the jeweler's "blurred rushing eye." For Quentin the schizophrenic it is the representation of an alien, threatening world. Quentin experiences something very like the feeling of the prisoner in the Panopticon during his encounter with the jeweler: "There was a glass in his eye -- a metal tube screwed to his face. I went in." (65). "He held my watch in his palm and he looked up at me with his blurred rushing eye" (65). But Jung offers a second meaning: "*The pupil in the eye is a child. The great god becomes a child again; he enters the mother's womb in order to renew himself*" (*Psychology* 300-1; my italics). And so the statement "I went in" comes to mean not only "into the store," but "into the womb." There is even the suggestion of rebirth: Quentin tells the jeweler that it is his birthday. Later, the eye reappears: "The road curved, mounting away from the water. It crossed the hill, then descended winding, carrying the eye, the mind on ahead a still green tunnel, and the square cupola above the trees and the round eye of the clock but far enough." <sup>148</sup> It is, of course,

---

<sup>148</sup> The passage greatly recalls Faulkner's "The Hill," a short prose piece published in *The Mississippian* of March 10, 1922. It has long been regarded as the first entry into the world of Yoknapatawpha, and a seed of images and themes developed later. Those images may

Bentham's Panopticon. It also the eye of *Un Chien Andalou*, and it anticipates by three years the Surrealist Man Ray's 1932 "Object of Destruction" -- an image of an eye printed on a piece of paper attached to the wand of a metronome.<sup>149</sup> But perhaps its owes most to a sense of paranoia described by Jung:

Unutterable! Veiled! Horrible One!

Thou huntsman behind the clouds!

Struck to the ground by thee,

Thou mocking eye that gazeth at me from the dark!

\_\_\_\_\_ Thus do I lie

Bending, writhing, tortured

With all eternal tortures,

Smitten

---

be Jungian -- or Jung's. As the story begins, a wind, perhaps the primary symbol of spiritual rebirth, seems about to lift the figure -- called the "tieless casual" -- over a hill. Images surrounding the figure imbue him with a sense of imminent rebirth: the hill itself, for instance, suggests pregnancy. Other images suggest an eternal repetition: the figure walks as though "mesmerized by a whimsical God to a futile puppet-like activity upon one spot" (*EPP* 90), and the hamlet visible from the hill's crest sleeps "as it had slept for a century; waiting ... for the end of time" (*EPP* 91). And the figure, possessing "a mind heretofore untroubled by moral quibbles and principles" is "shaken at last by the faint resistless force of spring in a valley at sunset" (*EPP* 92). Finally, he is an Everyman suddenly wakened to and nearly overwhelmed by a cascade of mythic images.

<sup>149</sup> Again, the Compsons are more alike than they might care to admit: Jason apprehends an eye on a sign. Significantly, it appears in Faulkner's text as a hieroglyph, as though existing in an extra-linguistic place.

By thee, cruelest huntsman,  
 Thou unfamiliar God. (*Psychology* 327) <sup>150</sup>

\* \* \*

This chapter has attempted to show that aspects of schizophrenic experience (disjointed narrative, the primacy of the observer, the disappearance of a unified self and a

---

<sup>150</sup> Elsewhere, Jung cites a poem in the same context; it seems a description of Quentin's condition:

Hunted by thyself  
 Thine own prey  
 Pierced through thyself,  
 Now  
 Alone with thee  
 Twofold in thine own knowledge  
 Mid a hundred mirrors  
 False to thyself  
 Mid a hundred memories  
 Uncertain  
 Ailing with each wound  
 Shivering with each frost  
 Caught in thine own snares,  
 Self knower!  
 Self hangman! (329)

will, the de-realization of the shared world, a disengagement from conventions of space and time, hyperreflexivity, and a paradoxical regard for language as being disconnected from reality and simultaneously creating it) have filtered into Faulkner's more experimental work. It has also suggested that the case studies of Jung, the diary of Schreber and perhaps certain case studies of Bleuler, may be buried within there, too. The next chapter will attempt to demonstrate that Faulkner used these not merely as details, but as the structure in which to construct a very strange novel.



## Faulkner's *Light in August* and a "try for the impossible"

---

### 6

*His Puritanism was no mere mask put on from cold calculation, but as essential a part of him as his hedonism. And his combination of the two was without conscious imposture. One might say with much truth that it proceeded from a fundamental split in his psyche, from a sort of social schizophrenia.*

(the Southern white male as described by W. J. Cash  
in *The Mind of the South*, 60).

Faulkner once ranked his contemporaries, and until his death he was bothered by questions asking for elaboration.<sup>151</sup> The explanation which was most lengthy -- and perhaps for that reason most genuine -- was offered during a 1955 interview with Harvey Breit.

"Let's go over the whole thing," Mr. Faulkner said, and I knew then that this was one of those Faulkner days when I didn't need to say anything to him. "I was asked

---

<sup>151</sup> Several are recounted in Meriwether, James B. and Millgate, Michael, eds. *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner (1926-1962)*. New York: Random House, 1968.

the question who were the best five contemporary writers and how did I rate them.

And I said Wolfe, Hemingway, Dos Passos, Caldwell and myself. I rated Wolfe first, myself second. I put Hemingway last. I said we were all failures. All of us had failed to match the dream of perfection and I rated the authors on the basis of their splendid failure to do the impossible. I believed Wolfe tried to do the greatest of the impossible, that he tried to reduce all human experience to literature. And I thought that Wolfe had tried the most. I rated Hemingway last because he stayed within what he knew. He did it fine, but he didn't try for the impossible." (81 LIG).

Clearly, Faulkner's answer demonstrates an anxiety of influence -- a concern he expressed elsewhere:

*(M)an will do the best he can to be physically immortal as well as immortal in spirit, and to try to do more than he knows he can do, is the right aim. To do better than he knows he can do makes something better than it is. All artists, all writers, deal in some truth because there's not very many different phases of it, and it has been said before, and it is not enough just to want to say that as good as it has been said, to say this time just a little better, because you know you can't do it, but you can try. (italics mine; LIG 106)*

One source of such anxiety might have been Joyce's *Ulysses*, a work Faulkner held in the highest regard. It may help to imagine that anxiety specifically: how might a novelist with world-class ambitions respond to a brilliant and epic evocation of a day-long interior monologue? One response might be not another depiction of an interior monologue (Joyce had accomplished that), and not an interior monologue of a schizophrenic ("Carcassonne," and parts of *The Sound and the Fury* and *As I Lay Dying* had accomplished that). Perhaps one kind of "try for the impossible" might be the interior monologue of a schizophrenic sustained for the length

of a novel. Such an undertaking would encounter at least two difficulties. First, such an interior monologue would offer no locus for reality, no place at which the exterior and interior might intersect, no sightlines by which a reader might judge the narrator's claims. Second and perhaps more problematic, a schizophrenic, subjective description of experience loosed from the moorings of a shared reality could be strange and spectacular, but would have difficulty holding a reader's interest for much more than the length of, say, a chapter. This may be one reason Schreber's *Memoirs* are seldom read, "Carcassonne" is a short story and not a novel, and the interior monologue of *The Sound and the Fury's* Benjy Compson depends for its intelligibility upon the perspectives offered by complimentary narratives. As Chapter Four made evident, most Surrealist work was brief; excepting Breton's *Nadja*, no form as long as a novel was even attempted.

Two characteristics of schizophrenia offer ways around these difficulties. A schizophrenic cannot escape total subjectivity any more than can a sane person, but unlike the sane person, the paranoid schizophrenic is occasionally provided the *illusion* of escape: in moments of extreme self-consciousness he may imagine that he sees himself. Consequently, a rendering of a schizophrenic interior monologue might at moments describe the character from without, thus providing the reader a second (if equally inaccurate) view of that character, and so allowing him to mediate between both views. The second problem presents greater difficulties. The concerns of a schizophrenic interior world may be compelling and emotionally charged to their creator, but they are likely to bewilder and tire a reader. The schizophrenic experience is almost by definition too hermetic to offer sustained interest, any resulting narrative far too recursive to trace a plot. But the schizophrenic experience -- as is the case with Frank Miller and to a less obvious degree, with Schreber -- may involve a struggle to regain sanity. And the story of this struggle could use traditional narrative devices of conflict, rising action, climax and denouement; it could even offer a narrative which, when viewed from a certain distance and certain perspective, might be called linear.

\* \* \*

Since its 1932 publication, *Light in August* has come to be recognized as one of Faulkner's four or five greatest works, yet it has also come to be seen as one of the most problematic. Many readers have asked why the flashbacks occur when they do, why parallels should exist between Christmas and Hightower, why Joe Christmas and Lena Grove never meet, why Percy Grimm and Gavin Stevens are given sudden and lengthy introductions in the last quarter of the book, why Hightower's history is revealed as late as it is, and why a furniture dealer narrates the last chapter. The argument for a casual or unconventional structure (in various forms from Richard Chase, Michael Millgate and Irving Howe) seems only momentarily persuasive. Many recent approaches to the novel have narrowed this focus considerably, and dealt with particular characters or themes. These more modest arguments, tacitly accepting the theory of a casual (or at least unconventional) form, seem to me epicycles added to a theory essentially flawed.

This chapter will argue that the work is an ambitious and unprecedented narrative experiment: an attempt to portray the experience of schizophrenia from within for the length of a novel. *Light in August's* peculiarities may be understood as the logical consequences of two conditions: 1) the narrative represents the interior monologue of a paranoid schizophrenic as it undergoes a kind of spontaneous and self-induced therapy, and 2) Faulkner's portrayal of the disease is informed by Freud and Janet, but drawn mostly along lines suggested by Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious* and "Psychology of Dementia Praecox," and Bleuler's *Textbook of Psychiatry*.

In "Psychology of Dementia Praecox" Jung describes several symptoms of schizophrenia: apparent emotional detachment in situations which should arouse emotion,

delusions of machinations working against oneself, and a predilection for inventing neologisms. He describes *paranoid* schizophrenia as a form which manifests the complexes of persecution and grandeur in hallucinations, and in which the idea of being a persecuted victim can become so powerful that it assumes a separate personality -- a symbolic self.

Bleuler's definition is similar:

"Where delusions and hallucinations -- the two symptoms usually go together in schizophrenia -- are in the foreground, one speaks of the paranoid type or *dementia paranoides*. The paranoid type can develop after any melancholic, manic, catatonic acute initial onset . . . or can begin immediately as such. In the latter case the entire course is as a rule chronic throughout. During a stage of discomfort in which ideas of reference gradually become more definite, there develops in the course of years a complicated pile of delusions, which are only rarely connected by the general tendency of persecution or (much more rarely) of grandeur or of hypochondria. However, the beginning may also manifest itself by finished primordial delusions that seem to come from a clear sky, which then increase and are only later followed by distinct ideas of reference and hallucinations. Many of the patients keep out of asylums for a relatively long time, others alternate between freedom and commitment, and others again lose external control so early and so severely that they have to remain in asylums the greater part of their lives. Especially in the last, single or even many catatonic symptoms very easily complicate the picture (413-14).

The etiology for the disease which Jung presents in *Psychology of the Unconscious* is a deviation from normal development. In adolescence a healthy personality outgrows and so escapes its longing for the mother, but any number of circumstances may inhibit or prevent such maturation. In such cases the unconscious compensates, and seeks means to a symbolic

impregnation and rebirth which the conscious mind neither shares nor recognizes. This is a schizophrenic complex. In some cases the unconscious desire may be so powerful that it forms a separate personality which may appear as the libido figure in a dream or series of dreams which compose a libido myth. Schizophrenia may be cured if the materials of the libido myth are made conscious, and understood. Moreover, the materials can enter conscious thought if the myth they compose is allowed to reach its end -- that is, if its *libido hero* is reborn through the mother. For this reason, Jung believes, such imaginings should be encouraged; and they may be encouraged by theater -- an experience which offers the schizophrenic a set of figures on which to project the pieces of the myth and so begin to examine them.

*Light in August's* character Gail Hightower demonstrates the symptoms of paranoid schizophrenia, and his history may explain their origin. He harbors an unresolved obsession with the mother, who was to him unreal, little more than an emaciated face. Consequently, he sought and found a surrogate in Cinthy, the family's slave: she became "his mother too" (444). Cinthy tells Hightower the story of his grandfather's raid -- and it obsesses him for reasons he can hope to explain only by telling it again:

"Because this. This is beautiful. Listen. Try to see it. Here is that fine shape of eternal youth and virginal desire which makes heroes. That makes the doings of heroes border so close upon the unbelievable that it is no wonder that their doings must emerge now and then like gunflashes in the smoke, and that their very physical passing becomes rumor with a thousand faces before breath is out of them, lest paradoxical truth outrage itself. Now this is what Cinthy told me. And I believe. I know. It's too fine to doubt. It's too fine, too simple, ever to have been invented by white thinking. A Negro might have invented it. And if Cinthy did, I still believe. Because even fact cannot stand with it. I dont know whether grandfather's squadron were lost or not. I dont think so. I think that they did it deliberately, as boys who had set fire to an

enemy's barn, without taking so much as a shingle or a door hasp, might pause in flight to steal a few apples from a neighbor, a friend. Mind you, they were hungry. They had been hungry for three years. Perhaps they were used to that. Anyway, they had just set fire to tons of food and clothing and tobacco and liquors, taking nothing though there had not been issued an order against looting, and they turn now, with all that for background, backdrop: the consternation, the conflagration; the sky itself must have been on fire. You can see it, hear it: the shouts, the shots, the shouting of triumph and terror, the drumming hooves, the trees uprearing against that red glare as though fixed too in terror, the sharp gables of houses like the jagged edge of the exploding and ultimate earth. Now it is a close place: you can feel, hear in the darkness horses pulled short up, plunging; clashes of arms; whispers overloud, hard breathing, the voices still triumphant; behind them the rest of the troops galloping past toward the rallying bugles. That you must hear, feel: then you see. You see before the crash, in the abrupt red glare the horses with wide eyes and nostrils in tossing heads, sweatstained; the gleam of metal, the white gaunt faces of living scarecrows who have not eaten all they wanted at one time since they could remember; perhaps some of them had already dismounted, perhaps one or two had already entered the henhouse. All this you see before the crash of the shotgun comes: then blackness again. It was just the one shot. 'And of course he would be right in de way of hit, 'Cinthy said. 'Stealin' chickens. A man growed, wid a married son, gone to war whar his business was killin' Yankees, killed in somebody else's henhouse wid a han'ful of feathers.' Stealing chickens." His voice was high, childlike, exalted. Already his wife was clutching his arm: *Shhhhhhhh!* *Shhhhhhhhhh! People are looking at you!* But he did not seem to hear her at all. His thin, sick face, his eyes, seemed to exude a kind of glow. "That was it. They didn't even know who fired the shot. They never did know. They didn't try to find out. It may have been a woman, likely enough the wife of a Confederate soldier. I like to think so. It's fine so. Any soldier can be killed by the enemy in the heat of battle, by a weapon

approved by the arbiters and rulemakers of warfare. Or by a woman in a bedroom. But not with a shotgun, a fowling piece, in a henhouse. (425)

Hightower has evolved a ritual for his imaginings -- allowing them and waiting for them only at "that instant when all light has failed out of the sky and it would be night save for that faint light which daygranaried leaf and grass blade reluctant suspire, making still a little light on earth though night itself has come. *Now, soon*, he thinks; *soon, now*" (55). <sup>152</sup>

It obsesses him, among other reasons, because it is a libido myth. It has the elements of a search for rebirth -- a man on a horse, at night and against a backdrop of fire, being mortally threatened by a woman. <sup>153</sup> (Significantly, this last part is Hightower's admitted

---

<sup>152</sup> The practice makes literal what Bleuler calls the "twilight state":

"[S]chizophrenics retreat into a *twilight state*; the unpleasant reality is split off and exists for them only secondarily; in its place another world, frequently with frank wish gratification, is imagined. The patient marries her lover, he visits her every night, she becomes pregnant and bears a child. But not nearly all of these patients are happy. They cannot flee entirely from reality and, consequently, come into conflict with it outwardly. Shutting off succeeds most intensively, and the imagined happiness is therefore least disturbed in the religious ecstasies ... The behavior of those in the twilight state varies. Some live their dream in bed or even under the covers. Others stalk about like ghosts in an unintelligent manner, as they have a false conception of the environment and hence get into conflicts" (412). Hightower's obsession is not a religious ecstasy *per se*, but it bears a similar intensity; it is difficult to guess as to Hightower's activities in the twilight state -- perhaps he stays at the window.

<sup>153</sup> Although we are stretching the metaphor to look further, it is interesting to consider: the man is hunting chickens, chickens produce eggs, and eggs suggest what Jung calls the "maternal egg" (*Psychology* 468).



addition -- already his unconscious is reshaping the story to become more like the myth. Perhaps Hightower regards a woman-caused death as unlike that of "any soldier," because it partakes of the myth.) Because Cinthy was the source of Hightower's knowledge of his grandfather's raid, the boy mixed sexual longings with the story: "They never tired: the child with rapt, wide half dread and half delight, and the old woman with musing and savage sorrow and pride. But this to the child was just peaceful shuddering of delight" (452). And so the aura surrounding Cinthy -- seductive, sexual and ultimately sinful -- came to surround the raid. And when Hightower represses thoughts of Cinthy, he retains the raid as a conscious obsession, strongly tainted with a sense of sin.

Hightower creates an elaborate response to the guilt surrounding that obsession. He disguises and civilizes his desire rather ingeniously, by blending it with religion.<sup>154</sup> Byron Bunch observes, "It was as if he couldn't get religion and that galloping cavalry and his dead grandfather shot from the galloping horse untangled from each other" (56). Byron does not know that the "entanglement" is deliberate.

The creation of an inviolable space, a place in which one cannot be disturbed, is a common schizophrenic wish. Jung quotes Janet: "These persons experience in advance painful feelings in the very thought that it is necessary for them to act; they fear action above all things. Their dream, as they all say, is of a life where there will be nothing more to do."<sup>155</sup> Hightower has precisely this desire:

---

<sup>154</sup> Hightower had been trying to be called to Jefferson "since he was four years old" (456). Jung writes a child who learns to displace sexual and/or incestuous urges does so between the ages of three and four (*Psychology*, )

<sup>155</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 84. It is represented in *Light in August* by the urn.

He believed with calm joy that if ever there was shelter, it would be in the Church; that if ever truth could walk naked and without shame and fear, it would be in the seminary. When he believed that he had heard the call it seemed to him that he could see his future, his life, intact and on all sides complete and inviolable (453).

But Hightower's wife suggests that the church will not shelter him, telling him "Why, I wouldn't let you go myself if I were them and you gave me that as your reason" (455).

And so the minister realizes that the church can hide his obsession, and indeed can provide him a life without obligation, but that it can never offer him rebirth. Later, he remembers the thing which can: "Woman (not the seminary, as he had once believed): the Passive and Anonymous whom God had created not to be alone with the recipient and receptacle of the seed of his body but of his spirit too" (441-42). Perhaps he never allowed his wife to receive that seed because she was not Cinthy, or anything like Cinthy. Whatever the case, Hightower's need to preserve himself for the mother of mythic rebirth denies him offspring, and worse: if his wife was killed seeking sexual relations elsewhere, then his need -- at least indirectly -- caused her death. He admits as much in Chapter Twenty: "Perhaps in the moment when I revealed to her not only the depth of my hunger but the fact that never and never would she have any part in the assuaging of it; perhaps at that moment I became her seducer and her murderer, author and instrument of her shame and death" (462).

Quite pathologically, the minister turns the tragedy and its consequences to his advantage, a means to nurture his complexes of grandeur and persecution. He is denied his ministry, but he replaces it with a better disguise -- martyrdom. He made it seem "that he resigned his pulpit for a martyr's reasons, when at the very instant there was within him a leaping and triumphant surge of denial behind a face which had betrayed him, believing itself safe behind the lifted hymnbook" (463). A photograph taken from the side reveals the face:

[H]is lips were drawn back as though he were smiling. But his teeth were tight together and his face looked like the face of Satan in the old prints" (63). The behavior is characteristically schizophrenic: "Among the affective disturbances compulsive laughter is especially frequent; it rarely has the character of the hysterical laughing fit, but that of the soulless mimic utterance behind which no feeling is noticeable ... Sometimes the patients feel only the movements of the facile muscles ('the drawn laughter')." <sup>156</sup> Following this episode Hightower continues to display the emotional detachment (or "affective disturbance") characteristic of schizophrenia: he does not mourn his wife's death.

Each time the schizophrenic's guilt increases, he must compensate by intensifying his complexes. There is reason to suspect that Hightower must make a third such compensation. When the town believes that Hightower tried to impregnate his black housekeeper, he responded by "allowing himself to be persecuted, to be dragged from his bed at night and carried into the woods and beaten with sticks, he all the while bearing in the town's sight and hearing, without shame, with that patient and voluptuous ego of the martyr . . . until, inside his house again and the door locked, he lifted the mask with voluptuous and triumphant glee" (463-64). This behavior is incriminating. Indeed, such an act would have been an attempt realize his hidden desire. It is reasonable to suggest that the minister represses his memory of the act with its consequent guilt. And as with most schizophrenics, the repressed thoughts poison his whole psyche, making him think himself inferior. And so Hightower compensates again, this time by

---

<sup>156</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry* 409. Sass discusses the "famous empty smile" as indication of schizophrenic distancing (112), citing Bleuler's original article and the work of H.C. Rumke. Haslam alludes to a torture described by Matthews: "*Laugh-making* consists in forcing the magnetic fluid, rarified and subtilized, on the vitals, [vital touching] so that the muscles of the face become screwed into a laugh or grin" (35).

welcoming actual torture. <sup>157</sup>

Hightower's sense of grandeur is occasionally troubled by an imagined deflating voice. In Chapter Seventeen, for instance, he seems to enter into a dialogue with such a voice: "I showed them! he thinks. "Life comes to the old man yet ... But this is vanity and empty pride. Yet the slow and fading glow disregards it, impervious to reprimand. He thinks, 'What if I do? What if I do feel it? triumph and pride?'" (382-83). In this case, the voice seems to fit Jung's conception -- a "healthy ego-remnant."

The minister's unconscious seems particularly ingenious in its attempts at a symbolic rebirth: it moves him to find a godchild. The minister's quest is twice failed -- once as an attempt at midwifery (68), and again in an attempt to support, or partially support, an "institution for delinquent girls" (in all probability a home for unwed mothers). As the novel begins, his need is still unsated, still profound: "the bitterest thing which he believed that he had ever faced -- *more bitter even than the bereavement and the shame* -- was the letter which he wrote them to say that from now on he could send them but half the sum which he had previously sent" (my italics; 53).

To suggest that Hightower is paranoid schizophrenic is fairly simple -- requiring only the identification of symptoms. To suggest that the novel is his interior monologue is more difficult. My reading is best presented as a sequenced set of smaller arguments: 1) the novel's "Christmas sections" may represent Hightower's hallucinations, 2) the speech and thoughts

---

<sup>157</sup> A patient of Laing's explains the response: "It is wonderful to be beaten up or killed because no one ever does that to you unless they really care and can be made very upset. A person kills because he really wants the other to be resurrected, not just lie dead" (Laing 181).

attributed to all characters are made by Hightower, 3) Hightower's unconscious creates a libido myth which works to effect a kind of cure, and 4) the entire novel traces the responses of Hightower's pathological complexes (grandeur, persecution and "correcting voice") to extrasomatic events.

## I.

In *Psychology of the Unconscious* Jung discusses Frank Miller's appropriation of a symbolic self -- a character she sees in a play. She so identifies with the character that when its actor feigns a wound, she feels pain (42-3). Hightower seems similarly disturbed by news of Christmas's plight; his "shrinking and forboding" (76) suggest more than empathy -- it suggests identification.<sup>158</sup> Jung describes the light stages of hallucinating as characterized by "stiffening," and observed that Miller in this state saw herself as an "Egyptian statue."<sup>159</sup> In Chapter Four Hightower seems to enter the same state: he appears like "an eastern idol" (83). Immediately following both episodes in which Hightower learns of Christmas (and demonstrates evident identification) appears a scene *describing* Christmas. In Chapter Four, Byron tells the minister that Christmas and Burch live in a cabin near the Burden house. The beginning of Chapter Five finds them there. In Chapter Three a grocer tells Hightower that a posse has nearly captured Christmas. Chapter Fourteen describes the scene. (And once, Hightower's concern is with Byron: in Chapter Seventeen, Hightower learns that Byron has left Jefferson, and Chapter Eighteen recounts his departure directly).

*Light in August's* "Christmas sections" -- those passages which describe Christmas directly -- share two peculiar qualities: they compose a libido myth both in particulars and overall form, and they parallel events in Hightower's life. Both qualities may be explained if we posit that the Christmas sections represent Hightower's hallucinations. More specifically, that as Jung's patient appropriated a character in a play as a symbolic self and as a libido figure, so Hightower's unconscious uses what he learns of Christmas in the same opposing

---

<sup>158</sup> Hightower sees the world beyond his study window as "a stage" (441).

<sup>159</sup> *Psychology*, 46.

roles: a representative self upon which to project his suffering, and the major instrument in a kind of self-induced and spontaneous therapy. The Christmas sections are hallucinations whose double provenance is also their essential conflict; they are produced at once by a mind's disorder, and by its attempts to end that disorder.

## II.

That Hightower has a history of behavior which seems schizoid if not schizophrenic, that he empathizes strongly with Christmas, and that the Christmas sections compose a libido myth are, taken together, substantial support for a case that the Christmas sections are Hightower's hallucinations. But objections arise immediately. The narrative voice of the Christmas sections seems little different from the narrative voice outside them. Further, Christmas himself appears in other parts of the book. The Christmas sections, in other words, have no clear boundaries. I would suggest that there are none, that the narrative outside those passages is equally representative of Hightower's thoughts.

The boundaries of the Christmas sections -- such as they are -- support this assertion. The beginning of the longest Christmas section (Chapters Five through Twelve) distinctly echoes Frank Miller's description of the subjective experience of a hallucination's beginning.<sup>160</sup> She lays down after an evening of "care and anxiety." In Chapter Five, Christmas tries to sleep after a violent exchange with Lucas Burch, an exchange presumably producing anxiety. Miller becomes restless and senses that "something [is] about to happen." Christmas -- although "in bed for two hours" (95), is unable to sleep, and thinks "Something is going to happen to me" (97). Miller sees "sparks and shining spirals," and Christmas watches a tossed

---

<sup>160</sup> Jung's account of Miller's description -- and the source of each of the quotes here -- are from *Psychology of the Unconscious* 191-92.

cigarette "twinkle end over end through the door" (98). Miller imagines she hears a prayer, and Christmas seems to see something like a prayer: "a printed sentence, fullborn and already dead *God loves me too*" (98).

Still, the narrative voice outside the Christmas sections seems little different from the voice within them. The situation asks us to consider a narrative which has seldom been subject to criticism, but which presents enormously troubling problems. The voice is occasionally offers aphorisms like "Man knows so little about his fellows" (43). More often it is openly prejudiced, evincing unqualified opinions, many of which seem trivial, and all of which are so unrelated to their context as to disturb the flow of the narrative. Either we are to take these observations as auctorial (that is, as Faulkner's own) -- and so posit a carelessness in the work's composition belied by all readings and manuscript evidence;<sup>161</sup> or we must assume a situation far more likely: the narrator is as much and as real a character as any in the work, interposing himself or herself between reader and story. Indeed, the narrator seems all too human: that these statements appear without justification, and without evident relation to their context, suggests they are eruptions of deep-seated anxieties.

In fact, three of the narrator's least subtle expressions seem to stem from anxieties which may be attributed to Hightower the character. First, there is the narrator's most protracted expression of prejudice -- a twelve-line diatribe concerning gossips ironically called "good women" (60-1) -- which defends Hightower against a peculiarly specific foe. And that foe is mentioned again only once in a cryptic rhetorical question from Hightower the character: "But what woman, good or bad, has ever suffered from any brute as men have suffered from good women?" (229). Second, there is a description of a "negro nursemaid"

---

<sup>161</sup> Fadiman and Pitavy's studies of the manuscripts and typescript make clear that Faulkner's crafting was conscientious and meticulous.



spelling aloud the letters on Hightower's sign "with that vacuous idiocy of her idle and illiterate kind" (53); if this is racism, it is of a particular and unusual sort: Hightower, I think, disdains the nursemaid first, because she cannot read his sign and so cannot appreciate its evocation of Christmas and its association of Hightower with Christ, and second, because as a nursemaid she parodies the mother for which he longs. Finally, there is the instance in Chapter Four, when Lena says she would "like to help" prepare her cot; the narrator remarks "even Byron could see that she would not" (80), implying an obtuseness or insensitivity nowhere borne out by Byron's actions. The suggestion is that Byron is unsuited to become Lena's companion -- a contention Hightower (as will become clear) the character goes to great lengths to support.

Throughout the narrative there appear subtler ties to Hightower. Much of the novel's abundant religious imagery has no obvious relation to its context: Byron and Lena sitting as though in "Sunday clothes" on a "Sabbath afternoon" (49), Christmas described as "a monk" (140), and Percy Grimm associated with angels (437) and a priest (439). These too seem eruptions of concerns or anxieties -- in this case with formal religion. And as becomes evident in Chapter Twenty's revelations, Hightower has had many such misgivings. The narrative also alludes to Hightower's other interests. For instance, the narrator describes Christmas as emerging from the darkness "like a kodak print" (99-100); Hightower develops photographs.

162

At at least one point this narrative voice may reveal itself. Chapter Two begins "Byron Bunch knows this," and later amends "This is not what Byron knows now. This is just

---

162 Strangely, schizophrenics may feel that they create the images they imagine; in other words, they may on occasion admit themselves as the source of their hallucinations. Perhaps Hightower's imagining Christmas appearing as though from as a Kodak print is such an admission.

what he knew then" (31). The dubious utility and insistent tone of these statements makes them backfire: our attention is drawn away from their ostensible subject, toward their speaker. And another passage in the same chapter identifies that speaker: "there is but one man in town who could speak with any certainty about Bunch . . . This man's name is Hightower" (43).

As we might expect, the narrator displays what seem schizophrenic symptoms. He has a propensity for neologisms -- among them "pinkwomansmelling," "patinasmooth," and "limpeared." (Although such combined words appear in most of Faulkner, here in particular they may be said to have a source within the novel's world.) He has delusions of reference -- specifically, ideas of machinations. The description of Christmas' chase refers to Percy Grimm as a "pawn" being moved by "The Player."<sup>163</sup> When Mrs. Hines threatens to associate the minister with Christmas, the narrator describes her as "puppetlike," and her voice "as though

---

<sup>163</sup> Adler writes that a paranoiac commonly perceives an imagined enemy as "a figure in a chess game" (259). Near the conclusion of *Flags in the Dust* Faulkner had evoked a similar image, towards evidently different ends:

The music went on in the dusk; the dusk was peopled with ghosts of glamorous and old disastrous things. And if they were just glamorous enough, there would be a Sartoris in them, and then they were sure to be disastrous. Pawns. But the Player and the game He plays -- who knows? He must have a name for his pawns, though, but perhaps Sartoris is the name of the game itself -- a game outmoded and played with pawns shaped too late and to an old dead pattern, and of which the Player Himself is a little wearied (432-33).

it belonged to the ventriloquist in the next room" (359).<sup>164</sup> Similarly, Byron is reported to perceive Hightower's beating as something like "a lot of people performing a play" (67).

This narrator, possessed of blind spots, human to a fault, seems occasionally omniscient: his description moves easily from externals to internals -- characters' thoughts and emotions. Shifts in voice are of course common in Faulkner, but they are everywhere prefaced by some sort of indicator: the "Grandfather said" which begins *The Reivers*, the chapter headings in *As I Lay Dying* and *The Sound and the Fury*. *Light in August* seems not only to eschew such indicators; it seems actually to obscure the places narrative transitions would naturally occur. Indeed, this narrator takes little care to distinguish his own observations from those he claims are others', and his narration blends so easily into characters' speech or thought that in many instances their certain differentiation is impossible. The first description of Christmas, for instance, is a single course of reasoning begun by the narrator -- but concluded by characters:

He did not look like a professional hobo in his professional rags, but there was something definitely rootless about him, as though no town nor city was his, no street, no walls, no square of earth his home. And that he carried his knowledge with him always as though it were a banner, with a quality ruthless, lonely, and almost proud. "As if," as the men said later, " he was just down on his luck for a time, and that he didn't intend to stay down on it and didn't give a damn much how he rose up." (27)

(Pitavy's study of changes from manuscript to typescript reveals that here and elsewhere, the blurring of distinctions between narrator and character's thoughts and speeches was deliberate.

---

<sup>164</sup> Schreber: "I thought I was faced not by real people but by miraculously created puppets" (43 n).

<sup>165</sup>) And if in places the interface between narrator and character voices seems strangely compressed, at others it is (as strangely) attenuated: characters' thoughts echo the narrator, and add little, if any, new information:

Though during the last seven days he has had no paved street, yet he has travelled further than in all the thirty years before. And yet he is still inside the circle. "And yet I have been further in those seven days than in all the thirty years," he thinks (321).

The construction suggests unrevised -- and so unconscious -- thought. It also may suggest a quality not peculiar to schizophrenia, but certainly exaggerated by it: Jung terms the schizophrenic thought process "reiterative" or "perseverating." <sup>166</sup>

All this suggests that the thoughts the narrator offers as others' are his own inventions or projections. If such is the case, can we be expected to distinguish the imagined from the real? In brief, yes: Hightower's schizophrenia is not autistic, and his thoughts are to a great degree moved by actual events. Jung explains: "This phantastical activity of the ancient mind created artistically *par excellence*. The object of the interest does not seem to have been to grasp hold of the "how" of the real world as objectively and exactly as possible, but to aesthetically adapt subjective phantasies and expectations" (*Psychology* 25). At another point, Jung quotes Freud: "One cannot assert that the paranoiac has completely withdrawn his interest from the outer world, nor withdrawn into the heights of repression, as one sometimes sees in certain other forms of hallucinatory psychoses. He takes notice of the outer world, he

---

<sup>165</sup> Pitavy, (125-26).

<sup>166</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 125

takes account of its changes, he is stirred to explanations by their influence." <sup>167</sup> In the schizophrenic mind, inner and outer experiences are confused and undifferentiated.

All strong wishes furnish themes for dreams, and the dreams represent them as fulfilled, expressing them not in concepts taken from reality but in vague dreamlike metaphors. The wish-fulfilling dreams appear side by side with associations from the waking state, the complexes come to light and, the inhibiting power of the ego-complex having been destroyed by the disease, they now go on weaving their dreams on the surface, just as they used to do under normal conditions in the depths of the unconscious. <sup>168</sup>

The "associations from the waking state" are provided through conversations with Byron. I believe that the minister appears in scenes of those conversations courtesy of an acute self-consciousness particular to schizophrenics, <sup>169</sup> and that such scenes, in part precisely *because* they flatter neither the minister nor his delusion, may be read as accurate or nearly accurate representations of reality. Although the boundary between the real and the imagined is sometimes hazy, I think we can be comfortably certain that scenes Hightower invents betray their origin not only by his absence from them, but by the intrusion of mythic images, or a complex typically schizophrenic. <sup>170</sup>

---

<sup>167</sup> *Psychology* 140-41.

<sup>168</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 124.

<sup>169</sup> *Psychology* 361-62. Reich (434-40) offers a clearer description of the same experience.

<sup>170</sup> Freud's discussion of interpretation, although well-known, seems worth repeating here:

Because these symptoms alternately respond to and propel the plot, they -- like the particulars of the hallucinations which compose the Christmas sections -- are best understood within the context of that plot. My argument here becomes necessarily inductive. It will be persuasive only in its entirety, and only if the reader will entertain -- at least provisionally -- the possibility that the novel represents Hightower's interior monologue. This awareness of the patterns of Hightower's thought offers more than an insight into his character; it allows us to do something no reader has accomplished: to explain the sequence of the novel's scenes.

### III.

Chapter One describes a pregnant woman wearing a "shapeless garment of faded blue" (7), carrying a palm-leaf fan (7), and possessed of a quality "inwardlighted" (15). She eats sardines and crackers -- Yoknapatawpha renderings of votive food. As a mother without sin -- as the Virgin -- she seems so perfect a solution to Hightower's dilemma that he might be imagining her. I suspect that he is: schizophrenic hallucinations, like the dreams of healthier minds, often involve wish-fulfillment. Jung:

[T]he pathogenic complex appears autonomously and works itself out ... usually

---

In its implications the distortion of a text resembles a murder: the difficulty is not in perpetrating the deed, but in getting rid of its traces ... Accordingly, in many instances of textual distortion, we may nevertheless count upon finding what has been suppressed and disavowed, hidden away somewhere else, though changed and torn from its context (Freud, "Moses and Monotheism," 43).

This text in particular *does* attempt to hide the evidence for a murder.

in the form of wish-fulfillment ... We do not have to look far in order to find something similar in the acute phases of dementia praecox. Every psychiatrist is familiar with the deliria of unmarried women, who act out betrothals, marriages, coitus, pregnancies, and births. <sup>171</sup>

Hightower's deliria too, represents a wish-fulfillment involving pregnancy, a birth, and -- as we will see, metaphoric and inferred betrothal. Chapter One seems Hightower's embellishment of information communicated to him by Byron, of a woman traveling alone. Lena Grove is for Hightower what Laing calls an *imago* -- the phantom of a schizophrenic fantasy. <sup>172</sup>

Regina Fadiman's study of the manuscript suggests that two earlier drafts began with Hightower sitting at the window -- the scene which in the printed version begins Chapter

---

<sup>171</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 81. See also *Psychology* 31.

<sup>172</sup> In *Psychology of the Unconscious*, Jung writes that the myth of the Virgin has persisted because it assures the unconscious of the possibility of immaculate birth -- and rebirth. Several readers have noted that descriptions of Lena frame the novel. I would suggest that this frame reflects the rather mythic sense in which Lena as mythic mother embraces Christmas/Hightower. Jung:

This highest degree of inactivity and freedom from desire, symbolized by *the being closed within itself*, signifies divine blessedness. The only human prototype of this conception is the child in the mother's womb, or rather more, the adult man in the continuous embrace of the mother, from whom he originates . . ." <sup>172</sup>

Three, or perhaps the scene which begins Chapter Twenty.<sup>173</sup> I would suggest that this may have been a portrayal of schizophrenia beginning in conscious thought and moving to dreaming thought. Such a portrayal would have been far more accessible to a reader, and one the author was likely to hit upon first. The narrative as it exists is superior because it forces the reader to take the schizophrenia on its own terms; because objective and subjective are equally real to the schizophrenic, beginning the book with a fantasy counters the reader's natural inclination to regard the latter as less valid.<sup>174</sup> (Faulkner's ordering of the narrative voices in *The Sound*

<sup>173</sup> See Faulkner's *"Light in August": A Description and Interpretation of the Revisions* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1975).

<sup>174</sup> During the preparation of this manuscript several well-meaning family members have asked me why -- if *Light in August* represents an internal monologue -- it is not introduced as such, and why Faulkner never referred to it as such. To the first I can only answer that *Ulysses* contains no preface explaining itself as internal monologue -- neither do "Carcassonne," *As I Lay Dying* or *The Sound and the Fury*. To the second, the answer is simply that I don't know -- but I can make guesses. First, I think we should perhaps take Faulkner at his word when he says -- in numerous interviews -- that his work must stand on its own. A response to Harvey Breit's question about *A Fable* is typical:

"I did the best I could, and if there's something more I could say, I'd have said it in the book. There's nothing I could add to it. I think if I would do it over, maybe I would do it better, but I always think that with everything I've done, as any artist thinks. The work never matches the dream of perfection the artist had to start with."

A similar but more vehement sentiment is evident in Faulkner's regret at having written the appendix to *The Sound and the Fury*: "I had forgotten what smug false sentimental windy shit it was. I will return the money for it, I would be willing to return double the amount



and the *Fury* achieves a similar end -- that is, beginning with the narrative of an idiot and concluding with the evidently objective narrator of "April Eighth," counters our inclination to privilege the latter.)<sup>175</sup> An earlier version of *Light in August* was entitled *Dark House* -- this too, may have been a reference not only to Hightower's house (or Joanna Burden's house), but to a representation of the womb.<sup>176</sup>

---

for the chance of getting it out of danger and destroyed" (Blotner vol 1 475). Years later, when Linscott asked for an introduction to *As I Lay Dying*, Faulkner replied: "To me, the book is its own prologue epilogue introduction preface argument and all" (Blotner vol 1 476).

<sup>175</sup> In this context, a certain passage from *Psychology of the Unconscious* may have inspired the original beginning: "A dream of a 'schizophrenic' is most significant; he is sitting in a dark room, which has only a single small window, through which he can see the sky" (*Psychology* 403).

<sup>176</sup> There has been much speculation on the meaning of this title; to my knowledge, no one has suggested that it might arise from a passage from Hightower's beloved Tennyson -- which seems an especially telling description of the minister's existence.

Dark house, by which once more I stand  
 Here in the long unlovely street,  
 Doors, where my heart was used to beat  
 So quickly, waiting for a hand,

A hand that can be clapsed no more --  
 Behold me, for I cannot sleep,  
 And like a guilty thing I creep  
 At earliest morning to the door.

Chapter Two seems to continue the minister's dream, and it too appears to be shaped by the minister's desires. The chapter begins "Byron Bunch knows this," and moves to describe precisely what Hightower would like Byron to know. The minister imagines Christmas as a representative of himself, <sup>177</sup> and hopes that Christmas will become Lena's husband and her child's step-father. And so the thoughts which Chapter Two attribute to Byron compare Christmas to Lucas Burch (the child's natural father) and find Christmas superior. Further, they see Christmas as the Jungian *logos*: Hightower imagines Byron thinking that "a man's name . . . can somehow be the augur of what he will do" (29), and that "in a small town . . . people can invent [evil] in other people's names" (65-66). The implications are that because Christmas' name recalls Christ, so must the man himself, and to invent evil in his name would be something like sacrilege. <sup>178</sup>

That the subject of Chapter Three is Hightower suggests that some part of him perceives a threat to his fantasy, and begins to arouse his paranoia. His first thoughts in this chapter move to protect his reputation, and in fact concern a means of guarding it -- the sign

---

*In Memoriam A.H.H. 7*

<sup>177</sup> The fugitive seems an unlikely focus for the sympathies of anyone, but Jung reported similar feelings in schizophrenic patients (*Psychology* 45).

<sup>178</sup> Jung: "The act of naming is, like baptism, something exceedingly important for the creation of a personality, because, since olden times, a magic power has been attributed to the name, with which, for example, the spirit of the dead can be conjured. To know the name of any one means, in mythology, to have power over that one. As a well-known example I mention the fairy tale of "Rumpelstilzchen." In an Egyptian myth, Isis robs the Sun god Re permanently of his power by compelling him to tell her his real name. *Psychology of the Unconscious* 208.

before his house. It is "carpentered neatly by himself and by himself lettered, with bits of broken glass contrived cunningly into the paint, so that at night, when the corner street lamp shone upon it, the letters glittered with an effect as of Christmas" (53). The effect is of course an attempt to evoke the Savior. But the description immediately follows Hightower's disappointment at being unable to support the "institution for delinquent girls" -- and so suggests that it is a substitute: "So he continued to send them half the revenue which in its entirety would little more than have kept him. 'Luckily there are things which I can do,' he said at the time. Hence the sign ..." It is also the minister's attempt to create from wood -- a substance the myth associates with the hero -- the *logos*. Inasmuch as the hero's father is a woodcarver, and the hero himself is a woodcarver, the sign is a symbolic self-birth.<sup>179</sup> Its symbolic power is further underscored by its advertisement for "Christmas cards," a suggestion not only of Hightower's Christlikeness, but of Christ as libido figure. Is Hightower conscious of such associations? Probably not: Bleuler writes "the *symbol* ... plays an important part in dementia praecox, not in its ordinary application but in such a way that it takes the place of the original idea without the patients noticing it."<sup>180</sup>

The whole of Chapter Three is less a history of Hightower as it is a history of what he perceives to be his reputation, and of the gossip which he believes surrounds him. Although Hightower's thoughts try to defend his reputation, and to diminish the gossip's validity, they work to another, quite different end. Jung writes that the gossip the schizophrenic imagines

---

<sup>179</sup> The sign is, in short, a highly-wrought objet d'art; in that it advertises "art lessons," it is even *about* art. Jung suggests that artistic creation substitutes for procreation: "Thus we discover the first instincts of art in animals used in the service of the impulse of creation, and limited to the breeding season" (? 145)

<sup>180</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry*, 375)

describes the very truth he avoids, and so may actually serve to identify that truth.<sup>181</sup>

Indeed, the gossip Hightower imagines in Chapter Three speaks of an act to which he will not admit: "About how he had made his wife go bad and commit suicide because he was not a natural husband, a natural man, and that the negro woman was the reason" (65). The suggestion, of course, is that Hightower regarded the maid as he regarded Cinthy -- as the mother of rebirth, the vessel prepared for his spirit -- or his semen.<sup>182</sup>

If a threat to a schizophrenic's dream becomes severe enough, it may do more than merely change the course of his dreaming; it may rouse him from it. And his paranoia may increase to a self-consciousness so intense that he imagines he sees himself.<sup>183</sup> The narrative offers its first image of Hightower at the beginning of Chapter Four -- and the image evinces the characteristic schizophrenic abhorrence of the flesh: his skin is "the color of flour sacking and his upper body in shape is like a loosely-filled sack falling from his gaunt shoulders of its own weight, upon his lap" (72).<sup>184</sup>

---

<sup>181</sup> *Psychology* 323.

<sup>182</sup> The narrator notes something else: "there were some who said that he had insured his wife's death and then paid someone to murder her" (65). That the narrator mentions this to dismiss it suggests that it too, is true.

<sup>183</sup> *Psychology* 361-62. Wilhelm Reich offers a clearer description of the same experience in *Character Analysis* (New York: Simon and Shuster, 1972), 434-40.

<sup>184</sup> Becker explains: "The schizophrenic's body has completely 'happened to him,' it is a mass of stench and decay. The only thing intimate about it is that it is a direct channel of vulnerability, the direct toehold the outer world has on his inner self. The body is his betrayal, his continually open wound" (220). I realize that this description postdates the composition of *Light in August* by some forty years; but its similarity is, I think, remarkable. I have been unable to find an earlier description which so closely resembles Faulkner's, but it seems likely

Jung discusses a curious delayed reaction:

I have often found with hysterics that in conversation they spoke with apparently affected indifference and superficiality about certain points, so that I had to wonder at their pseudo self-control. A few hours later I would be called back to the ward because this very patient was having an attack, and it was then discovered that the conversation had subsequently produced an affect. The same thing can be observed in the origin of paranoiac delusions (Bleuler). Janet observed that his patients remained calm at the moment of an event which really ought to have excited them. Only after a latency period of several hours or even days did the corresponding effect appear.<sup>185</sup>

We may postulate that when Hightower learns of the threat of his delusion, he has already imagined Chapters One and Two, that Chapter Three responds in some measure to the threat by beginning paranoid thoughts, and Chapter Four, an intensification of such thoughts, responds to an intensification of the threat.

In Chapter Four, Hightower (in conversation with Byron) fears that anxiety is outwardly visible, and his thoughts return to moments in their conversation when he fears he may have betrayed himself. The beginning of Chapter Four recalls and recreates parts of the conversation which occurred while Hightower was imagining Chapters One and Two. From this

---

that one provided the same source for Becker and Faulkner, or that Becker and Faulkner's source made similar observations.

<sup>185</sup> C.G. Jung, "The Psychology of Dementia Praecox," *The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease*, trans. R.F.C. Hull (New York: Pantheon Books, 1960), 71-2. (The first English translation appeared in 1909).

recreation, the reader learns that Byron's news probably provided Hightower the basis for his imaginings, and that although the minister altered some of that news to accommodate his desires, much of it was incorporated almost intact. For instance, Chapter Four shows Byron saying "'And so I had already told her before I knew it. And I could have bitten my tongue in two'" (75). At the actual moment Hightower heard the words, his dream had assimilated them, with this result: "And he cannot look at her, and he sits there on the stacked lumber when it is too late, and he could have bitten his tongue in two" (51).

The first change in the course of Hightower's dream, the arousal of his paranoia, occurs after the dream's description of Byron sitting on the stacked lumber. And the recalled speech of Chapter Four shows the provocation for that change. To Byron's confession of embarrassment, Hightower responds "'You did what you could. All that any stranger could be expected to do. Unless . . .'" His voice ceases also. Then it dies away on that inflection, as if idle thinking had become speculation and something like concern" (76). Hightower's "speculation" is of Byron marrying Lena, and taking Christmas' place -- and so *his* place -- as the child's stepfather. Hightower's thoughts, when he first heard this, moved to imagine Chapter Three, a defense of his reputation, of his own fitness to be a stepfather.

The recreated conversation continues, and Hightower watches Byron with "shrinking and forboding" (77). This is Hightower's recreation of the moment the recreation began; it continues until the break in the text on page 83. At this point occurs yet another intensification of the threat to Hightower, rousing him to full consciousness, and *self*-consciousness, in the present moment. Bleuler explains the delay: "If a change of affect occurs it often takes place more slowly than in normal people; the affects follow slowly after the ideas or they appear very capriciously. One does not quite know why they appeared just now and why they took this form" (Textbook 380).

The minister listens to Byron describe the circumstances surrounding Joanna Burden's death, circumstances which seem to incriminate Christmas. The minister had sympathized and identified with Christmas because he had seen Christmas as unjustly persecuted. Now, as the minister learns that Christmas committed a crime like that *he* committed, he realizes his choice of figures was more appropriate than he knew, and his paranoia intensifies. Jung describes the moment when such paranoia produces a second personality: "Suddenly the jovial face before us changes, a piercing look of abysmal mistrust and inhuman fanaticism meets us from his eye. He has become a hunted, dangerous animal, surrounded by invisible enemies: the other ego has risen to the surface."<sup>186</sup> The description of Hightower seems a clear echo: "His face is at once gaunt and flabby; it is as though there were two faces, one imposed upon the other . . . He sits rigid; on his face now that expression of denial and flight has become definite" (82). When the minister learns that Christmas is part black, he becomes more frightened still: "there seems to come over his whole body, as if its parts were mobile like face features, that shrinking and denial, and Byron sees that the still, flaccid, big face is suddenly slick with sweat" (83). As Byron finishes the story, Hightower "sits there with his eyes closed and the sweat running down his face like tears" (93).

Adler wrote that paranoid hallucinations are "connected with marked self-absorption

---

<sup>186</sup> ("Mental Disease" 227). Several descriptions of paranoid reactions appeared before the composition of *Light in August*, but this seems nearest to the novel's portrayal of Hightower in Chapter 4. It appeared in a section of an article in the *Berliner Tageblatt* of April 21, 1928. Although the article was translated in a rare English edition, a sufficiently motivated Faulkner might have encountered and had translated the original German far more easily: Tulane University Library had a subscription to the paper between 1928 and 1930.

into the role to be played." <sup>187</sup> Jung describes the light stages of hallucination as involving a "stiffening" of parts of the body, and observes that a schizophrenic patient, in this state, saw herself as an "Egyptian statue" <sup>188</sup> Hightower imagines himself thus: "Beyond the desk Hightower sits erect. Between his parallel and downturned palms with his lower body concealed by the desk, his attitude is that of an eastern idol" (83).

Chapter Five begins the hallucination in which Hightower imagines himself as the victim he believes himself to be -- as Christmas. The minister creates the scene which begins Chapter Five from the scene Byron only recently described -- Christmas and Burch in the cabin. Hightower translates his own surroundings to those, and as he becomes Christmas, so Burch become Burch.

All Hightower's imaginings translate sin into blackness. The reason may be that Cinthy was black, the womb was black; more likely, though, it is simply because Hightower has a complex typical of his kind: Jung: "*I have frequently observed in the analysis of Americans that certain unconscious complexes, i.e., repressed sexuality, are represented by the symbol of a Negro or an Indian; for example*" <sup>189</sup> (my italics).

Christmas's quest for the mother is unconscious (as is that of all libido heroes) but nonetheless so obsessive that it determines his every action and thought. The hero's journey is

---

<sup>187</sup> Alfred Adler, *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*, trans. P. Radin (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul LTD, 1929), 259.

<sup>188</sup> *Psychology* 46.

<sup>189</sup> *Psychology* 205. Unfortunately, Jung offers neither qualifies nor embellishes this very provocative assertion. But it would seem that he has offered a psychological basis for, among others, the theories of Eric Sundquist's *Faulkner: The House Divided*.



circular; he seeks the mother who gave him birth. Since Christmas, for most of his life, seeks Joanna Burden, the myth requires that she bear him. And in Chapter Five she does -- at least metaphorically. The chapter which begins the Christmas section also begins the libido myth. Although it may be read as a realistic description of the hero in the novel's present, within the narrative as a whole -- in which the symbolic births of Chapter Five are followed by Christmas's childhood in Chapter Six -- it is better understood as a symbolic account of Christmas's escape from Joanna's womb. As the hero should, Christmas cuts open the womb from within, and severs his own umbilical cord.

His right hand slid fast and smooth as the knife blade had ever done, up the opening in the garment. Edgewise it struck the remaining button a light, swift blow. The dark air breathed upon him, breathed smoothly as the garment slipped down his legs, the cool mouth of darkness; the soft cool tongue (99-100).

Christmas has much in common with a libido figure Jung calls "Gitche Manito, the "master of life":

"From his footprints flowed a river,  
Leaped into the light of morning,  
O'er the precipice plunging downward  
Gleamed like Ishkoodah, the comet."

Jung comments that the water produced by his footsteps demonstrates his "phallic nature," and that, in turn, recalls "the phallic and fertilizing nature of the horse's foot and the horse's steps" (348). Christmas wonders why he wants to smell horses, and spends the night in a stable (101). When he wakes he sees "the primrose sky and the high, pale morning star of full summer" (102); when he walks, "The dew was heavy in the tall grass. His shoes were wet

at once" (102).

In Chapter Five, Christmas experiences another symbolic birth. He sits against a tree and near a spring (both images of the female), begins a fire, and falls asleep before it. He wakes suddenly, sees the sun two hours higher, and shaves. In other words, the hero enters the womb, builds the fire within it, escapes and finds his hair missing [that the sun is suddenly two hours higher recalls a particular libido myth at whose end "the sun rose with a bound." <sup>190</sup> The same chapter describes yet a third birth. The city is a common symbol for the mother, <sup>191</sup> and Freedman Town, accordingly, becomes another womb.

"On all sides, even within him, the bodiless fecundmellow voices of negro women murmured. It was as though he and all other manshaped life about him had been returned to the lightless hot wet primogenitive Female. He began to run, glaring, his teeth glaring, his inbreath cold on his dry teeth and lips, toward the next street lamp. Beneath it a narrow and rutted lane turned and mounted to the parallel street, out of the black hollow. He turned into it running and plunged up the sharp ascent, his heart hammering, and into the higher street" (107).

Because Christmas has enacted parts of the escape from the mother, he thinks for a moment that he has achieved it: "Maybe I have already done it ... Maybe it is no longer waiting to be done" (104). But the hero truly escapes the mother only when he kills her, and Christmas has not: when he stops running he realizes that he is holding his razor, but that he has not used it.

---

<sup>190</sup> *Psychology* 238.

<sup>191</sup> *Psychology* 234.

If Chapter Five is read as Christmas's birth, then Chapter Six's description of his childhood is not a flashback, but a logical continuation (and at least part of the narrative structure is thereby simplified). The opening -- "Memory believes before knowing remembers. Believes longer than recollects, longer than knowing even wonders" (111) -- suggests that the myth has overtaken actual fact.

Jung observed that the hero's youth often involves "exposure, and upbringing by foster parents."<sup>192</sup> That the hero seems to have two mothers effectively separates him from both, and contributes to a sense that he is self-generated<sup>193</sup> -- a sense Doc Hines seems to share when he christens the child "Joe, the son of Joe" (364). Still, the hero is not particularly independent. In fact, he is obsessed with the mother. Because the myth requires that the hero die before he is reborn, he comes to see the mother as a promise yoked with a threat, offering at once a beginning and an end. Like Quentin's "And then I'll not be. The peaceablest words," (*SF* 136), Christmas' refrain "*All I wanted was peace*" (104) expresses a desire for the kind of death the libido hero seeks: "This death is no external enemy, but a deep personal longing for quiet and for the profound peace of non-existence, for a dreamless sleep in the ebb and flow of the sea of life" (390). ("Ah, my brother, you will never learn to know the happiness of thinking nothing and doing nothing: this is next to sleep; this is the most delightful thing there is."<sup>194</sup>) Still, at moments death is something Christmas fears: and as adolescence awakens in him the sexual urge, it aggravates this terrible ambivalence. His first fumbling attempt at the

---

<sup>192</sup> *Psychology* 356.

<sup>193</sup> *Psychology* 356-57.

<sup>194</sup> *Psychology* 362. Perhaps coincidentally, the desire is characteristically schizophrenic: "The dream is of a life where there will be nothing more to do" (*Psychogenesis*, 84). It suggests a preference for the imagined internal world fashioned of desires, and responsible to nothing outside it.

sexual act (146-47) is fraught with images of the female as a threat of suffocating death.

Christmas is frightened; he kicks her, and begins to run from her. (Jung notes that "heroes in the sun-devouring myths often stamp at or struggle in the jaws of the monster." <sup>195</sup>)

When Christmas learns of Bobbie's menstruation, he senses a prepared womb. He is frightened again, and runs again -- this time to be overcome by a vision of trees (with shapes particularly maternal) oozing death. "In the notseeing and the hardknowing as though in a cave he seemed to see a diminishing row of suavely shaped urns in moonlight, blanched. And not one was perfect. Each one was cracked and from each crack there issued something liquid, deathcolored and foul" (177-78). <sup>196</sup>

Only the mother's womb can renew life; all others (as Christmas's vision suggests) threaten a death without rebirth. And if the hero is to find the mother of rebirth, he must leave her earlier incarnation--the mother of his youth. Jung calls the cow a maternal symbol, <sup>197</sup> and the lamb a representation of the weakness of character derived from the mother. <sup>198</sup> Thus

---

<sup>195</sup> *Psychology* 349.

<sup>196</sup> Jung notes (on page 385 of *Psychology of the Unconscious* a similar vision experienced by Hiawatha:

Paused to rest beneath a pine-tree,  
From whose branches trailed the mosses,  
And whose trunk was coated over  
With the Dead-man's Moccasin-leather,  
With the fungus white and yellow . . .

<sup>197</sup> *Psychology* 203.

<sup>198</sup> *Psychology* 318-19.

when Christmas sells his cow, and when he slaughters a sheep, he symbolically renounces Mrs. McEachern. He acts, in part, from fear: his reference to the dead sheep as "the price paid for immunity" (177) suggests that it somehow protects him from the mother, and (since his action seems a response to his discovery of menstruation) from the womb.

Many myths represent the hero's fear as a serpent watching over a cache of gold or jewels; Christmas's serpent is inanimate, but its purpose and its irony are no less mythic:

He kept the rope, neatly coiled, behind the same loose board in his attic room where Mrs. McEachern kept her hoard of nickels and dimes, with the difference that the rope was thrust further back into the hole than Mrs. McEachern could reach. He had got the idea from her. Sometimes . . . he would think of the paradox (178-79).

The "paradox" is, finally, mythic: Jung notes irony in the fact that "the fear of the maternal womb of death has become the guardian of the treasure of life." <sup>199</sup>

As was mentioned in regards to Quentin Compson, the father personifies society's condemnation of incest. <sup>200</sup> Accordingly, when Christmas kills McEachern, he exults "perhaps at that moment as Faustus had, of having put behind now once and for all the Shalt Not, of being free at last of honor and law" (194). Jung explains further: "when one has slain the father, one can obtain possession of his wife, and when one has conquered the mother, one can free oneself." <sup>201</sup> Christmas intends exactly that. He enters the womb boldly: "He laughed . . . vanishing upward from the head down as if he were running headfirst into something that was

---

<sup>199</sup> *Psychology* 408.

<sup>200</sup> *Psychology* 364.

<sup>201</sup> *Psychology* 365.

obliterating him like a picture in chalk being erased from a blackboard" (195). And the treasure is wrested from the mother:

"(S)he watched him empty the tin can onto the bed and sweep the small mass of coins and bills into his hand and ram the hand into his pocket. Only then did he look at her as she sat, backfallen a little now, propped on one arm and holding the shawl with the other hand" (195).

The youthful hero severs the last tie with the mother of his youth when he is beaten by an enemy, and very nearly dies; but "The arrow is not shot, the hero . . . is not yet fatally poisoned and ready for death."<sup>202</sup> The night Christmas leaves Mrs. McEachern he is very nearly killed by Max, and when he finds himself alive, he thinks "*Not yet*" (209). Jung describes a corresponding moment for "Chiwantopel." When the enemy who nearly kills him leaves him, Chiwantopel begins to consider his past. "From the extreme ends of these continents, from the farthest lowlands, after having forsaken the palace of my father, I have been wandering aimlessly during a hundred moons, always pursued by a mad desire to find "her who will understand." With jewels I have tempted many fair ones, with kisses I have tried to snatch the secret of their hearts, with acts of bravery I have conquered their admiration . . . There is not one among them who has known my soul."<sup>203</sup>

Similarly, the Christmas sections conflate the hero's escape from death with his years of wandering: Christmas explores "a thousand savage and lonely streets [which] run from that

---

<sup>202</sup> *Psychology* 338.

<sup>203</sup> *Psychology* 341. It may seem strange to compare Joe Christmas with Quentin Compson -- but both are variations on a theme. Quentin preserves his literal virginity; Christmas, although sexually promiscuous, nonetheless preserves his soul.

night when he lay and heard the final footfall and then the final door" (207). Christmas travels from Missouri to Mexico; with neither passion nor discrimination nor obvious pleasure, he sleeps with women. Jung calls this wandering "a representation of longing, of the ever-restless desire, which nowhere finds its object, for unknown to itself, it seeks the lost mother." <sup>204</sup> Chiwantopel laments:

In all the world there is not a single one! I have sought among a hundred tribes. I have watched a hundred moons, since I began. Can it be that there is not a solitary being who will ever know my soul? Yes, by the sovereign God, yes! But ten thousand moons will wax and wane before that pure soul is born. And it is from another world that her parents will come to this one. She will have pale skin and pale locks. Suffering will accompany her; she will seek also, and she will find no one who understands her. Temptation will often assail her soul--but she will not yield. In her dreams, I will come to her, and she will understand . . . I have come ten thousand moons before her epoch, and she will come ten thousand moons too late. But she will understand! <sup>205</sup>

---

<sup>204</sup> *Psychology* 231.

<sup>205</sup> *Psychology* 429. Joanna, of course, has neither pale skin nor pale locks. In both regards she resembles the mother of another myth -- a portion of which *Psychology of the Unconscious* quotes on page 354.

And she who bore me in her womb,  
     and gave me food and clothing,  
 She was a maid--a wild brown maid,  
     Who looked on men with loathing.

Joanna's parents are from New Hampshire and Missouri; her family's history and her dream of the crucified unborn speak of "suffering before she was born." Twenty years living alone suggest that she has found "no one who understands her," and if she does not deny temptation, then she seems to defy its consequences: "It as though each turn of dark saw him faced again with the necessity to despoil again that which he had already despoiled -- or never had and never would" (221). Joanna's dream of a crucified black race seems to understand Christmas's existence as no one and nothing else has. And Joanna's name may itself be an Anglicized version of Chiwantopel's mother's name -- "Janiwama." <sup>206</sup>

As a child, Christmas received -- simultaneously -- a meal of toothpaste and an introduction to sexual behavior. It may have been the first time he associated the mother with sex, and the last time he associated her with nourishment. The latter association is infantile; and when the hero regresses to the mother, it is revived. <sup>207</sup> Christmas first enters Joanna's house through a kitchen which seems itself a womb: "he seemed to flow into the dark kitchen: a shadow returning without a sound and without locomotion to the allmother of obscurity and darkness toward the food which he wanted as if he knew where it would be" (216). At this point in the myth, hunger symbolizes sexual urges, and fasting, logically, represents sexual abstinence and denial of desires for the mother. When Christmas tries to leave Joanna, he refuses food (233), and throws cooked dishes at the kitchen wall.

Because Christmas seems to have met the real mother of rebirth, his conflict becomes immediate, and doubly intense. He sees Joanna as a promise of comfort, then as a place of confusion, and finally as a threat of non-existence: "During the first phase it had been as though he were outside a house where snow was on the ground, trying to get into the house; during the

---

<sup>206</sup> *Psychology* 482.

<sup>207</sup> *Psychology* 369.



second phase he was at the bottom of a pit in the hot wild darkness; now he was in the middle of a plain where there was no house, not even snow, not even wind" (254-55). Still, for brief moments he senses that he is immortal, that he has lived before and will live again: "He thought of that with quiet astonishment: going on, myriad, familiar, since all that ever had been was the same as all that was to be, since tomorrow to-be and had-been would be the same" (266).

Jung says that religion stirs unconscious memories of the comfort and security of childhood, and so considers religious sentiment (like the association of the mother with food) a regression.<sup>208</sup> Christmas himself seems to associate the church with immaturity: of the moment he rebelled from McEachern and McEachern's religion, he thought "On this day I became a man" (137). Joanna uses religion to draw Christmas to her, to speed his regression. And he sees in her behavior no comfort, but the threat of his annihilation: "As he passed the bed he would look down at the floor beside it and it would seem to him that he could distinguish the prints of knees and he would jerk his eyes away as if it were death that they had looked at" (263-64). He thinks "She ought not to started praying over me. She would have been all right if she hadn't started praying over me . . ." (99).

She does pray for him, though, and (as is the nature of mythic mothers) threatens to kill him. But Christmas does not kneel, does not pray; he escapes. The fire is some indication that Christmas lived within the womb as a libido hero should, and Joanna's cut throat (recalling the opening in the monster through which the hero leaves) is evidence that this escape is real, that Christmas has finally freed himself of the mother. He has not, however, freed himself of her influence.

Jung discusses Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* as another libido myth. After the

---

<sup>208</sup> *Psychology* 99.

poem's hero escapes *his* symbolic mother, he wanders for three days and fasts; on the fourth day he falls asleep.<sup>209</sup> Chiwantopel awakes from a similar sleep to discover Moudamin, a "maize god" whom he fights and, on the fourth day, defeats. Christmas's experience seems to combine the two. The fugitive does not eat from Saturday to Tuesday, when he falls asleep in the fields. Upon waking, he devours rotting fruit and "ripened ears of corn as hard as potato graters" (316), and suffers a consequent bleeding flux. (A Jungian reading would suggest that Christmas's enemy -- though less animate -- is the same: "Moudamin is the maize: a god, who is eaten, arising from [the hero's] introversion. His hunger, taken in the double sense, his longing for the nourishing mother, gives birth from his soul to another hero, the edible maize, the son of the earth mother"<sup>210</sup>). During the first days of his fast Hiawatha perceives the world in a sentimental light; Christmas seems taken with similar feelings: "It is as though he desires to see his native earth in all its phases for the first or last time" (320). He looks inward too, and begins to see in his life a pattern.

It had been a paved street, where going should be fast. It had made a circle and he is still inside of it. Though during the last seven days he has had no paved street, yet he has travelled further than in all the thirty years before. And yet he is still inside the circle. 'And yet I have been further in those seven days than in all the thirty years,' he thinks. 'But I have never broken out of the ring of what I have already done and cannot ever undo' (321).

Again, the explanation may be found in Jung:

This hero . . . is the libido which has not fulfilled its destiny, but which turns

---

<sup>209</sup> *Psychology* 376-70.

<sup>210</sup> *Psychology* 370.

round and round in the kingdom of its mother, and, in spite of all its longing, accomplishes nothing. Only he can break this magic circle who possesses the courage of the will to live and the heroism to carry it through. Could this yearning hero-youth . . . but put an end to his existence, he would probably rise again in the form of a brave man seeking real life. <sup>211</sup>

Christmas seems to find the requisite courage: "It was as though," the narrator says, "he had set out and made his plans to passively commit suicide" (419). One of Christmas' last acts is getting a haircut (331); recalling the hero losing his hair within the mother's womb, the act is auspicious, a suggestion that mythic rebirth is imminent.

Jung says that the hero's enemies kill him "as if he had committed the most shameful crime." <sup>212</sup> Accordingly, Percy Grimm kills and castrates Christmas as though he were a rapist. But another particular of the hero's death promises transcendence of this shame, and of death itself: Jung speaks of heroes made immortal by "a flash of lightning." <sup>213</sup> As Christmas nears death, his hands are "raised and manacled [and] full of glare and glitter like lightning bolts" (428). The narrator evokes a similar auspiciousness, declaring outright that Christmas's spirit will endure: "It will be there, musing, quiet, steadfast, not fading and not particularly threatening, but of itself alone triumphant" (440).

A particular maternal symbol -- the tree -- appears at crucial moments throughout Christmas's life. In Chapter Five, Christmas sits against the same tree at two separate moments (110). By Chapter Six, Christmas is separated from the mother of birth. And the

---

<sup>211</sup> *Psychology* 429.

<sup>212</sup> *Psychology* 295.

<sup>213</sup> *Psychology* 349.

description which begins the chapter so resembles Chapter One's description of a sawmill that it suggests the orphanage has taken the hero from the mother as the sawmill took wood from trees.<sup>214</sup> Other circumstances reinforce the metaphor: Christmas's grandfather ran a sawmill, and Christmas was born near another sawmill. His life might be a piece of wood taken ever further from its origin. When Christmas was approached by the dietician, "the muscles of the backside [became] flat and rigid and tense as boards" (116) and "He might have been carven" (117). He has a frightening vision: "ranked tubes of toothpaste like corded wood, endless and terrifying" (117). At the planing mill the foreman jokes: "We ought to run him through the planer . . . Maybe that will take the look off his face" (28). Christmas begins to return to the mother, and the symbol reappears. Arguing with Joanna "was like trying to argue with a tree" (254), and looking at her was a little like looking at one: "he saw a head with hair just beginning to gray drawn back to a knot as savage and ugly as a wart on a diseased bough" (260). But he does not return; and he dies far from her, from bullets fired through the final product of cutting and sawing and planing -- a table.

---

<sup>214</sup> The rhythm, tone and language of the book's beginning is very like the description of the place of Christmas' beginning. The sawmill presents "a stumpocked scene of profound and peaceful desolation, unplowed, untilled, gutting slowly into red and choked ravines beneath the long quiet rains of autumn and the galloping fury of the vernal equinoxes" (2-3) And the orphanage is "a corridor in a big long garbled cold echoing building of dark red brick sootbleakened by more chimneys than its own, set in a grassless cinderstrewnpacked compound surrounded by smoking factory purlieus and ... where in rain soot from the yearly adjacent chimneys streaked like black tears (111).

Both landscapes may find their provenance in Jung's reference to note the part of *The Song of Hiawatha* in which "the creator of the nations" is shown "on the great Red Pipestone quarry," where "From his footsteps flowed a river" (*Psychology* 348).

How, then, is Christmas reborn? The libido myth demands that the hero impregnate the mother spiritually, and many myths symbolize that spirit as a wind.<sup>215</sup> Again, Christmas's life abides by mythic strictures. Several times in his youth, Christmas had come near impregnating a woman. After he struggled against the black girl in the shed, "It was as if a wind had blown . . . hard and clean" (137). Winds blew when he killed McEachern (180), and when he was beaten by Max (188-89). Each wind suggests a spirit escaping present circumstances, preserving itself for the mother of rebirth. That mother may not be Joanna. Since Joanna bore the hero at his beginning, all the symbolic wombs of Chapter Five were hers. When Christmas escaped the third one "a cool wind blew from somewhere" (110), just as it had when he escaped other women. And when he returned to Joanna and sensed her threat, he imagined himself in a place "without even wind" (225). Christmas's intuition is sound: Joanna's behavior and psychology are emphatically physical, far too physical to offer a spiritual rebirth. For that the hero requires a spiritual mother, and *Light in August* may provide one. Mrs. Hines believed that Lena's child was Joe, and at least for a moment, she convinces Lena of the same. The idea, literally, is absurd. But Mrs. Hines does not see her world literally, and (as I've suggested) perhaps the reader shouldn't either. Chapter Twenty-One, like the Christmas sections, may be best read symbolically -- for here the allegory of the disintegrating tree reverses direction. In Chapter One, Lena was traveling with her brother, a sawmill worker. In Chapter Twenty-One, she rides with "a furniture repairer and dealer," the suggestion being that Christmas has begun another incarnation, that he is indeed reborn. The child Lena suckles was abandoned by Burch; and Byron, as the furniture dealer repeatedly suggests, seems neither husband nor father.

That Christmas and Lena never meet is not, as some readers have implied, a flaw in the plot; it is, on the contrary, essential to it. An encounter between them would allow the

---

<sup>215</sup> *Psychology* 252.

possibility of physical relation; the absence of such a meeting ensures that any relation be spiritual, and that Christmas's rebirth, too, be spiritual.<sup>216</sup> Jung calls the "word," like the wind, an archetype of the spirit.<sup>217</sup> The novel's first mention of words in the abstract comes from Lena: "but me and Lucas dont need no word promises between us. It was something unexpected come up, or he even sent the word and it got lost" (17).<sup>218</sup> It was not lost, of course; it was abandoned. Burch surrendered his spirit when he surrendered his name. Both were adopted by Byron ("Burch" becoming "Bunch"), the man Lena found in the place she expected to find Burch. Lena's womb, meanwhile, was left empty of word and spirit, and thus enabled to accept both from Christmas. (Christmas, by contrast with Burch, clung tenaciously to his name, as is proper: the libido hero and his name are one.<sup>219</sup> That Christmas is the logos is also suggested by his skin: "parchmentcolored.")

In some oblique way, Lena perceived the cyclic nature of her role, if not the role itself: in the book's first and last chapters, she said "A body does get around." The narrator is far more explicit, at least some of the time imagining her as little more than symbol. He describes

---

<sup>216</sup> Jung accounts the life of Christ another libido myth, replete with archetypes: a carpenter father, a return to a kind of tree (the Cross), and -- in the "Pieta" legend -- a return to the mother at death. It may be that Lena does not resemble the Virgin and Christmas Christ, so much as all four resemble mythic images.

<sup>217</sup> *Psychology* 108.

<sup>218</sup> See Virginia V. Hlavsa, *The Mirror, the Lamp, and the Bed: Faulkner and the Modernists*, *American Literature*, Mar. 1985. Hlavsa finds in this passage echoes of St. John. But that page 358 of *Psychology of the Unconscious* discusses that Gospel suggests that Jung may have pointed Faulkner in its direction.

<sup>219</sup> To Bobbie's question of his name, Christmas replies "It's not McEachern ... It's Christmas" (173).

the wagon in which she travels as seeming to be a series of vehicles "identical and anonymous," "a succession of crackwheeled and limpeared avatars," and Lena herself "like something moving forever and without progress across an urn." 220

#### IV.

---

220 When Hightower and his wife were courting, they left notes for one another in a hollow tree. (Joanna left notes for Christmas in a fencepost.) Hightower thinks, in Chapter 20, that the idea was not his or hers alone; rather, it seems to have sprung from the minds of both simultaneously. Perhaps it did. The image is a particularly notable synthesis of mythic concepts--the note in the tree representing the *logos* within the body of the mother, and the act of placing the note thereby becoming a particularly spiritual kind of insemination. But what is also interesting is that the shared idea is evidence of a collective unconscious, evidence that mythic symbols exist at interstices of thought that all humanity shares. In Chapter 20, Hightower acknowledges further evidence of the collective unconscious, and defends it: he admits that the story of his grandfather's raid may not be true.

Now this is what Cinthy told me. And I believe. I know. It's too fine to doubt. It's too fine, too simple ever to have been invented by white thinking. A negro might have invented it. And if Cinthy did, I still believe. Because even fact cannot stand with it.

(458)

The thought echoes "memory believes before knowing remembers," and likewise suggests that memories are imperfect, and any mind is likely to fill lapses in memory with mythic images, trying to turn a story, any story, into a libido myth.

The life of the libido figure is the means by which the unconscious seeks health. If it were allowed to do its work unobstructed -- as was Frank Miller's -- the result would be a kind of cure. The path of Hightower's libido figure is made difficult because he is also the vehicle for Hightower's delusions of persecution and grandeur. Christmas is Hightower's symbolic self -- a figure which represents him, and so which he will not allow to die.

A particular passage reveals the peculiar dynamic of Hightower's delusion of persecution: when Christmas is beaten, the narrator observes: "The boy's body might have been wood or stone; a post or tower upon which the sentient part of him mused like a hermit, contemplative and remote with ecstasy and selfcrucifixion." (LIA 150). In fact, this passage also describes the relation of schizophrenic selves. Sass describes Foucault's interest in Bentham's "Panopticon" (a prison design which allowed guards hidden in a central tower to observe prisoners in windowed cells arranged around the tower): "One cannot experience one's own bodily being from within but only from without, from the imaginary position of the observer in the town" (Sass 252) ... (H)ow uncannily close is the correspondence between these ontological entities [the selves] and the fundamental elements of the Panopticon -- with its prisoner, its imagined Other watching from the *dark tower*, and the internalized gaze that forges an infernal marriage between two distant beings" (Sass 244; my italics).

But at other moments Hightower aggressively defends Christmas. Hightower's unconscious feelings toward Byron are made clear in the picture of Burch. In Chapter Four Hightower believed that Byron was suggesting that he (Hightower) sinned. Consequently, in Chapter Five, Burch tells Christmas ("in a tone cunning, not loud" [96]) that he is black. And Christmas responds to Burch as (I assume) Hightower would like to respond to Byron -- he forces his hand over his mouth, stops his words and very nearly stops his breathing.<sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>221</sup> Brill notes that the paranoid personality often directs hostility toward the person about whom he or she cares most, and that often the hostility turns violent (266-67). Bleuler



("Bunch" to "Burch" follows a schizophrenic "clang association": "(R)epressed thoughts disguise themselves in similarities, whether in verbal (clang) similarities or in similarities of visual imagery." 222 )

Adler writes that the paranoid personality is likely to hallucinate memories selected and altered in such a way as to compose a defense against perceived accusations (259). The hallucination represented by the Christmas sections is not only a libido myth; it is also a rendering of Christmas' life in such a way as to make its subject an object of pity (orphaned, abused, misunderstood and persecuted), and in such a way as to shift the ultimate blame for Joanna's death onto others. (That Christmas begins his life at an orphanage on Christmas Eve suggests a narrative motive which is an almost ridiculously transparent attempt at arousing sympathy. Readers have not much noticed this, perhaps, because Christmas is not by nature sympathetic.)

Christmas eats toothpaste, and the dietician and her consort assume he is a voyeur. That the narrator notes that Christmas at this moment is five years old, suggests we are seeing the moment when the libido is balanced between hunger and sex, and perhaps the

---

suggests something similar: "One of the commonest and often very rapid transformations is the one where the beloved becomes the persecutors" (Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry*, 392). Freud suggested that the paranoid species of schizophrenia might be a product of repressed homosexual desire, and that such desire could be replaced by anger towards the object of that desire (Freud ). Certain readers have suggested that Hightower has homosexual feelings toward Byron; a reading is supported by these authors. Jung speaks of the phallic nature of hands (Psych 176); the description of Christmas' struggle with Burch uses the word "hand" twelve times on one page (96).

<sup>222</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 55.

beginning of Hightower's schizophrenia.

I might designate the period from birth until the occupation of the sexual zone as the presexual stage of development. This generally occurs between the third and the fifth year ... it is distinguished by the irregular commingling of the elements of nutrition and of sexual functions. Certain regressions follow directly back to the presexual stage, and, judging from my experience, this seems to be the rule in the regression of *dementia praecox*." <sup>223</sup>

Because Hightower's defense of Christmas is a moderately disguised defense of himself, it should not surprise us to discover the past he imagines belongs to Christmas confused not only with the libido myth, but with his own history. It is. But that history is made sensual, physical. Hightower's obsession with the Civil War raid, for instance, becomes for Christmas a tangible desire: the minister is "born about thirty years after the only day he seemed to have lived in -- that day when his grandfather was shot from the galloping horse" (57), and a passage in Chapter Five begins "It was falling down now and there had not been a horse in it for thirty years, yet it was toward the stable that he [Christmas] went . . . He was thinking now, aloud now, 'Why in hell do I want to smell horses?'" (101). Similarly, Christmas' relation with Hines mirrors that between Hightower and his grandfather (both older men are "lusty and sacrilegious"), but the former relation is more immediate, more literal: Hines cries aloud and in Joe's presence that "God's curse" is upon him, while if Hightower's grandfather damned him (as Hightower believes), he did it inadvertently and long before Hightower's birth. Further, Hightower believes he is different because of his grandfather; Christmas thinks of Hines: "*That is why I am different from the others: because he is watching*

---

<sup>223</sup> *Psychology of the Unconscious*, 162.

*me all the time*" (129). <sup>224</sup> In the same fashion, while the minister believes that he "skipped a generation [and] had no father" (452), Christmas is a genuine orphan. <sup>225</sup> The shift appears elsewhere. Descriptions of Hightower's father are exaggerations:

[Hightower and his mother] both lived ... like two small, weak beasts in a den, a cavern, into which now and then the father entered -- that man who was a stranger to them both, a foreigner, almost a threat ... He was more than a stranger: he was an enemy" (450).

But the same description applied almost literally to McEachern. For young Hightower, "the ground, the bark of trees, became actual, savage, filled with, evocative of, strange and baleful half delights and half terrors" (300). For Christmas too, desire and fear find their locus in trees, but again, his experience is reified and intensified. His sexual desire is denied when he

---

<sup>224</sup> Irene Gammel uses this phrase as part of a title of a recent article in which she cites the unusually large number of variations on the infinitive "to see." Such an interest, I think, is evidence of the narrator's paranoia.

<sup>225</sup> Ernest Jones: "It is probable that the interest, the admiration, and the phantasies that gather round the figure of the grandfather are always derived from an attitude of mind earlier taken up in respect to the father, but there are some important points in which that figure is distinguished from other repetitions of the father-image. In the first place it is much older than the other reproductions, since it always goes back to the earliest period of childhood. More particularly at the time when the boy is beginning to weave what Freud terms his 'family romance' and is engaged in getting rid of the real father by replacing him in his imagination by a more satisfactory substitute . . . With very many children there is a lively desire to become the parents of their own parents, and they may even entertain the fantastic belief that just in proportion as they grow bigger, so will their parents grow smaller." (Jones, 668-69)

learns of menstruation; the knowledge frightens him, and as though to escape it he runs to a place where trees seem cracked and leaking something "deathcolored, and foul" (177-78).

And all that is sinful in Hightower's waking life becomes -- in his hallucinating -- black. When the minister's wife died, he preached "with rapt fury" (63) to people not of his church; after Joanna's death, Christmas performs wildly before a black congregation. While Mrs. Hightower's "mysterious trips to Memphis" are for carnal purposes, Joanna's are for blacks. Hightower's wife encouraged his sense of guilt, and Joanna never lets Christmas doubt that he is black. But both assist the masquerade: as Hightower's wife schemed to help him gain his ministry (456), so Joanna (Christmas realizes) tried to make him "something between a hermit and a missionary to Negroes" (257). And as Hightower tries to appear holy, so Christmas tries to appear white: his refusal to enroll at a black college ("Tell the niggers that I am a nigger too?" [262]) must echo Hightower's refusal to admit his sin.

Christmas's carnal relations with Joanna, we may assume, represent not Hightower's relations with his wife as much as his pathologic view of those relations -- i.e., as sinful:

She had an avidity for the forbidden wordsymbols; an insatiable appetite for the sound of them on his tongue and on her own. . . . She would be wild then, in the close, breathing halfdark without walls, with her wild hair, each strand of which would seem to come alive like octopus tentacles, and her wild hands and her breathing: "Negro!

Negro! Negro! (245). <sup>226</sup>

---

<sup>226</sup> The sexual act, for Christmas and Joanna, seems to involve an exchange of gender: Christmas considers "My God," he thought, "it was like I was the woman and she was the man" (222). Terrell Tebbetts article reads this and similar passages as evidence of Christmas's struggle for Jungian "individuation." It is an interesting reading, but the concept

The word is erotically charged for several reasons. As Jung suggests, the unconscious of Americans use it to represent sexuality; and for many interrelated reasons suggested earlier, Hightower uses it to represent sinfulness. But why the word itself, *voicing* of the word? Bleuler cites a patient who explains his own attraction to verbal obscenity because it is a confession:

Suddenly Dolinin (the writer himself) felt, that not only without his wish, but even against his will, his tongue begins to express loudly and at the same time rapidly that which in no case should have been uttered. At the first moment the patient was perplexed and frightened ... but when he began to grasp the meaning of what his tongue chattered, the horror of the patient increased, because it showed that he, D., openly confesses his guilt to a serious political crime ... <sup>227</sup>

For Hightower too, the voicing (or the imagined voicing) may be a catharsis -- here, an admission of, and even a reveling in, sin.

The translation from conscious to unconscious seems to work within a kind of symmetry. The blacks of the minister's waking life become sinners in his dream: as the minister's father had refused to eat a slave's cooking, so McEachern eats the food of the

---

of individuation post-dates Light in August; indeed, Tebbetts' primary source is *Man and His Symbols*, a 1964 synthesis of Jung's work for the layperson. I think it is more likely that this is a flourish on a schizophrenic hallucination -- Schreber imagined that he was changing into a woman.

<sup>227</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry*, 150-51.

profane (at the restaurant) only as he promises Joe they will never do it again. Similarly, the church of Hightower's waking life is translated by his unconscious into white skin. Christmas' black father and McEachern represent, by turn, the violently emotional half and the God-fearing half of Hightower's father, a man the narrator calls "two separate and complete people" (448).

Later passages of which Christmas is subject represent further hallucinations, and continue the parallel. Without his wife, Hightower "seemed to eat like an animal -- just when he got hungry and whatever he could find" (60); after Joanna's death Christmas lives and eats in the fields. Even the "bleeding flux" which Christmas suffers for the experience seems a projection of a part of Hightower's life: as a child, the minister's view of the patch of blue cloth sewn into his grandfather's Confederate uniform produced "a kind of hushed and triumphant terror which left him a little sick" (444); he suffered "intestinal fits" regularly (444). 228

As the minister's paranoia increases, so does Christmas's suffering, until he (Christmas) becomes nothing less than a Christ-figure. Mrs. McEachern bathes his feet; Burch, a kind of disciple, betrays him for a sum of money; further, he feels he must partake of a kind of Last Supper: he is obsessed with "the necessity to eat" (316), and imagines himself at a

---

228 Macalpine and Hunter, in explaining Schreber, may explain Hightower:

"Schizophrenics regularly are in doubt about the nature of their sex, commonly speculate on religious matters, particularly the end of the world, speak of sexual transformation, and live through pregnancy and birth fantasies. These last centre around bowel function or the interior of the body; hence the common delusions of poisoning and refusal of food which Schreber also showed, which represent fear and impregnation fantasies (Schreber, 407)

table "filled with flight and abrupt consternation" (317).<sup>229</sup> Finally, he is lynched at very nearly the age Christ was crucified. Although circumstances surrounding Christmas resemble those surrounding Christ, Christmas himself is anything but Christlike. This too, is typical of the delusions of Christ often produced by the disease: they are, Becker says, "clumsy, crippled and inverted" (221).

Several articles have discussed Christmas as a Christ-figure or "inverted" Christ-figure. One article makes much of the fact that Christmas was not thirty-three when he died, and that he did not die on a Friday -- the author concluding that Christmas therefore cannot be a Christ-symbol. I think that Christmas is not so much an inverted Christ-figure as he is an poorly-constructed one. Clearly the narrator wants to make the association: he mentions Joe's age explicitly only *when* he is thirty-three, and mentions the day of the week only when it *is* Friday -- that these particulars do not exactly parallel Christ's life shows them as cracks in Hightower's delusion.<sup>230</sup>

---

<sup>229</sup> It is likely, I think, that this part of the hallucination derives also from the hero's need to eat as he nears the mother of rebirth.

<sup>230</sup> Identifying the source for the Christ imagery -- clumsy or otherwise -- is complicated by the fact that Christ too was a libido figure. Having in a sense two sets of parents (one heavenly, one earthly), a carpenter father, a youth of wandering, a search for rebirth, (in pieta legend if not scripture) a return to the mother (and to the tree or a form of the tree) at death, a three-day journey in the underworld, and ultimate rebirth. The shape of Hightower's hallucination of Christmas may derive somewhat from this: in fact Faulkner's explanation of the Christ imagery in the novel suggests as much:

"(T)hat's a matter of reaching into the lumber room to get out something which seems to the writer the most effective way to tell what he is trying to tell. And that comes

In the second half of Chapter Thirteen, Hightower becomes self-conscious again. When he suspects that Byron will ask him to offer Lena refuge, he fears the possibility of gossip about the association, and his thoughts (again) evince a hatred of his body: "And when Hightower approaches, the smell of plump unwashed flesh and unwashed clothing--that odor of unfastidious sedentation, of static overflesh not often enough bathed--is well nigh overpowering" (282). In the same chapter, the minister fears that a grocer might somehow connect him with Christmas as the grocer tells him of Christmas' imminent capture. And Hightower's paranoia provides him (and so the reader) a reflection of the scene similarly distorted: the minister sees himself "gaunt, misshapen, with his gray stubble and his blackrimmed hands and the rank manodor of his sedentary and unwashed flesh" (291). As the chapter ends, Hightower learns that Byron plans to care for Lena, effectively usurping Christmas' place (and so his own place) as the child's stepfather. And he receives the news as an actual threat. "Well, I dont mean it to be a threat," Byron says. "Ah," Hightower says. "In other words, you can offer no hope" (295). The minister's "hope" of course, is for his own rebirth; he begins to abandon it. Hightower tries to convince Byron to leave Lena:

"It's not fair that you should sacrifice yourself to a woman who has chosen

---

back to the notion that there are so few plots to use that sooner or later any writer is going to use something that has been used. And that Christ story is one of the best stories that man has invented, assuming that he did invent the story, and of course it will recur" (FAU 117).

Jung says something very like this: "This rule can be applied generally to mythical tradition. *It does not set forth any account of the old events, but rather acts in such a way that it always reveals a thought common to humanity, and once more rejuvenated.*" (Psych 39).



once and now wishes to renege that choice ..."

"Sacrifice? Me the sacrifice? It seems to me the sacrifice --"

(299)

Hightower is using Jung's language here, with Jung's meaning -- the hero approaching the mother of rebirth, and sacrificing himself. The minister had long regarded Byron as a rival, but for the most part an unthreatening one; this indicated in Hightower's strange observation that Byron is unhorsed -- that is, is without the symbol of the libido and is not himself the symbol of the libido: to Hightower, he is a "puny, unhorsed figure moving with that precarious and meretricious cleverness of animals balanced on their hinder legs" (70).

Hightower's imagining, in the chapter which follows (Chapter Fourteen), recounts the chase amended to accommodate the grocer's news. Hightower intensifies the Christ-imagery surrounding Christmas, the minister's paranoid conviction being that if Christmas is to die, he will die a martyr. Most of the dream emphasized Christmas' role as libido hero. Now, as the role of persecuted victim is imposed upon him, Christmas (so Hightower imagines) feels compelled by forces he does not understand, imprisoned by walls whose outline he cannot imagine: "They all wanted me to be captured, and then when I come up ready to say Here I am . . . They all run away. Like there is a rule to catch me by, and to capture me that way would not be like the rule says" (319). The rule demands that Christmas die as Christ died, and he cannot help but obey it. Soon thereafter he knows, but does not know why, he must learn the day of the week (347). In the morning he discovers that it is Friday, and at noon he surrenders himself. And so ends the second Christmas section -- with part of Hightower's unconscious pushing his libido towards death and rebirth, and his paranoia trying to sanctify that death.

Much as Hightower imagined Chapter One as he listened to Byron, so he imagines Chapter Fifteen -- the Hines' history -- even as he listens to them. And as Hightower's self-

conscious reaction to Byron's talk became visible in Chapter Three, so his response to the Hineses is not evident to the reader until Hightower "sees himself" in Chapter Sixteen. The minister is genuinely afraid that there exists a visible similarity between himself and Christmas. On two separate and unrelated occasions (39 and 419), his narration states that the town believes "Like to like." In Chapter Four Hightower seems to hear (and may imagine) Byron telling him "like not only finds like; it can't even escape from being found by its like" (80).<sup>231</sup> When the Hineses visit the minister, they ask him to declare publicly an association with Christmas; it is an association far more distant than the one he relinquished at the end of Chapter Fourteen, but as his terrified refusal suggests, it is one which he believes would make him appear "like" Christmas, one which would condemn him as a sinner and a murderer, too: his question (which must confuse his listeners) is rhetorical: "What is it you want me to do? Shall I go plead guilty to the murder? Is that it?" (368).<sup>232</sup> By the time Byron and the Hineses have begun to leave him, Hightower's sense of his persecution has increased manifold; he adopts the posture of the prototypical martyr: "he falls forward, onto the desk, his face between his extended arms and his clenched fists" (370). Probably Hightower is unaware of this action; it may be what Bleuler terms "automatic":

Nowhere do we find automatic action so frequently as in schizophrenia and in the most various degrees of connection with the conscious ego. Apparently insignificant movements such as lifting of the arms, assuming the position of the crucified ... often take place without the conscious will of the patient.<sup>233</sup>

---

<sup>231</sup> Jung remarks upon the enormous significance of analogy, and of the phrase "even as" to the unconscious (*Psychology* 156).

<sup>232</sup> Mythic images infiltrate the minister's conscious perceptions here: because the Hineses are Christmas' mythic parents, they remind Hightower of bears.

<sup>233</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry* 408.

Later, the minister sees himself as he imagines Byron might see him -- as a man having just surrendered the possibility of rebirth, "as though he had given over and relinquished completely that grip upon that blending of pride and hope and vanity and fear, that strength to cling to either defeat or victory, which is the I-Am, and the relinquishment of which is usually death." (372) Sass describes the phrase as characteristic: "Given such profound experiences of ontological insecurity, of uncertainty about the very existence of the ego or the self, it is understandable that many schizophrenics will manifest the so-called "I am" sign -- the habit of repeating over and over to themselves some desperate litany such as "I am"; I am me, I am me" ... (Sass 215). Jung has an interpretation of the phrase which may better apply here: "The patient uses the form 'I am' in a very capricious way. Sometimes it means 'it belongs to me' or 'it is proper for me,' sometimes it means 'I ought to have.' " <sup>234</sup> The minister's "I-Am" seems to mean "ought to have," and the *thing* he ought to have is, of course, rebirth. He relinquishes it to Byron, imagining the morning of the birth of Lena's child through Byron's eyes, and imagining Byron suddenly realizing his own sudden fortune: "And this too is reserved for me, as Reverend Hightower says." (380). Bleuler explains:

It is quite common to displace feeling which we have ourselves in our dreams to other persons. Transitivity is an almost common occurrence in schizophrenia; the patients are convinced that the voices which they hear are also heard by others in the same way; they frequently ascribe their own actions to others; thus, if they read something, ... it is really done by others; their thoughts are thoughts by others, and so on. <sup>235</sup>

Details of the depiction show it as a product of Hightower's obsessions. For instance, the

---

<sup>234</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 175.

<sup>235</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry*, 138-39.

minister remembered his mother "first and last as a thin face and tremendous eyes and a spread of dark hair on a pillow . . . [later] he thought of her as without legs, feet; as being only that thin face and the two eyes which seemed daily to grow bigger and bigger, as though to embrace all seeing, all life, with one last terrible glare of frustration and suffering and foreknowledge, and when that finally happened, he would hear it: it would sound like a cry" (449-50). The recollection seems to shape what he imagines is Byron's perception of Lena : "She was covered to the chin, yet her upper body was raised upon her arms and her head was bent. Her hair was loose and her eyes looked like two holes and her mouth was as bloodless now as the pillow behind her, and . . . she gave again that loud, abject, wailing cry" (378). <sup>236</sup>

"The Psychology of Dementia Praecox" discusses schizophrenics who have a great interest in names, and who are "very fond of dissecting and interpreting words" (76, 90). It is likely, I think, that as Hightower had named Christmas, so he gave the other figures of his dreaming life names appropriate to the parts he wished them to play in his desires. <sup>237</sup> Now,

---

<sup>236</sup> Mrs. Hines is, for Hightower, another mother, and he makes her a comic variation on the same theme: "she didn't look like she had any body at all," "like somebody had sneaked up and set a toy balloon with a face painted on it" (335).

<sup>237</sup> Lena's surname recalls the grove of Joanna's dream, and both recall the tree as maternal symbol. Jung: "The sacred grove often takes the place of the taboo tree and assumes all the attributes of [it]" (*Psychology* 307). Joanna's family name may derive from the hero's conception of the mother as a burden, a sentiment expressed in a poem to which Jung refers (*Psychology* 337):

Overwhelmed with a hundred burdens,

Overburdened by thyself

A wise man,

A self-knower,  
 The wise Zarathustra;  
 Thou soughtest the heaviest burden  
 And foundest thou thyself . . .

The minister's first name, Gail, may derive from the symbol of the "pneuma" or "fructifying wind." The name "Hightower" may be derived from Schreber -- who appealed his commitment in a legal brief which reads in part: "the certainty of my knowledge of God and the absolute conviction that I am dealing with divine miracles *tower high* above all empirical science" (Schreber, *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness*, 289; my italics). Or, it may derive from a delusion of grandeur of one of Jung's patients (*Psychology* 363): "I am as high as a church steeple."

The name Joe Christmas is a paradoxical conflux of the profane and holy in which Hightower's conflict is reflected. The surname may have been inspired by the sign before Hightower's house; certainly the intention (to suggest Christ) is the same. Finally, Christmas' mother is called *Milly*, a name perhaps suggestive of a sawmill, or perhaps Faulkner's acknowledgement of the schizophrenic patient (Frank Miller) from whose perceptions Jung derived much of *Psychology of the Unconscious*.

Typically schizophrenic is Hightower's belief of a supernatural power of naming. If the names he gives figures befit the role he wishes them to play in his delusion -- specifically, in protecting his reputation -- then they need exist only as far as it exists. Indeed, in the places where the minister is unknown, names, and the gossips who manipulate them, disappear. Lena's journey outside the valley seems "a peaceful corridor paved . . . with kind and nameless faces and voices" (4). Typically schizophrenic too is the imaginative severing of names from their referents. As Burch ran from the valley, he "called no names, thought no names" (414). When Byron nears the ridge of a hill outside Jefferson, he thinks "It is like the edge of nothing.

with the desires surrendered, the names vanish. Hightower imagines that Byron thinks that names he has known are utterly separate from the things they claim to describe, and useless in understanding those things (380).

This disillusion does not last. In the second half of Chapter Seventeen, Hightower seems suddenly to realize the power of the mythic logos: the recognition allows him to consider the possibility that his surrender was premature: "*That child I delivered. I have no namesake. But I have known them before this to be named by a grateful mother for the doctor who officiated*" (384). Although he hesitates ("*But then, there is Byron. Byron of course will take the pas of me* [384]), and although he learns, later, that Lena probably *has* planned to name the

---

Where trees would look like and be called by something else except trees, and men would look like and be called by something else except folks" (401). (Notice that the pairing is not men and women, but men and *trees*--their mythic equivalent.) And in the final chapter, outside the valley and far from Hightower, people become "kind and nameless" once more.

But in an interesting passage, Jung observes that "tag names" occur outside literature, too; in fact, they are the names of the founders of three major schools of psychological study.

We find ourselves in something of a quandary when it comes to making up our minds about the phenomenon which Stekel calls the "compulsion of the name." What he means by this is the sometimes quite grotesque coincidence between a man's name and his peculiarities or profession ... Herr Frued (joy) champions the pleasure-principle, Herr Adler (eagle) the will-to-power, Herr Jung (young) the idea of rebirth, and so on. Are these the whimsicalities of chance, or the suggestive effects of the name, as Stekel seems to suggest, or are they "meaningful coincidences?" (*The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche*, 15n - 16n.)

child for Byron, his hopes are fed by another change in circumstances. He discovers, to his actual "exultation" (391) that Byron has left Lena: "He believes her, but wants to corroborate the information for the sheer pleasure of hearing it again" (391). At this point Hightower begins to convince himself -- in the sudden absence of evidence to the contrary -- that he has been spiritually reborn. But almost immediately his belief is challenged by a place within his own mind.

Jung wrote of schizophrenic patients whose delusions were occasionally corrected, or deflated, by a manifestation of the third complex--an imagined voice.

As usual, we find in this patient the complex of grandeur alongside that of injury. But part of the "injury" consists in the normal correction of her grotesque ideas of grandeur. That such a correction still exists seems a priori quite possible, since even in patients who are far more impaired, intellectually and emotionally, than she was, there are still signs of more or less extensive insight into the illness . . . . While the patient was telling me what a misfortune it would be for humanity if she, the owner of the world, should have to die before the "payment," the "telephone" suddenly remarked, "It would do no harm, they would simply take another owner."

. . . .

Suddenly, to the great chagrin of the patient, the telephone called out, "the doctor should not bother himself with these things." <sup>238</sup>

Such "deflations" of the Hightower's ideas of grandeur may be heard, occasionally, in his narration. After Hightower delivers Lena's child, he imagines an exchange between himself and this voice:

---

<sup>238</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 149 [1936 translation].

"I showed them! he thinks. "Life comes to the old man yet . . . But this is vanity and empty pride. Yet the slow and fading glow disregards it, impervious to reprimand. He thinks "What if I do? What if I do feel it? triumph and pride?" (383).

Similarly, Chapter Eight's description of Christmas ("contemplative and remote with ecstasy and selfcrucifixion" [150]) describes the relation between Hightower and Christmas, and criticizes it. The voice has particular disdain for Hightower's lapses in courage, for the moments he disassociates himself from Christmas. When the minister abandons hope for a godchild, the voice criticizes his taste in literature (and, implicitly, the cowardice which renders him sterile): "It [reading Tennyson] is like listening in a cathedral to a eunuch chanting in a language which he does not even need not to understand" (301).<sup>239</sup> As Chapter Seventeen

---

<sup>239</sup> Interestingly, Tennyson's "The Lady of Shalott" describes the titular figure imprisoned by an enchantment within "Four gray walls, and four gray towers," where she weaves reflections of passersby into a tapestry.

There she weaves by night and day

A magic web with colors gay,

She has heard a whisper say,

A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may be,

And so she weaveth steadily,

And little other care hath she,

The Lady of Shalott.



ends, Hightower thinks that Byron's ungraciousness concludes the trials of his rebirth: "It would seem that this too was reserved for me. And this must be all." The voice corrects him: "But this is not all. There is one thing more reserved for him" (392). Indeed there is. The minister's *libido hero* must die.

Hightower's thoughts in Chapter Eighteen are, on the balance, cowardly. He imagines the behavior of Byron and Burch to avoid imagining the death of the figure with whom he has identified. Ironically, Hightower does not need to imagine Christmas' death, for it occurs in his house, before his eyes. The minister must believe that the event forces between them the association he had so fervently fought in refusing the Hines' request. So, at the probable moment Hightower sees Christmas die (when he imagines the speech of the man on the wagon: "'I thought maybe you hadn't heard. About an hour ago. That nigger, Christmas. They killed him'" [418]), his imagination abandons Byron to begin a chapter devoted entirely to denying all resemblance between the fugitive and himself.

Chapter Nineteen begins with a strange assertion that the town is so obsessed with a retired minister that he -- not the escaped prisoner -- is, on the evening following the escape, the subject of prolonged thought and discussion: "About the suppertables that Monday night, what the town wondered was not so much how Christmas escaped but why, when free, he had taken refuge in the place he did . . . There were many reasons, opinions, as to why he fled to Hightower's house at last . . ." (419). The idea is itself a paranoid delusion, and begins an imagined attack against imaginary forces. The narrator quickly dismisses "Like to like" as an idea of the "easy and immediate," and gives cursory notice to the thoughts of several others. His more considered reaction is comic in its misplaced practicality: he gets a lawyer. The narrator's introduction of Gavin Stevens (a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard Law School, and a respected man who communicates easily and freely with the townspeople) implicitly condones Stevens' explanation of Christmas' choice of hiding places -- and that explanation --

quite pointedly -- involves unqualified admiration for Hightower. <sup>240</sup>

Jung explains the response: "Whenever the analytic investigation touches upon the libido, withdrawn into its hiding place, a struggle must break out; all the forces, which have caused the regression of the libido, will rise up as resistance against the [therapy]." <sup>241</sup> For Hightower, events with which he sympathizes have operated as that therapy. Christmas' death should conclude it, allowing Hightower to imagine the death of his libido. But the forces which repressed the libido -- fears that his sin might be visible -- now make tremendous efforts to undo the therapy, to deny Hightower's association with Christmas.

Hightower cannot alter reality, but he can embellish it, and he can approach it as he wishes. <sup>242</sup> He cannot pretend the fugitive did not enter his house, but he can, in

---

<sup>240</sup> Brill was greatly impressed by paranoiacs' litigious inclinations, noting that in a certain hospital for the insane "practically every one of the inmates had a legal paper drawn in accordance with the legal form, applying for a writ of habeas corpus" (268). Eugen Bleuler terms an entire category of paranoia as "litigious." See *Textbook of Psychiatry*, trans. A.A. Brill (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1924), p. 591.

<sup>241</sup> *Psychology* 421.

<sup>242</sup> This phantastical activity of the ancient mind created artistically *par excellence*. The object of the interest does not seem to have been to grasp hold of the "how" of the real world as objectively and exactly as possible, but to aesthetically adapt subjective phantasies and expectations." (*Psychology* 25).

At another point, Jung quotes Freud: "One cannot assert that the paranoiac has completely withdrawn his interest from the outer world, nor withdrawn into the heights of repression, as one sometimes sees in certain other forms of hallucinatory psychoses. He takes

reconstructing Christmas' death, remove himself as far from the man as he believes is possible: he can focus his thoughts on the man who kills Christmas. When he does, his conflict, for the first time, is clearly polarized -- with Christmas representing his libido, and Percy Grimm representing his obsessive concern for appearance, and its religious vehicle. Much as the town first received Hightower's ministry, he imagines it to have "suddenly accepted Grimm with respect and perhaps a little awe and a great deal of actual faith and confidence" (432). He describes Grimm's voice as like "that of a young priest" (439) and his appearance like "angels in church windows" (437). And since Hightower associates sin with blackness, he imagines that Grimm believes "the white race . . . superior to any and all other races" (426). Grimm is also a manifestation of paranoia, or -- as Bleuler suggests -- the mind's response to its own delusion:

The patients want to be more than they are and this then results in the delusion of grandeur. They do not get what they wish for, and as they themselves do not want to admit they are incompetent, the result is the delusion of persecution.

. . . . Particular individuals, relatives, superiors, the physicians in the asylum, but especially complete plots, the free masons, the Jesuits, the "Black Jews," mind readers, "Spiritualists," persecute the patient with voices, slander and annihilate him."

243

Suddenly, the figures upon which Hightower had projected his fantasy -- figures until now seen only in his imagination -- appear before him. Of this occurrence, Laing alludes to Marianne Moore: "Real toads invade the imaginary gardens" (Laing 90). The minister's delusion

---

notice of the outer world, he takes account of its changes, he is stirred to explanations by their influence." (*Psychology* 140-41)

243 Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry* 390.

had always adjusted itself to reality -- that is, to what Hightower knew as truth. Now that delusion must strain to accommodate a shifting in the very ground upon which it rests. And the strain shows. When the men lift the minister from the floor, he imagines them as angels, and himself as a fallen Christ. The source of other details in the scene is less clear. Does Grimm castrate Christmas? The act would seem to reflect the way Hightower's fear for his reputation denied him offspring. If the minister imagines Grimm's act, then some part of him must already understand his own self-denial. If the act is real, then it can only trigger the beginning of such understanding.

Bleuler and Jung both report numerous hallucinations of castration. A case of Bleuler's seems to share some particulars with Christmas: "His penis was being operated on 'so that indecent sensations would disappear.' The voices tell him that he had denied his God and had perpetrated a lust murder. Lust murder is sexual desire."<sup>244</sup> Indeed, "Lust murder" might describe the crime for which Grimm punishes Christmas: "Then Grimm too sprang back, flinging behind him the bloody butcher knife. 'Now you'll let white women alone, even in hell,' he said" (439).

In the moments before Christmas' death, Hightower tells his persecutors that Christmas was with him on the night of the murder. For Hightower, the statement is nothing less than courageous: he has accepted his libido figure at the risk of his reputation. Then, having renamed Christmas a part of himself, Hightower watches that part die.

He just lay there, with his eyes open and empty of everything save consciousness, and with something, a shadow, about his mouth. For a long moment he looked up at them with peaceful and unfathomable and unbearable eyes. Then his face, body, all, seemed

---

<sup>244</sup> Bleuler, *Textbook of Psychiatry* 419.

to collapse, to fall in upon itself, and from out the slashed garments about his hips and loins the pent black blood seemed to rush like released breath. It seemed to rush out of his pale body like the rush of sparks from a rising rocket; upon that black blast the man seemed to rise soaring into their memories forever and ever. They are not to lose it, in whatever peaceful valleys, beside whatever placid and reassuring streams of old age, in the mirroring faces of whatever children they will contemplate old disasters and newer hopes. It will be there, musing, quiet, steadfast, not fading and not particularly threatful, but of itself serene, of itself alone triumphant. (439-40) <sup>245</sup>

Frank Miller experienced a similar sympathy for the figure with whom she identified -- Cyrano de Bergerac. Jung explains:

Cyrano is the misunderstood one, whose passionate love and noble soul no one suspects; the hero who sacrifices himself for others ... Cyrano, who under the hateful exterior of his body hid a soul so much more beautiful, is a yearner and one misunderstood, and his last triumph is that he departs, at least, with a clean shield -- "Sans un pli et sans une tache." <sup>246</sup>

The description shares much with the description of Christmas' death. The narrator bestows upon Christmas a kind of immortality, as do associations of Christmas with lightning. <sup>247</sup> And the "scream of the siren" echoes the screams of Lena and Hightower's mother, and like them, it suggests a birth -- or, in this case, a rebirth.

---

<sup>245</sup> The final two sentences have the rhythm of a benediction; it may be that we are finally hearing Hightower as he sounded in the pulpit.

<sup>246</sup> *Psychology* 44-45.

<sup>247</sup> *Psychology* 349.

Hightower does not begin to appreciate the import of Christmas' death until a few hours after it happens, at nightfall. In Chapter Twenty the minister is, again, self-conscious; it is his delayed reaction to the events of that afternoon. Hightower watches himself consider his life, and he sees it -- perhaps for the first time -- clearly. The existence he recounts is far more repressed (as is expected) than was Christmas'. While Christmas wore the suit McEachern said could only be an adjunct to sinning, Hightower's father's uniform remained hidden: "To him, the child, it seemed unbelievably huge, as though made for a giant; as though merely from having been worn by one of them, the cloth itself had assumed the properties of those phantoms who loomed heroic and tremendous" (443-44). The coat was attractive, among other reasons, for its mythic associations: Jung explains "By enwrapping himself in the buck's skin [the libido hero Hiawatha] really became a giant. This motive ... reveals the fact that the parents are concerned, whose gigantic proportions as compared with the child are of great significance in the unconscious."<sup>248</sup> The myth goes further, as does resemblance to Hightower's forbears: "The hero's father accomplishes his great labors as a religious founder, hides himself for years in a cave, he dies, is skinned, stuffed, and hung up."<sup>249</sup> (Here again, Christmas experiences a more literal version of the same event: when he is kidnapped by Hines [his own grandfather], he is wrapped in Hines' coat: "He just stood there and then a bigger garment enveloped him completely -- by its smell he knew it belonged to the man." [130])

While Christmas rebelled against McEachern, Hightower never objected to his father or to his father's religion. In fact, Hightower's past is some blend of Christmas' and Grimm's. During this reverie, he begins to admit of that aspect of his character and to appreciate its brutality:

---

<sup>248</sup> *Psychology* 363.

<sup>249</sup> *Psychology* 367.

He seems to see the churches of the world like a rampart, like one of the barricades of the middleages planted with dead and sharpened stakes, against truth and against that peace in which to sin and be forgiven is the life of man. "And I accepted that," he thinks. "I acquiesced. Nay, I did worse: I served it. I served it by using it to forward my own corrupt desire" (461). <sup>250</sup>

Again, Jung explains what Hightower seems suddenly to realize: "The unconscious casting of the erotic into something religious lays itself open to the reproach of a sentimental and ethically worthless pose." <sup>251</sup> Although Hightower begins to understand his hypocrisy, his contrived martyrdom, he justifies it: "'It is any man's privilege to destroy himself, so long as he lives to and of himself'" (465). Then he begins to realize that he did hurt someone else, and so comes to acknowledge his greatest sin: "'Then, if this is so, if I am the instrument of her despair and death, then I am in turn the instrument of someone outside myself'" (465).

Hightower's understanding of himself, and of his life, is increasing quickly, dramatically. Jung says that during such sudden education "the unity of life in startled surprise detaches Change and holds it away from itself . . . [then] consciousness is born." <sup>252</sup> The minister seems to be approaching such consciousness: at various moments during his meditation, he "seems to watch himself" (462, 463). Jung explains further that an unbalanced personality beginning to cure itself experiences a characteristic vision: a mandala. It rotates,

---

<sup>250</sup> In Laing's terms, Grimm is an imago (a phantom of a schizophrenic fantasy) who represents Hightower's "false self": "The self is extremely aware of itself, and observes the false self, usually highly critically (77).

<sup>251</sup> *Psychology*, 82.

<sup>252</sup> *Psychology* 361-62.

thus balancing the "light and dark forces of human nature," and so signaling a resolution to psychological disturbances.<sup>253</sup> When Hightower admits his sin against his wife, he allows the vast delusion constructed to deny that sin to collapse, a "wheel of thought," begins to rearrange his personality (or personalities). Of the faces the wheel contains, Hightower sees only Christmas' as confused; when he realizes it had been blended with Grimm's, he realizes too that Grimm is as much a part of him as is Christmas, and "it seems to him that some ultimate damned flood within him breaks and rushes away" (465-66).

Schizophrenics may imagine themselves dying or dead. They sense that they have no "self," and experience an unpleasant weightlessness: "I have no identity of my own. . . . no self . . . I am only a cork floating on the ocean."<sup>254</sup>

He seems to watch it, feeling himself losing contact with earth, lighter and lighter, emptying, floating. 'I am dying,' he thinks. 'I should pray. I should try to pray.' But he does not. He does not try. 'With all air, all heaven, filled with the lost and unheeded crying of all the living who ever lived, wailing still like lost children among the cold and terrible stars. . . . I wanted so little. I asked so little. It would seem . . . ' The wheel turns on. It spins now, fading, without progress, as though turned by that final flood which had rushed out of him, leaving his body empty and lighter than a forgotten leaf and even more trivial than flotsam lying spent and still upon the window ledge which has no solidity beneath hands that have no weight; so that it can be now Now

Jung describes the culmination of a schizophrenic disorder in a patient he identifies as a "foreign archeologist":

---

<sup>253</sup> Jung, Wilhelm 25-8.

<sup>254</sup> R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self* 140, 144, 47-48.



He answered this question ["What was going on?"] in broken phrases, with long pauses in between, in that twilight stage which precedes convalescence. I followed his own words as faithfully as possible. When he fell ill he suddenly left the orderly world and found himself in the chaos of an overmastering dream: a sea of blood and fire, the world was out of joint, everywhere conflagrations, volcanic outbursts, earthquakes, mountains caved in, then came tremendous battles in which nation was hurled on nation . . . ." 255

It is very like Hightower's dream:

They rush past, forwardleaning in the saddles, with brandished arms, beneath whipping ribbons from slanted and eager lances; with tumult and soundless yelling they sweep past like a tide whose crest is jagged with the wild heads of horses and the brandished arms of men like the crater of the world in explosion" (466-67).

Jung explains: "The phantasy of the world conflagration, of the cataclysmic end of the world in general, is nothing but a mythological projection of a personal individual will for death." 256

Jung also explains the cured personality mythologically: "The world arises when man discovers it. He discovers it when he sacrifices the mother; that is to say, when he has forced himself from the midst of the unconscious lying in the mother." 257 Chapter Twenty-one indeed seems to portray a new world, or at least a new vision of the old one. It is a vision freed of paranoia and endowed instead with a childlike expectancy, perhaps best reflected in Lena's face: "And it

---

<sup>255</sup> *Psychogenesis*, 169-70

<sup>256</sup> *Psychology* 481.

<sup>257</sup> *Psychology* 458.

was like it was already fixed and waiting to be surprised, and she knew that when the surprise came, she was going to enjoy it. And it did come and it did suit her" (480).

Hightower's imagination does not cease upon his problem's resolution, and neither does it abandon the figures which -- for some days -- have obsessed it. But it sees those figures quite differently, and it is itself much changed. The narrator of much of Chapter Twenty-one -- a "furniture repairer and dealer" -- is still Hightower, but Hightower awakened and in some sense cured. Jung writes that the neurotic is able to remain a child by avoiding the "complete erotic experience."<sup>258</sup> Hightower here seems at least able to conceive of that experience: the talk between the furniture dealer and his wife occurs, as their words on page 472 suggest, after sexual relations. Schizophrenics are incapable of communication with others, and humor, Jung claims, is utterly beyond their abilities. But this talk is playful: when his wife implies that he propositioned Lena, the furniture dealer responds "'I didn't aim for you to find that out. Yes sir. I thought I had covered my tracks this time'" (476). It is a benign jest, born of relief, and made possible only by a new self-understanding. For, in a manner of speaking, he *did* proposition Lena: her child is his libido reborn. This passage, significantly, presents the novel's first example of humor that is not bitter or ironic, and the first example of this level of intimacy.<sup>259</sup>

---

<sup>258</sup> *Psychology* 343.

<sup>259</sup> Laing: It is only when the body can be thus differentiated from others that all the problems involved in relatedness/seperateness, between separate whole persons, can begin to be worked through in the usual way ... [F]eelings can be shared without their being confused or merged with those of the other (190). The assertion of Lee Jenkins' title -- "Nobody Laughs in Light in August" -- is correct; but the furniture dealer and his wife, at the very least, smile. (in *Faulkner and Psychology*, 1994)

Jung continues his recounting of the archeologist's recovery:

Then more battles, and victory at last. As the victor's prize he gained his loved one. As he drew near her the illness ceased, and he awoke from a long dream.

His daily life now resumed its ordered course. He shut himself up in his work and forgot the abyss within him . . . [Upon visiting a place which had, for him, painful memories of a lost love], he followed the old trail and again was overborne by old memories. . . . In this state -- I follow his own words -- he had a dreamy feeling, as if he stood on the border between two different worlds and did not know whether reality was on the right or on the left. He said: "They tell me she is married, but I believe she is not; she is still waiting for me. I feel that it must be so. For me it is always as if she were not married, as if success must still be attainable." 260

Likewise, Hightower continues to imagine that Lena is not married. Byron accompanies Lena and the child, but as a guardian and companion, not as a husband or a father. To the furniture dealer, he is all but invisible: "Then I saw that he was the kind of fellow you wouldn't see the first glance if he was alone by himself in the bottom of a empty concrete swimming pool" (469). And the furniture dealer's story of Byron's embarrassing and failed attempt to seduce Lena suggests, even insists, that Byron will remain no more than a companion, a Joseph to Lena's Mary -- leaving the place of the father for Hightower.

Jung describes the disease's aftermath:

Thus the door of the underworld gradually closed. There remained nothing but a certain tenseness of expression, and a look which, though fixed on the outer world, was

at the same time turned inwards; and this alone hinted at the silent activity of the unconscious, preparing new solutions for his insoluble problem. Such is the so-called cure in dementia praecox." 261

And such is the ending of Hightower's self-induced therapy in *Light in August*.

\* \* \*

The narrative of *Light in August* gains its unity because it describes events from a single perspective. It gains its structure in that it represents a schizophrenic mind struggling to cure itself and in some fashion succeeding. That structure, contrary to longheld opinion, is quite conventional: it is (at least according to its own terms) chronological, it has exposition (Chapters One through Four), rising action (Chapters Five through Eight), a climax (Chapter Nineteen) and a denouement (Chapter Twenty). It fits other conventional structures, too, including a variation of the "Hollywood" plot of which Faulkner was at the time of this writing beginning to make acquaintance: boy (fantasizes that he) meets girl, boy (fantasizes that he) loses girl, boy (fantasizes that he) gets girl back.

To return to the proposition which opened this chapter: as a "try for the impossible," how does *Light in August* fare? It is interesting to examine Richard Rovere's response to the book -- which is in many ways typical.

I, for example, find Hightower an extraordinarily moving figure, and I shall always be able to picture his evenings with Byron Bunch in my mind's eye. But when I think about him and about his history as Faulkner gives it, I am quite unable to believe in him.

Either I can believe what Faulkner says about the lunatic sermons Hightower preached in his youth, "with religion and galloping cavalry all mixed up," or I can believe in the aged, reflective Hightower who finally makes his reluctant way to Lena Grove's bedside. But I cannot believe both, or, if I do, I must split Hightower up into two men. I can accept Hightower as the man stripped of status, of friends, of faith, of everything but feeling and a lingering, misty view of right, but to do this I must somehow divorce the Hightower of the sermons from the Hightower of the reveries. And I find it even harder, except when Faulkner has me in his spell, to believe fully in Joe Christmas, whose tragedy is the subject of this novel. Christmas comes very much alive for me as the boy in the asylum, as the adolescent on McEachern's farm, as the virgin who conducts his own lonely rites of puberty, as the man obsessed with the taints of his blood, as the spinster's lover, as the killer, and as the hunted. But I cannot make the fragments of a history, the elements of many characters that are attributed to Christmas come together in a single, indivisible being. For all Faulkner's gifts, Christmas is not, to my mind, a memorable character in American fiction; he is, instead, the vehicle for a series of memorable experiences. <sup>262</sup>

I think Rovere is exactly right: Joe Christmas is not a complete character, and Hightower is not a complete character. In fact, no one in the novel is a complete character -- but the novel itself and in its entirety -- may be. I claimed that Hightower is schizophrenic; it may be more accurate to say that a large part of the schizophrenic personality is represented in the character we term Hightower. Rovere's reaction intrigues me because I think that, had he trusted his intuitions, he might have arrived at my reading. But credit for shaping those intuitions is Faulkner's. What is astonishing about *Light in August* is that it displays a technical

---

<sup>262</sup> Rovere, Richard H. Introduction, *Light in August*. New York: The Modern Library, 1950. ix.

virtuosity capable of portraying a disordered mind from within itself and -- at the same time -  
- it controls and manipulates readers in matters large and small, even when those readers fail  
to appreciate its skill.

The schizophrenic's "ontological insecurity," at the root of his disorder, is largely  
hidden even from himself. And for Hightower, the fear is articulated in terms of race -- as  
Alfred Kazin and Eric Sundquist have suggested, the defining sense of much of the South. The  
schizophrenia of Gail Hightower may represent the schizophrenia of the American south -- a  
hidden secret, a sublimated sexuality, a fragmentation, a separation of emotion and intellect.  
As usual, Faulkner's version is haunting and powerful: 'You are worse than that. You don't know  
what you are. And more than that, you won't ever know. You'll live and you'll die and you  
won't ever know' (363).

## Afterword

---

*Had me this buddy in the Russian camp, Siberia, his thumb was frostbit. Medics came by and they cut it off. Month later he's tossin' all night. Elroy, I said, what's eatin' you? Goddam thumb's itchin', he says. So I told him, scratch it. McCoy, he says, it's the other goddam thumb.*

-- William Gibson, *Neuromancer*, 105-6.

There are numerous fictional depictions of the schizophrenic experience which this project has given insufficient attention or no attention. To name a few of the more significant: Septimus Smith in Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925), Jean Paul Sartre's *Nausea*, (1938), the narrator of Bioy Casares' *The Invention of Morel* (1940), Bartleby in Melville's "Bartleby, the Scrivener" (1853), <sup>263</sup> and Clara Batchelor in Antonia White's *Beyond the Glass* [1954]). I

---

<sup>263</sup> Morris Beja argues persuasively that Melville's Bartleby is clinically schizophrenic -- and the evidence Beja puts forth is strictly behavioral -- specifically, Bartleby's autism and his dispassionate response or lack of response to all inquiries for

suspect that most contributed to the aesthetic/intellectual movement I have posited, and merit attention as such. But I am interested here in larger views, in placing the suggestions of this project in historical perspective, enumerating a few directions for further inquiry, and briefly discussing theories of the origin of schizophrenia.

Most historians of psychology agree that nearly every mental disease now known seems to have been present since ancient times; most or perhaps all psychiatric syndromes are described in ancient texts -- with the exception of schizophrenia. Hippocrates described symptoms of mental illnesses which we recognize as epilepsy, mania and depression; he did not describe schizophrenia. The Old and New Testaments portray several figures who suffer from

---

his health. Morris Beja's 1978 article "Bartleby and Schizophrenia" delineates symptoms of a Laingian reading.

[H]e displays the symptoms and behavior patterns of "schizophrenia, catatonic type, withdrawn." He is detached, withdrawn, immobile, excessively silent, yet given to remarks or associations that do not make sense to others, depressed, at least outwardly apathetic and refraining from all display of ordinary emotion, possibly autistic, and compulsively prone to repetitive acts or phrases ("I would prefer not to") (557).

To these I might add Bartleby's profession itself (a copier of words) and its paradoxical and conflicted relation to language. In terms of this particular literary/cultural history, Bartleby is a kind of ur-text -- an inquiry into the schizophrenic experience that occurred long before the subject had gained much attention. An observation by Torrey is interesting: "By 1864 it was said that the insane were mostly aged 20-35 and that the clerical profession was strikingly overrepresented among them" (121).



various mental illnesses, none of which seem schizophrenic.<sup>264</sup> The English physician Richard Napier (1559-1634) kept careful notes on 2000 mental patients -- again, no group of symptoms points unequivocally to schizophrenia. In fact, before the nineteenth century there is no record of any human behavior which is clearly schizophrenic. Its appearance in records was remarkably sudden. In 1809, working independently, Phillippe Pinel at Hospital Salpetriere in Paris and John Haslam at Bethlam both authored detailed descriptions of schizophrenic cases. And almost immediately the disease seemed to appear everywhere -- In Europe and in the United States, there was a great increase in building of insane asylums, a great many of whose residents are described as having symptoms of what we would call schizophrenia. In the twentieth century, one percent of the population is diagnosed schizophrenic.<sup>265</sup>

---

<sup>264</sup> Gottesman (5) comments upon numerous of psychobiographies of Jesus, which rested mostly upon presumed delusions of grandeur and auditory hallucinations. They are refuted in Albert Schweitzer's 1913 *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus*.

<sup>265</sup> Although Laing does not address this issue directly, he does imply that if we have no accounts of schizophrenia before Haslam, several literary works suggest their author was familiar with aspects of the schizoid condition. The figures of William Blake's *Prophetic Books* "undergo division [within] themselves" (175 n.; Ophelia, for Laing, is "latterly undoubtedly a schizophrenic ... There is no integral selfhood expressed through her actions or utterances. Incomprehensible statements are said by nothing (212 n.). Perhaps more interesting is Laing's suggestion that Christian gnosticism advocated a divorce of soul and body very like a schizophrenic separation of private and public selves; he cites a translation of a Gnostic text: "(the body is) the dark prison, the living death, the sense-endowed corpse, the grave thou bearest with thee, the grave which thou carriest around with thee, the thievish companion who hateth thee in loving thee, and envieth thee in hating thee" (69 n).

There are three theories to explain the evident sudden emergence of schizophrenia at the beginning of the nineteenth century. None are entirely satisfactory. The first posits that a tendency towards schizophrenia has always been latent in humans, and surfaced only from stresses caused by the crowding of urbanization and industrialization. The difficulty with this theory is that schizophrenia, while affecting some societies more than others (western Ireland and Croatia, for instance, have a higher than average incidence), it does not seem to affect industrialized societies preferentially. Further, while industrialization and urbanization have increased in the ninety or so years that reliable surveys have been made, incidence of schizophrenia shows no appreciable change: it seems stable at about 1 per 100.<sup>266</sup> A second

---

<sup>266</sup> Whether or not industrial landscapes caused schizophrenia, it is true that schizophrenics seem sensitive to, and fearful of, machines. (The best-known paranoid delusion in literature involves windmills.) Schreber and Bleuler's patient *Catatonia with Rapid Dementia* regarded specific, if imaginary, technologies as conduits by which they were persecuted. MacLane comments on the larger subject of industrialization: her description of the more nightmarish tableaux of her lifetime -- child millworkers -- seems to depict the split of intellect and affect for which Bleuler named the disease:

The most darkling-luminous thing about the Drab-Eyed children is that they never weep. They talk among themselves and smile their little dreadful decayed smiles, but they don't weep. When they walk it's with a middle-aged gait: when they eat their noontime food it's as grown people do, with half-conscious economic and gastronomic consideration. They count their Tuesdays and Wednesdays with calculation as work-days, which should be childishly wind-sweptly free. Which is all of less weight than the heavy fact that they never weep" (150).

theory posits that disruptions in familial and cultural patterns -- greatly increasing since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution -- have caused more insanity of *all* types, and the growth of insane asylums in England and America in the second half of the nineteenth century allowed for more careful observation and differentiation. This theory too, is weakened if not undermined for the same reason: although familial and cultural patterns are still increasing, the percentage of schizophrenic cases seems stable. A third theory suggests that schizophrenia simply did not exist before the eighteenth century. It may result from a viral agent -- its sudden manifestation and spread paralleling AIDS in the early 1980s.

The humor in Virginia Woolf's famous assertion "In or about December 1910 human nature changed" lies in the fact that it is an overstatement, because we know (or think we know) that human nature does not and cannot change, and that any appearance to the contrary must be illusory. This sense is part of a homoethic tradition very like geologists' gradualism, a not so much a theory as a platitude so long accepted and only recently challenged by its opposite -- catastrophism. But the sudden appearance of schizophrenia suggests that human nature, or some part of it, did change, about a century before. Of course, Woolf was referring to human nature specifically as evinced in developments in art, literature -- all contributing to the condition call Modernism. The predominant feature of Modernism is a focus on the self -- manifest mainly as the encouragement of individual will and expression, or, in its darker incarnation, alienation, loneliness and a loss of innocence. Significantly, these are aspects

---

In this context it is interesting that technology intrigued the Surrealists.

Marcel Duchamp made several studies (evidently not ironic) of a chocolate grinder he saw in a shop window (Sandrow 5). Many Surrealists had great affection for the Eiffel Tower, which was at the time of its construction widely regarded as anathema, an obscenity, a defeat of art by technology, etc.

much exaggerated by schizophrenia, and very much the defining features of two literary genres which have gained much attention since Woolf's pronouncement.

The Theatre of the Absurd seems in many ways as closely or more closely related to the schizophrenic experience than any artistic movement, including its progenitor, Surrealism. Like the schizophrenic, the characters of many Absurdist plays begin with "ontological insecurity" -- they are without selves, or are seeking selves. In fact, they are not characters in any traditional sense, because characters presuppose a development or at least continuity in human behavior, presuppose a self integrated over time. Plot too, requires that events progress linearly, and because the action of many Absurdist plays merely repeats events or depicts events which evince no cause and effect, in any traditional sense they have no plots. Of course, the world of many schizophrenics are only the repeated recital of circumstances.

Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* has come to be regarded as the first, and perhaps the definitive Absurdist work, and the protagonists, Estragon and Vladimir, indeed seem depictions of the schizophrenic experience. They attempt suicide (twice); they are not recognized by the messenger; they believe they are dead; they experience temporal discontinuity. Moreover, they experience something like Schreber's "voices."

ESTRAGON: All the dead voices.

VLADIMIR: They make a noise like wings.

ESTRAGON: Like leaves.

VLADIMIR: Like sand.

ESTRAGON: Like leaves.

[*Silence.*]

VLADIMIR: They all speak together.

ESTRAGON: Each one to himself.

[*Silence.*]

VLADIMIR: Rather they whisper.

ESTRAGON: They rustle.

VLADIMIR: They murmur.

ESTRAGON: They rustle.

This experiential relativism of Vladimir and Estragon, applied to language and taken to a postmodern extreme, arrives of course at Derrida's ideas concerning the independence and ambiguity of language -- specifically, his suggestion that a reader make herself open to all possible meanings and to dismiss consideration of auctorial intent. Derrida's ideas, as has been widely observed, bear little correlation to common experience: most people in their general use of language (even, so far as I know, poets and semioticians), are seldom paralyzed or overwhelmed by consideration of the infinite ambiguities inherent in every word. Significantly, however, that is precisely the experience described by many schizophrenics.

Science fiction (or "speculative fiction") is another genre which in some ways furthers the Surrealist project. It is interesting that science fiction too, has been regarded as a response to the asocializing effects of the Industrial Revolution. The work commonly regarded as the first true science fiction -- that is, embodying a scientific rather than a supernatural explanation for extraordinary events -- is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, written and published in 1816, seven years after the appearance of Haslam and Pinel's accounts of schizophrenia. Like the impulse toward the Surreal, the impulse to write and to read science fiction begins with a kind of tiredness about the present reality, and replaces it with another, in which moment-to-moment existence is made vastly different by conditions in social structure, philosophies, religions, even fundamental principles of human behavior. Significantly, themes common to science fiction -- alternate realities, omnipotent or nearly-omnipotent beings, apocalypses, new cosmogonies, human-machine interfaces, million-year-old secrets,

solipsistic worlds, alternate realities in which rules and truths are discovered to be merely local -- are also themes common to schizophrenic delusions. In some sense science fiction seems to offer a ready-made genre for schizophrenic sensibilities.

In this regard I note two works: Stanley Kubrick and Arthur C. Clarke's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968; film and novel) and William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1986). *2001: A Space Odyssey* involves a computer known as "HAL," which functions as brain and central nervous system of a spacecraft. It/he evinces delusions of power and infallibility, and paranoia -- but unlike schizophrenics described in previous chapters, HAL's delusion is supported by the situation in the shared reality. Within the local universe (and as the crew is several million miles from earth, it is for all intents and purposes the *only* universe), HAL *is* omnipotent. Further, the crew (as he discovers) is plotting to disconnect him. The entire spacecraft -- with its artificial and natural intelligences -- seems a collection of selves that mimic a schizophrenic mind. HAL is the inner self, the human crew are false selves which the inner self regards as necessary intermediaries between it and the shared reality, and yet comes to perceive as separate from itself and threatening to it.

The experience of schizophrenia and the sub-genre of science fiction called "cyberpunk" share a particular concern for human/machine interfaces -- bodies altered, invaded by various nightmarish mechanisms. (At least in technological societies, many paranoid schizophrenics imagine that the forces operating against them operate through machines. Schreber wrote of "nerve probes" and "electrical devices.") Several such works seem to describe an externalization of the schizophrenic experience, so that the shared reality mimics the experience within a single mind. These particular pieces concern themselves with themes common to schizophrenic experience: paranoia, delusion of grandeur, bodily infiltrations, a belief that all behavior is artificial. William Gibson's *Neuromancer* (1983) is widely regarded as the novel which defined "cyberpunk." The world it describes is made nightmarish through a

schizophrenia which is both externalized and institutionalized. The central character (named, appropriately enough, "Case") lives within a kind of artificially-induced schizophrenic autism, "jacked into a custom cyberspace deck that projected his disembodied consciousness into the consensual hallucination that was the matrix" (5). He develops a typically schizophrenic disdain for things corporeal: "The body [he thinks] was meat" (6). Further, the shared reality is a creation of nearly-omnipotent corporations which attack his person as a schizophrenic imagines his enemies to attack his.

\* \* \*

Martin Esslin's *Theatre of the Absurd* remarks upon the confusion with which "Waiting for Godot" was received at its 1952 premiere, and the manner in which subsequent generations of audiences seemed to grow familiar and even comfortable with what, a few years previous, was baffling. Esslin writes of an audience of San Quentin prisoners who understood the experience presented intuitively; perhaps similarly, at the end of the twentieth century audiences seem able to understand, for instance, *Endgame*, intuitively. We do not say that a character represented this or that so much as we say of the entire piece, *I have felt that way*. The work which in earlier audiences produced bewilderment, arouses in a contemporary audience a kind of empathy. A similar sort of naturalization may have occurred regarding depictions of schizophrenia. Twentieth century sensibilities grow comfortable with schizophrenic experience, and gradually it is, after a fashion, naturalized and/or domesticated. It seems that the experience of schizophrenia -- in 1850 strange to the point of incomprehension -- over the years has grown more familiar. As this project has suggested, a number of literary works, as well as several whole genres, may have played large parts in that process.

## WORKS CITED

- Aiken, Conrad. "A Basis for Criticism." *The New Republic*, 1923.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Skepticisms*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1919.
- "American Expert's Indictment of American Dream Analysis as Psychological Humbug."  
*Current Opinion*, LX (January 1916).
- Adler, Alfred. *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. Trans. P. Radin. 2nd Ed.  
(Revised). London: Routledge & Kegan Paul LTD, 1929.
- American Psychiatric Association. *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders --  
Revised (DSM-III-R) (Third Edition, revised)*. Washington: American Psychiatric  
Association, 1980.
- Bateson, Gregory. *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*. New York: Ballantine, 1972.
- Becker, Ernest. *The Denial of Death*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1973.
- Beja, Morris. "Bartleby & Schizophrenia." *Massachusetts Review*, Amherst, MA 1978, 19,  
555-68.
- Bleikasten, André. *The Ink of Melancholy: Faulkner's Novels from The Sound and the Fury to  
Light in August*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Bleuler, Eugen. (1911) *Dementia Praecox: Or, the Group of Schizophrenias*. New York:  
International Universities Press, 1950.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Textbook of Psychiatry*, trans. A.A. Brill. New York: The MacMillan Company, 1924.
- Blotner, Joseph Leo. *Faulkner; A Biography*, Volume One. New York: Random House, 1974.
- Bockting, Ineke. "The Impossible World of the 'Schizophrenic': William Faulkner's Quentin  
Compson." *Style* (DeKalb, Ill.) 24: 484-97.
- Bodkin, Maud. "Literary Criticism and the Study of the Unconscious." *The Monist*, XXXVII  
(July 1927).
- Breton, André. *Manifestoes of Surrealism*. Trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane. Ann



- Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972.
- Breuer, J., and Freud, S. (1895). *Studies in Hysteria*. Standard Edition. London: Hogarth Press, 1955, 2, 161.
- Brill, A. A. *Fundamental Conceptions of Psychoanalysis*. New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1921.
- Brooks, Peter. *Psychoanalysis and Storytelling*. Cambridge MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1994.
- Budd, Louis J. "Playing Hide and Seek with Faulkner: The Publicly Private Artist; Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha" in Fowler, Doreen and Abadie, Ann J. *Faulkner and Popular Culture*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990.
- Cardinal, Roger. *Nadja*. University of Kent at Canterbury: Grant & Cutler, Ltd., 1986.
- Cash, W.J. *The Mind of the South*. New York: Vintage, 1969.
- Caws, Mary Ann. *Surrealism and the Literary Imagination*. The Hague: Mouton, 1966.
- Chabrowe, Leonard. *Ritual and Pathos -- The Theatre of O'Neill*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1976.
- Collins, Carvel. Lecture given at the University of Notre Dame. 4 May 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Miss Quentin's Paternity Again." *The Merrill Studies in The Sound and the Fury*. (Compiled by James B. Meriwether) Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Interior Monologues of The Sound and the Fury." *Psychoanalysis and American Fiction*. New York: Dutton, 1965.
- Coriat, Isador. *What Is Psychoanalysis?* New York: Moffat, Yard and Company. 1919.
- Coveney, Peter. *Poor Monkey: the Child in Literature*. London: Salisbury Square, 1957.
- Dell, Floyd. *Homecoming*. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1969.
- Donn, Linda. *Freud and Jung: Years of Friendship, Years of Loss*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988.
- Eastman, Max. "Exploring the Soul and Healing the Body." *Everybody's Magazine*, XXXII (June 1915).
- Edel, Leon. *The Psychological Novel*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1955.

- Eisenstein. *The Film Sense*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1975.
- Ellman, Richard. *James Joyce*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Eliot, T.S. *Selected Essays, 1917-1932*. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1932.
- Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, Inc., 1969.
- Faulkner, William. *Absalom, Absalom*. New York: The Modern Library, 1936.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "American Drama: Inhibitions." *The Mississippian*, 17 March 1922. 5. *Faulkner's University Pieces*. (Compilation and Introduction by Carvel Collins). Tokyo: Kenkyusha Limited, 1962.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *As I Lay Dying*. New York: Vintage Books, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. Discussion with student at the University of Virginia. Cited in *Faulkner in the University: Class Conferences at the University of Virginia 1957-58*. Ed. Frederick L. Gwynn and Joseph Blotner. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1958. 268.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Go Down, Moses*. New York: Vintage, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Light in August*. New York: Modern Library, 1959.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Pylon*. New York: Vintage, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Sound and the Fury*. New York: Random House, 1956.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Sound and the Fury: A Concordance to the Novel*. Ed. Noel Polk and Kenneth L. Privratsky. UMI Monographs, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *William Faulkner Manuscripts 1; Elmer and "A Portrait of Elmer."* Ed. Thomas L. McHaney. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *William Faulkner Reads from As I Lay Dying and Others*. (Recorded in October, 1954 in New York City.) New York: Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1989.
- Felman, Shoshana. *Jacques Lacan and the Adventure of Insight*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- Fisher, V.E. *An Introduction to Abnormal Psychology*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937.
- Flournoy, Theodore. *From India to the Planet Mars*. Trans. D. B. Vermilye. New York and

London, 1900.

Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon Books, 1977.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Madness and Civilization: a History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. New York: New American Library, 1967.

Frank, Florence K. "Psychoanalysis: Some Random Thoughts Thereon." *The Little Review*, III (June-July, 1916).

Freud, Sigmund. *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. In *A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud*, Edited John Rickman. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1957.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's *Gravida*" (1907). *Standard Edition*, 9, 3-96.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Psycho-Analytic Notes Upon an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia" in *Collected Papers*, vol. III. London: Hogarth Press, 1925.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Claim of Psychoanalysis to Scientific Interest." *Standard Edition*, 1914, 13.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Interpretation of Dreams* in *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, trans. A.A. Brill. New York: The Modern Library, 1938.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Problem of Lay-Analyses*. Trans. A. Paul Maerker-Branded. New York: Bretano's Publisher, 1927.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Psycho-Analytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides)." *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. XII*. Trans. James Strachey. London: The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1958. (First English translation in 1925.)

Fry, Roger. *The Artist and Psychoanalysis*. London: Hogarth Press, 1924.

Glass, James M. *Psychosis and Power*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995.

Gottesman, Irving I. *Schizophrenia Genesis: the Origins of Madness*. New York: W.H. Freeman and Company, 1991.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,

1980.

Gregory, Alyse. "Sherwood Anderson, *The Dial* LXXV (September) 1923.

Hamilton, G. V. *An Introduction to Objective Psychopathology*. St. Louis: The C.V. Mosby Company, 1925.

Haslam, J. *Illustrations of Madness*. London, 1810. Reprinted in *Selected Readings in the History of British Psychiatry*. Ed. R.A. Hunter, I. Macalpine, and L. M. Payne. 1988.

Hoffman, F. *Freudianism and the Literary Mind*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1945.

Hollingsworth, H.L. *Abnormal Psychology: Its Concepts and Theories*. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1930.

Inge, M. Thomas. Faulknerian Folklore: Public Fictions, Private Jokes, and Outright Lies; Faulkner and Yoknapatawpha" in Fowler, Doreen and Abadie, Ann J. *Faulkner and Popular Culture*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1990.

Irwin, John W. *Doubling and Incest/Repetition and Revenge: A Speculative Reading of Faulkner*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1975.

Janet, Pierre. *The Major Symptoms of Hysteria*. London: MacMillan & Co., Ltd., 1907.

Jaspers, Karl. *General Psychopathology*, trans. J. Hoenig and M. W. Hamilton. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963.

Jean, M. ed. *The Autobiography of Surrealism*. Trans. L. Bourgeois and R. Goldwater. New York: Viking Press, 1980.

Josephson, Matthew. "Instant Note on Waldo Frank," *Broom*, IV (December 1922), 57.

Jung, C.G. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. (1907) "The Psychology of Dementia Praecox." *Collected Works*, 3, 1-151. New York: Bollingen, 1960. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. New York: Pantheon Books, 1960. (First English translation in 1909.)

\_\_\_\_\_. (1910) "The Family Constellation." *Collected Works*, 2, 466-75. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973. Trans. Leopold Stein in collaboration with Diana

- Riviere. New York: Pantheon Books, 1960. (First English translation in 1910.)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1917) *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology*, second edition. London: Bailliere, Tindall and Cox, 1917.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1912) *The Psychology of the Unconscious*. Trans. Beatrice M. Hinkle. New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1916.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1914a) "The Content of the Psychoses." *Collected Works*, 1960, 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1914b). "On the Importance of the Unconscious in Psychopathology." *Collected Works*, 1960, 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1919). On the problem of psychogenesis in mental disease. *Collected Works*, 1960, 3.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "On the Relation of Analytical Psychology to Poetic Art." 1919.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1928). "Mental Disease and the Psyche." *The Psychogenesis of Mental Disease*. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. New York: Pantheon Books, 1960. (First published as "Geisteskrankheit und Seele." *Berliner Tageblatt*, Apr. 21, 1928)
- Jung, C. G. and Wilhelm, Richard. *The Secret of the Golden Flower: A Chinese Book of Life*. Trans. Cary F. Baynes. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1931.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Symbols of Transformation (An Analysis of the Prelude to a Case of Schizophrenia)*. Trans. R.F.C. Hull. 2nd Ed. Bollinger Series XX. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*. New York: Pantheon Books, Inc., 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*. New York: Random House, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Spirit in Man, Art, and Literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966.
- Kartiganer, Donald M. and Abadie, Ann J. *Faulkner and Psychology*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1994.
- Kleinbard, David. "As I Lay Dying: Literary Imagination, the Child's Mind, and Mental Illness." *The Southern Review* (Baton Rouge, La.) 22:51-68 Jan 1986
- Kraepelin, Emil. *Manic-Depressive Insanity and Paranoia*. Trans. R. Mary Barclay. Edinburgh:

Livingstone, 1921.

Kuttner, Alfred Booth. "The Freudian Theory," *The New Republic*, II (March 20, 1915), 183.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Psychopathology of Everyday Life." *New York Times* in October 18, 1914.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Artist." *The Seven Arts* (February, 1917).

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Artist (A Communication)." *The Seven Arts* (March, 1917).

Laing, R. D. *The Divided Self*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1969.

Levenson, Michael. *A Genealogy of Modernism*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Levin, Kenneth. *Freud's Early Psychology of the Neuroses: A Historical Perspective*.

Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1978.

Lezenweger, Mark F. and Gottesman, Irving I. "Schizophrenia." *Encyclopedia of Human*

*Behavior*, Volume 4. Academic Press, Inc., 1994.

Lippmann, Walter. "Freud and the Layman," *The New Republic*, II (April 17, 1915). 10.

\_\_\_\_\_. *A Preface to Politics*. 1914.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Review of Jung's *Psychology of the Unconscious*," *The New Republic*, VII (May 6, 1916), 22.

Lothane, Zvi. *In Defense of Schreber; Soul Murder and Psychiatry*. Hillsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, Inc., 1992.

Lucie-Smith, Edward. *Movements in Art Since 1945*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1984.

Luhan, Mable Dodge. *Intimate Memories*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1933.

Lukach, J.M. "De Chirico and Italian Art Theory," in W. Rubin, ed., *De Chirico*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982.

Luria, A. R. *The Man with a Shattered World: the History of a Brain Wound*. Trans. Lynn Solotaroff. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.

MacLane, Mary. *I, Mary MacLane, A Diary of Human Days* (1917). New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1917.

Marcus, Steven. *Freud and the Culture of Psychoanalysis*. Boston: George Allen & Unwin, 1984.

- Meriwether, James B. "Foreword," *Elmer*. Ed. Diane L. Cox. Northport, Ala.: Seejay Press, 1984.
- Meriwether, James B. and Millgate, Michael, eds. *Lion in the Garden: Interviews with William Faulkner (1926-1962)*. New York: Random House, 1968.
- Metman, Eva. "Reflections on Samuel Beckett's Plays," *Journal of Analytical Psychology*, London: January 1960.
- Meyer, Adolph. (1896-1937) *Collected Papers*. Volume 2: Psychiatry. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1951.
- Miller, Frank. "Some Instances of Subconscious Creative Imagination." *Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research*. Vol. 1, No. 6. June, 1907.
- Millgate, Jane. "Quentin Compson as Poor Player: Verbal and Social Clichés in *The Sound and the Fury*." *Revue des Langues Vivantes* (Bruxelles), 34 (1968), 40-49.
- Minter, David. *William Faulkner: His Life and Work*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980. 94.
- Morrison, Claudia C. *Freud and the Critic*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1968.
- Nadeau, Maurice. *The History of Surrealism*. Trans. R. Howard. New York: Penguin Books, 88.
- New York Times*, May 21, 1916, section 6.
- Nightingale, Benedict. *Peter Brook Voyages to Inner Space*. *The New York Times*. Section 2, p. 4. March 5, 1995.
- Oppenheim, James. "What Jung Has Done," *The New Republic*, VII (May 20, 1916).
- Orberndorf, Clarence P. *A History of Psychoanalysis in America*. New York: Grune and Stratton, 1953.
- Polk, Noel. "'The Dungeon Was Mother Herself': William Faulkner: 1927-1931." *New Directions in Faulkner Studies*. ed. Doreen Fowler and Ann J. Abadie. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1984. 61-93.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "William Faulkner's 'Carcassonne.'" *Studies in American Fiction*, Spring 1984, vol. 12, no 1.
- Porter, Roy. *A Social History of Madness*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1987.
- Prescott, Frederick Clarke. *Poetry and Dreams*. Boston: The Four Seas Co., 1912.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Poetic Mind*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922.
- Radford, F. L. and Wilson, R. R. "Some Phases of the Jungian Moon: Jung's Influence on Modern Literature." *English Studies in Canada*, 7, no. 3, 1982.
- Ransom, John Crowe. "Freud and Literature," *The Saturday Review of Literature*, I (October 4, 1924). 161.
- Read, Herbert. *Art and Society*. New York: Schocken Books, 1966.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Psychoanalysis and the Critic," *The Criterion*, III (January 1925), 214-30.
- Reprinted in Read, Herbert. *Reason and Romanticism*. London: Faber and Gwyer, 1926.
- Richardson, H. Edward. *William Faulkner: The Journey to Self-Discovery*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1969. 210.
- Rosen, G. *Madness in Society*. New York: Harper & Row, 1968.
- Rubin, William S. *Dada and Surrealist Art*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers.
- Sacks, Oliver. *An Anthropologist on Mars*. New York: Knopf, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1990.
- Sandrow, Nahma. *Surrealism: Theatre, Arts, Ideas*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1972.
- Sartre, Jean-Paul. "On *The Sound and the Fury*: Time in the Work of Faulkner." In *Faulkner: A Collection of Essays*. Ed. Robert Penn Warren. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966.
- Sass, Louis A. *Madness and Modernism: Insanity in the Light of Modern Art, Literature, and Thought*. New York: Basic Books, 1992.
- Schreber, Daniel Paul. *Memoirs of My Nervous Illness* (1903). Ed. Macalpine, Ida; Richard A. Hunter. Contributor: Samuel Weber. Trans. by Macalpine, Ida; Richard A. Hunter.



Boston: Harvard University Press, 1988.

Schultz, Duane P. *A History of Modern Psychology*. New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1969.

Seltzer, Leon F. "Narrative Function vs. Psychopathology: The Problem of Darl in *As I Lay Dying*." *Literature and Psychology*, 25, no. 2. 1975.

Sensibar, Judith L. *The Origins of Faulkner's Art*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1984.

Shattuck, Roger. *The Banquet Years: The Arts in France, 1885-1918*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958.

Simpkins, Scott. "Surrealism and Breton's Textes Soluble: An Index to Modernism." *Comparative Literature Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 3, 1988.

Slusser, George and Shippey, Tom, eds. *Fiction 2000: Cyberpunk and the Future of Narrative*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992.

Smith, Jacqui. "Divided Down the Middle": a Cure for the Journals of Susanna Moodie. *Essays on Canadian Writing*. No. 17:149-62. Fall 1992.

Soby, James. *Giorgio de Chirico*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, n.d.

Sontag, Susan. *Illness as Metaphor*. New York: Vintage Books, 1979.

Steffens, Lincoln. *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1931.

Steinberg, Erwin R., ed. *Stream-of-Consciousness Technique in the Modern Novel*. Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1979.

Stekel, Walter. "Poetry and Neurosis," *The Psychoanalytic Review*, X (January 1923).

Stone, Phil. "To Carvel Collins." 16 Aug 1954. Letter 1064a in *Faulkner: A Comprehensive Guide to the Brodsky Collection. Volume II: The Letters*. Ed. Louis Daniel Brodsky and Robert W. Hamblin. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1982.

Strauss, John S. and Carpenter, William T. *Schizophrenia*. New York: Plenum Book Company, 1981.

Strecker, E. A. and Ebaugh, F. G. "Dementia Praecox." *An Outline of Abnormal Psychology*. Ed. Gardner Murphy. New York: Random House, 1929.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Paranoia." *An Outline of Abnormal Psychology*. Ed. Gardner Murphy. New York: Random House, 1929.
- Sugg, Richard P., ed. *Jungian Literary Criticism*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1992.
- Szasz, Thomas S. *The Manufacture of Madness: A Comparative Study of the Inquisition and the Mental Health Movement*. New York: Harper & Row, 1977. London: Paladin, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Myth of Mental Illness*. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Age of Madness: The History of Involuntary Hospitalization Presented in Selected Texts*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Thompson, Lawrance. "Mirror Analogues in the Sound and the Fury." *English Institute Essays*, 1952. New York: Columbia University Press, 1953.
- Thorburn, John M. *Art and the Unconscious*. London: Kegan, Paul, Trubner and Company, 1925.
- Torrey, E. Fuller. *Schizophrenia and Civilization*. New York: Janson Aronson, Inc., 1980.
- Tuck, Susan. "The O'Neill-Faulkner Connection" in *Critical Essays on Eugene O'Neill*. (Compiled by James J. Martine) Boston: G.K. Hall, 1984.
- Vernon, John. *The Garden and the Map: Schizophrenia in Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973.
- Wasson, Ben. *Count No 'Count: Flashbacks to Faulkner*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1983.
- Watts, Eileen. "Beckett's Unnamables: Schizophrenia, Rationalism, and the Novel." *American Imago*, Spring 1988, 45:1, 85-106.
- Wright, Willard Huntington. *The Creative Will: Studies in the Philosophy and Syntax of Aesthetics*. New York: John Lane Company, 1916.
- Zeitlin, Michael. "Faulkner and Psychoanalysis: the Elmer Case." *Faulkner and Psychology*. Kartigann, Donald M. (ed. and intro.) and Abadie, Ann J. (ed.) Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1994.

Zimmerman, Brett. "Moral Insanity" or Paranoid Schizophrenia: Poe's The Tell-tale Heart.

*Mosaic* Spring 1992.