Fragments of an Analysis: Lacan in Context

David Macey

At risk of caricature, the received Anglo-Saxon image of Lacan might be formalized as Freud + Saussure = Lacan (2). The received formula owes much to one of the first texts to introduce Lacan's work to an English-speaking audience, namely the translation of Althusser's 'Freud and Lacan': 'Lacan would be the first to admit that his attempted theorization would have been impossible were it not for the emergence of a new science: linguistics' (3); Althusser's presentation of Lacan is not, of course, as crude as my caricatural formula; for this most subtle of doctors the mystery of the incarnation is rather more complex. The unspoken model operating in 'Freud and Lacan' is that of the process of theoretical practice outlined in 'On The Materialist Dialectic' (4) the model of Generalities. Saussure 'works upon' Freud to produce Lacan. To risk caricature once more: the mystical marriage of Freud and Saussure gives birth to the monster known as 'Lacan'. The simplicity of the formula and the theoretical obviousness of Althusser's model mask certain fundamental difficulties. Leaving aside the vexed question of its supposed novelty, what precisely is the linguistics that is being invoked here? Saussure, of course. Saussure on general linguistics. But a curiously incomplete Saussure. Lacan reduces the sign to the algorithm S/s and represses the concept of the referent (though it might be argued that, like most repressed material, it returns ... in the concept of the Real (5), forever excluded from discourse, forever resistant to symbolization). Linguistics, if not language itself, is reduced to the binary phonemic opposition mapped out in the Fort-Da game (6). A linguistics devoid or innocent of semantics, syntax, morphology, etymology ... a curiously abstract parent, even for this most immaculate of conceptions.

Althusser would be the first to admit that generalities, be they ever so correct or scientific, are not innate in the mind and do not drop from the skies, that every birth, even that of a monster, has its inscription. What, then, is the inscription of Lacan's work? To pose such a question is not to look for a single point of origin or to attempt to reduce Lacan to constituent elements via a search for the sources and influences dear to literary criticism. It is to attempt to provide anchoring points for a discourse that seems to hover in the rarified atmosphere of pure theory, that appears to be as abstract as it is difficult of access. Above all, to attempt to contextualize.

The immediate context for Lacan's earliest work is the entrenched resistance to psychoanalysis in France and the distortions of Freud perpetrated by the very individuals who claim to be pioneering French psychoanalysis. The famous 'return to Freud' begins, that is, with an attempt to turn to Freud in the first place. The Freud to whom the Young Lacan turns is not, however, the 'linguistic' Freud of The Interpretation of Dreams: references to that supposedly canonical text do not appear in the Ecrits until the fifties (in 'The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis'). It is the Freud of On Narcissism: An Introduction and related texts who provides Lacan with his first theoretical tools and helps him erect the scaffolding of his concept of the Imaginary (7). A major part of the Lacanian edifice is in situ long before any encounter with theoretical linguistics. And when that encounter comes, it is not with Saussure but with a phenomenological theory of the sign. But perhaps a more crucial encounter for the Young Lacan is that with his contemporaries the surrealists, virtually the only group in France to welcome psychoanalysis with open arms. Their conception of language provides a parallel with Lacan's own and their linguistic practice may provide a key to the mysteries of his famous 'style'. Finally, the surrealist cult of 'convulsive beauty' and the associated pantheon of women killers parallels a major theme in Lacan's discourse from his very first writings to Encore (8).

Ecrits (9) - almost a thousand pages in the original French, the product of thirty years of exploration and theorization - born, so it would seem, intact from the presses of Editions du Seuil in 1966 and swept into the best-seller lists by the flood tide of structuralism. Born but not created: a monolith. The volume opens with the singularly opaque 'Ouverture de ce receuil' (1966) and the text of the 1955 Seminar on Poe's Purloined Letter (10). After a brief survey 'De nos antécédents', a flashback takes us back to 'Au delà du principe de réalité' (1936). The effect of this textual architecture is to mask the chronology of the collection as a whole. The monolith is completed by the Index raisonée des concepts majeurs lovingly compiled by Jacques-Alain Miller, an index which transforms the hestitations of thirty years into the smooth body of timeless theory, ironing out evolution and contradictions and producing a text to be studied in terms of its presumed architectonic, never in terms of its history: 'according to our concept of these Ecrits, it is best to study them as forming a system' (11). Miller's index is raisonné, as in catalogue raisonné: 'the collection of the complete oeuvre of the artist whose coherence as an individual creator by assembling all his or (rarely) her work into an expressive totality' (12). A curious fate for the theorist of the split or decentred subject.

Ecrits, then, a source of authoritative, authorized truths to be applied, the fountainhead of a new orthodoxy applicable to everything from literary theory to feminism, from film studies to the theory of ideology. A conceptual apparatus to be applied, never to be dismantled, never to be contextualized. True, a partial attempt at contextualization is made by Sherry Turkle in her Psychoanalytic politics (13), but it is constantly frustrated by the author's nostalgia for the heady days of May '68 and by her curious belief that Lacan is in some senses an anti-authoritarian figure. So no doubt was André Breton, high priest of surrealism and subversion, Breton who presided over at

least as many expulsions from the divinely anti-authoritarian presence as the 'phallocentric prick' - to use Jane Gallop's inimitable phrase - who summarily dismissed Luce Irigary from the Département de Psychanalyse at Vincennes University when she dared to publish her Ce sexe qui n'en est pas un (14).

Ecrits: A Selection (15), less than half the original text, a selection made by Lacan himself. No explanation as to the criteria for inclusion/exclusion is given: we are simply assured that the selection is 'Lacan's own'. The monolith is still flanked by that formidable index, but a curious sea-change has taken place in mid-Channel: raisonné is translated as classified. We no longer have a catalogue raisonné but a classified directory of concepts. The armature is completed by a short glossary supplied by the translator. Despite its evident utility, and even though 'it is not intended to provide adequate definitions of concepts' (16), the glossary cannot but heighten the sense of closure, the feeling of theoretical claustrophobia: everything is indexed to Lacan himself or at best to Freud read through Lacanian glosses (17).

Ecrits: a fortress hewn from the solid rock, all of a piece. Only later are we permitted to explore the outworks of the multi-volume Seminar and then the primitive stockade of a thesis first published in 1932 and which remained invisible to all but specialists in Lacanian archaeology until it was republished in 1975 - and even then 'not without reference' (18). The publication of the Lacanian oeuvre has taken a curiously inverted course which does little to facilitate any reading of it.

Lacan insists again and again that the supposed unity of the individual subject is illusory, imaginary. Is the seeming unity of this fortress-text any less imaginary than that of the child in front of the mirror? Are there no contradictions at all in this seamless text, no anchoring points at all? Must it float in the pure empyrean of theory for all time?

To return briefly to Althusser. There is no Young Lacan in 'Freud and Lacan', merely the eternal, fetishized author of the Ecrits. For an adept of symptomatic reading, Althusser shows little sign of having looked at the shifting meaning of certain terms - notably 'sign'. Certainly, Lacan refers constantly to language, signs and symbolization, but it is not until the fifties that the reference to Saussure becomes dominant (in 'Function and Field' and 'The Freudian Thing'). Certainly, the word 'sign' appears in the earliest sections of the Ecrits, but a word is not a concept (even though it may masquerade as such in Miller's index). After all, the word 'alienation' does appear in Capital, but we all know the theoretical blood that has been spilt to prove that it no longer has the connotations that cling to it in the 1844 Manuscripts. Coupure épistémologique oblige.

Signs and Meanings

(1) 'Au-delà "Principe de réalité"' (1936)

'Language, that is, a sign.... Before signifying something, language signifies for someone' (19). Given Ecrits's marked tendency to abolish or disavow its own chronology, it is tempting to read Saussure into this, to project the entire apparatus of 'The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious or Reason since Freud' (1957) back across the years. But one would search in vain for any sign of the 'floating signifier' in 'Au-delà', one would seek in vain for the famous algorithm. Indeed, to attempt to do so would be to sin by anachronism. The Saussure of the Course on General Linguistics is far from being a major reference in the France of 1936. The 'structuralist' Saussure is not in the ascendant until after the Second World War and his rise to stardom owes much to the phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty, 'probably one of the first philosophers to take an interest in Saussure' (20). In the thirties, Saussure's reputation rests upon his work on philology - the very discipline that will be discredited by the synchronic studies of structuralism (21).

The primary reference of 'Au-delà' is phenomenology and the 'sign' invoked here owes much more to that tradition than to any structuralism. By 1936, phenomenology is finally beginning to infiltrate the Maginot line erected by the protectionist neo-Kantians of the Third Republic to defend French philosophy from barbarian incursions across the Rhine, the major breach of the fortifications being the course of lectures on Hegel given by Alexandre Kojève at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes between 1933 and 1939 (22). Lacan was an assiduous attender and his dialectic of desire bears the mark of Kojève's reading of the master-slave dialectic to the end. As no less an authority than Julia Kristeva notes, what will come to be known as structuralism owes a considerable if usually unacknowledged debt to phenomenology (23).

In 'Au-delà', language is defined as the 'given' of the analytic situation, which is described in phenomenological terms. Its central moment is the analyst's recognition of the intentionality of the analysand (a desire to speak which s/he represses). Language is seen here as a structure governed by the intentionality of a subject, as a system of motivated signs which speak 'for someone' before they signify something. These are not, then, the signs of Lacan's later work. 'Au-delà' contains themes that will become more familiar in 'The Mirror Stage' and 'Aggressivity in Psychoanalysis', still perhaps the best-known and the most accessible of the Ecrits, namely a theory of images and of alienating identifications as constitutive of the ego, but (1) those themes do not emerge ex nihilo, being at least half-visible in the very earliest of Lacan's writings (as well as displaying a kinship with Kojève's Hegel) and (2) they do not depend upon any reference to Saussure.

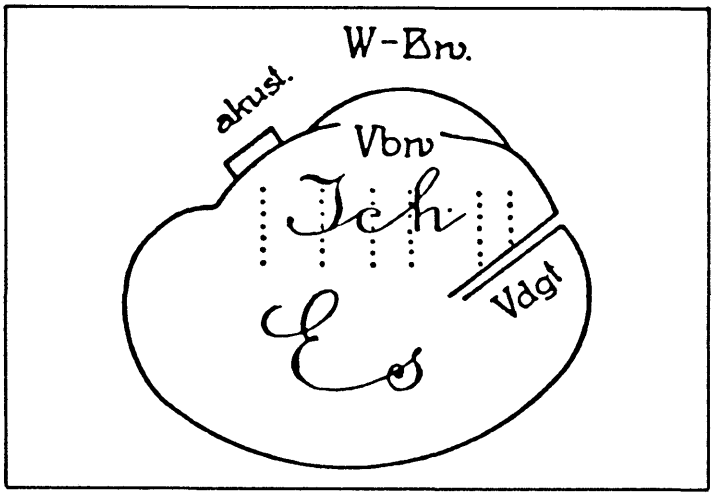
(2) 'Propos sur la causalité psychique' (1946).

'The word is not a sign, but a knot of signification' (24). Again, a deceptive reference. Lacan glosses his use of 'sign' not with a nod towards Geneva linguistics, but with a bow to 'my friend Leiris', who excelled at 'glossalogical games'. Michel Leiris: poet, ethnographer and sometime member of the surrealist group. Author of a curious text entitled Glossaire: j'y serre mes gloses (which might be rendered, if not exactly translated, as Glossary - where I air my glosses), parts of which appeared in La Révolution Surréaliste (the review published by Breton and associates from 1924 to 1929), a longer version of which was published in 1939. Glossaire consists of a series of 'definitions' of words arrived at by a process of punning which is at least as preposterous as Lacan's verbal games. 'PSYCHOANALYSIS: lapsus channelled by means of a couch'; 'PSYCHOSIS: hypostasis in question' (25). Compared with Glossaire, some of Lacan's word play, such as je père sévère (26) ('I persevere/I, strict father'), seems innocent indeed. Leiris in Biffures, the first volume of his autobiographical La Règle de jeu: 'Articulated language, the arachnid tissue of my relations with others, transcends me, spreading its mysterious antennae in all directions' (27). Or again, 'But what is an "I" - a unique, isolated "I" - without a "thou", without a "we", without a "he/it" gravitating around it?' (28). Leiris is not being posited as a source or even as an influence, but as a parallel. Parallels may not meet, but they can be far-reaching and suggestive. The suggestion here being that there is no need to look to Saussure to explain Lacan's interest in language and his 'linguistic' treatment of the formations of the unconscious. The example of Leiris and his exploration of the pronoun "I" as being defined solely in relation to other pronoun-functions suggest that the parallel reaches back to a very different scene. And that at least some of the tenets of what will become structural linguistics are already present in a very different discourse: that of surrealism. But before that parallel is pursued, mention should be made of a negative determinant of Lacan's discourse - the French Resistance.

The French Resistance (29)

In 1964, Lacan describes himself as always having been alone in relation to the psychoanalytic cause (30). Nine years later, still isolated, still alone, he coins the acronym SAMCDA: Société d'Aide Mutuelle Contre le Discours Analytique (Society for Mutual Aid Against Analytic Discourse) (31). SAMCDA refers primarily to the International Psychoanalytic Association, seen by Lacan as 'revisionist' in an almost classically Maoist sense, but its membership is not restricted either in terms of history or of ideological space. Indeed, its original membership includes the self-styled pioneers of psychoanalysis, the founder members of the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (SPP, born 1926). In this context, the slogan of the 'return to Freud' can be seen as something other than a rallying cry in the battle against made-in-USA ego psychology. Lacan's polemic begins at home. Just as reading classical political economy can provide some useful insights into Marx, the negative example of SAMCDA's early pronouncements on Freud is a helpful backdrop to any reading of Lacan, not least in that its pronouncements form a curious prelude to the largely hostile reception given to Lacan by the British establishment (32).

In the beginning was the French resistance: 'not always understanding' (Freud). 'Among European countries, France has hitherto shown itself least disposed to welcome psychoanalysis' (33). The first line of resistance is the defence and illustration of French culture, with the damning accusation of 'Germanism' as a rallying cry. It



matters little that Freud is Austrian and that Vienna is scarcely in the heartlands of Prussia: if the unconscious can ignore time, repression can easily ignore geography. From the Franco-Prussian war onwards it is taken for granted that Germanism is the arch enemy of French or 'Latin' culture. For philosopher Emile Boutroux, prominent on the theoretical Maginot line and no doubt an honorary member of SAMCDA, 'German culture really is a scientific barbarism', whereas 'France represents a marriage between a generous heart and a lucid reason' (34). And Freud? 'Freud's doctrine, which derives from Germanic philosophy and not, as has sometimes been said, from the French genius of Charcot, will find that moderation, the inspiration behind the Latin genius, is a very useful adversary...' (35) The classic mechanism of Verleugnung (disavowal) is pressed into service to deny that this is crude nationalism: 'Impartial independence from foreign influences must not be confused with xenophobia' (36). The last two quotations are not, as might be supposed, from immortal members of the Académie Française but from the preface to the second edition of Régis and Hesnard, La Psychanalyse des névroses et des psychoses (1914), the first full-length account of psychoanalysis to be published in France and described by Freud himself as 'an exhaustive presentation which, however, is not always understanding' (37). For the French medical establishment, Freud's doctrine is Germanic. The use of germanique rather than the more usual allemand is in itself symptomatic, connoting as it does a Germany of misty forests and barbarian hordes, a suitable lair for the nightmare creatures of the unconscious.

If psychoanalysis is to be allowed into the country, it must first be Gallicized, castrated on the procrustean bed of French rationalism. 'Psychoanalysis has many merits, but it is too obviously marked by Germanic philosophy and system-building: if it is to make its mark in France it will have to be considerably modified ... it must abandon such outrageous terms as "pansexualism" and "libido", whoch are offensive to a French ear" (38). Psychoanalysis must be naturalized - such is the stated ambition of L'Evolution psychiatrique, the journal established in 1925 to 'translate' psychoanalytic theory and technique and 'to adapt them to the spirit of our race' (39).

The accusations of Germanism are not restricted to Freud himself. In 1938, Edmond Pichon, who combines the improbable attributes of being a linguist, a psychoanalyst and a member of the monarchist Action Française, comments on Lacan's article on the family in the Encyclopédie Française: 'it seems to me that M. Lacan has chosen to dress up in a finery that is ill-suited to an intellect which, in terms of hereditary and family and social background, is French' and objects to 'an armature that combines sectarian jargon and personal pedantry' (40). Lacan has caught the Germanic plague. In retrospect, the irony is irresistible: Lacan, now regarded as the epitome of all that is Parisian in his pedantry, accused of Germanism!

The compulsion to revise is there from the beginning. SAMCDA objects to the theory of the libido, 'a concept as obscure as it is untranslateable' (41) and reduces it to a variant on Bergson's élan vital or to a genital instinct. The very mention of infantile sexuality provokes howls of moral outrage. Analysis is little more than a revamped hypnosis; the interpretation of dreams is no more than the ancient notion of a universal key to dream symbolism; unconscious forces are merely a tropism. With a prudery worthy of Molière's précieuses ridicules, SAMCDA proposes a wholesale bowdlerization of Freudian technical vocabulary. 'Libido' is too close to 'libidinous' for comfort and must therefore be banished from French psychoanalytic nomenclature (42): Pichon proposes that it be replaced by aimance, a word as obscure as it is untranslatable, but which might be rendered as 'amativeness'. Psychoanalysis itself must be renamed if it is to be adopted into the national tradition: Hesnard suggests psychogonomie but at least has the grace to apologize for 'a neologism which we are substituting for "psychoanalysis", which Freud and his school use arbitrarily and illegitimately to mean the psychological analysis of sexuality' (43). In a final attempt to ward off the plague, the name of Charcot is invoked like some all-powerful mantra. SAMCDA blissfully ignores (or represses) Freud's radical break with Charcot after his abandoning of the trauma theory of neurosis and argues that 'we might say that Freud's studies take as their starting point the research of Charcot and Janet, which is based upon a search for the neurotic's traumatic memories and which leads to a sort of mental disinfection' (44). Thus Claude, professor at the Hopital Sainte-Anne and Lacan's mentor in 1928-1929. Claude, who allows René Laforgue to give 'analytic' consultations at Sainte-Anne, but whose considered opinion is that 'Psychoanalysis has not yet been adapted to the exploration of the French mentality. Certain of its investigative methods shock the delicacy of our innermost feelings and some of its outrageous symbolic generalizations which may be applicable to subjects from other races do not seem to me to be acceptable in Latin critical practice' (45). Thus Claude, who applies the vocabulary of pharmacology to psychoanalysis, fencing it in with contra-indications and incompatibilities as though it were some new chemotherapy.

What, then, will psychoanalysis be when it is finally

granted French citizenship? Quite simply an additional tool in the hands of the medical profession, an adjuvant to traditional therapeutic methods. A medical specialization to be kept safely in quarantine, obtainable only on prescription. This at the very moment when Freud is coming to the conclusion that 'Doctors have no historical claim to the sole possession of analysis' (46). Jean-Pierre Mordier summarises the main defence mechanisms marshalled to protect the healthy French ego, one and indivisible, forged in the image of the Republic:

(1) Psychoanalysis is a stage in the history of psychiatry.
(2) Medical doctors must regain a monopoly on psychoanalysis.
(3) The psychoanalytic concept of libido and of sexual life in general is outrageous.
(4) The unconscious is not the 'centre' of the human phenomenon. It is the conscious mind that constitutes the human personality. (47)

The self-styled pioneers of French psychoanalysis make no attempt to discover the specificity or even the originality of Freud's work. Psychoanalysis is allowed into France on condition that it remains under house arrest in the Faculty of Medicine, that it accepts its status as a poor relation of classical psychiatry. Such is the theoretical background to the founding of the SPP in November 1926 (with a total membership of eleven). Such is the backdrop to the publication of Lacan's doctoral thesis, not in itself a psychoanalytic text but one which is struggling to find a theoretical basis that cannot be provided by SAMCDA or the SPP.

The strength of the French resistance explains some features of what will become Lacanian discourse: an insistence that analysts must (re)turn to Freud, to the letter of Freud's text; the foregrounding of the unconscious and the libido; a theory of drives and desire; a sustained assault on the healthy ego of Cartesianism, the very heart of French rationalism. And above all a refusal to be kept in quarantine in the Faculty of Medicine: one of the most persistent features of Lacan's work is its appeal to and cooption of other disciplines, its rejection of medical-biological essentialism.

'Beauty will be CONVULSIVE'(48)

For the French medical establishment, Freud is a persona non grata, an extremely undesirable alien. Translations of his work are slow to appear: The Psychopathology of Everyday Life in 1922, Totem and Taboo in 1924, The Interpretation of Dreams in 1927, Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious in 1930 ... even today there is no French equivalent of the Standard Edition or the Gesammelte Werke. For a long time the SPP remains a small, isolated group practising what is virtually fringe medicine. As Freud himself is ruefully aware, the only milieu in which psychoanalysis finds a warm welcome is the literary salon. French literature has, of course, a long tradition of psychological analysis and no doubt it seems in some circles that psychoanalysis is directly descended from La Rochefoucauld or from the Cartesian analysis of the passions of the soul. For one group, however, it is rather more than that: the surrealists (49).

The surrealists' interest in psychoanalysis is far from orthodox. To a large extent, they see it as simply another weapon in their arsenal, another means to épater le bourgeois. Its therapeutic aims are the least of their concerns: if anything, psychoanalysis is seen as a contribution to what can at times be described as a positive celebration of madness. Freud's exploration of the unconscious is greeted as a parallel to their own investigations of dreams and hallucinatory states (50) rather than as a scientific breakthrough. Thus, for Breton, Freud's discoveries have brought to light 'by far the most important part of the intellectual world' (51). Despite the unorthodox approach, despite Breton's disappointment at discovering that Freud was 'a Viennese bourgeois of regular habits' who showed no 'trace of the Bacchanalian' (52) and despite Freud's total, if predictable, lack of interest in their work, it would be difficult to deny that the surrealists play a role in the popularization of psychoanalysis. Not least by stressing that it should not remain in medical quarantine: significantly, it is La Révolution Surréealiste that first publishes Marie Bonaparte's translation of On The Question of Lay Analysis in its October 1927 issue. And, as will be argued here, surrealism has a major part to play in the creation of 'Lacan'.

Whilst the surrealists' interest in sexuality (53) and psychoanalysis is well-chronicled, their linguistic concerns usually attract less attention. They are of course fascinated with word association, and that fascination sometimes takes a surprisingly theoretical direction, as in Leiris's explorations of 'the most hidden virtues of words, the secret ramifications which spread throughout language, which are channelled by associations of sounds, forms and ideas' (54). Or as in René Magritte's early paintings, in part an application of the proposition that 'Everything suggests that there is very little relation between an object and what represents it' (55). Whilst much of his work at this time can be seen simply as an attempt to 'make strange' by juxtaposing incongruous objects and images, could it not also be seen as a meditation on the arbitrary nature of the linguistic or visual sign, as suggesting that there is no necessary link between signifier, signified and referent?

This convergent interest in dreams, the unconscious and language comes as no surprise, given that in 1924, André Breton, the charismatic prophet of the movement, defines surrealism 'once and for all' as 'pure psychical automatism which we propose to use in order to express, verbally, in writing or in any other way the real workings of the mind in the absence of any control exercised by reason and in the absence of any aesthetic or moral preoccupations' (56). It is in the context of this programmatic declaration that Breton and Aragon celebrate hysteria as 'the greatest poetic discovery of the late nineteenth century' and as a 'supreme means of expression' (57). The hysteria in question is in many ways closer to Charcot than to Freud: the celebratory text is illustrated with photographs of Charcot's female patients in the Salpétrière and strays into prurient speculation as to the nocturnal pastimes of patients and interns. More important is the insistence that hysteria - or any other form of 'madness' - is not simply the obverse of sanity and reason. On the contrary, pathological phenomena and discourse are significant and marked by the intentionality of the subject. For the surrealists, they are productive of poetry: Eluard and Breton attempt to simulate psychopathological discourse in L'Imaculée conception (1930), one of the classic texts of the heroic period of surrealism. And for the Young Lacan, 'the lived experience of paranoia and the world view it generates may be considered an original syntax' (58), a view which is much closer to Breton than to SAMCDA and its 'mental disinfection'. Over thirty years later, he will still attribute a positive value to hysteria, defining the analyst as a 'perfect hysteric, that is without symptoms' and maintaining that 'the hysteric produces knowledge ... forces the "signifying matter" to confess, and thereby constitutes a discourse' (59).

Although virtually every history of the surrealist movement records the fact that the Young Lacan did move in the circle gravitating around Breton, the details remain regrettably obscure. A reading of Ecrits, however, suggests that his discourse remains marked by his encounter with the surrealist revolutionaries, both thematically and stylistically. Symptomatically, of the forty or so French (literary) authors cited in the same Index, almost half belonged to the surrealist group at some point or were claimed by the surrealists as their ancestors. The majority of the other literary allusions are to classic authors -

Proust, Molière, Madame de La Fayette - standard cultural references of any literate Frenchman. Moreover, the standard allusions and references are not to any identifiable group: those to surrealism most definitely are. And as such they are highly significant. Lacan in 1966: 'I feel a great personal connection with surrealist painting' (60). And well he might.

According to one recent account (61) Lacan was introduced to Breton himself in the mid-twenties, but the details are uncertain. Other evidence is more definite. In 1933, Lacan publishes two articles (one of major importance) in Minotaure, a luxurious avant-garde review published by Albert Skira between 1933 and 1939. Minotaure provides a platform for many of the writers and artists associated with the surrealist group: a somewhat unlikely place, one would think, for a young psychiatrist to publish material which draws heavily on his clinical research. his doctoral thesis, not, apparently, too well received in medical circles, becomes something of a cause célèbre for the surrealists, a very favourable account of it being given by René Crevel in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution (62), the more politicized successor to La Révolution Surréaliste. But of all the surrealists it is Dali who is closest to Lacan. Or is it Lacan who is closest to Dali?

Dali and Lacan, apparently introduced to one another by Breton, are known to have been close associates in the early thirties. A tenacious legend persists that Lacan's doctoral thesis is the primary 'source' for Dali's paranoiac-critical method, but whilst Lacan may provide him with a certain a posteriori theorization, Dali appears to have first used the term 'critical paranoia' in 1929 (63). The usage would therefore seem to pre-date both the thesis and the research on which it is based. Equally tenacious is the story that Lacan's early work on paranoia owes much to insights gained during long conversations with Dali (64). The latter version derives primarily from Dali's various writings and, given the author's marked tendency towards mythomania, is unlikely to be totally objective. Ultimately, however, there seems little point in speculating as to the vectors of possible mutual influences. What is more important is that in the early thirties both the surrealist and the future psychoanalyst are working in similar areas and drawing similar conclusions. In 1935 Dali defines paranoiac critical activity as follows: 'Paranoia: delirium of interpretative association permitting a systematic structure. Paranoiac-critical activity: spontaneous method of irrational understanding based upon the interpretative critical association of delirious phenomena (65). Probably the best-known painting produced by paranoiac-critical activity is The Metamorphosis of Narcissus (1937, Tate Gallery). The similarities between Dali's visual images and the Young Lacan's interpretation of paranoia are undeniable. The painting is characterized primarily by its haunting reduplication of images: in the thesis, it is the reduplication and repetition of images and identifications that provides Lacan with his first notion of structure (66) (Dali's 'systematic structure'). For Dali, the images produced by critical paranoia are characterized by their immediacy; for Lacan the 'fertile moments' of paranoia are exceptionally rich and acute delusional experiences relating less to a loss of reality than to the sudden breakthrough to an original syntax. Yet again, Lacan displays his surrealist birthmark.

The Metamorphosis of Narcissus is accompanied by a poem of the same title. Without wishing to stray into the mysteries of 'sources and influences', it does provide an admirable commentary on Lacan's mirror stage:

> Narcissus annihilates himself in the cosmic vertigo
> In whose depths
> Sings
> The cold, dionysiac siren of his own image
> ...
> Narcissus, you are losing your body,
> Carried away and confused with the millenary
> reflection of your disappearance (67)

For Breton, 'the most basic surrealist act consists of going into the street with a revolver in your hand and firing at random into the crowd for as long as possible' (68). Needless to say, no surrealist ever puts the maxim into effect, but their admiration for those who appear to do so is no less sincere for that. The cult of convulsive beauty and the theory of the most basic surrealist act merge in the adoration of a pantheon of female killers. Germaine Berton, the assassin of Plateau (an Action Française leader), 'an admirable woman in every respect' (69) whose photograph appears in the first issue of La Révolution Surréaliste. Léa and Christine, the Papin sisters, who 'inexplicably' butchered their employers in Le Mans. The patricidal Violette Nozière, 'mythological to her finger tips' (70), the heroine of Breton's 1933 poem and, much later, of Charbol's film. And one would-be killer, 'Aimée', beatified by Lacan's doctoral thesis and finally canonized when extracts from her unpublished writings appear in Paul Eluard's anthology, Poésie involontaire et poésie intentionelle (71).

'A real ladies' man . . . (72)

Paris, April 10, 193*, eight in the evening ... Madame Z., one of the best-known actresses in France, is about to enter the stage door of a theatre when she is attacked by an unknown woman assailant. The woman, later to become known as 'Aimée', is a thirty-eight-year old railway clerk with no previous criminal record. Madame Z. wards off Aimée's knife thrust with her hand, severing her tendons as she does so. Aimée is overpowered by bystanders. In police custody, she accuses Madame Z. and P.B., novelist and academician, of spreading slander about her. She also claims that threats have been made against the life of her son. No charges are brought by the actress, but Aimée is admitted to Sainte-Anne for psychiatric reports. Dr. Truelle diagnoses paranoia characterized by delusions of grandeur, megalomaniac tendencies and a substratum of erotomania, the latter revealed by Aimée's curious attachment to the Prince of Wales. Aimée is observed by the Young Lacan, who will later state that he was attracted to the case by the 'burning significance of his patient's unpublished writings' (73). Lacan has found the Anna O. who will take him to 'the threshold of psychoanalysis' (74).

Lacan's doctoral thesis, based largely upon his observations of Aimée, is not a case history in any classical text and is singularly devoid of the novelistic charm of, say, Freud's Analysis of a Phobia in A Five-Year-Old Boy ('Little Hans'). Indeed, no analysis as such takes place: after her largely symbolic attack on Madame Z., Aimée seems to have recovered 'spontaneously' and the prognosis is good. The thesis is a cacophanous text which marks Lacan's move away from the classical psychiatry in which he was trained to psychoanalysis, a text swarming with references to everything from Aristotle to German criminological theory, from Plato to Freud. But three voices gradually make themselves heard above the background noise: the voices of Aimée, Freud and Lacan.

Aimée has literary ambitions. In her unpublished novels and poems she dreams of a utopia: 'fraternity between peoples and races ... the reign of women and children ... dressed in white ... the end of the reign of evil upon earth.... All people will be united' (75). Such are the themes she tries to express in her fiction. Such is the world which she hopes the Prince of Wales will help her to bring into existence. But Buckingham Palace returns her manuscripts with a polite note of dismissal. Aimée's writings have been rejected by one publisher after another - and she knows that they have been plagiarized by other writers. Dreaming of a utopia of universal peace, Aimée lives in a dystopia of persecution. Her persecutors represent 'the personification of an ideal of evil.... Her self-representation, in contrast, represents an ideal of purity and this makes her vulnerable to the actions of the hated one' (76). Aimée's utopia and her dystophia are pro-

foundly symmetrical: they mirror one another. Mirrors, recognition and misrecognition.

Prior to the incident on April 10, Aimée had never met Madame Z., although she does claim to have seen her perform on two occasions. The actress is important only in so far as she is representative of 'Aimée's image of a woman who, to some extent, enjoys social freedom and power' (77). In striking Madame A., Aimée is simply striking her own ideal, the image of what she herself would like to be. In a word, her ego-ideal (78). Hence Lacan's diagnosis of 'self-punishment paranoia'. And hence no doubt the spontaneous cure: once the ideal has been adequately punished, the subject no longer needs her delusions. After her release from Sainte-Anne, Aimée is not heard of again. Nor does she write novels and poems again.

Madame Z. is not the first incarnation of Aimée's ideal persecutor. The role was first played by an elder sister who came to live with her and her husband, a sister whom Aimée adored but who gradually became the dominant personality in the household, effectively becoming the mother of Aimée's child. A sister who, according to Aimée, turned her husband against her. The role was then taken over by Mlle. C. de la N., a distressed gentlewoman with whom Aimée enjoyed a close friendship for some time, the confidante to whom she confessed that she felt herself to be masculine. The friend who first mentioned Madame Z. to her. A sister, her closest friend, 'the dominating woman she envies' (79), Madame Z.: 'Each of the persecutors is simply a new image, still trapped by narcissism, of the sister our patient turned into an ideal' (80). A systematic structure organized around the representatives of a monstrous regiment of social superiors, actresses and writers who 'provoke murders, wars and moral corruption with their boasting ... all to procure a little glory and pleasure' (81). And who, in doing so, provoke thirty-eight-year old railway clerks to attack them with knives bought especially for the purpose.

Aimée's choice of victim is significant, but Lacan's interpretation of it seems oddly close to a banal sociologism. Madame Z. is a star and her appeal is enhanced by the 'particularly abstract and inhuman nature of urban and industrial work' (82). In a different world, Aimée would have chosen a different victim. In an atmosphere of moralistic fanaticism, she could, for instance, have become a second Charlotte Corday (83). Could she also have been a second Saint Theresa? And what if she had lived in the small provincial town of Le Mans?

Le Mans, 1933. A thunderstorm causes a power failure in the house of a respectable lawyer. When they return to the darkened house, the lawyer's wife and daughter begin to berate the servants, Christine and Léa Papin, blaming them for the blackout. The sisters have in fact been sitting quietly in the dark, not knowing what to do, waiting for someone to come home. Suddenly, something happens, something snape. 'They each grab an adversary and tear her eyes from the socket while she is still alive - something which is, they say, unheard of in all the annals of crime. Then, using whatever comes to hand - a hammer, a pewter jug, a kitchen knive - they fling themselves on the bodies of their victims, smashing in their faces, exposing their genitals, lacerating their thighs and buttocks and daubing them with each other's blood. Then they wash the instruments they used for their atrocious rites, clean themselves up and go to sleep in the same bed. "What a mess!" That is the very formula they use. It seems to capture the tone of the totally unemotional sobering up that comes after their bloody orgy' (84).

The crime committed by the Papin sisters seems quite inexplicable. Educated at a local convent school, they have been in the lawyer's service for six years. They have always been good servants, if somewhat uncommunicative, spending all their free time alone together in their room. Without ever hearing of Breton, they seem to have carried out the 'most basic surrealist act' to the letter. For Eluard and Breton, writing in Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, they seem 'sprung fully armed from one of Maldoror's songs' (85). High praise indeed, Lautréamont's hero (86) being one of the major saints in the surrealist calendar, his glory eclipsed only by that of the Divine Marquis himself. If a motive has to be supplied, it lies in the humiliations that the sisters allegedly suffered at the hands of their employers. Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution also publishes photographs (87) of the sisters before and after the murders: the similarity with some of the photographs taken by Charcot is striking. Fifteen years after the event, Jean Genet will adapt the legend of the Papin sisters to provide the central theme of The Maids. A convulsive beauty is born.

In prison, the sisters are separated, seemingly for the first time in their lives. Christine begins to suffer from delusions, tries to mutilate and blind herself and makes the curious statement that 'I really do think that in a different life I should have been my sister's husband' (88). Neither sister even attempts to deny the murders and their statements to the police are identical. According to the doctor who examined them, they are 'Siamese souls' living in 'a world unto themselves: when you read their statements, you'd think you were reading double'.

Lacan's analysis of the motives for this paranoiac

crime is brief and relies primarily upon Freud's Some Neurotic Symptoms in Jealousy, Paranoia and Homosexuality and the argument that paranoia is in part a defence against repressed homosexuality: 'This homosexual tendency can only find expression by disavowing itself completely. That disavowal provides the basis for the conviction that one is being persecuted and designates the loved one as the persecutor' (89). But he is clearly fascinated by the case: the loving detail of his description of the 'atrocious rites' suggests rather more than a purely theoretical-diagnostic interest, as does the conclusion of the article: 'They tear out their victims' eyes just as the Bacchantes castrated their victims. The sacrilegious curiosity that has caused man anxiety since time immemorial is the motivation behind their desire for their victims. That is what motivates them to search the gaping wounds for what Christine in her innocence will call the "mysteries of life" when she appears before the judge' (90).

Siamese sisters living in a closed world, repressing their homosexual love for one another (at least until Christine's surprising admission) ... you'd think you were reading double. A reduplication of the self and the other (until the revelation that Christine and Léa are not the same: they should be husband and wife, different). Their victims? Mother and daughter, their employers, their social superiors, doubtless something of an ideal for the two poor servant girls. The women they see as their persecutors as they sit in the dark, waiting for someone to restore the electricity. The whole atrocious rite takes place in front of a mirror: it is just a phase (or stage) they are going through.

Much of the cacophany of the thesis is taken up with a very academic discussion of theories that might provide an explanation for Aimée's actions. But the references to Freud gradually drown out the other voices. Which Freud? The Freud of The Economic Problem of Masochism, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, The Ego and the Id, Mourning and Melancholia, On Narcissism: An Introduction ... the Freud of the second topography of super-ego, ego and id. Not, perhaps, the Freud we most readily associate with Lacan: Beyond the Pleasure Principle, for instance, is cited, not for the fort-da game which will later become such a locus classicus of Lacanian discourse, but for its comments on the super-ego and narcissism. This is the Freud whose texts will be discussed at such length in the 'Topic of the Imaginary' section of the 1953-54 Seminar and during the 1954-55 seminar on the ego. In applying these texts to the cases of Aimée and the Papin sisters, Lacan begins to elaborate his thesis that the ego is founded upon an alienating and originally narcissistic identification (91) with the other, that it is an illusory identity founded upon a dual relation with the other (Siamese sisters, no less). Nothing is certain in the closed world of these convulsively beautiful criminals: Aimée is masculine, Christine should be her sister's husband. They strike others in order to strike themselves. Aimée, Christine and Léa have brought Lacan to the mirror stage, to the very threshold of Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Sadly, there appear to be no extant photographs of Aimée. It is tempting to imagine her as a reincarnation of one of Charcot's photogenic hysterics and to look for a family likeness in the 'before and after' photographs of Christine and Léa. Even to look for her reflection in the haunted, haggard eyes of Germaine Berton. But it might be possible to find her likeness elsewhere. In December 1933 Minotaure publishes a collage by Dali entitled Le Phénomène de l'ecstase (92). The collage is made up of photographs of women in a variety of 'ecstatic' poses, lips parted, eyes half-glazed, limbs sprawling. Most of them appear to be contemporary, although some are strikingly reminiscent of the photographs used to illustrate the celebratory article on hysteria in La Révolution Surréaliste. Aimée, Christine and Léa would not be out of place here. Four of the photographs are of unidentified statues of women, distant relations, perhaps, of Bernini's St Theresa. And, to parody Lacan in Encore, 'they're coming, no doubt about it'. The question being why. Perhaps because they are being watched over by Dali himself, who appears at the top and bottom left of the collage. A male eye contemplating the phenomenon of female ecstasy.

Encore

Encore, the text of the 1972-73 Seminar, is, it is generally accepted, Lacan's most sustained attempt to come to terms with Freud's unanswered question, Was will das Weib? (What does woman want?) (93). It is 'Lacan's most direct attempt to take up the question of feminine sexuality, not just as part of a return to the earlier debate, but in a way which goes beyond Freud' (94). To go beyond Freud in the exploration of the 'dark continent' - an imperialist metaphor if ever there was one.

Central to Encore is Lacan's concept of jouissance, a difficult concept, not least because of the translation problems posed by its polysemy. A brief exploration of its ambiguities and a digression may clarify it somewhat. In legal terms, jouissance means enjoyment or possession of property, rights or privileges. In a totally different register it can mean 'bliss' and its opposite, exquisite pain. Its common slang meaning is 'orgasm', the verbal form jouir being the equivalent of 'to come'. In its Lacanian acceptation, the sexual connotations are somewhat different: as Jane Gallop remarks, 'You can have one or multiple orgasms; they are quantifiable, delimitable. You cannot have one jouissance and there is no plural' (95). The concept functions as an absolute, always in the singular, always accompanied by the definite article. It always retains its ambiguity: much of the first section of Encore is taken up with a complex play of its sexual/legal connotations (96). Indeed, the polysemy of jouissance seems infinite, its ambiguities endless. La jouissance de la femme could, for example, mean 'woman's orgasm' or 'enjoyment of the woman', 'having her'. Arguably it could mean both at once.

In 'Subversion of the Subject and the Dialectic of Desire', Lacan himself points to a further ambiguity: the imperative form jouis! ('come!') is phonetically indistinguishable from j'ouis, an archaic form meaning 'I hear' (97). We have then a condensation of two verbal modes, an indicative and an imperative. And of two positions, coming and listening. Phonetically, the two are one and the same. You come, I listen. Your jouissance is my pleasure. You come when I call out that I hear: you come at my command. Encore transposes this ambiguous structure to the visual register, the register in which, perhaps more than any other, the image of woman signifies male desire (98). Woman's orgasm, enjoying a woman.

The cover of Encore is illustrated with a photograph of Bernini's Ecstasy of Saint Theresa. The statue portrays the saint at the moment of her 'transverberation', when the arrow of divine love pierces her heart. As Lacan has it, 'she's coming, there is no doubt about it' (99). Throughout Encore, Lacan complains that women - not even women analysts - will tell him what they want. And to illustrate his text he chooses a photograph of a statue, by definition silent, by definition unable to tell him anything. The historical Saint Theresa in fact had quite a lot to say about her experience, but Lacan will not let her speak for herself. She is doubly silenced, first by Bernini and then, perhaps more decisively, by Lacan. We might, then, legitimately ask Was will Lacan? You have only to go and look at the cover of Encore to understand immediately that he wants to reduce the discourse of mysticism to an iconography of the phenomenon of ecstasy. He wants to watch and the image of the saint is the signifier of his desire. He wants to see her come and silences her at the moment of orgasm, petrifying her ecstatic moans. Is Saint Theresa anything more than another icon of convulsive beauty? In The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, Lacan speaks of 'the satisfaction of a woman who knows that she is being looked at, on condition that one does not show her that one knows she knows' (100). That is the role that is being thrust upon Saint Theresa: she is called upon to act the part of a woman in the throes of an orgasm provoked by his gaze. In the meantime, Lacan himself remains silent, as silent as only a Lacanian analyst can be, not speaking his desire. Encore does not provide any way out of a scopic field dominated by male desire. Nor does it break the silence as to the desire of the analyst.

Jouissance is always defined by Lacan in terms of a beyond: beyond the pleasure principle (governed by the economic principle of a return to equilibrium: the pleasure principle is the brake on jouissance); beyond the phallus (the signifier of difference and sexual identity); the beyond of the mystics. Beyond the Pleasure Principle, the text in which Freud first posits the existence of death drives and argues that sexuality is bound up with death. Beyond, to go beyond, to go too far, so far as to experience 'that small death', 'the collapse that follows the final paroxysm' (101). Transgredior, to go across, to pass over. The etymology of transgression. Of all French authors, it is Georges Bataille whose name is most readily associated with transgression.

Towards the end of 'On the Possible Treatment of Psychosis', Lacan makes a fleeting allusion to Bataille's novella Madame Edwarda. Bataille (1897-1962): librarian, sociologist of religion, founder of the influential review Critique, disciple of Kojève, author and amateur of erotica (or gentleman pornographer, as you prefer). Dissident surrealist, playing Trotsky to Breton's Stalin. And, more important, the author of a major essay on eroticism.

Bataille's thought is fragmentary and complex in the extreme and there can be no question of beginning to analyse it here. His theory of transgression will, however, be outlined briefly as it has much in common with Lacan's jouissance: a further link with the surrealist past. Bataille's work on eroticism derives largely from Mauss on taboo and transgression. The erotic is defined as being totally distinct from the realm of reproductive sexuality, going into the silence of that small death. Eroticism does not abolish taboos: it transcends them in the sense of the Hegelian Aufhebung (the influence of Kojève is again apparent). It is further specified as that which has no purpose: from the reproductive point of view it is dysfunctional, as is Lacan's jouissance (103). Eroticism is the domain of violence, violation and transgression that lies beyond the pleasure principle. The approach of the erotic is signalled not by the thrill of pleasure but by the tremor of nausea and disgust, indicators of its proximity to death. A realm of convulsive beauty. It also has much in common with the beyond of the mystics. In Madame Edwarda, transgression, mysticism and eroticism come explosively together.

> 'She was sitting with her legs apart, one leg raised. She pulled at the skin with both hands to open the slit still wider. Edwarda's hairy pink "rags" stared at me. Full of life, like some repulsive octopus.
> I stammered softly,
> "Why are you doing that?"
> "Look", she said, "I am GOD".
> "I must be mad".
> "No, look, you have to look".
> Her husky voice softened. She became almost childlike as she said with the infinite smile of total abandon,
> "I came, I came".' (104)

Encore (again) a man watches a woman coming. Encore a woman comes as a man watches. Encore a woman's orgasm and enjoyment of a woman. No doubt about it.

The narrator of Madame Edwarda remarks that it is madness to say that an insane prostitute in a brothel is God. But the text gives away his true meaning: it is not Edwarda herself who is God, but her jouissance. As Lacan asks, 'And why not interpret one face of the Other, the God face, as supported by feminine jouissance?' (105). Why not indeed? But why pretend that such an interpretation-identification takes us anywhere but back to the cult of convulsive beauty and the phenomenon/phenomenology of ecstasy, to the enjoyment/orgasm of the infinite smile of total abandon?

To Conclude

'Lacan' is not the product of pure theory and his work does not exist in theory alone. It is, rather, the product of a reaction against SAMCDA and of a crucial encounter with surrealism, to which many of its themes and much of its style can be traced. Nor is this work as systematic as it may sometimes appear: the appearance of systematicity is an illusion fostered in part by the architecture of the Ecrits themselves, in part by presentations of Lacan. To take the example of the sign. Lacan's sign is, so to speak, a shifter, referring now to phenomenology, now to Leiris, and only latterly to Saussure. The increasingly sophisticated linguistic references of the later Lacan cluster around a core that was established long before any encounter with structural linguistics. The equation Freud + Saussure = Lacan is premised upon inaccurate and anachronistic assumptions: it is invalid.

It is frequently argued (and increasingly assumed) that Lacanian psychoanalysis has a contribution to make to an analysis of the production of gendered subjectivity in so far as it provides a theory of the insertion of the individual subject into culture (the Symbolic). As such, it is held to offer the means of going beyond the notion of always-already given sexual identity. But that theoretical kernel, always assuming that it does exist, is set in an irreducibly phallocentric iconography of women. From his earliest writings to Encore, Lacan's discourse is populated by a series of silent, ecstatic women who have at least as much to do with a surrealist fascination with convulsive beauty and female ecestasy as with any theory of gendered subjectivity. If the women are not already silent, they are reduced to silence by the desire and gaze of the analyst. Until such time as the theoretical kernel is extracted from the iconographical shell, its supposed value must remain non-proven.

It should be obvious that such reservations do not amount to the suggestion that Lacan is to be rejected out of hand. They merely point to the need to go beyond these fragments of an analysis.

Notes

1 I am indebted to Margaret Atack for her comments and criticisms. Unless otherwise stated, all translations from French are mine.

2 For example: 'Lacan's basic project is to provide a linguistic version of Freud.... Clearly, Lacan's work is a linguistic reading of Freud, especially drawn from "The Interpretation of Dreams",' John Bird, 'Jacques Lacan - The French Freud?', Radical Philosophy 32, Spring 1982, pp.7, 11. My emphasis.

3 Louis Althusser, Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays (tr. Ben Brewster), London 1971, p.191. The translation first appeared in New Left Review 55, 1969.

4 Louis Althusser, For Marx (tr. Ben Brewster), Harmondsworth, 1969, pp.182-193.

5 Perhaps the most cogent discussion of the elusive concept of the Real is Stephen Heath's 'Anato Mo', Screen, Vol. XVII, No.4, Winter 1976, pp.49-66.

6 Freud, Beyond the Pleasure Principle, Standard Edition Vol. XVIII.

7 The order of images, visual or otherwise, and of identification therewith, typified by the child's identification with an image in the mirror. In terms of Freud's topography, the Imaginary corresponds roughly to the instance of the ego, always defined by Lacan as being founded upon an illusion of identity and reality. The Symbolic, in contrast, refers to the order of language and culture and is analogous to Lévi-Strauss's theory of culture as opposed to nature. In many ways it corresponds to the instance of the super-ego.

8 Jacques Lacan, Encore, Paris 1975. Two sections have been translated by Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose (eds.), 'Jacques Lacan and the Ecole Freudienne', Feminine Sexuality, London 1982.

9 Jacques Lacan, Ecrits, Paris 1966.

10 Translation by Geoffrey Mehlmann, Yale French Studies 48, 1973, pp.39-72.

11 Ecrits, p.894.

12 Griselda Pollock, 'Artists, Mythology and Media - Genius, Madness and Art History', Screen Vol. XII, No.3, 1980, p.58.

13 Sherry Turkle, Psychoanalytic Politics, London 1979.

14 Irigaray is quite clear as to the meaning of her expulsion: 'Only men may say what women's pleasure consists of. Women are not allowed to speak.' 'Women's Exile' (tr. Couze Venn), Ideology and Consciousness No.1, May 1977, p.71. Jane Gallop, Feminism and Psychoanalysis: The Daughter's Seduction, London 1982, gives a good account of Irigaray. Her 'inimitable phrase' is from p.36.

15 Jacques Lacan, Ecrits: A Selection (tr. Alan Sheridan), London 1977. References will be given as Sheridan.

16 Sheridan, p. vii.

17 Similar comments could no doubt be applied to Ben Brewster's glossary to For Marx. Obviously, glossaries have their uses: the point is not that they are somehow morally reprehensible but that they inevitably close the text in upon itself, giving it a unity that is sometimas more apparent than real.

18 The Seminar: Vol. XI, Les Quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse, Paris 1973, tr. Alan Sheridan, The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, London 1977; Vol. I, Les Ecrits techniques de Freud, Paris 1975; Vol. XX, Encore, Paris 1975; Vol.II, Le moi dans la théorie de Freud et dans la technique psychanalytique, Paris 1978; Vol.III, Les Psychoses, Paris 1982. The publication of a further sixteen volumes is threatened. The Thesis: De la psychose paranoiaque dans ses rapports avec la psychanalyse, Paris 1932, 1975. References are to the 1980 reprint in the 'Points' collection and are given as De la psychose. 'Not without reticence': cover note signed 'J.L.' to the 1980 reprint.

19 Ecrits, p.82.

20 Roland Barthes, Le Degré zéro de l'écriture, Pais 1970, p.96. The reference would appear to be to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Eloge de la philosophie, Paris 1947.

21 Lacan's reference to the etymological work of Bloch and Wartburg - 'which I delight in' (Encore, tr. Jacqueline Rose in Rose and Mitchell, p.145) - suggests a lingering interest in philology that is somewhat heretical for one of the stars of structuralism.

22 The text of the lecture course was published as Introduction à la lecture de Hegel (ed. Raymond Queneau), Paris 1947. tr. Alan Bloom (ed.), Introduction to the Reading of Hegel. Lectures of the Phenomenology of Spirit, New York 1969. On the importance of Kojève see Vincent Descombes (tr. L. Scott-Fox and J.M. Harding), Modern French Philosophy, Cambridge 1980.

23 Julia Kristeva, Le langage, cet inconnu. Initiation à la linguistique, Paris 1981, p.219.

24 Ecrits, p.166.

25 Michel Leiris, Glossaire in Mots sans mémoire, Paris 1969, p.105.

26 Lacan, letter on the dissolution of the Ecole Freudienne de Paris, Le Monde, 11 January 1980.

27 Michel Leiris, Biffures, Paris 1948, p.12.

28 ibid., p.74.

29 This section relies heavily on Jean-Pierre Mordier, Les Débuts de la psychanalyse en France 1895-1926, Paris 1981.

30 'Actes de Fondation de l'Ecole Freudienne de Paris', Annuaire de l'EFP, p.38.

31 Lacan, Télévision, Paris 1973, p.27.

32 Typified by Roger Scruton's comments on Lacan's 'choked, bombastic and arcane' style and his 'tone of evangelical fervour and morbid self-involvement' in his review of Sheridan and related texts, 'Incantations of the Self', Times Literary Supplement, 11 August 1978, p.909.

33 Freud, On The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement, Standard Editioin XIV, p.32.

34 Emile Boutroux, Pages choisies, Paris 1915, pp.48, 59.

35 Hesnard, cited, Mordier, p.107.
36 ibid.
37 Freud, 'On The History ...', p.32.
38 Hesnard, cited, Mordier, p.159.
39 Cited, Mordier, p.220.
40 Cited, Catherine Clément, Vies et légendes de Jacques Lacan, Paris 1981, pp.43, 240.
41 Hesnard, cited, Mordier, p.241.
42 Mordier, p.241.
43 Hesnard, cited, Edith-Hesnard-Félix, 'Le Dr. Hesnard et les débuts de la psychanalyse en France', Europe 539, Mars 1974, p.80.
44 Claude, cited, Mordier, p.249.
45 Claude, cited, Georges Politzer, Ecrits II, Les Fondements de la psychologie, Paris 1969, p.8.
46 Freud, On The Question of Lay Analysis, SE XX, p.229.
47 Mordier, p.242.
48 André Breton, Nadja, Paris 1963 (revised edition), p.155.
49 Perhaps the most useful overall survey of surrealism is Dawn Ades, Dada and Surrealism Revisited, London 1978 (Catalogue to the Hayward Gallery exhibition). Patrick Waldberg, Surrealism, London 1966 gives a useful selection of texts in translation.
50 Breton's Les Vases communicants, Paris 1932, for instance, chronicles his attempts at dream interpretation. This volume also contains his brief correspondence with Freud. Accounts of dreams are a regular feature in surrealist journals.
51 André Breton, Manifestes du surréalisme, Paris 1972, p.19.
52 Sheridan, p.276. In a letter to Breton, Freud admits that 'Although I receive so much evidence of the interest you and your friends take in my research, I am not in a position to understand clearly what Surrealism is and what it wants', cited, Ades, p.254.
53 An interest typified by 'Recherches sur la sexualité', La Révolution Surréaliste 11, March 1928, an open discussion of the sexual preferences of leading members of the group. No women were present. For a discussion of the sexist parameters of surrealist research into sexuality, see Xavière Gauthier, Surréalisme et sexualité, Paris 1971.
54 Michel Leiris, 'Glossaire', La Révolution Surréaliste, 3, April 1925, p.7.
55 René Magritte, 'Les Mots et les images', La Révolution Surréaliste, 12, March 1929. Reproduced, Ades, p.201.
56 Breton, Manifestes, p.37.
57 André Breton and Louis Aragon, 'Le Cinquantenaire de l'Hystérie', La Révolution Surréaliste, 11 March 1928. (Translation in Waldberg, pp.61-62).
58 Jacques Lacan, 'Le Problème du style et la conception psychiatrique des formes paranoiaques de l'expérience', Minotaure, 1, February 1933, p.69.
59 Jacques Lacan, 'Conférence, Yale University 1975', Cited, Stephen Heath, 'Difference', Screen, Vol. XIX, No.3, Autumn 1978, pp.55, 56.
60 Jacques Lacan, 'Of Structure as an Inmixing of an Otherness Prerequisite to Any Subject Whatever', R. Macksey and E. Donato (eds.), The Structuralist Controversy, London and Baltimore 1972, p.172. This was Lacan's contribution to the 1966 Johns Hopkins symposium on 'The Languages of Criticism and the Sciences of Man'. According to the editors, it was delivered alternately in English and in French and at times in a composite of the two. This must rank as one of Lacan's more classically surrealist performances.
61 Nicolo Geblesco, article on Lacan in A. Biro, R. Passeron (eds.), Dictionnaire général du surréalisme et de ses environs, Paris 1982.
62 René Crevel, 'Notes en vue d'une psychodialectique', Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, 5 May 1933, pp.48-52.
63 José Pierre, 'Breton et Dali' in Dali, catalogue to the retrospective held at the Centre Pompidou, Paris, 1979-80, second revised edition, p.138.
64 Cf. paptrice Schmidt, 'De la psychose paranoiaque dans ses rapports aved Salvador Dali', Dali, pp.262-266. Dali does claim that the thesis provided him with a theoretical basis for his intuitions, allowing him to formulate the method more rigorously. José Pierre suggests that the proclaimed debt to Lacan is perhaps a screen and that Dali's debt is in fact to Freud's Psychoanalytic Notes on an Autobiographical Account of a Case of paranoia (Dementia paranoides) (SE III), a French translation of which appeared in 1932.
65 Salvador Dali, 'Conquest of the irrational', tr. Waldberg, p.91. The Metamorphosis of Narcissus is reproduced in the catalogue to the Tate Gallery exhibition of Dali (1980), plate 156.
66 'The function of the ideal revealed itself to me in a series of reduplications which led me to a notion of structure', Ecrits, p.66.
67 Reprinted in Dali, p.287.
68 Breton, Manifestes, p.78.
69 Aragon, La Révolution Surréaliste, 1, December 1924. Photograph reproduced Ades, p.191.
70 Breton, 'Violette Nozière', 1933.
71 Villeneuve-Les-Avignon, 1942.
72 Gallop, p.33.
73 Ecrits, p.168.
74 Sheridan, p.184.
75 De la psychose, p.166.
76 Ecrits, p.189.
77 De la psychose, p.253.
78 'An agency of the personality resulting from the coming together of narcissism (idealisation of the ego) and identification with the parents, with their substitutes or with collective ideas. As a distinct agency, the ego-ideal constitutes a model to which the subject attempts to conform', J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis (tr. D. Nicholson-Smith), The Language of Psychoanalysis, London 1973.
79 De la psychose, p.166.
80 'Motifs du crime paranoiaque', Minotaure 3-4, December 1933, p.25.
81 De la psychose, p.166.
82 De la psychose, p.318.
83 ibid.
84 'Motifs du crime ...', p.25.
85 Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution, 5 May 1933, p.28.
86 Lautréamont: 1846-1870, pseudonym of Isadore Dicasse, best known for his Chants de Maldoror (1868), a collection of prose poems ranging in tone from the blackest of humour to gothic horror and expressing a total revolt against God and society. Virtually nothing is known about Lautréamont himself.
87 Reproduced in R. Cardinal and R.S. Short, Surrealism. Permanent Revelation, London 1970, p.48.
88 'Motifs du crime ...', p.27.
89 ibid.
90 ibid.
91 Elsewhere, identification is described as 'perhaps the most fundamental phenomenon to have been discovered by psychoanalysis', Ecrits, p.141.
92 Reproduced, Ades, p.283.
93 The phrase comes from a letter to Marie Bonaparte, cited Ernest Jones, Sigmund Freud: Life and Work, London 1955, Vol.2, p.468.
94 Jacqueline Rose in Mitchell and Rose, p.137.
95 Gallop, p.30.
96 Encore, pp.9 ff.
97 Sheridan, p.319.
98 Cf. Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', Screen Vol. XVI, No.3, Autumn 1975, pp. 6-18.
99 Mitchell and Rose, p.147.
100 The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis, p.75.
101 Georges Bataille, L'Erotisme, Paris 1965, p.110.
102 Sheridan, p.225.
103 'What is jouissance? ... a negative instance. Jouissance is that which has no purpose', Encore, p.10.
104 Georges Bataille, Madame Edwarda, Oeuvres Complètes, III, Paris 1971, pp.20-21.
105 Mitchell and Rose, p.147.

NOTES ON THE ANIMAL KINGDOM OF THE SPIRIT

Here is a puzzle for students of the animal kingdom of the spirit: to what animal should Hegel be compared? As we know, he himself liked to think of himself as the owl, or sometimes identified with the mole (1). In Marx's most famous reference to him, in Capital, he says that German philistines treated Hegel as a 'dead dog' (2). This was not the first occasion on which Marx had made such a comparison. My curiosity was aroused when I read in a book of McLellan's that in a latter of January 1868 Marx said Germany treated Hegel as a 'dead duck' (3), while in a paper of Meszaros the very same letter is quoted (from Dona Torr's translation seemingly) to the effect that Hegel was a 'dead horse' (4)! What is this poor ghost: 'dead duck'; 'dead horse'; 'dead dog'? I turned to the German of the 1868 letter in Werke and read 'ein toter Hund' (5) - mysteriously metamorphosed by McLellan into a duck, and by Torr into a horse! Nor is this all: another letter, of June 1870, says that Lange and company are surprised that he (Marx) takes seriously 'the dead dog Hegel', given that - 'poor deer' (in English) - they buried him long ago (6). I have not seen the holograph but I am prepared to believe Marx's spelling was shaky; as expected, the English edition silently corrects to 'poor dear' (7); but the solemn Berlin editor reaches down his dictionary and goes on to inform us in his footnote that Marx had called Hegel 'armes Tier'. Given that he has been such a difficult one to bury perhaps 'dead elephant' would be the best choice.

Chris Arthur

References

1 Philosophy of Right; Preface. History of Philosophy, Vol.3, p.553.
2 Marx's 'Afterword' of 1875 to the second edition.
3 D. McLennan, The Young Hegelians and Karl Marx, p.112.
4 'Marx "Philosopher"', in The History of Marxism, Vol.1, ed. E.J. Hobsbawm, following Selected Correspondence, trans. Dona Torr, London, 1934, p.233.
5 Marx to Engels, January 1868, Marx-Engels Werke 32, p.18.
6 'das sie - poor deer - ihn längst begraben haben.', Marx to Kugelmann, Werke 32, p.686.
7 '.t. that he - poor deer - had long been buried by them', p.240, Marx and Engels Selected Corresondence (1965 edition).