

Differentia: Review of Italian Thought

Number 1 *Autumn*

Article 24

1986

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Recommended Citation

Russo, John Paul (1986) "Logos and Transience in Franco Rella," *Differentia: Review of Italian Thought*. Vol. 1 , Article 24.

Available at: <https://commons.library.stonybrook.edu/differentia/vol1/iss1/24>

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Logos and Transience in Franco Rella

John Paul Russo

Travel along every path, you will
not find the boundaries of the
soul, so deep is its *logos*.

—Heraclitus, Fr. 71

After World War II the cultural ambience of the Italian Left was defined variously by dogmatic Marxism, by the later Lukács, by socialist realism, and by followers of Croce and Gramsci. In the 1960s the Frankfurt School, French Marxism, and other "critics of ideology" began to exert a potent influence on Italian criticism. It was demonstrated (once again) that there could be no ultimate explanatory language or fact in isolation from its "resistance" or "opposition," that even the "means of production, in themselves isolated, do not explain or determine," but are "anticipated, retarded, or crossed by ideological currents."¹ For their own purposes the Italian critics wished to recover and utilize the avant-garde, experimental, bourgeois art and literature of modernism: Conrad, Mann, Kafka, Schoenberg, Musil, Rilke, Eliot, Joyce,

etc. "Modernism" had been condemned as "decadent" and "irrational" by Lukács on political grounds; it had also been attacked by the liberal humanist Croce and had remained outside the immediate concerns of Gramsci. During the 1970s and early 1980s the twin concepts of "negative thought" and the "crisis of reason" strongly marked the cultural ideology of the Italian Left and entered literary criticism. One can scarcely speak of a unified movement, but it is possible to define a group of concepts, issues, methodological strategies, and representations that mark out a "generation." Franco Rella is a leading figure of this generation.

Negative Thought and the Crisis of Reason

In general, "negative thought" stands for the *via negativa* of the great modern thinkers and writers and the "twilight of the West" theme in the aesthetic historians (Burckhardt, Spengler, Schwab). There is an asserted affinity between "negative thought" and the sense of "fatuity" (or "frivolity") and "boredom" that was said by Hegel to characterize the transition between periods, in this case, between the modern and the postmodern.² Negative too is the relentlessly destructive character of the critique, Nietzsche's "philosophizing with a hammer." Freud's concepts of repression, the repetition compulsion, and the death instincts are "negative thoughts." Methodologically, negative thought bears a family resemblance to the younger (Hegelian) Lukács and the Frankfurt School (although one cannot speak of influence—the relationship is as yet unexplored). In Adorno's negative dialectic, after the moment of thesis, the second moment is comprised of continuously proliferating antitheses; the third moment, toward synthesis, is either blocked or indefinitely deferred. "The saving principle," writes Adorno on the decline of the individual, "is now preserved in its antithesis alone."³ In modernity, so it was said, there could be no culture-as-synthesis whatsoever, no psychological "wholeness," no "totality" of an "integrated civilization," not under existing modes of industrialism and the technocratic state.⁴ Instead, there is only the continuous flux of the fragmentary, the precarious, the transitory, and the unbidden: Montale's "vestigial/che il vuoto non ringhiotte" ("vestiges/which the void does not swallow") ("Debole sistro"). Finally, the "negative" is the word unsaid, the thought unheard, the silence in Rilke, Eliot, and Wittgenstein.

Krisis (1976) is the title of Massimo Cacciari's diagnosis of fin-de-siècle German and Austrian culture. *La crisi della ragione* is a

collection of essays by various writers which touched off a sustained debate when it appeared in 1979. The "crisis" refers to the failure of traditional logic and method fully to explicate the problems, modes of inquiry, enigmas, and "solutions" of modern writers and thinkers.⁵ This failure synchronized with the collapse of classical physics at the turn of the century. As Giuseppe Sertoli comments, classical reason is based on the "mind's self-sufficiency and autotransparency (Descartes' *cogito*, Kant's *Ich denke*) . . . [it] silenced the 'language' of the body (the passions, the imagination); holding a linear and cumulative conception of time, it choked the voices of those who opposed the 'march of progress.'" ⁶ The coherence of the ego and history is purchased at the price of suppression or relegation to the non-meaningful. Romanticism of course revalued the non-rational upward, but it retained the epistemological premise and individualist viewpoint of the Enlightenment; instead of expressing ideals of wholeness in terms of reason, the Romantics chose terms such as imagination, synthesis, and ideal form. Early modern critics (Babbitt, Eliot, Richards) continued to invoke concepts of humanism, reason, imagination, tradition, synthetic form, synaesthesia, and equilibrium to describe psychological and cultural synthesis. But the humanist synthesis was a "fiction of a totality, a simulation of an impossible conciliation; it is even more than an illusion, a trick—in so far as beneath the harmony of a proper order hides the disorder of reality"; and formalist criticism turned out to be an even sharper instrument for detecting textual non-synthesis.⁷

Cacciari locates the first signs of "crisis" in the immediate aftermath of German transcendentalism. The division between noumenon and phenomenon leads in Schopenhauer to "extreme pessimism" before the illusory quality of all representation. "The extraordinary logico-epistemological importance of Schopenhauer consists in his very *deduction* of pessimism."⁸ Nietzsche's attempt to overcome the ascesis of Schopenhauer, inherent in his very logic, precipitates the "negative thought" and crisis. Nietzsche exposed the "immense plurality and contradictoriness of the real, irreducible to *one* meaning or *one* idea," "irreducible even to the unity of a theory of consciousness," comments Franco Rella; Nietzsche "uncovered, within this plurality, the conflictual plurality of the subject" (CF, 13).⁹ The ego's unity and *its* knowledge were displaced by disunity and another, enigmatic "knowledge": the "reasons of the body," the "reasons of memory and experience" which lie beyond linear time and "classical reason" (SP, 70). Although Nietzsche retained the category of "the genuine" as an

ultimate ground of the ego and even equated it with the true, his "death of God" and displacement of "knowledge" precipitated the "death of the ego" (SP, 110), what Adorno called the "withering of the subject."¹⁰

To varying lengths, many Italian critics on the Left subscribe to the *aggiornamento* implied by negative thought and the crisis of reason: new forms of thought and imagining, of time and space, must be analyzed by new forms and methods of inquiry. Of the ten critics in *Crisi della ragione*, notes Rella, "at least five either take their movement from or confront Freud in their readings" (SP, 70). On their view, classical reason should be supplemented by Freudian condensation, displacement, the overdetermined, and opposition, with the "logic of the double," with the "atemporal" and "silent" unconscious, with the free-association technique of psychoanalysis (CF, 36; CR, 151-53). Freud's concept of the "uncanny," which he employed to investigate E. T. A. Hoffman and Michelangelo's Moses, brings to light the "contradictory tensions" that surround every "splitting" and "plurality"; as with his analysis of the "ultra-clear" no detail in the complex is "too little for analysis" (CF, 34-35). Wittgenstein also figures importantly in Cacciari, Rella, and other "negative thought" critics. The vanishing-point of their picture of modernity is perhaps Wittgenstein's critique of language, his conception of the "unsayable" forms of reality beyond verbal "limits." His "antimetaphysical mysticism"¹¹ led Wittgenstein to take from language—from referential language at the very least—the power of revealing, of identifying itself with the "sense of the world" (6.41): "What *can* be shown *cannot* be said" (4.1212).¹² What cannot be said is exactly the "sentiment" beyond the limits of the world. Thus, ethics (and aesthetics) lay beyond "facts" and language—"it is the space of the mystic and of *silence*," comments Sertoli:

yet silence is but the reverse of the "great words" of classical rationality, whose order and law it confirms while declaring, and suffering, its inadequacy. Unable to work through the mourning for the loss of the past . . . silence shows melancholically that no language and reason at variance with the ruling ones can be formulated.¹³

"Italy" and Silence

Negative thought and the crisis of reason have been primary themes in the work of Sertoli (b. 1943), Cacciari (b. 1944), and Rella (b. 1944). Sertoli, who is an immensely gifted literary critic and historian of ideas, holds the chair in English Literature and Lan-

guage at the University of Genoa. One of his earliest papers was on Richards, Empson, and ambiguity (1967); longer studies include close readings of Swift, Hardy, Conrad, and Lawrence Durrell; *Le immagini e la realtà: saggio su Gaston Bachelard*; essays on Derrida and Canguilhem; and introductions to Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, Johnson's *Rasselas*, Goldsmith's *She Stoops To Conquer*, and Burke's *Enquiry on the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Sertoli acknowledges "negative thought" and the "crisis of reason" in his work, but his general superiority as a close reader—he ranks among the finest textual critics in Italy—prevents facile categorization.¹⁴ Cacciari has a wide reputation as a political philosopher and cultural historian; a major theoretician of the Partito Comunista Italiano, he served for two sessions in the Italian Parliament (it must be said, however, that within the Party Cacciari has always been considered somewhat heretical). He is associated with the University of Venice. Rella, an extremely versatile and prolific critic, teaches in the Department of History at the Institute of Architecture at Venice. Sertoli and Rella serve on the editorial board of *Nuova Corrente* (Cacciari is on the masthead as a contributor), one of the leading journals in critical theory in Italy. All three critics have been concerned with exploring the foundations of modernity and the post-modern across a wide variety of disciplines.

Cacciari writes mainly within an intellectual context of Central European thought; Rella draws on the same tradition but also on French structuralism and, in particular, Foucault; Sertoli has moved in the ambience of French phenomenology, poststructuralism, and the English novel. There are, curiously enough, few and always incidental references to Italian writers or thinkers in their work. The absence of Italian texts marks the fact that Italy—in spite of Burckhardt's view that she had created the modern world—played a relatively minor role in the making (and the *teaching*) of what we call "modernity," namely, the culture that succeeds the French and industrial revolutions and Kant. Yet in the writings of these critics, Italy is still the unsaid factor, the buried soul or, as Rella would say, the "silence." What can be said as one walks through Italy's cities and towns, her beautiful ruins and unsurpassed museums, and then confronts "modernity"? An extreme response is Marinetti's Futurist denunciation: "We want to deliver Italy from its gangrene of professors, archeologists, tourist guides, and antiquarians. We want to get rid of the innumerable museums which cover it with cemeteries."¹⁵ The opposite response repeats the historical platitudes and apologies for classical humanism. A third takes refuge in a merely antiquarian view of the

immense, 2500-year-long subject of "Italy."

Neither Rella, Sertoli, nor Cacciari has of course Marinetti's remedy in mind. Rejecting the pieties of humanism, they do not choose antiquarianism either. Nonetheless, Italy as historical exemplar of humanistic culture is in some sense an object of attack, hidden rhetorically behind a variety of designated targets: the "classical," "culture," "reason," "humanism," the "universal," the unity of the ego, the individual, wholeness, synthesis, etc. "Italy" was identified so strongly with classical reason and humanistic education that the silence surrounding its name and tradition in the periods of crisis (1880-1920, post-1968) is therefore all the more intriguing. Rella speaks of the "disorder" and "evil" of the crisis (MA, 10), of the "great 'No' of negative thought which expresses mournfully the same urgency of eternity as the great 'Yes' of classical culture" (SP, 96). Nietzschean echoes are unmistakable, and yet there is a poignant drama taking place in this denial of "the great 'Yes' " by a modern Italian in a borrowed rhetoric.

The "crisis of reason" critics were the first generation to assume positions of authority within the academy after the "crisis" of 1968. At this time Italian universities experienced the first major shift in their fundamental structure in a half-century. The collapse of classical reason and concepts of negation, which had been a part of the cultural climate of northern Europe and America for decades (where Freudianism had become state religion in its field and close-reading techniques were a general given in analytical method), are really signs of the Italian times. The new ideology had conquered the high ground in certain sectors of the Italian university system, finally displacing traditional humanism. The punishingly insistent rhetoric of crisis and negation was meant if not to "strike the fathers dead" (for they had long since "died") at least to rattle their bones.

In particular, Cacciari expresses no nostalgia for the "lost values" of humanist culture, nor even for "Marxist" humanism, or other myths of utopia or totality, all versions of "false consciousness." His vision of Worker's Power appropriates the forms, means, and styles of capitalism and technology, "l'uso operaio del capitale," which Sertoli maliciously depicted as "American consumerism in overalls." It is the capitalization of the petty bourgeois and the complete reverse of Adorno's denunciation of the American way of life. Cacciari in effect rejects the Frankfurt critique of technocratic reason as a cultural nostalgia. In sum, Cacciari announces antihumanism. While Rella and Sertoli are mandarin in

their attitude toward Burckhardt's "culture of old Europe" and far less strident than Cacciari in their critique, they waste little time fighting rearguard actions with liberal bourgeois humanism. If *The Magic Mountain* were to be written today, and in Italy, there would be a hundred Napthas and no Settembrini.

Rella and Freudian Criticism

Two of Rella's major accomplishments are introducing a new reading of Freud to Italian criticism, and deconstructing Jacques Lacan. The Freud reading has had a marked influence on Cacciari and Sertoli. In 1977 Rella edited *La critica freudiana* and published "Testo analitico e analisi testuale" in *La materialità del testo* (both volumes contain essays by Sertoli). In his introduction to *La critica freudiana* and his contribution to *Crisi della ragione*, Rella took issue with French and American readings of Freud and exposed inconsistencies in their concepts of language and applied psychoanalysis. Dehistoricized, psychoanalysis was being used as a "social regulator" and maker of "natural" norms (CR, 165, 170). Although Rella esteemed Lacan highly as the "last great 'negative' philosopher" (CR, 166), he criticized him for erecting a new Freudian orthodoxy, announcing the "true" Freud and proposing a "truth without adjectives." Such a truth was seen as both "cause and foundation of a language beyond history (which is the place of pure manifestation) or culture (which is '*cloaca maxima*')" (MA, 15). Lacan succeeded in "tearing psychoanalysis from the galley-ship of clinical practice" and in confronting it "with a cognitive and philosophical problematic." But he ended by restituting Freudian analysis to the very "philosophical 'compatibility'" (CF, 11) that Freud had struggled to eschew.

In Rella's analysis, Lacan posits that language precedes the unconscious, "hides in its folds, to emerge as the language of being, and to manifest itself in sudden and dazzling epiphanies in which the subject (of the word, of the Logos) 'happens upon' truth" (CF, 19). To create "true" science in the present "arid time" of science, psychoanalysis must "restabilize" the language of "truth" (CR, 161). Although Freud spoke of the "precariousness" and plurality of language and knowledge resulting from the "impossibility of basing knowledge on values *external* to critical practice," in Lacan precariousness is the basis of "another discourse," the "discourse of truth." History and society produce the "false," the "illusory," the "lacking"; but truth—stable and singular Truth—emerges within the structure of fiction. "From the Other

the subject receives even the message which it utters." This Other is the "witness of the Truth." The signifier lies within the "precariousness" of the signified and marks a Truth "which exceeds, in every case, the real, and which constructs, in this very excess, the real as a structure of fiction, as an inexorable lack" (CR, 162). As Lacan describes the action of signifier:

[it] demands another place, the place of the Other, the Other as witness . . . because the Word by which it supports itself can lie, that is, place itself as truth. Therefore the Truth does not draw its guarantee from reality, which it concerns, but from elsewhere: from the Word.¹⁶

The separation between the signifier and signified "frees Lacan from any nagging thought about a rapport with reality." The analyst as "master" gains knowledge of the "name" or "word" of the unconscious, which speaks the "Truth" (CR, 162). Lacan contrasts positivist science with his own "idealist" notion of a "cause causing every effect," a contrast which for Rella is an entirely too "simplified" dialectic. From this point, it is but a short step to the later Lacan (post 1968) whose discourse resembles articles of "faith" supported by mystical allusions to Augustine, Saint Theresa, and to a God who "always intervenes." The analyst is a witness to the "horrible" nature of truth and to an "impossible" historical reality. Reason resides over a tragic, impotent will, over the "silence of a reality degraded to refuse and residue" (CR, 167).

Rella objects to Lacan's hermeneutical idealism and the belief that there is a truth hidden behind the veils of illusion, a single voice that speaks. Against Lacan Rella cites Freud to the effect that the "unconscious speaks more than one dialect" (13. 177).¹⁷ These dialects speak across and through one another simultaneously, muffle each other's messages, and cannot be resolved, on any grounds, *into a single language*. It is true that Freud argued the distinction between "historical" and "material" truth (23. 29-30, 267; 22. 191). "Illusions" must be analyzed into their historical antecedents, and these antecedents themselves must be subjected to yet another analysis, down to their material origins in a rejected material reality, in an unremembered past. In other words, there may be room in Freud for a "material" ultimate that is equivalent to Lacan's "Truth." However, Rella prefers to focus on Freud's emphasis on the contradictions between the parallel systems or the contradictions within the systems, on the inherent dualism and even the conflictual *drama* in Freud. He is always reminding us that distortion can occur to and fro along the tortuous route from

phantasies and illusions to material truths and that the process of analysis is without limit. According to Rella, the "real simplicity" behind the "legendary difficulty" of Lacan's work is its attempt to "show through its own discourse the structural lacks of language, the very lacks that make necessary the advent of the full word of Truth" (CR, 163). But, for Rella, psychoanalysis cannot pretend to "truth"; at best, it attains to "compromise-formations" that uphold society and culture (MT, 14). Lacan's "return to Freud" is thus aimed at accomplishing an end opposed to Freud's *Unsicherheit* ("radical.uncertainty") (CF, 20).

Also disputed are the postlacanian studies of Jean-François Lyotard, Gilles Deleuze, and Felix Guattari. Rella argues that the discourse of the Other, the omnipotence of the signifier, and the "full word" offers these critics a kind of redemption from the real; the real is effectively "relegated to the role of a phantom." With reality and its "knots" suppressed, they can let flow, "undifferentiated and boundless, the productions of the unconscious (desire, libidinal energies) within a new *natural totality*" (CR, 166). Lyotard believes that Freudian theory imposes its own static system upon a body of texts that arose from conditions vastly different from the circumstances in which the theory was formed. There is neither a "displacement," "distortion," nor "material difference" between the representation and the underlying reality, because "representation does *not* in fact exist." There is but a "single and undifferentiated flux" of desire, the action of the "instinctual apparatus" (MT, 12).

Rella leans neither toward "closed" Freudian orthodoxies nor to the dissolution of psychoanalytic methodological potency. Rather, he interprets Freudian reading as an "open" activity, a "construction" ("*costruzione*," one of Rella's key words), invoking the power of "refigurability" (CF, 15), like psychoanalytic technique itself. With his unusual ability to rescue an out-of-the-way text of a master, Rella focuses on Freud's "Constructions in Analysis" (1937) and "Analysis Terminable and Interminable" (1937). In these late papers Freud argued for "construction" (or "reconstruction") over "interpretation" as the "more appropriate" description for analytic technique. "Interpretation" applies to something that one does to some single element of the material, "such as an association." In "construction," however, one proposes a narrative of early history that "has been forgotten from the traces which it has left behind": "the analyst has neither experienced nor repressed any of the material under consideration: his task cannot be to remember anything. What then is his task? His

task is . . . to *construct* it" (23. 261, 259). The analyst puts the "fragments" into the form of a story: "Up to your *n*th year you regarded yourself as the sole and unlimited possessor of your mother; then came another baby and brought you grave disillusionment. Your mother left you for some time . . ." (23. 261). Obviously interpretation and construction are complementary activities; as Freud says, one must first "discompose" and then "recompose," but always devoting "micrological" attention to what is a kind of "microscopic anatomy" (CF, 34).

Rella urges the dual activities of analysis and construction (SP, 42). Analysis discloses the buried "traces," the "tensions," "uncertainties," "contradictions," "stratifications," and "conflicts." Thus, the "shattering" of the classical *ordo*, beginning with Nietzsche's "hammer," meant a "dispersion" and "differentiation" of the subject of inquiry. This destruction was the major achievement of the avant-garde writers and artists, an achievement perfectly articulated by Picasso's "I am the sum of my destructions." But then criticism must "build with the fragments and historicize them once again" (MF, 104). Construction, the second act of interpretation, is the making of an "incomplete surrogate" (CF, 28). One does not "unveil" or "enucleate" *one* sense, but elaborates *a* sense in order to render its "plurality" (CF, 25). At the interpreter's disposal lie not only analytic, dialectic, and Freudian method, etc., but also the contributions of the modern writers and thinkers, the figural and mythic methods which have increasingly supplemented science as models for "rationality." Rella affirms Freud's comment that the "only safe interpretation . . . points to incompleteness" (23. 263) (*Unvollständigkeit*), and that the degree of uncertainty is not "assignable" (13. 65) (MT, 13-14). At the same time one must resist the very attractiveness of "incompleteness" (CF, 150), which can become fetishized. For Rella, again following Freud, the end of a psychoanalytic procedure is not to erect another pillar in the "myth" of psychoanalysis, but to *perform a reading*—i.e., the union of theory and practice, "excavation" of the particular materials down to the smallest details in which the contradictions manifest themselves.

The relationship between "languages" of analysis and art becomes one of Rella's central problems. No single language has "autonomy"; each one is "untranslatable"; they "cut into each other reciprocally," each "putting its own structure continuously into play" (MA, 10). The unconscious is not a language for Rella, as it is for Lacan, but exists in a dialectical relationship to "languages." If critical language confines itself to one technical system

or even to the broader category of referential language, it inevitably suppresses through its own ideology the very material it was trying to unearth. Rella gives the example of Freud's attempt to "translate" the dreams in Wilhelm Jensen's novella *Gradiva* (1903) into psychoanalytic language. The experiment ended by "complicating" the literary text "through rewriting it in a contradictory system," which restored "to the text that density which [Jensen's] very naive (or astute?) adherence to nineteenth-century aesthetic ideology (inspiration, creativity, etc.) had planed away in poetic form" (CF, 16). Such a critical rewriting in strict psychoanalytic terms only substitutes its own "truth" (CF, 125) for the author's, an act which Rodolfe Gasché calls an "excess of mimesis."¹⁸ If languages are like distorting mirrors, revealing here and distending out of all recognition there, what language is capable of rendering the truth of art? What method can "guarantee the 'certitude' and 'truth' of literature and the arts," for even Freud said that he must "lay down arms" before the "reasons" of poetry (CF, 20)? The quest for a critical language is the first duty of criticism. To the extent that Rella accepts this challenge and refuses to yield to irrationalism may reflect not only his profound debt to Freud, but also to his own humanistic education.

From Concept to Gleichnis

Rella's proposal for a critical language assumes that contradictions within the text are also "real" and traceable outside it, either to another text or the psyche or reality where they are subject to historical determination: the "solution" to critical oppositions, to "this contradictory constellation dominated by economic contradiction," is the "distortion dominated by the ideology of the dominant classes" (MT, 17). The critical text initiates a "dialectical rapport with the original text but is always beyond it, in the sense that it is not a reconfirmation of it, but underlines it and produces newness from it" (CF, 194). To this end one must employ a language of multiple functions: descriptive, referential, evaluative . . . and *poetic*. The subject-object dichotomy must be bridged: he applauds the "absurd" method of Valéry's Mephistofeles which "allows mixing body and spirit" and "oscillates among diverse fragments, constructing a possible transit among them without cancelling the differences" (M, 20). In his poem "Percorsi" (1973) Rella describes "la ruvida compattezza, incrinando" ("rough compactness, cracking" [NP, 15]). One may compare the sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro's polished bronze spheroids cracked open here

and there to expose infinitely reticulated and partially disintegrating networks. For Rella, critical language must trace the jagged contours of the cracks, the breakage, the interstices. In an essay on Rella's poetry, Sertoli defines the critical act as a "furrow that excavates the compactness of every given, unlocking the closure and opening up differences where there had been the appearance of unity" (NP, 38).¹⁹

For Rella, "completeness" would only impose false unity on the objects of investigation. To paraphrase Valéry on writing a poem, one does not finish a reading, one only abandons it. Thus Wittgenstein's "silence" over the impossibility of rewriting Kantian reason is superseded by the "fragments" of his language games (SP, 23). Benjamin's *Passagenwerk* remains unfinished after fifteen years, no formal structure being able to contain its "hieroglyphics," "phantasmagoria," "dreams," "ruins" (SP, 149). Musil's *Man Without Qualities* possesses "interminability" (*Unendlichkeit*), a deliberately chosen "losing strategy" (SP, 57, 194). Nietzsche is quoted to the effect that "facts do not exist; rather only interpretations" (MA, 53). The "map" of Kafka's world must be "provisional" and "incomplete" (CF, 192), like an unknown continent with just a few rivers and mountain ranges sketched in. In Aragon's *Le paysan de Paris*, "error" unlocks the "doors of mystery"; "confusion" contains the "locks" which "close badly on the infinite" (MF, 86). The endless Parisian streets represent the form and theme: frailty, transitoriness, "flânerie" and "prostitution." "I strive," said Aragon (a hundred years after Blake), "to elevate myself to the particular" (M, 87). In Max Klinger's *Am Strande*, the nude female bather recalls the undulating waters as she stretches out on the beach, her gaze caught in a "moment of metamorphosis . . . in which nothing seems to have either sense or limit" (M, 10). Klee's "country without frontier" is the "paradise of appearances" where the destruction of regressive memory becomes "liberating" (M, 10). As we have said, one of Rella's most fervently held assumptions is Freud's premise that interpretation and psychoanalysis are theoretically "interminable" but practically "terminable" when the "best possible psychological conditions for the functions of the ego" have been secured (23. 250). Freud interpreted Sandor Ferenczi's paper on terminating analysis as a "warning not to aim at shortening analysis but at deepening it" (23. 247). Likewise for Rella, interpretation is "interminable" (CF, 50; CR, 171; MA, 53; MT, 13; MF, 103). Logos itself is not a being, but a "becoming" (CR, 154).

The tension between "completeness" and "incompleteness"

is never fully resolved in Rella's criticism. This tension exists in literary texts, in critical methodologies, and is traceable to the underlying class conflict. Like Lukács, Rella believes that the working class is the collective subject of the "new totality." But as Sertoli comments on *Il silenzio e le parole*, Rella's "defense resembles the very mythology that he censures as the 'myth of progress' in classical (bourgeois) rationality. Moreover, how does such a hope for a new totality accord with the definition of reason as a conflicting plurality of methods and procedures?"²⁰

Not least of Rella's strategies is the figural power of metaphor, narration, and myth; in fact it marks the tendency in Rella's criticism from *Il silenzio e le parole* to *Metamorfosi*. Nietzsche's *Zarathustra* must be accounted an influence in this regard, as well as the later Wittgenstein ("What I find are new *figures*" [*Gleichnisse*] [MR, 5]). Figurability enables the critic to work "rather freely"; the figure is a movement of "another thought" across the literary image, holding together the "half-truths"; figures have "maximum abstraction of concept and maximum force that is defined gradually as myth, unreason, analogy, image" (MF, 8-9). A figure in Rella is not what is metamorphosed, neither the tenor, nor the vehicle, but the "complexity of articulation" of all the terms, the "structuring" of the ensemble (MF, 134). The "pleasure" of the image is only a stage which is undercut by the "conflict" of images and (what would appear) a cathartic "transformation into figures."

A recurrent metaphor in Rella's poetry is the journey across the modern metropolis, which initially appears "una grigia estensione, uniforme" ("a gray extension, uniform," "Percorsi" [NP, 15]), an unusual description for an Italian city, anything but gray and uniform, except perhaps in a few northern Italian cities in the dead of winter (Rella's eye is unfortunately not on the particular in his poetry as it is in his criticism). Then, in disconnected sequence come the "murmur," "words," "spaltung" (splitting), "fantasies," "traces, houses, trees, steps, sounds, dreams, noises" (NP, 15, 20). While the catalogue bespeaks the open form of the postmodern, the walker either has or draws a "map" as he proceeds. He confronts the "fantasma" of the metropolis, searching amid tautologies and obfuscations for a "senso preciso" to articulate the bombardment of impressions and find a "way" ("percorso"), a "representation." Impressions pile up and, with a suddenness resembling Rilkean shock, he discovers "this dazzling appearance," this "presence." The preparation (if there is one) for "presence" comes in phrases like "constructing a crossing," "tracing," "measuring," acts of critical acumen. Other poems also end on

gnostic illumination; together they reveal Rella's desire for presence, Platonic light, and origin, as if to circumvent Musil's "the mystical has set; it cannot withstand the city" (MF, 17). "PROIEZIONE" (1973) ends with "istante," "future," and "speranza." In "Hors d(e l)'oeuvre" (*beyond the work*) (1974) Rella wants to quell the terror of "impassioned dreams" and notices the Petrarchan "light flowering," "your beautiful hair," "so gentle" ("tanto gentile"), symbols of sexual fulfillment. These images of sudden presence—they occur near the end of their poems—seem like a leap of faith. They have their parallel in Rella's criticism with its contrary notions of fidelity to textual non-synthesis and the utopian desire for totality.

Like a city, a text lies open to be "crossed," "measured," "plumbed" at every cultural and social level. From gray to "dazzling," from uniform to multiform, from absence to presence. To penetrate these densely-figured designs ("nuclei of maximum resistance," MF, 105) and to plot their connections with other designs is the aim of Rella's criticism. Some of his "figures of construction" are Kafka's hunter Gracco, Baudelaire's "king of a rainy country," Nietzsche's illness, Rilke's angels, Weininger's cultural politics, Franz Marc's edenic deer, the *andersdenken* and nontransmissibility of experience into language in Musil, Benjamin's metropolis, and the "silent friend" in Freud (perhaps Rella's critical *tour de force*).

Increasingly in his writing Rella attempts to tell a story or construct a myth by means of the images and abstractions taken from the text at hand. Myth for Rella, as for Serres, "organizes . . . a series of heterogenous images, each of which manifests the visibility of one aspect of the world" (M, 12). If the first act is critical (from Gr., *critikos*, whose Indo-European root means to "cut"), the second act is the imaginative reassembling of fragments, which requires the "hybridizing" of philosophical and literary discourse and places one structure *across* another. Thus, images and figures have more than a stylistic function in critical language. They organize a "construction of diverse cadence" and effect a "redemption" of fragments and images in their isolated senses (MF, 10). Rella notes that Freudian metaphor is not offered as a "poetic solution to 'what cannot be said.'" Instead it is a "construction" involving the possibility of naming that which has been "excluded by science and classical philosophy: the contradictory plurality of the real" (MT, 15). To this extent, myth or metaphor substitutes itself for instrumental reason; or rather substitutes its own "reasons," to make up for a lack of referential language.

The blending of "reasons" and styles of procedure had been practiced by modernist writers who "conducted their work to a truth which is not purely literary, but rather approximates philosophical discourse," the "essay" and a "scientific text" (M, 158). Rella instances Freud's construction method of analysis in *Totem and Taboo* and the essays on *Gradiva*, Michelangelo's Moses, and the Oedipus story, and he notes that Freud had to defend himself from having written, in his study of Leonardo's childhood dream, a "psychoanalytic novel" (SP, 103; CF, 21). Most recently, Rella has studied the narrative method of Plato in the *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Phaedrus* and *Republic* (BV). The critic thus inhabits an "intermediate kingdom" (MF, 9, 17) where it is impossible to distinguish the "literary text," the "essayistic description," and the "narrative of events" (M, 158). Rella's poetry tends toward the philosophical; his criticism veers toward the literary. A critic is like the protagonist of a "novel" and, "rather than moving across real events and figures, moves across images and figures of thought." He participates in "strani incontri, strane avventure" ("strange encounters, strange adventures") (M, 159-60). All the same, writes Rella, the "novel" remains unfinished. It leaves off on a "perception of a new limit and of a new possibility" (M, 160).

"Metamorphosis" and "battle" are Rella's latest metaphors for criticism; his essays are like Ovidian tales of "modernity" or dialectical "disputations." Nothing is fixed; everything is flowing from one form to another. Logos is subjected to analysis, is dissolved, and shown in all its partiality, contingency, and transience. Essays are not close readings of one or two texts, but are organized around a theme—the dream of reason, the black sun of the mystics, the end of night, Narcissus—and include numerous partial readings and allusions. At some points the interplay of cross-references tires and bewilders, and one's sense of literary history is scrambled. The tough-minded analyses in *La critica freudiana* and *Il silenzio e le parole* (the Weininger effect, Freud's silent friend, Nietzsche, and Benjamin) work with great intensity through historically resistant materials. The facts of the case control but do not confine critical intelligence. This is a formidable criticism that ought to be translated and studied.

Not that Rella is unaware of the dangers of merging the analytic and literary methods. He compares his method to the confluence of two "seas" of thought, whose point of arrival is only "the beginning of a new departure, an invitation to a voyage to see new things which emerge from *these* and from *those* waters" (M, 161). Through figure and metamorphosis he will try to render "thinka-

ble" what was presented historically as "unthinkable," that is, the "great silence," the "mute vertigo," the "intoxication," the "transgression," the "excess" (MF, 104-5). The variety of sources, the intellectual sweep and boldness, the driving energy of Rella's enterprise give life to his new methods. But, again, the humanist strain is apparent in his refusal to accept any one logos or explanatory method as the complete explanation of "human nature."

Logos/Logoi

With "classical reason" and its associated concept of linear time one "reads" the world as if it were one's own nature. "Reason," Aldo Gargani writes, "is like a *nature*; on one side, as the nature of thought or more precisely as the 'natural laws of thought,' and on the other as the objective structure of the world" (CR, 9). For the negative thinkers, however, the laws of thought are "regulative" and not "constitutive" of reality. It is an "illusion," writes Wittgenstein, to think that "the so-called laws of nature are the explanations of natural phenomena" (6.371). Two examples may serve to contrast "negative" thought with the "positivist" opposition: Anglo-American empiricism, pragmatism, and "common sense." At the time when Wittgenstein first went to Cambridge in 1911, any one suffering from Idealism could apply to Russell and study mathematical logic or repair to G. E. Moore for the cure of common sense. Wittgenstein's implacable brilliance drew immediate attention: "he thinks nothing empirical is knowable," wrote Russell, "I asked him to admit that there was not a rhinoceros in the room, but he wouldn't," not even after they "looked under all the desks."²¹ Russell assumed the so-called correspondence theory of truth whereby the perceptions of the mind structure themselves in a way that corresponds to reality. That an empirical proof could be wrong is absurd, non-human, and therefore monstrous. On the other hand, the Cambridge Idealist J. M. E. McTaggart thought matter was only a "bare possibility" with nothing to make it preferable to "any other hypothesis however wild" including belief in "Gorgons" and "Harpies."²² Here again the non-meaningful is imagined in terms of the monstrous. McTaggart also denied the existence of time, which Moore "refuted" by common sense: Moore said he was certain that he had breakfast before lunch.²³

Classical Reason is a broad term: Plato distinguishes *nous* ("mind," the organizing principle of the universe, wisdom, intuition of the forms, of the Good), *dianoia* (deductive and analytic method, dialectical strategies), and *dienotes* (cleverness,

"brains").²⁴ For Rella and other "negative thought" critics, however, "classical reason" normally means instrumental, technical, or Enlightenment reason, a highly selective version of Classical Reason made during the "crisis" of the aristotelian/ptolomaic system in the early seventeenth century. Such a refinement parallels other narrowings of classical theory with regard to imitation and form in the High Neoclassic Mode. As Rella notes, while myth and magic had hitherto kept up relations with geometry and neoplatonism, the *Discourse on Method* "interrupted the transit between Mythos and Logos" (M, 15). Instead of phenomena bounded by "sympathy" throughout the cosmos, they related to each other by cause and effect in the dimension of linear time. "The new science does not consider knowledge a going back to the past, a recollection of *prisca philosophia*, but a rupture with this past, and an increase and progress precisely because of this rupture" (M, 25). New life and "certainty" were given to "classical reason," oddly enough, by "tearing it from the senses" (MF, 13), that is, from the body and the body's memory with its idiosyncratic notions of space and time. The body was a "victim condemned to non-existence" (M, 15) and denied the right to plead its case.

Rella chooses the "figures" of disease and the destruction of linear time to pierce through the body's "opacity" (M, 75) and allow it to articulate its counter-reasons. In *The Magic Mountain* Mann depicts fever as "full of contradictions." It renders the subject "more corporeal" or even "exclusively a body" and dissolves the line between the physical and the spiritual. While the subject lies immobilized, the heart races and the blood is felt coursing through tingling veins. At the fever's height, the body is inert, but images are thrown up from the most distant periods of the subject's past. Unlike a dream which normally imposes its formal unity on material prompted by the previous day, the delirium of fever knows no limits of time or space; "it hurls fragments inexorably against each other, in a process of reciprocal extraneity" (M, 74). Ludovico Settembrini, who symbolizes the "European principle" or reason, progress, and civilization over against the "Asiatic principle" of "immobility" and "quiescence," warns Hans Castrop that illness is the very form of depravity, resembling the putrefaction of death, a "feast" of a new life in which the body is no longer organized by the "spirit" with all its "impediments" and "responsibility." The ringing affirmation of Classical Reason, notes Rella, is "strange" (M, 72) coming from Settembrini who is himself stricken with fever. It is not strange at all coming from a child of the Risorgimento.

Mann draws out the resemblance between the physical manifestation of fever and orgasm, which as the "most acute and absolute pleasure" should lie at the furthest possible remove from the anguish of disease. But in both experiences, as Rella comments, the body dominates—in disease, with the onset of uncontrolled physical processes; in orgasm, with the body's "nudity," with its "weight," with its "opaque thickness" which is "shot through with an unbearable luminous shudder" (M, 74). The delirium of fever has affinities to sexual fantasy, particularly to those "fearful forms of love," the "strange and grief-laden deformations." Both the physician Hofrat Behrens and the psychiatrist Krokowski reveal "mysteries" to Castrop, the one with his x-rays of the thoracic cavity that encrypts the diseased tissue; the other with his revelations of love's hidden forms, "relics of abandoned possibility, ready to take on new life." That we are on the border of the sacred, between death and life, notes Rella, is apparent from Castrop's response to seeing his cousin's pulsating heart under the x-ray: "My God, I see!" "The fever does not limit itself to exhibiting the body liberated from the spirit, but proposes, in disease as in cure, a non-human time," which has "neither beginning, nor end" (M, 75). Likewise, when Castrop attempts to communicate with Clavdia Cauchat he finds himself needing to speak French, because "*c'est parler sans parler*." As Rella writes, it is the "language" which allows the repressed to articulate itself; the "language" approximates the silence of the eternal where "one does not speak at all" (MF, 40).

Rella also shows that in the *Tractatus* Wittgenstein locates the metaphysical ego as a limit of the world, on the edge of silence. Wittgenstein recoils from the "horror of mixing" (MF, 19) and severs the psychological from the metaphysical ego: "The philosophical I is not the man, not the human body or the human soul which psychology treats, but the metaphysical subject, the limit—not a part of the world" (6.641). It is another symptom of the unresolved dualism, a vestigial Cartesianism with its valorized *cogito* and a perception of the mystical "I."

Under the new logoi, however, "temporal anomalies multiply themselves" (MF, 57). The "storm of progress" (MF, 22), the "time of precariousness" (SP, 105), the "crisis of reason" in the late nineteenth century, these conspired to "render perceptible another kind of temporality" (SP, 76). Nietzsche and Freud undermined classical reason at its point of greatest resistance: its conception of the historical and individual past as an "unredeemable" *thus it was*, a chain of "naturally passed events" (SP, 108,

109). *Thus it was* is the "boulder which the will cannot move" because the will "cannot will *backwards*" (SP, 109). Under these blocking circumstances, as he describes several times in his works, Nietzsche discovered his central affirming idea of the eternal return.²⁵ It is a revolt against Idealism and other-worldliness and represents an attempt to rivet attention on present existence. Not just the good will be redeemed, but everything in all its misery and horror, with one note of hope: that the very idea that this is the only life, that it will recur over and over again (not of course in the same precise detail, but in its general character) would lead people to change. What is to be lived again could thus be different, possibly better; and so the future is redeemed along with the past. Rella's most penetrating observations concern the origins of eternal return in Nietzsche's biography. As Nietzsche characterizes the experience, it possesses many of the features described by Freud in "The 'Uncanny'" (1919). Nietzsche speaks of the suddenness and terror with which the idea "assailed" or "overtook" him; a howling dog reminded him of a similar incident in earliest childhood; he felt in the grip of involuntary memory; the distinction between waking and dreaming was lost; and silence. The Freudian uncanny is defined by its displacement of linear time, the demonic, the mixture of the familiar with the strange (or "un-at-home-like," *Unheimliche*) and the sudden return of some repressed element, which is ultimately a manifestation of the death instinct. The discovery of a new time leads to a new logical strategy by which to organize experience: no longer is "time" to be seen as linearity, the time of the "bourgeois city," ever fleeting into a past (SP, 109-10). Now time is redeemable.

Despite Nietzsche's casting of his insight in quasi-mythical language, Rella interprets eternal return in essentially critical terms, as a breach in the citadel of classical reason. Hence his disturbance over Lacanian "reason" which ended by being as "strong" as the "reason" it sought to replace; it established its own totalizing premises, normative grammar, dominant practice, and Truth. Rella's deconstruction de-universalized it, permitted it to become one among a number of "reasons." Typically Rella calls for "flexible" methods (M, 17), Freud's "witch's reason" (CF, 22) and "slippery" reason (MF, 17); a "series of satrapies and partial dominions" (SP, 197); "dispersed," "plural," or "neo-classical" reason (MA, 17-18); "weak" reason,²⁶ low-keyed, without imperialist ambitions (CR, 172); "new rationality," that is, a "new capacity for representing the real" (CS, 9). Adopting the terms of Deleuze and Guattari, he speaks of "rhizomatic" (MA, 17) opera-

tions: the humble rhizome is a rootlike horizontal stem lying just under or just above ground and sending out numerous roots from its underside and shoots or leaves from its upperside. He likens reason to "paths" through a "forest of signs"; the paths are "interminable," "exhausting," and full of "conflict" and "struggle"; "the struggle that *decides*" (CR, 173); the pun on *decide* (fr. Latin, *decidere*, to cut off) allows meanings of *determine*, *resolve*, and *cut through*. But how much "resolution" can there be in an era that forbids closure? A rational project for Rella does not consist in raising plurality to a "metaphysics of difference," in "renouncing the will to transform reality," or in limiting itself to a "fascination with the abyss" (MA, 18). In Rella's crossing the "paths" through a "scene" in Freud one observes his method in detail. The point at which he "cuts off" analysis, if not closure in the classical sense, indicates deeper intentions.

Freud on the "Scene of Transience"

Rella's analysis of the "silent friend" episode in Freud has major biographical interest, bringing together Freud, Rilke, and Lou Andreas-Salomé. It has close readings of poems, letters, diary entries, and a Freudian "story" and combines the best elements of his method—figure, metamorphosis, displacement and redemption of time (linear, eternal return, constructed), plurality of voices, and "reasons." His focussed attention on one episode with all its ramifications seems to have acted as a limiting agent on his rhetoric. The deep background of the episode is World War I and its themes are the universal ones of nature, death, and eternity. Freud himself speaks in this profoundly moral tale, though in the hushed oblique tone of the modern, with a prophet's authority. Rella's ingenuity deserves praise because the episode did not lie ready to hand, or else it would have attracted far more commentary.

In November 1915, on the invitation of the *Berliner Goethebund*, Freud wrote a brief note *Vergänglichkeit* ("Transience") for a book of essays *Das Land Goethes* (1916: "The Land of Goethe").²⁷ Containing contributions from prominent German writers, the book was meant to show that Germany was not the barbarous country painted by the foreign press. It was the land where Goethe and fellow poets and thinkers flowered and where the human spirit was affirmed. Earlier in 1915 Freud had written "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death" and was under no illusions on either subject. Rella explains that Freud quietly signals a doubt about the enterprise of *Das Land Goethes* in his title, "Transience."

The brevity of the note (eight paragraphs) is also a mimesis of its subject matter.

In "Transience" Freud recalls "a walk through a summer landscape in full flower" in the summer before the war (1913) "in the company of a silent friend and a poet already well-known despite his young age" (14. 305).²⁸ The despondent poet finds no solace in the natural beauty which will vanish by winter. It only quickens his awareness of the precariousness of all things, the "sinking into transitoriness" ("Versenkung in die Hinfälligkeit"), and the ultimate meaninglessness of human values and achievements. No single thing could be truly enjoyed in light of this knowledge of inevitable loss. Freud countered by speaking up for the certainty and beauty of nature and humanity. Transience is "painful" but "true"; it destroys illusions of permanence and to that extent it has a certain value; but it does not negate the "beauty and perfection" which have immediate value in our emotional lives. Transience and "limitations" on the possibility of pleasure constitute an "increase" of value. Freud makes an analogy to natural flowering and alludes to Nietzsche's eternal return: "Each time nature is destroyed by winter it comes again next year, so that in relation to the length of our lives the return can in fact be regarded as eternal" (14. 306).²⁹

Freud failed to convince or console his companions and he began to think of their predicament in terms of "mourning," of their anticipated grief over nature's death in winter (eventually these thoughts led to his paper "Mourning and Melancholia" [1915; pub. 1917]). Turning back to the present but retaining the nature metaphor, Freud wrote that the War "has devastated the beauty of the countryside through which it had passed and the works of art it met with. . . . [It] has revealed our instincts in all their nakedness and let loose the evil spirits within us which we thought had been tamed forever by centuries of continuous education by the noblest minds" (14. 307). Nonetheless he felt confident that sometime after the War "our mourning" would eventually come to a "spontaneous" end. Then the libido would once again become "free (in so far as we are still young and active) to replace lost objects by fresh ones equally or still more precious." Shorn of the illusion of permanence, we will have learned to value even more highly the masterworks of civilization. "We will return to reconstruct everything that the war has destroyed," Freud concluded, "perhaps on a foundation more solid and enduring than before" (14. 307).

With so many riches elsewhere in the Freud canon scholars

never gave much attention to "Transience." The standard editors did not identify the other individuals or the setting, referring only to Freud's sojourn in San Martino di Cartozza in the Dolomites in the summer of 1913. Nor did Ernest Jones offer an explanation; he interpreted the note simply as an "irrefutable denial of the common belief in Freud's supposed pessimism."³⁰ Then, in 1966, writing in the *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, Herbert Lehmann proposed that the younger poet was Rilke and that the "silent friend" was Lou Andreas-Salomé. His main and virtually definitive evidence was Andreas-Salomé's *Freud Journal* (1958) and the comment of her editor Stanley A. Leavy that she tended "to be silent in Freud's circle."³¹ Max Schur, Freud's doctor in his last decade, accepted Lehmann's identifications, but attached no particular importance to them: "Transience" was another illustration of Freud's "basic love of life and serenity."³² Rudolph Binion mentions Andreas-Salomé's introducing Rilke to Freud, but not the connection to "Transience."³³ In a study of Freud's prose, W. Schonau said that the note was a "fiction," a "piece of romantic prose" (SP, 77).

For Rella, Freud's countryside in full flower is a "text," a "figure" which he calls the "scene of transience" (SP, 74). Its blossoming and decay symbolize Goethe's land in its darkest hour. The individuals and the historical setting, with the mysterious clues, must be identified in order to decipher as clearly as possible the "dischrony," the "unevenness," the "conflict," and the "plurality of dialects of the unconscious" that are speaking across each other. Indeed, the scene has all the character of a dream in its precision, its overdeterminedness, its "uncanny" double time and remembered quality. Rella therefore poses a series of questions: "What does the affirmation of 'a foundation more solid and enduring than before' mean in a context in which one affirms that the *negation* of transience is only a desire lacking any value in reality?" "What is the sense of this text, so clear, yet to result in something so totally hidden in this clarity and therefore incomprehensible . . . ?" "Who speaks in this tale?" "Who is silent?" "What are the words and *the silence* saying?" (SP, 78) The solution to these questions begins with the text but ultimately lies beyond the "scene of transience," in the other writings of the three persons.

The external evidence may be briefly stated. In her *Freud Journal* Andreas-Salomé wrote that she introduced Rilke to Freud at the Fourth International Congress of Psychoanalysis in Munich in 1913. "They took a liking to one another; so much so that we remained long together, also in the evening and late into the night.

The day after the Congress (9 September) with Freud in the courtyard garden" ("Hofgarten") (SP, 83).

The time of year ("summer . . . in full flower") is exactly right; Rilke was relatively young (37) and "already well known." While "Hofgarten" is not a "summer landscape" ("Sommerlandschaft") Freud may have chosen the latter geographical term better to evoke the "land" of Goethe; and besides, as Lehmann notes, "we should grant Freud some poetic license in setting the mood for his essay."³⁴ Moreover, Freud mentioned Rilke in a letter of 9 November 1915 and met with him in either November or December 1915, that is, during the period of his writing "Transience." Later Freud wrote Andreas-Salomé that "clearly with him one cannot 'conclude an eternal alliance' " (27 July 1916). In Lehmann's view, Rilke "thus impressed the character of transience on his relationship to Freud."³⁵

When Freud met Rilke in Munich in 1913 both men were in the midst of deep personal crises. Jung was proposing major changes in Freudian theory (e.g., identifying the sexual libido with the Bergsonian *élan vital*). Freud had come to the Congress with the deliberate intention of defending his position. Jung's defection hurt Freud, not least because he regarded Jung as perhaps his ablest successor. It is likely the confrontation with Jung came on the very day that Freud met Rilke. But at this time Freud was also bringing about what Jones considered one of the two "fundamental" alterations in his theory by way of his studies in narcissism.³⁶ Moreover, the coming of war and the realization of its meaning for Western civilization put any personal developments into an enormous tragic perspective. "I know for certain," he wrote to Andreas-Salomé on 25 November 1915, "that I and my contemporaries will never see a happy time again" (SP, 76). With so many changes in Freud's life, there were many reasons for him to feel a sense of "transience" during these months.

Rilke's melancholy was even more grave, because it struck at the root of his creative power. Work on his *Duino Elegies* had come to a halt after the third Elegy precisely over the question of the irretrievable flight of things into the "surging abyss." Parts of others were written but to the wandering Rilke they seemed a semblance of his own fragmentary life: "my body is become like a trap" (M, 147). Initially, Rilke had hoped to "construct" new "reasons" for existence (SP, 83) in the *Elegies*, reasons based upon his fleeting perception of permanence, an "angelic order" beyond change. But in 1913 Rilke was still the poet of flux. "Beauty's nothing/but beginning of Terror" ["Schrecklichen"], he wrote:

“Each single angel is terrible./And so I keep down my heart, and swallow the call-note of depth-dark sobbing” (1. 4-5, 7-9).³⁷ In Freud’s *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, “terror” or “fright” (*Schreck*) is distinguished from “fear” (*Furcht*) and “anxiety” (*Angst*) by the element of surprise and unpreparedness for danger (18. 12-13). *Schreck* is sufficiently powerful to break the “shield” that protects the ego from the repressed and is associated with the return of a repressed episode, a compulsion to repeat, and a manifestation of the death instinct (18. 31). According to Rella, the angelic perceptions of another order of being come to Rilke as a “shock”: “I should fade [“ich verginge”] in the strength of his/stronger existence” (1. 3-4). The angels “shock” repeatedly (“Every angel is terrible” [“schrecklich”], 2. 1) and break up the repetition of habit:

There remains, perhaps
 some tree on a slope, to be looked at day after day,
 there remains for us yesterday’s walk . . .
 . . . a habit that liked us and stayed and never gave notice.
Elegy 1. 13-16

The angelic experiences shatter the ego’s hold on the id’s own coherency and firmness; they precipitate awareness and fear of death. Can one overcome death? The self is impotent before the laws of nature and society. Indeed, before Rilke could surmount his paralyzing experiences of transience he was to fall into deeper melancholy during the War. He wrote in August 1915: “the world has fallen into the hands of men.”³⁸

Impotence and omnipotence, the “uncanny” or doubling, and narcissism were themes in the writings of both Freud and Rilke in the period 1912-1915. In *Totem and Taboo* (1913) and “Narcissism: An Introduction” Freud redefined his theory of the drives and proposed an intermediate stage in the development of libidinous impulses: an infant’s impulses have organized themselves but have not yet found an external object and so become attached to the ego; or rather “his egoistic instincts and his libidinous wishes are not yet separable” (13. 89-90). This is primary narcissism, a residue of which remains through life. It is succeeded by what Freud called “secondary narcissism”: object libido which had been attached to the mother is returned to the ego. Some of this object-libido eventually finds its way to other objects; if not, the object-libido remains fixated upon the ego. Freud believed that some narcissistic fixation is necessary—it manifests itself in various forms of self-regard—in order for the individual to protect himself and allow for a restorative withdrawal in the event of loss (otherwise there may be no

libidinal projection later on). But the inability to surmount the phases of narcissism leads to obsessional neuroses: hypochondria, masturbation, homosexuality, and delusions of grandeur that mask an underlying helplessness.

Rilke had written the idea of Narcissus into his second Elegy: he is the figure whose only joy is a memory of lost moments that strike by surprise and fright: "suddenly, separate mirrors, /drawing up their own outstreamed beauty into their own faces." The mirror in Freud is a form of doubling that represents an assurance against death in primary narcissism; its dream counterpart is "doubling or multiplication of a genital symbol" as assurance against castration. "But when this stage has been surmounted, the 'double' reverses its aspect and instead of an assurance of immortality it becomes the uncanny harbinger of death" (17. 234). Rilke probably began two poems on Narcissus in the spring of 1913. One begins "Narziss verging" ("Narcissus was perishing") and describes his love for what is being lost, the precarious, up to his own death; as Rella comments, it recalls the fainting episode in the first Elegy (M, 147). In the second poem, Narcissus sees the floating image of his double in the pool, has the narcissist's feeling of megalomania, and at the same time recognizes his impotence and inability to love: he is being lured by his double to plunge into the pool and drown:

All my boundaries are in a hurry,
plunge from me and are already yonder . . .

What is reflected there and surely like me,
and trembles upward now in tear-blurred lines,

might perhaps come to being in some woman
inwardly; it was not to be reached. . . .³⁹

His desire to have his image live in the generalized "some woman" may trace to the infant's love for the mother, the first object of love beyond itself; but this attempt fails. "Narcissus recognizes death within himself the moment that he loses himself in his gazing outward," writes Rella, "so that even though he closes himself in a circle, he cannot save himself from the transience of the world" (SP, 85).

To review Rella's evidence: there are two historical times, the summer before the war and the late fall of its grim second year. A young poet captured by the precariousness of nature opposes a middle-aged man who accepts it, sees it as heightening the value of things, and feels the seasonal cycle as a balm to the soul. There are

also two conceptions of temporality: linear time leading toward death; and cyclical time, the eternal return around the center of the self, involving death and rebirth.⁴⁰ At this point in his career Rilke chooses "habit" to stabilize the ego and withstand change, a regressive act in its focus on repetition and refusal of new stimuli. The choice commits Rilke to "transience" and to "silence." The war initially seems to confirm Rilke in his position. However, through its sheer magnitude the war introduces a new category: the "unsayable," the "silence of the indescribable" (SP, 85):

minds of murders
are easily divined. But this, though: death,
the whole of death . . .
this is beyond description! (4. 82-85)

According to Rella, the war is "beyond description" because its destructiveness has "corroded" the language through which we "represent and dominate" the world, even the world of transience. Death represents the unsayable "remainder" ("il resto," what is left over), proving that our domination is not "perfect." In "Thoughts for the Times on War and Death," Freud wrote that death was as "unrepresentable for the primitive savage as it was for everyone of us today" (14. 293). His whole effort was to construct a logic to explain this "remainder," outside the boundary of "moral control": the "immutable law of death." As Max Schur paraphrases Freud, "in recognizing death intellectually man can hope to overcome not *death*, but his *fear* of it."⁴¹

The Silent Friend

Before Rella can present Freud's, Rilke's, and Andreas-Salomé's separate resolutions of the conflict beyond the "scene of transience," other voices, the "silent friend," and the land itself must be allowed to "speak." The first voice is Goethe's; Freud is writing an essay for "Goethe's Land" and is crossing "the countryside of Goethe," that is, rethinking the dimension of Goethean "salvation," which is the "solution" of the culture of "classical reason" (SP, 81). Freud's title "Vergänglichkeit" seems to point to "Alles Vergängliche," from the Chorus Mysticus that concludes *Faust*:

Alles Vergängliche
Ist nur ein Gleichnis;
Das Unzulängliche,
Hier wird's Ereignis;

All that perishes
is only a figure;
the inadequate
here becomes event;

Das Unbeschreibliche	the undescribable
Hier ist's getan;	here is accomplished;
Das Ewigweibliche	the eternal feminine
Zieht uns hinan.	leads us upward. ⁴²

"That transitory things have only symbolic significance," writes Hans Eichner, was "almost a commonplace in the Age of Goethe."⁴³ *Faust's* world is often raucous and messy, made of evil temptations, full of dizzying mutability. For Goethe the greatest experience of mutability was the French Revolution and its Napoleonic aftermath. Only through self-realization could the individual find salvation and conquer the "anguish of change" (SP, 80). The devil's pact set death and nihilism (staying "fixed" upon pleasure, self-indulgence, yielding up the self) over against a continuous urge to self-realization. But this ideal of self-realization required training the self to "desist," to "renounce" the pleasures of the fleeting moment. The individual must learn that the only solid thing is the soul's constancy, the "coherence of the ego." Adorno refers to the Goethean solution as a "dialectic of tact," an awareness of the "inhumanity of progress," the "threatening impossibility of all human relationships in emergent industrial society." A holdover from the courtesy of Renaissance high culture, tact ("and humanity—for him the same thing—") is the "saving accommodation between alienated human beings."⁴⁴

Rella translates *Unzulängliche* as "inadequate" instead of the more common "unattainable" or "inaccessible"; what belongs to the world of *Gleichnis* (sign, figure, comparison) cannot fully express what is beyond it; "here" in the world only an "event" can express it. For Rella, Goethe's final lines do not mean that the Eternal Feminine draws upward to heaven, purity, or divine forgiveness; rather, it draws the "subject to itself"; guarantees and inspires its constancy; provides an eternal foundation for it; brings it to the "height" of its value. Faust saved himself by freely renouncing nihilism. His solution is one of the great models of classical realism (or bourgeois idealism). In a time of catastrophe, however, the "indescribable" has been "accomplished," the choice has already been made for nihilism. The way across and "upward" ("ci sublima") over "transience" is no longer "practical" in the same sense (SP, 80). The fragments will not cohere through being read as a *symbol* of another *wholeness*, through being rescued "upward in sublimation." Transience cannot be redeemed; it can only be suppressed. And not for long: "all my boundaries are in a hurry." The modern writer must walk through suffering and death to "find new figures."

Rella's emphasis on the coherence of the subject refers him back to the "scene of transience" for a final time and to the one element in it that remains "silent": the friend. Who is the friend? Lou Andreas-Salomé seems almost overdetermined to fill the role of the third term and resolve the conflict between Freud and Rilke. She was *the* friend in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For Nietzsche, who proposed to her, she came to symbolize the Eternal Feminine as he indicated at numerous places in his writings. As the muse of Rilke, she came to think of herself in terms of the Eternal Feminine and "eternity": in short, Goethe's way.

For Rilke, what discursive practice leaves unsaid is "Death" ("beyond description"); for Freud, it is the "residue" uncontained by classical reason. For Andreas-Salomé, it is something close to Goethean eternity. Freud could not have chosen a better epithet for her than the "silent friend" because silence (a representation of eternity in her *weltanschauung*) and friendship were her signature virtues. "Every desire," she said, "yearns for eternity, for a deep, deep eternity," "independent of every analytic consideration" (SP, 88). "Being friends," she wrote in "Thoughts on Lovers' Problems," meant sharing "reciprocal solitude in order to deepen it. . . . *Friends* means, then, protector against every losing solitude in anything whatever—himself included."⁴⁵ These virtues of friendship and silence she brought to perfection; together they gave her intuitions of pure Being:

The persons of our most remote past, against whom we have sinned, separating ourselves from them, rise again: no, they are present as always, marked by eternity—solid and tranquil; one thing alone with Being itself. (SP, 89)

In whatever she wrote her fundamental idea shone through. Such is the case with psychoanalytic language—she was a practicing lay analyst for many years after 1913—and her theory of narcissism.

Andreas-Salomé's theory of narcissism seeks to find a topographical setting within psychoanalysis for what is basically the Romantic idea of the eternal unity of being. For her, narcissism is not only a phase of individual development but endures "in all the subsequent object-cathexes of the libido—which in fact, in Freud's metaphor, stretches forth pseudopods to objects, like the amoeba, only to withdraw them when need arises." In keeping with Freud's conflict between the libido and the instinctual ego energies, but opposed to his belief in the regressive nature of narcissism,

Andreas-Salomé describes narcissism as facing in two directions, one toward "self-assertion" and the other toward "abandonment in the primal boundless state," a "deep identification with the totality." Libidinal energies in the service of individuation, which manifests itself in egoism, are responsible for the great tragedies of mankind. She rejects Freud's later motto "Where id was, there ego shall be" as going in entirely the wrong direction. It is to the id that one must repair for value. Friendship, for instance, possesses a "climate of asexuality, rooted not in mutual eroticism, but a tertium quid," which is a sublimation of the "most archaic autoeroticism." Freud's primary narcissism thus becomes responsible for universal love, "autonomous judgment," the intuitions of "all-encompassing, all-supporting Being." Finally the artist returns to his primary narcissism when he wishes to discover the truths that he *shares* with his audience, allowing him to be at the same time "fully personal" and "universal." His labor results in a work which is a "guide to blessedness," a "rejoicing in the incredible fullness of union."⁴⁶ The idea is perhaps a restatement of the Rousseauistic-Wordsworthian "sentiment of being," a kind of cosmic consciousness. Freud repudiated similar notions of the "oceanic sensation" in his discussion of Romain Rolland in *Civilization and Its Discontents*.

Andreas-Salomé's revisionism was unacceptable to Freud, who warned her seminar against turning narcissism into a "key to every possible residue." Her theory was a "receptacle for unsolved residues."⁴⁷ Unsolved—and unresolved, like other dualities in her work, "spirit/flesh, ego/sex, active/reactive, objective/subjective, analysis/synthesis," her "penchant for ambiguity," her theories of bisexuality.⁴⁸ Rella ought to have pursued further Andreas-Salomé's oppositions on the "scene of transience": she was almost as "burdened with tensions" as Rilke and Freud. But Rella does show that her "eternity" was finally unacceptable to Rilke. In *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* he rejected the "third" term, the Romantic "eternity" and the "silence" which hides a "real conflict":

Was I an imitator and a fool that I needed a third person to tell of the fate of two human beings who were making things hard for each other? And I ought to have known that this third person who pervades all lives and literatures, this ghost of a third person who never was, has no significance and must be disavowed. He is one of the pretexts of Nature who is always endeavoring to divert the attention of men from her deepest secrets. He is the screen behind

which a drama unfolds. He is the noise at the threshold of the voiceless silence of a real conflict.⁴⁹

Andreas-Salomé herself came to recognize the inadequacy of "silence," not from the War, but from Rilke's death in 1926. Writing to Freud on 20 May 1927 she said that she could not express a "new experience" which was "unexpected." It derived from "something infinitely sad and linked to the death of Rainer." Does this show her bondage to transience and the failure of her concept of narcissism? Somehow she must break her "silence" (SP, 89):

some ten years ago the important thing for me would have been loss, the abominable despoiling. . . . Now it is something *strange* . . . to begin with it was an augmented suffering—something like a cry—the fact that I could not tell you any more about it. . . . Now it is almost as if Rainer were there under my trees, living their autumn or their summer, their winter and their spring. No absolutely, *it is impossible to express it clearly*. But after the death of Rainer *I am pressed by the need to speak of it with you*.

Freud's memorial note on Andreas-Salomé does not mention this development. She remains the "silent friend" portrayed in "Transience." Rella considers Freud's "silence" to be an unresolved conflict in his own position and suggests a distant relationship to the attitude of women expressed in Weininger's *Sex and Character* (1903), where the woman is the "unconscious," "plurality," "heterogeneity," and lack of boundedness (SP, 34). Rella terms it the "Weininger effect," a resurgent antifeminism operating throughout Middle European culture at the turn of the century and accounting for the extraordinary popularity of Weininger's book. Freud writes in the note that Andreas-Salomé "never spoke" of her literary works, but neither does Freud, nor does he mention her contribution to psychoanalysis. What could be more appropriate than some reference to these works by the founder of the subject? Rella underscores the points at issue, beginning with the curious circumlocution ("It was known . . . It was well known") by which Freud explains how he learned of her past, never allowing her to "speak" (although individuals are not normally quoted in memorial notes about themselves):

It was known that as a girl she had kept up an intense friendship with Friedrich Nietzsche. . . . *It was well known*, too, that many years later she had acted alike as Muse and protecting mother to Rainer Maria Rilke. . . . But beyond this her personality remained

obscure. . . . *She never spoke* of her own poetical and literary works. She clearly knew where *the true value* in life was to be looked for. Those who were closer to her had the strongest impression of the genuineness and *harmony* of her nature. (23. 298)

Silence and the Eternal Feminine, sustaining one person after another, govern the passage. Andreas-Salomé can only "speak" to another woman: "My daughter," concludes Freud, "who was her close friend, once heard her regret that she had not known psychoanalysis in her youth. But, after all, in those days there was no such thing" (23. 298-99): the suppression of Andreas-Salomé contains the clue. Freudian psychoanalysis provides the new "construction" which allows the "silence" of the atemporal (eternal) unconscious to speak.

How did Freud and Rilke cross the "scene of transience"? In the episode Freud invoked the "eternal return" to rebut his two sad friends, representing "transience" on the one hand and "silence" (eternity) on the other. He ended on the note of optimism and serenity mentioned by his two major biographers. But in subsequent references to "eternal return" Freud gave it a much darker meaning. It becomes associated with the uncanny, the repetition-compulsion, and the return of the repressed, that is, regression to an unresolved conflict in one of the phases of narcissism. The uncanny is experienced as sudden fright, creeping horror, the revenant, and a blending of the unfamiliar and the familiar; its dream and literary representations are shadows, doubles, guardian spirits, demons, and second sight. Demonic doubles in stories are narcissistic images which become terrible under the aspect (or influence) of repression:

the subject identifies himself with someone else, so that he is in no doubt as to which his self is, or substitutes the extraneous self for his own. In other words, there is a doubling, dividing and interchanging of the self. And finally there is the constant recurrence of the same thing—the repetition of the same features or character-traits or vicissitudes, of the same crimes, or even the same names through several consecutive generations. (17. 234)

In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1919) Freud associates the "eternal return" with the sense of the demonic, with being pursued by a "malignant fate" ("fate neurosis") which is tracking down its victim and luring it to self-destruction (23. 21-22). Ultimately, "eternal return" is linked by way of narcissism to the death instinct, which represents the desire to return to a preconscious

state, and further, to the absence of all disturbing stimuli in inanimate matter. As in narcissism, the eternal return betrays a compulsion to repeat and, arguably, an intolerance of otherness and difference. In the struggle between the ego and the repressed, the "patient's resistance arises from his ego," "the compulsion to repeat must be ascribed to the unconscious repressed" (23. 20). Rella points out that Freud's descriptions of repetition compulsion—"early efflorescence" of infantile sexual life is "doomed to extinction"—recall the natural metaphor in "Transience."

How does the analyst treat the repetition-compulsion? Accepting the "eternal return" as the unmistakable given, the "time" of regression and the denial of linear time, Freud comes to terms with it by "allowing it to speak" in its own way, that is, through psychoanalysis. The patient divulges his secret thoughts, tells his dreams, and engages in free association: he is "obliged to repeat the repressed material as a contemporary experience instead of, as the physician would prefer to see, remembering it as something belonging to the past." Gradually there emerges a "transference neurosis" forced upon the physician. The analyst tries "to keep this transference neurosis within the narrowest limits: to force as much as possible into the channel of memory and to allow as little as possible to emerge as repetition." The patient re-experiences his past with "some degree of aloofness" and he becomes able to "recognize that what appears to be reality is in fact only a reflection of a forgotten past." This is the condition for a successful transference and therapy (23. 19). Rella sums up the section of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* dealing with "construction": the "present ought to redeem the past, but *as past*" (SP, 119), and hence freedom from repetition.

Linear time lies in the service of the pleasure principle and of the ego and is a defensive construction to ward off both external and internal stimuli that disturb consciousness. Some internal stimuli are inevitably the repetition-compulsions that deny linear time and manifest themselves as experiences of eternal return. While Freud had chosen eternal return as consolation in "Transience," at least part of this choice must have been determined by his personal crisis and unresolved feelings, represented by and in the "silence" of the unconscious and the woman, the first object of affection beyond the self. At this time, too, he must have recognized that in its repetitiveness eternal return resembled the repetitiveness of neurotic symptoms associated with narcissism. Even the note of hope may express his desire to *break the cycle*: in "Transience" he looks ahead to a time in which one is "free (in so far as

we are still *young and active*)" (14. 307). Ultimately it is his own invention of psychoanalysis that enables Freud to cross the "scene of transience." "The third way which Freud proposes is that of recognizing precariousness," writes Rella. Life and death are not opposed to one another but "make up each other and are articulated by one another, in a different time" (SP, 123). This time is exactly what the new logos of psychoanalysis can construct.

Rilke's "crossing" beyond transience and the Narcissus period was not accomplished until February 1922 when he completed his *Elegies* and wrote the *Sonnets to Orpheus* in a "sudden" outpouring of inspiration. The poems contained his resolution: the construction of a new poetic language:

Are we, perhaps, here just for saying: House,
 Bridge, Fountain, Gate, Jug, Olive tree, Window, —
 possibly: Pillar, Tower? . . . but for saying, remember,
 oh, for such saying as never the things themselves
 hoped so intensely to be. . . .
Here is the time for the Tellable, *here* is its home.
 Speak and proclaim.

Elegy 9. 31-35

Rilke's praise of language overcoming time is not the Renaissance boast of death-defying fame, but the power of language to transform the experience of the transitory into its eternal significance. Life and death are not diametric opposites, but phases of a single "profound Being." The human perspective on Being is finite and limited, but this condition must not be regretted. Rather, it must be welcomed as the condition for the "fulfillment of our specifically human task, that of transformation."⁵⁰ As Rilke wrote in the last year of his life, the poet's task is "to stamp this provisional, perishing earth into ourselves so deeply, so painfully and passionately, that its being may rise again, 'invisibly,' in us."⁵¹

Like Freud, Rilke responds obliquely to the final Chorus Mysticus in *Faust*. The final lines of his tenth and last *Elegy* read:

And yet, were they waking a likeness within us, the endlessly dead,
 look, they'd be pointing, perhaps, to the catkins, hanging
 from empty hazels, or else they'd be meaning the rain
 that falls on the dark earth in the early Spring.

And we, who have always thought
 of happiness climbing, would
 feel the emotion that almost startles
 when happiness falls.

"Endlessly" dead implicates the endlessness of being. The dead are "waking a likeness," are represented, as in a poem. The revelation that death and life are two sides of being comes through the imagination. The "endlessly dead" point to the seasonal cycle rolling on forever, to catkins flowering from dead husks in late autumn, and to earth made "dark" and poisonous by rain in early spring (the "dark earth" is an Homeric epithet; earth is darkened and so nourished by warriors' blood, that is, by death). This awareness of the unity of being, in nature and art, "almost startles," like the uncanny, with its suddenness, its (cyclical) repetition, its provocation of the instinctual desire to return to inorganic existence. *Almost* startles: it does not shock. While the psychological train of events is similar, Rilke now acknowledges "happiness" or pleasure because the individual is reconciled to—in some sense, has willed or "constructed"—his fate. Freud said that the death instinct wins out because "*the aim of all life is death*" and that the satisfaction of this instinct, reducing tension to nothing, gives the deepest pleasure of all. But the self-preservative (erotic, outgoing, life-) instincts conspire so that the individual may die only in the way that is "immanent" within him. He must follow his own "path to death"; "thus these guardians of life, too, were originally the myrmidons of death" (18. 38-39). Both climbing on high, Goethe's way, and equally "falling," the way of the negative modern poet of transience, may lead to "happiness." One makes—constructs—one's death as one makes one's life, in the present moment of logos and transience. The tenth Elegy offers Rella a closure on the grounds of the widest imaginative possibility: present and past, silence and speech, death and life. "The voices of the past," he writes, can "speak inside the images of the present. Provided that we are disposed to this present" (SP, 102).

1. Manfredo Tafuri, "Il 'progetto' storia," *Casabella*, n. 429, 1977, pp. 16, 18. All translations are the present writer's unless otherwise noted.

2. *Phenomenology of Spirit*, 1. 3.

3. Theodor W. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, trans. E. F. N. Jephcott (London: Verso, 1978), p. 150. For a perspective of "negative thought" criticism on the Frankfurt School, see Giuseppe Sertoli, "Utopia ed effettualità: un libro sulla Scuola di Francoforte," *Nuova Corrente*, no. 65 (1974), 547-70.

4. Georg Lukács, *Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1971), pp. 29-30. Cf. Adorno: "The whole is the false." *Minima Moralia*, p. 50.

5. *Crisi della ragione*, ed. Aldo G. Gargani (Torino: Einaudi, 1979). Hereafter cited in the text and notes as CR. "The crisis of rationality originates in the awareness that rationality is not in nature," Gargani writes, "and that the socio-economic structure of our civilization has generated a system of abstractions and of generality which reflect a constellation of powers and of functions of domination" (CR, 40).

6. Giuseppe Sertoli, unpublished review of Franco Rella, *Il silenzio e le parole: Il pensiero nel tempo della crisi* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1981).

7. Giuseppe Sertoli, "Umanesimo e Formalismo," *Quaderno*, mon. no. 13, ed. Giovanni Cianci and John Paul Russo (Palermo: Facoltà di Lettere, 1981), pp. 89, 90.

8. Massimo Cacciari, *Krisis: Saggio sulla crisi del pensiero negativo da Nietzsche a Wittgenstein* (1976), 6th ed. (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1982), pp. 56-57.

9. The following is a list of abbreviations of works and editions by Franco Rella cited in the text and notes: BV: *La battaglia della verità: il pensiero della narrazione*, (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1985), forthcoming 1986; CF, "Introduzione," "Ipotesi per una descrizione di una battaglia," *La critica freudiana*, ed. Franco Rella (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1977); CS, *Critica e storia: materiali su Benjamin*, ed. Franco Rella (Venezia: Cluva, 1980); M, *Metamorfosi: immagini del pensiero* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1984); MA, *Il mito dell' altro: Lacan, Deleuze, Foucault* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978); MF, *Miti e figure del moderno* (Parma: Pratiche Editrice, 1981); NP, *Negazione presunta*, poetry with a critical note by Giuseppe Sertoli (Torino: Geiger, 1975); SP, *Il silenzio e le parole: Il pensiero nel tempo della crisi* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1981). Also by Rella are: "Testo analitico e analisi testuale," in MT, *La materialità del testo: ricerca interdisciplinare sulle pratiche significanti*, no ed. (Verona: Bertani, 1977); and "Il discredito della ragione," in CR, op. cit.

10. Adorno, pp. 36, 63-64, 152-55.

11. C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1923), p. 399.

12. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, trans. C. K. Ogden (1922: London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1983). Numbers in the text refer to Wittgenstein's propositions. The "crisis of reason" is explicated by Cacciari through a series of "connections" or "fractures" between Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Wagner and Mahler, Frege and Wittgenstein, and many others. For instance, a description in Frege can have "meaning" without "denoting," that is, without having any object. The natural language has no logical syntax; and meaning flows around and over and through any logical calculus. This is the idea that penetrates the *Tractatus*. Logical propositions are not coterminous with truths; the propositions of mathematics are tautologous. In Wittgenstein's early philosophy the world "shows" itself; what exists is the world; the world is the "possibility of possibles." Cf. *Dallo Steinhof: prospettive del primo Novecento* (Milano: Adelphi, 1980), pp. 19-32.

13. Sertoli, unpublished review of Rella, *Il silenzio e le parole*.

14. Remo Ceserani, *Breve viaggio nella critica americana* (Pisa: ETS, 1984), p. 13.

15. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Le manifeste du Futurisme*, *Figaro*, 20 Feb. 1909.

16. Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 807-9.

17. "The Claims of Psycho-Analysis to the Interest of the Non-Psychological Sciences," *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 23 vols. (London: Hogarth and The Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1955); citations are given in the text by volume and page number.

18. "Psicoanalisi 'come' letteratura," CF, 127.

19. Taking up another Rella metaphor, Sertoli writes that a critical act is a "street": "It shows only the form of a book as a map of a city—but together: the structure of ideology that stretches on things and on words—is only a fiction which tries to reconcile and pacify in the *imaginary* the oppositions and *real* conflicts which it bears within itself, which produce the fiction and which the fiction reproduces" (NP, 38).

20. Sertoli, unpublished review of Rella, *Il silenzio e le parole*.

21. Ronald W. Clark, *The Life of Bertrand Russell* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1976), p. 130 (2 Nov. 1911).

22. J. M. E. McTaggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion* (London: Arnold, 1906), p. 95.

23. Norman Malcolm, "Moore and Ordinary Language," *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, ed. P. A. Schilpp (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1942), pp. 346-47.

24. G. M. A. Grube, *Plato's Thought* (Boston: Beacon, 1964), p. 254.

25. Nietzsche's expressions for his famous concept varied: "Der furchtbarste Gedanke einer ewigen Wiederkehr der Vergeudung" ("The horrible eternal return of waste"), *Nachgelassene Fragmente*, July 1882-Winter 1883-84, *Werke*, 7, pt. 1 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), p. 622; "der Lehrer der ewigen Wiederkunst" ("the teacher of the eternal return-art"), *Götzen-Dämmerung*, *Werke* (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner, n.d.), 8, p. 200; "der Ewige-Wieder-Kunst-Gedanke" ("the eternal return-art concept"), *Ecce Homo*, *Werke*, 8, p. 391.

26. The leitmotiv of *Il pensiero debole*, ed. G. Vattimo and P. A. Rovatti (Milano: Feltrinelli, 1983).

27. "On Transience" is the translation of the title in the *Standard Edition* (14. 305). The "on" is fussy and literary and robs the title of some of its force and poignancy.

28. My translation here follows Rella's Italian translation, but will refer as necessary to the *Standard Edition* and the text of the *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. Marie Bonaparte et al. (London: Imago, 1946), 10, pp. 358-61.

29. "Deise Wiederkehr darf im Verhältnis zu unserer Lebensdauer als eine ewige bezeichnet werden," *Gesammelte Werke*, 10, p. 359. See above, n. 25.

30. Ernest Jones, *The Life and Work of Sigmund Freud* (New York: Basic Books, 1955), 2, p. 373.

31. Herbert Lehmann, "A Conversation Between Freud and Rilke," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 35 (1966), 423.

32. Max Schur, *Freud: Living and Dying* (New York: International Publishers, 1972), pp. 301, 304.

33. *Frau Lou* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1968), p. 451.

34. Lehmann, 423.

35. Lehmann, 427.

36. Jones, pp. 366, 304. See also Schur, p. 282: "Freud himself felt like the father of the 'primal horde' when he looked at some of his 'sons,' as he remarked in a letter (12 December 1912) to Binswanger: 'All of them [Stekel and Jung in particular] can hardly wait for it [his death].'" In part four of Freud's *Totem and Taboo* the Primal Horde is the group of sons (or males) whom the father has driven away to keep the females for himself; but they return, kill and devour him and, in doing so, identify with him and assume a portion of his power. They also institute laws against repetition of the deed.

37. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, trans. J. B. Leishman and Stephen Spender (New York: Norton, 1939), p. 21.

38. Quoted in Rilke, *Duino Elegies*, p. 97.

39. Rainer Maria Rilke, *Sonnets to Orpheus*, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York: 1942), p. 153.

40. Cf. Mircea Eliade, *Le Mythe de l'éternel retour: archetypes et répétition* (Paris:

Gallimard, 1949), pp. 38-52.

41. Schur, p. 333. For Freud's "man overcomes death which he has recognized intellectually," see "The Theme of the Three Caskets" (1913), *Standard Edition*, 12, p. 299. "Complete objectivity requires a person who takes less pleasure in life than you do; you insist on finding something edifying in it. True, it is only in old age that one is converted to the grim heavenly pair *Logos kai Ananke*" [Reason and Necessity], Freud to O. Pfister, 6 April 1922, quoted in Schur, pp. 332-33.

42. My translation follows Rella's (SP, 81).

43. Hans Eichner, "The Eternal Feminine: An Aspect of Goethe's Ethics" (1971), in *Faust*, trans. Walter Arndt, ed. Cyrus Hamlin (New York: Norton, 1976), p. 616.

44. Adorno, *Minima Moralia*, pp. 35-36.

45. Quoted in Binion, pp. 258-59.

46. Lou Andreas-Salomé, "The Dual Orientation of Narcissism," *Psychoanalytic Quarterly*, 31 (1962), 3, 11, 28, 14, 26, 30.

47. Quoted in Binion, p. 381.

48. Binion, pp. 28-29. Binion calls her the "mistress of subterfuge" (p. 30) which would indicate that concealment had as much to do with self-image as with eternity.

49. Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*, trans. M. D. Herter Norton (New York: Norton, 1949), p. 27.

50. Leishman and Spender, in *Duino Elegies*, p. 112.

51. Quoted in *Duino Elegies*, p. 128 (13 Nov. 1925).