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# Psychotropes

Models of Authorship,  
Psychopathology, and Molecular Politics  
in Aldous Huxley and Philip K. Dick

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*A thesis submitted to the  
Department of English and  
the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
at the University of Sydney in fulfillment of  
the requirements of the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy*

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## Abstract

AMONG THE SO-CALLED “ANTI-PSYCHIATRISTS” of the 1960s and ‘70s, it was Félix Guattari who first identified that psychiatry had undergone a “molecular revolution.” It was in fact in a book titled *Molecular Revolutions*, published in 1984, that Guattari proposed that psychotherapy had become, in the decades following the Second World War, far less personal and increasingly alienating. The newly “molecular” practices of psychiatry, Guattari mourned, had served only to fundamentally distance both patients and practitioners from their own minds; they had largely restricted our access, he suggested, to human subjectivity and consciousness.

This thesis resumes Guattari’s work on the “molecular” model of the subject. Extending on Guattari’s various “schizoanalytic metamodels” of human consciousness and ontology, it rigorously meditates on a simple question: Should we now accept the likely finding that there is no neat, singular, reductive, utilitarian, or unifying “model” for thinking about the human subject, and more specifically the human “author”?

Part 1 of this thesis carefully examines a range of psychoanalytic, psychiatric, philosophical, and biomedical models of the human. It studies and reformulates each of them in turn and, all the while, returns to a fundamental position: that no single model, nor combination of them, will suffice. What part 1 seeks to demonstrate, then, is that envisioning these models as different attempts to “know” the human is fruitless—a futile game. Instead, these models should be understood in much the same way as literary critics treat literary commonplaces or topoi; they are akin, I argue, to what Deleuze and Guattari called “images of thought.” In my terminology, they are “psychotropes”: images with their own particular symbolic and mythical functions.

Having thus developed a range of theoretical footholds in part 1, part 2 of the thesis—beginning in chapter 4—will put into practice the work of this first part. It will do so by examining various representations of authorship by two authors in particular: Aldous Huxley and Philip K. Dick. This part will thus demonstrate how these author figures function as “psychoactive scribes”: they are fictionalising philosophers who both produce and quarrel with an array of paradigmatic psychotropes, disputing those of others and inventing their own to substitute for them.

More than this, however, the second part offers a range of detailed and original readings of these authors's psychobiographies; it argues that even individual authors such as Huxley and Dick can be seen as "psychotropic." It offers, that is, a series of broad-ranging and speculative explanations for the ideas and themes that appear in their works—explanations rooted in the theoretical work of the first part.

Finally, this thesis concludes by reaffirming the importance of these authors's narcoliteratures—both for present-day and future literary studies, and beyond. For while Huxley and Dick allow us to countenance afresh the range of failures in the history and philosophy of science, they also promise to instruct us—and instruct science—about the ways in which we might move beyond our received mimetic models of the human.

# Psychotropes

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C.J.R.

## Abbreviations

*TT* Michiel Heyns, *The Typewriter's Tale: A Novel* (Johannesburg: Jonathan Ball Publishers, 2005).

### Aldous Huxley

*AH* *Antic Hay* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1949).

*AOS* *The Art of Seeing* (California: Creative Arts Book Company, 1982). Originally Chatto & Windus (London, 1942).

*BNW* *Brave New World* (London: Vintage, 2007).

*BNWR* *Brave New World Revisited* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1960).

*CY* *Crome Yellow* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1921).

*DOP* *The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell* (London: Vintage, 2004).

*DTSM* "Drugs That Shape Men's Minds," in *Aldous Huxley, Complete Essays, Volume 6: 1956-1963*, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 299. Originally in the *Saturday Evening Post*, October 1958.

*EBM* "Exploring the Borderlands of the Mind," in Michael Horowitz and Cynthia Palmer, eds. *Moksha: Writing on Psychedelics and the Visionary Experience (1931-1963)* (New York: Stonehill Publishing, 1977), 210-216.

*EOA* "The Education of an Amphibian," in *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Other Essays* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 1-32.

*EG* *Eyeless in Gaza* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1955).

*HOT* "The History of Tension," in *Moksha*, 117-128.

*FCM* "The Far Continents of the Mind," in *Moksha*, 58-60.

*FLF* "Foreword," in Jiddu Krishnamurti, *The First and Last Freedom* (Illinois: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1954).

*GE* *Grey Eminence* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1941).

*GENIUS* *The Genius and the Goddess* (Chatto & Windus, 1955).

*HAH* *Heaven and Hell* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956).

*ISLAND* *Island* (Chatto & Windus, 1962).

- JP* *Jesting Pilate* (New York: George H. Doran, 1926).
- LAS* *Literature and Science* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1963).
- LIM* *Limbo* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1920).
- MOTHER* Aldous Huxley, *Complete Essays, Volume 5: 1939-1956*, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 339-44.
- PCP* *Point Counter Point* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937).
- PS* *Proper Studies* (Chatto & Windus, 1957 [1927]).
- SLP* *Science, Liberty and Peace* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1946).
- SW* "Spinoza's Worm," in *Do What You Will* (Chatto & Windus, 1929), 62-92.
- SWIFT* "Swift," in *Aldous Huxley Complete Essays, Volume 2, 1926-1929*, Baker and Sexton, eds. (Chicago: Ivan. R. Dee, 2000), 24-31.
- TAP* *Texts and Pretexts: An Anthology with Commentaries* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1933).
- TBL* *Those Barren Leaves* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1940). Originally published by the same publisher, 1925.
- TMHAS* *Time Must Have A Stop* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1953 [1944]).
- TPP* *The Perennial Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).
- TV* *Themes and Variations* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1954 [1950]).
- UD* "Usually Destroyed," in *Adonis and the Alphabet* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956), 204-216.
- VOI* "Varieties of Intelligence," in *Aldous Huxley Complete Essays, Volume 2*, 165-192. Originally published in *Proper Studies*, 31-88.

### Philip K. Dick

- DADOES* *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* In *Philip K. Dick: Four Novels of the 1960s*, ed. Jonathan Lethem (New York: Library of America, 2007), 431-608.
- EX* *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick*, ed. Jonathan Lethem and Pamela Jackson (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011).
- TSPE* *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1965).
- VAL* *VALIS* (Surrey: Kerosina, 1987).
- WCR* "We Can Remember it For You Wholesale," in *The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick*, 5 vols. (London: Grafton, 1991), 5: 205-227.

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## Introduction

# To Gaze Upon the Sun

*Le soleil ni la mort ne se peuvent regarder en face.  
(Neither the sun nor death can be looked at steadily.)*

—François de La Rochefoucauld<sup>1</sup>

ON THE MORNING OF the day of his death, Aldous Huxley, weak and passive on a creaky hospital bed, scrawled a barely legible note on a small square sheet of paper. This was Huxley's last-ditch effort, perhaps, to relieve his pain. As Huxley's bony hand passed the note to his wife, Laura, the words "Try LSD 100 mm intramuscular" must have caused her some concern; Huxley longed, it seemed, for one final experience of that "moksha-medicine in which he believed": LSD (or d-lysergic acid diethylamide).<sup>2</sup> Laura granted Huxley's request and, at around lunchtime, several hours after she had injected the first 100 micrograms ( $\mu\text{g}$ ), she injected her husband with "another shot" of roughly the same quantity. Some three or four hours after that, a peaceful Huxley would pass away; he would fade into his death, as Laura observed, "like a piece of music," concluding his life "so gently in sempre più piano, dolcemente."<sup>3</sup>

If this dialogical and chemical exchange between Huxley and his wife constitutes more than simply a private act of tender love and care, it also, as Laura herself puts it, strikes us as a "last gesture of continuing importance." While it "might," Laura continues, "be ignorantly misinterpreted" by some, Huxley's dying ode to LSD seems to demand our attention—not least because of the respectable and even grandiose familial and historical tradition after which it arises: the "history," as Laura remarks, in which "Huxleys stop ignorance before ignorance stops Huxleys."<sup>4</sup>

1 François De La Rochefoucauld, *Moral Reflections, Sentences and Maxims* (New York: William Gowans, 1851), 12 (Maxim 27). Also see Peter Sloterdijk, *Neither Sun Nor Death*, tr. Steve Corcoran (New York: Semiotext(e), 2011), *passim*.

2 Laura Archer Huxley, *This Timeless Moment: A Personal View of Aldous Huxley* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), 303-8.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 308.

Yet, no matter how profoundly the gesture struck those who knew Huxley, it would not be very long after the man's death that history and ignorance seemed to escape the control and influence of such staunchly scientific families as his. And, in a way, Huxley's death marks a break from the period in which the "family name," as such, would mean anything at all. That is, after Huxley's death, history seems to take a sharp turn towards something altogether less peaceful and benevolent than this Huxley death scene. It would enter into a time in which the constancy, uprightness, and objectivity that had been signalled by his family name, ever since his grandfather's monumentalisation in the early decades of twentieth century, would all but disappear. By 1968, for instance—by which time Philip K. Dick had already been practising his daily regimen of ingesting 45mg of methamphetamine for some 36 months—a score of news reports, all of them vicious counterpoint to Huxley's "gesture of continuing importance," had appeared in the United States press about drugs and the human mind.

One report, published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* in 1967, just four years following Huxley's death, describes how a group of four male users of LSD had each, as a consequence of using the drug, suffered a severe eye injury that would later be named "solar retinopathy."<sup>5</sup> But the report was also concerned with how the drug could cause other injuries: LSD could bring on deep spiritual delusion, it observed, and, among other things, it offered details of how one man among the four had felt he had been "holding a religious conversation with the sun."<sup>6</sup> The article made the damage of such rituals abundantly clear: "What this has left the students with," it posited, "is not total blindness but a blind spot in the center of their vision."

Rich in metaphorical potential (not to mention its ironic reverberation of the story in which Huxley came to bear his own "blind spot"—a story this thesis will tell), the report's literary and even Ovidian mythological allusions appear only slightly less remarkable than the dismaying accident it describes. But the report was also suspect: those who were interviewed for the report appeared to know very little about the incident. One represen-

5 On Philip K. Dick's methamphetamine use, see chapter 7 of this thesis. Also see Philip K. Dick to Terry and Carol Carr, October, 1964, quoted in Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasions* (Carrol & Graf Publishers, 1989), 119; "A Blinding LSD Vision," *San Francisco Chronicle*, May 18, 1967, 3. On cases of solar retinopathy, see H. Schatz and F. Mendelblatt, "Solar Retinopathy from Sun-gazing Under the Influence of LSD," *British Journal of Ophthalmology* 57 (1973): 270-3.

6 "Four LSD Users Suffer Serious Eye Damage," *Los Angeles Times*, May 19, 1967, 1-2. The story was also reported elsewhere: see "Four Students Under LSD Hurt Eye by Sun-Gazing," *New York Times*, May 19, 1967.

tative of the Santa Barbara Ophthalmological Society could convey only his “impression” that “each of the sun-staring incidents occurred separately.” Unsure of the details, however, he could name neither a specific student nor doctor who had been involved.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, since the story came at a time when a number of other reports had warned of LSD’s dangers, the facts of the story were accepted uncritically, easily digested by a public already worried about the idea of a countercultural revolution. Such events as these, scant in detail though they were, served merely to *confirm* the pestilence and danger of those novel substances that the wider population had already been persuaded to condemn—substances such as LSD.

Yet when a similar news story emerged some eight months later in January 1968, it did seem to be even more serious than the others. While it generated some hysteria, it also attracted the suspicion and attention of a range of commentators well placed to invigilate its credibility. These were the doctors who, calling on their experience, began to question whether what had been reported about LSD represented a likely or possible physiognomic response to the intrusion of UV rays into the eye. For it was this group of tutored readers who possessed, it seemed, the higher wisdom of what Huxley had called the “psycho-physical instrument” (*EOA*, 12). They had wisdom enough, at least, to see these reports for what they were: fraudulent fabrications. On this occasion, *Newsweek*, among other sources, reported that no less than six student LSD users had been rendered permanently blind by engaging in a round of LSD-induced sungazing.<sup>8</sup> (Some commentators have since suggested that this story represents no more than a concocted mutation of the first report, a psychopolitical elaboration driven by an anti-LSD agenda.) But what

7 My analysis of these news reports profits greatly from the research of Jan Harold Brunvand and his colleagues at snopes.com. See “Blinded By The Light,” at <http://www.snopes.com/horrors/drugs/lstdsun.asp>, accessed July 14, December 2014. Also see Mark Kurlansky, *1968: The Year That Rocked the World* (London: Random House, 2004), 188; Joel Fort, *The Pleasure Seekers: The Drug Crisis, Youth, and Society* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1969), 139-140.

8 “Darkness at Noon,” *Newsweek*, 22 January 1968. It is notable that this article’s title makes reference to Arthur Koestler’s novel of the same name. In 1967, Koestler had written an article for the *Sunday Telegraph* (London) titled “A Return Trip to Nirvana” (it is also sometimes recorded as having been published in 12 March, 1961). Addressing the value of hallucinogens, the article formulated a response to Huxley’s *Doors of Perception*. On Huxley and Koestler, also see James Sexton, ed. “Introduction to the Toronto Luncheon Colloquy 1961,” *Aldous Huxley Annual* 10/11 (2010-11): 153-221, esp. 189; cf. Jeff Aronson, “The Magic Phrase,” *British Medical Journal* 320, no. 7226 (2000): 50. Other sources of the story include the following: “6 College men Take LSD, Blinded by Sun,” *Los Angeles Times*, January 13, 1968, 1; and “Medicine: More Bad Trips on LSD,” *Time*, May 26, 1967, 64.



was distinctive about this second story was that, this time, a source for the information had been named.<sup>9</sup>

This source was Dr. Norman Yoder, a man who had been rendered blind by an injury at an early age, and who had become the commissioner of the office of the Blind in the Pennsylvania State Welfare Department. Yoder, it was revealed, had filed an “informal report” to Washington, and had given a press conference in which he presented this story “as established fact.”<sup>10</sup> But many ophthalmologists who heard the story were doubtful; as one *Time* reporter remarked, having heard some of the skeptical responses, it was unlikely that “even LSD could wipe out the eye-closing reflexes so completely.”<sup>11</sup> Before long, Yoder’s story was revealed to have been completely fabricated—the result of his personal wish to “drive home the dangers of LSD.”<sup>12</sup> Having falsified the records of six college students, “all of whom had been blinded for reasons completely unrelated to LSD,” Yoder was suspended from his post and, now “distracted and sick,” immediately “had himself admitted to the Philadelphia Psychiatric Center.”<sup>13</sup>

A reader’s letter to *Newsweek* scolded the magazine for printing what had been not just a false story, but a disturbing illustration of a “grotesque situation”—one that expressed the fabricator’s “wrong-minded fear of the unknown.”<sup>14</sup> However, within weeks of this story, the US Federal Drug Administration (FDA) persuaded its Commissioner, Dr. James Goddard, to endorse “the Johnson LSD bill,” persuading him against his own instincts, and thus making possession of the drug a “federal offense for the first time.”<sup>15</sup>

These “staring at the sun” narratives are not simply disturbing and exemplary proofs of the processes of psychopolitical fabrication; they are also fascinating works of fiction. This is because they convey much more than simply their authors’s desire to convey the “dangers of LSD.” When we read

9 See, for instance, “Blinded By The Light.”

10 Fort, *The Pleasure Seekers*, 139.

11 “Another LSD Hallucination,” *Time*, Friday, January 26, 1968, 1.

12 Richard Neville, *Play Power* (London: Paladin, 1970), 118. Yoder’s hoax was reported, albeit, as Neville asserts, not very widely. See “LSD Sun-Blinding Revealed as Hoax,” *Oakland Tribune*, January 18, 1968, 3; “Another LSD Hallucination”; “Official Will Be Removed for LSD Blindness Hoax,” *The New York Times*, 19 February 1968.

13 Fort, *The Pleasure Seekers*, 139; “Another LSD Hallucination.”

14 “Hoaxes Ex Cathedra,” Letter from Christopher Barr to the Editor, *Newsweek*, 5 February, 1968.

15 “Penalties for LSD,” *Time Magazine*, Friday 8 March, 1968; Stephen Siff, “Glossy Visions: Coverage of LSD in Popular Magazines, 1954-1968,” PhD diss., University of Ohio, 2008, ProQuest: AAT 3338743, 188; Stephen Siff, “Henry Luce’s Strange Trip: Coverage of LSD in *Time* and *Life*, 1954-68,” *Journalism History* 34, no. 3 (2008): 126-34.

that the students “didn’t realize they were staring at the sun until they came out of the trance,” for instance, we are warned not only of the dangers of drugs or suns—we are also directed to ignore what the writer more surreptitiously conveys: their knowledge of the power of trances. Thus, even while we are directed to disregard it, what remains visible here is a *psychotrope*: a tropism that represents a certain thought-image of the mind—and in this case a particularly dismaying image, one in which the mind, having reached the potential to overpower the body, renders its owner sightless and helpless.

The story, as one *Time* reporter suggests, was “Another LSD Hallucination”; but this story’s egregiousness followed from the fact that it trafficked in one untruthful distortion (that of the overwhelming trance) precisely to erase or obscure the possibility of another (that of the self-experiment, emblematised by Huxley’s “last gesture”).<sup>16</sup> The moment recalled the one in which the Egyptian king Thamus, as Plato suggests in his *Phaedrus*, had rejected the truthfulness of letters and writing; to deploy an object or a technic (*tekhne*) without knowledge of its power, Thamus suggested, would mean becoming subject to it, succumbing to its poisonous, hypnotic, delirious, or toxic potential while “know[ing] nothing.”<sup>17</sup>

Despite what Thamus expressed about language, the danger of subjecting oneself to such a poison is a notion that this thesis will court—embracing a risk, to be sure. But this thesis will also carefully examine the range of precarities entailed by these procedures: by the ingestion of new technics and by staring at such suns. By offering a detailed elaboration on the freighted conjugation of writing and drugs, this thesis attempts to demonstrate the importance of this long-vexed conjugation for literary history, and particularly for literary practices of the twentieth century. That drugs compel the creation of texts in many ways, for instance, should already be evident—it will be clear, at least, to anyone who tracks the emergence of the sungazing news reports. For it is in these reports that we see how fear, ignorance, and political pressure can conspire to concoct a new fiction—even if to dismiss fantasies of another kind. But what is less clear about these news reports—and about the texts this thesis will examine—is how every detail of these stories also constitutes a biopolitical or psychopolitical enunciation. That is, how every of Yoder’s utterances, for instance, also develops a progressively

16 “6 College men Take LSD, Blinded by Sun,” 1.

17 See Plato, *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. Benjamin Jowett, 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), 1: 487. Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003); and Jacques Derrida, “Pharmakon,” in *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (New York: Continuum, 1981 [1972]), 95-116.

striated and intractable narcoliterature, borne of some deeper dictation as to what must not be encountered at the level of cognition. That these deep dictations exist, that they are discoverable in the works of Huxley and Dick, and that their residues may be traced in all works of writing: this is what this thesis proposes; and these are its founding claims.

It is important to underscore that in part 1 of this thesis, the works of Dick and Huxley—and the authors themselves—will appear only as spectral figurations. They are not in this part the objects of the theory; rather, my brief allusions to their works and biographies will serve only to foreshadow their more illuminated appearance in part 2. As with Yoder's fiction, Part 1 may be understood to fabricate its own report on the dangers (and wonders) of authorship in the twentieth century, naming such an engagement with reading literature “psychobiographic” (by means of “*psychobiographia*”). This term names my method of engagement with writing: one that takes texts to be, and reads texts as, the inscribed effects of mental procedures; it is a combination of psychoanalytic, psychological, or psychiatric, biological, and biographical inquiry.

However, part 1 is also admittedly a theoretical experiment, a kind of unworking (*désœuvrement*) whose intent is to develop a set of principles or axioms that reverse engineer the very possibility of authorship, and to discover the strange set of preconditions that give rise to authorship's processes. In a vigorous effort to announce the principles by which we might encounter all writing as an effect of the body and brain, this part of the larger psychographic project begins with what are those putatively “observable” parts of our world. Taking up a range of scholarship on the human body, chapter 1 proposes the radical alterity of our “human microbiomes,” populated as they are by greater numbers of microbotic (or *nonhuman*) genes than human ones. Theorising about the importance of this discovery for the nature of subjectivity, authorship, and identity, the chapter then turns to the brain, first offering an analysis of this organ's mythologisation, and then articulating a series of speculations about the impact of a range of myths—or “mythemes”—on the speaking subject.

In chapter 2, the figure of the author is more carefully scrutinised. Accepting Roland Barthes's elegiac commiseration of the author's death in his 1968 essay “The Death of the Author,” this chapter fabricates a model for that same author's resurrection: if they may be reconstituted, I argue, it is as a molecular entity, one that I name the “psychoactive scrivener.” Thus intent to recuperate the author as a form of consciousness that interacts functionally with its environment, this chapter transcodes Michel Foucault's

analysis of the “author function” in an original model of the author; it does so in a manner akin to Félix Guattari’s “modelisation” of the human in his schizoanalytic “metamodelisations.”<sup>18</sup> In other words, this chapter seeks to represent this theory of writing or “scrivening” in diagrammatic form; in so doing, this diagrammatic model names four “operants” that are constitutive of the author, thus providing an original taxonomy (see chapter 2, figure 2.1). The chapter will then return to the brain, both as a means of interrogating materialist formulations of consciousness, and of apprehending what Deleuze and Guattari called the “brain subject.” Finally, to interrogate some of the concepts that have already been proposed, the chapter offers a short summary of “scrivening”: the production of writing under the instruction of an external agent.

Extending on the final sections of chapter 2, chapter 3 will focus more closely on the history of the scrivener, offering a “short scribal history.” Here I return to the scrivener’s literary-theoretical adumbration in modern history, paying particular attention to the technical processes of authorship and what Bernard Stiegler calls “technicization”—both of which serve as important psychotropes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. This is a time when technologies including drugs have begun to reshape the extent to which the authorial subject is now automatised or, as I propose (conceiving of prior modes as “automatic”) “*deautomatised*.” What is equally as important as the history of authorship in this chapter is the historical development of psychiatry, which—as it ever more precisely defines certain kinds of madness—allows for the production of a range of new “psychotropes.” That is, as psychiatry develops, so arise various kinds of madness—but not simply as discrete phenomena in the world, but figures for literary authors to reproduce, experiment with, and re-express in their works. Madness thus connotes, for Derrida (after Kierkegaard), as fundamental an experience as certain moments of judgment: as he suggests, one is as good as mad in the very “instant of decision.”<sup>19</sup>

Tracing psychiatry’s history, chapter 3 will also propose a range of ways in which literature and madness start to become close allies, coiling one with

18 See, for instance, Félix Guattari, *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, tr. Andrew Goffey (New York: Bloomsbury, 2013); Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, tr. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995). Both originally published in French as *Cartographies Schizoanalytiques* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1989), and *Chaosmose* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1992).

19 Jacques Derrida, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” in *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 2002 [1978]), 36.

the other until they are separated only by what James Joyce calls a “transparent sheet.”<sup>20</sup> It is this imbrication that will prompt both of them to undergo a process of redefinition—one that I argue renders each category gradually more interchangeable with the other.<sup>21</sup> The chapter will then consider the role of drugs in this transition, suggesting that, when one reflects on the changes of the twentieth century, drugs and other related kinds of adjuncts may be seen to increasingly begin to substitute for what had previously taken the form of the injunction to write, articulated by a sovereign to a scrivener. Observing the ways in which writing or scrivening has always elicited *acedia* and melancholy, the chapter concludes by proposing that drugs should be understood not as products of the advent of the chemical sciences, but rather as simply another means of overcoming what the Greeks had previously described as the “noncaring state.”

Comprising three chapters, part 2 constitutes what I call a series of “Psychobiographic Speculations.” Here, much of what part 1 has already articulated in a theoretical manner is interwoven with the close study of specific texts and events in literary history, so that the conceptual apparatus of part 1 is now applied to specific literary works and ideas. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 undertake to examine a range of Huxley’s fiction and essays in what are this thesis’s most detailed and extensive textual interlocutions. Proposing that the geometrical and ontological figure of the “chiasmus” serves to model, explicate, and reflect Huxley’s thought, chapter 4 examines Huxley’s strained relationship with a range of emergent ideas in the physical, mathematical, and mental sciences. In many cases, I propose, Huxley problematises and rebuts the emergent ideas in science by privileging metaphysical experience; this mode, which recalls Bergson’s resistance to Einsteinian theoretical physics, remains as persuasive today as ever, for reasons I will elucidate. The chapter will then examine the historical evidence of Huxley’s polyamory to analyse the impact of Huxley’s apparently open marriage on his ideas about women, Victorianism, and gender and sexual politics.

Of course, to engage with the question of Huxley’s sexuality is to return to one of Freud’s wider concerns: that of fatherhood or paternity. It is to meditate on the way in which fathers condition the adolescences of their sons and daughters. Developing an analysis of Huxley through his father and grandfather, chapter 5 thus focuses on the “filial” or “genealogical” origin of Huxley’s masculinity and sexual identity. The chapter will consider various

20 Quoted in Derrida, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” 36.

21 Ibid.

of Huxley's "expurgations" and "extrospections"; it conceives of these literary operations as symptoms or reflections of certain biophysical orientations and drives. Identifying various of Huxley's biological and cynical modes of exteriorisation, chapter 5 will read these "psycho-physical" productions and projections as Huxley's attempt to express both his epiphenomenalism as well as his cynical rejection of the world. A chiasmic pairing of ideas, this ontological position, I argue, had been particularly shaped by the influence of Huxley's grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley.

Turning then to Huxley's writing on the human as an amphibian, chapter 6 reads Huxley's writings about the body's operations as a mode of Swifitian misanthropy. Understood in this way, so many of Huxley's novels are visible as instances of what Herbert Marcuse called the literature of "great refusal."<sup>22</sup> In other words, this chapter will argue that Huxley's amphibian writing—which apprehends the human as a poorly evolved animal—represents further evidence of this author's tendency to purge, resist, and "sublimate" aspects of his own humanness. These writings also produce, I argue, a "Gestalt" description of all humans's lived experience, constructing an existential psychotrope that shares much with, as Huxley himself notes, the understudied methods, and results, of the Gestalt psychologists (*DOP*, 47).

In the final sections of chapter 6, I will seek to bring into view the phenomenological effects of Huxley's partial blindness; this is my attempt to adumbrate the striking affinities that Huxley's eye condition—together with his relationship with his father, Leonard, and his deep affection for early-deceased mother, Julia—seem to engender as between Huxley and the figure of Oedipus. But this familiarity or resemblance is more than simply a biographical coincidence. As I will claim, Huxley's narratives also feature instances of Oedipal triangulation: configurations in which fathers and sons compete for the affection of the same woman, for instance. Combined with a range of allusions in Huxley's letters to his father, I propose that these illustrations of masculine contestation serve as evidence of Huxley's immense frustration and "lack of respect" for his father.<sup>23</sup>

In this thesis's final chapter, chapter 7, I shall consider science fiction author Philip K. Dick's use of various drugs. This chapter represents my attempt to circumvent or reshape the discourse in which Dick is dismissed as an "acid-crazed visionary" or "drug-addled nut." Proposing that Dick's some-

22 See Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (London: Routledge, and Kegan Paul, 2007), 66.

23 See chapter 7; and Gervas Huxley, quoted in Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley: A Biography*, 2 vols. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973), 1: 14.

times seemingly ignominious reputation has at least partially prevented any serious debate about the material effects of drugs on the author's material writing practices, this chapter seeks both to recuperate Dick and to contribute more broadly to the discourse on drugs and literature—a field in which so many authors other than Dick have been dismissed on the ground of their drug use.<sup>24</sup>

Short-circuiting this “critical psychotrope,” this chapter will examine the developments in psychiatry and psychopharmacology from the 1960s and onward (that is, after Huxley's death); it will consider, that is, not only Dick's *instrumentalisation* of amphetamines, but also the way in which Dick's novels, and specifically *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (1965), serve to generate new and important postmodern “biopolitical psychotropes.” As this chapter will explain, these biopolitical conceptualisations of drugs form the very fabric of some of Dick's most important narratives; these are those stories in which various figurations of alienation, subsistence, and deterritorialisation become all the more dismaying when they are soldered to one of Dick's favourite thematics: the pestilence of drug dependency.

Thus, if this thesis begins by envisioning the way in which the body and the brain can influence authorship, it ends by apprehending, with Dick, a biopolitical future in which we remain only barely in control of these very influences. When these powers are restrung in weird and novel ways, our psychophysical instruments seem, now more than ever, to fully govern the shape and substance of our minds. However, as this thesis will conclude, we may yet come to a realisation or metanoia that should detract neither from Huxley's biological determinism nor from Dick's paranoid vision of a body “against itself.” Namely, we may come to understand that it is yet possible to reverse engineer the mind *through* our bodies; we may conceive of thought, that is, not only as the *body's language*, but as the *mind's own body*.

In other words, we may understand the mind as a body that is constituted by psychotropes: these are the myriad imagistic models of the mind's own practices, limits, dangers, and strengths—many examples of which I will describe throughout this thesis's pages. To finally name and identify these psychotropes, however, will not be enough; in the spirit of Foucault's archaeological endeavour, I will also attempt to disinter them, historicise their emergence, and understand how each of them remains animated and functional in society today. It is only in undertaking such a process, I propose, that we may finally be enabled to remodel the mind's future.

24 See Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 9.



# Part 1

*Principia Psychobiographia Literaria:*  
The Principles of Literary  
Psychobiography



## Chapter One

# Molecular Correspondences: Writing With, On, and About Drugs

*It is our belief that the issue of drugs can be understood only at the level where desire directly invests perception, and perception becomes molecular at the same time as the imperceptible is perceived. Drugs then appear the agents of this becoming.*

—Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari<sup>1</sup>

IN OUR HUMAN WORLD of letters, the question of *what* or *who* exactly may be said to *write* has long been a subject of scholarly speculation.<sup>2</sup> And while this work may have seemed often arbitrary, circular, and even unproductive, the fruit of the labour has been, and remains, for most literary scholars, as tantalising as it is essential. “Who writes?” is a question that is worth taking seriously too, since the prospect of discovering a vital new answer to the question—however moderate its improvement on previous explanations—implies nothing less than a new literary and intellectual enlightenment.

If we can better discover precisely how and why it is that we humans produce such language as we do, then we shall perhaps have answered a number of other vital questions along the way, and have accumulated new knowledge in disciplines as diverse as biochemistry, theology, and politics.

- 1 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, tr. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 282.
- 2 Among many others, the following studies of the last half-century take up this question: Michel Foucault, “What Is An Author?” in Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 101-20; Roland Barthes, “The Death of The Author,” in *Image – Music – Text*, tr. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 142-8; Judith Butler, *Giving An Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005); Jorge J.E. Gracia, *Texts: Ontological Status, Identity, Author, Audience* (New York: University of New York Press, 1996); Alexander Nehamas, “What An Author Is,” *Journal of Philosophy* 83 (1986): 685-91; and José Medina, *Speaking From Elsewhere: A New Contextualist Perspective on Meaning, Identity and Discursive Agency* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).

Routinely reposing and countenancing afresh this central question of the nature of authorship is also of vital importance for the continued life, relevance, and seasonal renewal of the humanities. It is necessary to continue in this work to express a belief less in “progress” than a faith in the “rightness” of that infinite chaos that is subjective experience. To continue this work is to acknowledge, in other words, that the status of subjectivity continues to change and transform—drastically, unabatedly, and intrinsically. For those who broad-mindedly look at literary history, it is not hard to see how, generation after generation, an ever enlarging surfeit of modern epistemological and disciplinary pulses leads, untiringly and confirmably, towards more particular answers to explain its secrets. We can now better express exactly what is reflected about us in the many human literatures that have appeared through time than we previously could do. Of course, much of this work now takes place under the august dominion of the biological and physical sciences—or at least by close reference to them. But there has been, and there remains, an abundance of philosophical and critical approaches to understanding literary authorship and the authorial subject outside of these domains.

In almost all modern theorisations of the author, this writing figure is presupposed to enjoy an *individual* identity, which is to say a unified and subjective *authority*, one that is valorised or reified in such features as their name or body. These features seem to be upheld or endorsed by an author’s social context, which *individualises* and *personalises* them—often through epideixis: the language of praise and blame. And while this identity is problematised in various ways, its existence remains largely unquestioned—at least it remains demonstrable, we think, at the level of molecularity, psychiatry, biochemistry, or neurology.

A chief dictum of history, then, has been this: “Individuals exist.” But why, then, is there such a paucity of scholarship devoted to the conjunction between, first, the metaphysics of authorship (that is, the philosophy of literary subjectivity, and the notion that authors are individuals) and second, the biochemical and physical science of individuality (that is, the work that discovers that human bodies and brains are genetically, biochemically, and neuropsychologically unique)? My contention is that, if so little work has been devoted to this conjunction, it is because the “results” of the *literary* experiments in biochemical alteration, by human authors, have been largely understudied.

In any case, in almost all instances in which such work has been undertaken, the text is read as if it were any other—as if the author’s biochemical

conditions, even if much is known about them, are by and large to be considered *immaterial*. But if it is true that “individuals exist,” can we not also accept that there may be certain *parts* of these individuals that are not, in fact, parts of them at all?

Exploring a range of ideas that may be understood to reside at the *limits* of the scientific method, part 1 of this thesis seeks to develop a pathway along which an answer to this question of *biological* authorship might be faced. Proposing a fresh appraisal of this question through a “molecular” or biochemical optic, the chapter aims less to discover a panacea—a permanent and singular answer—than to enhance the many prophecies and prior proposals about the epistemology of authorship.<sup>3</sup>

After all, it may already be apparent that the question I pose closely resembles Roland Barthes’s 1967 invocation: “Who is speaking?” As such, this thesis embarks on a quest, or a “request,” to solve a problem that Barthes ultimately came to understand as insoluble; for him, the “very being of writing” militates against its explanation at the level of intention or individuality—its essence keeps it “from ever being answered.”<sup>4</sup> To encounter Barthes’s proposition at this basic level, however—and even to accept his conclusion that writing’s very “being” makes the question of the nature of authorship *unanswerable*—is to intuit the chimerical, defeatist, and fatalistic character of literary studies’s myriad encounters with authorship.

When Jacques Derrida disavows the “violent hierarchy” of the Hegelian dialectic, for instance—the binary dualism that, were it not already apparent, he reveals to be detectable at every stage of philosophy’s history—Derrida also prevents us from speaking of a singular, static, and originary author. As with so many conceptions, the author cannot be understood as a *homogenous* agent; but neither are they to be seen as fixed, static sites of production, nor as series of orthodox processes that, when put in train, simply *produce* writing.

An author fits none of these descriptions because, as Derrida suggests, each of them engenders a dichotomised asymmetry, and one that is essentially too violent or blunt to be accepted—for each reinscribes the same, problematic distinction between the singular author and their others (the world).<sup>5</sup> And in any event, to imagine an author as such a unitary agent

3 I will afford a range of examples attesting to the limits of science at a later stage of this chapter, including Kurt Gödel’s incompleteness theorems, and Alfred Whitehead’s theorisations on processuality.

4 I will address Barthes’s work in much great detail at the beginning of chapter 2. Roland Barthes, *S/Z: An Essay*, tr. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 140.

5 Jacques Derrida, “Interview with Jean-Louis Houdebine and Guy Scarpetta,” in *Posi-*

would be to rehearse only another of those “Manichean oppositions” that Félix Guattari—in a similar, but different way to Derrida—renounces, taking particular exception to them when he identifies them in Freud’s “parents versus child” model of Oedipal triangulation.<sup>6</sup>

The crucial point in all of this is that studies of authorship have largely conceived of the question of authorship in terms of a crude distinction between the author’s identity on the one hand, and the external world on the other. What makes the question of a comestible drug fascinating—and a productively disruptive heuristic in this desertified zone of indeterminacy—is the fact that drugs are capable of traversing the world at two levels: the external and internal.

In recalling Derrida’s suspicions about fictitious oppositions, however, we may be reminded to avoid speaking in such binary terms about drugs’s capacities. We should perhaps also seek not to dichomatise the subject by speaking of what is “internal” and “external” to them; nor still should we describe consciousness in this binary fashion—we should eschew, that is, the false dichotomy between “sobriety” and “intoxication.”<sup>7</sup>

It is better, perhaps, to conceive of the apparently singular “writer” as constituted by an assemblage of multiple proxies; they consist not of “ins” and “outs,” “ups” or “downs,” that is, but only of a striated diffusion of actors, “actants,” agents, and *agencies*.<sup>8</sup>

The history of philosophy and, to a lesser extent, that of literary theory and criticism, offers a great deal to these questions; and yet it is this same history that, writ large, expresses only uncertainty when it comes to a biological or psychobiological literary criticism. Yet, we should not lose hope. Given that there has been so vast a number of approaches to the general

*tions*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 39-41, esp. 42. Also see Derrida, “Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” in *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass (New York: Routledge), 351-69.

6 Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, tr. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), 12. Originally published in French as *Chaosmose* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1992).

7 An instructive work that problematises sobriety in a productive manner is David Lenson’s *On Drugs* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 3. Lenson’s discussion of the oppositional dynamic between intoxication and sobriety is one of the most valuable of its kind in the critical literature of psychography.

8 Matthew Ratcliffe develops a comprehensive argument for rejecting the “binary opposition” that undergirds Thomas Szasz’s political theory of psychiatry, which draws an opposition between “mental” and “bodily” illness. See Ratcliffe, “Binary Opposition in Psychiatry: For or Against?,” *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 17, no. 3 (2010): 233-39, 234; cf. Pat Bracken and Phil Thomas, “From Szasz to Foucault: On the role of critical psychiatry,” *Philosophy, Psychiatry, & Psychology* 17, no. 3 (2010): 219-28.

question of authorial subjectivity—whether any are directly or indirectly concerned to provide an “answer”—it is appropriate to speculate that some “order of things” might be found amid this work. It behooves us, that is, to circumspectly assume that we are on the “right path.”

When one considers the diversity of characters who have uttered the proverb “all roads lead to Rome,” the diversity may itself serve sufficiently to confirm the phrase’s validity. But this diversity also serves to illustrate the scope of this thesis’s scholarly reach, since, in an uncanny coincidence, we find that not only do each of this phrase’s utterers metonymise at least one of the methods deployed in this thesis, but that their collective utterance of this phrase also confirms one of the thesis’s central findings: namely, that the same language, tropes, or “psychotropes” can move between and among *divergent* authors as freely as they move between or among *convergent* ones.

Thus, when Gayatri Spivak, for one, employed this phrase in an introduction to a public lecture in 2004, she also quoted what had first been enshrined by Le Fontaine in a fable, and what had, sometime between Spivak and Le Fontaine, been uttered by Julian Huxley—one of Aldous’s brothers—in a biological study on individuality.<sup>9</sup> So, just as this locution can be applied in different contexts, it also works to reinforce the view that any number of pathways might serve to convey us to our intellectual destiny, to our conclusions—or to what Isabelle Stengers, recalling Whitehead, calls our final “Foothold of the Mind.”<sup>10</sup>

But despite the plurality of approaches open to this work, this chapter, will be concerned with what are in essence material or physical objects—which is to say the various molecular entities, chemical compounds, and atomistic alkaloids, be they synthetic or otherwise, known as “drugs.” It shall begin, then, by adopting a *physicalist* vernacular: that is, by examining in physical terms the relation of our *bodies* and *brains* to the question of authorial subjectivity.

9 See Gayatri Spivak, “The Trajectory of the Subaltern in My Work” (lecture, University of California, “Voices” series, September, 2004), <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZH-H4ALRFHw/>, accessed 27 April 2014; Jean de La Fontaine, “The Arbiter, The Almoner, and The Hermit,” in *The Fables of La Fontaine*, tr. Robert Thompson (London: J.C. Nimmo and Bain, 1884), Book XII, Fable xxvii; Julian Huxley in fact deploys this idiom in the closing paragraph of his book on human individuality in the context of evolutionary theory: *The Individual in the Animal Kingdom* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), 154.

10 See Isabelle Stengers, *Thinking With Whitehead: A Free and Wild Creation of Concepts*, tr. Michael Chase (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), chapter 3, 58-73.

## Our Bodies Are Not Our Own: Reformulating Bodily Constructivism

*What, know ye not that your body is the Temple of the holy Ghost which is in you, which yee haue of God, and ye are not your owne?*

—1 Corinthians<sup>11</sup>

*The body, however, is only a peculiarly intimate bit of the world. Just as Descartes said, “this body is mine”; so he should have said, “this actual world is mine.”*

—Alfred North Whitehead<sup>12</sup>

RECENT CLAIMS IN MICROBIOLOGICAL science affirm that our bodies are constituted by no less than “90 percent bacteria.”<sup>13</sup> While we may imagine that our “human microbiomes” are our own possessions, scientists increasingly understand our bodies as the shared province of so many other, nonhuman forms of life. Predominantly, in fact, our bodies are the property of nonhuman organisms—many of which have gone long unacknowledged, previously not known, and have certainly never been understood to form part of the human being.

And, perhaps needless to say, such microorganisms—at least in studies of the body and its relation to authorial subjectivity—have been almost invariably ignored in literary scholarship, or else only very seldom recognised to be living properties that may constitute, in any material way, our *human-ness*. Occupied by a “virtual zoo” of “non-human genes that are represented by human microbiota,” the human body is home to huge numbers of nonhuman genes, numbered at “about 1,000,000, as compared to the 25,000-30,000 genes in [the] *human* genome.”<sup>14</sup>

Much more than simply the symbolic sites of competition and parasitism, though, our human bodies have each been “colonized by a vast number

11 *The Holy Bible, Conteyning the Old Testament, and the New* (The King James Bible) (London: Robert Baker, 1611), 1 Corinthians, chapter 6, verse 19, see <http://www.king-jamesbibleonline.org/>.

12 Alfred North Whitehead, *Process and Reality: An Essay in Cosmology* [Corrected edition] (New York: The Free Press, 1978), 81.

13 On the claims, see “‘We are 90% bacteria’ says researcher for Hospital Microbiome Project,” *Chicago Tribune*, 2 January, 2013, accessed 22 April 2014, available at [http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-01-02/news/ct-met-microbiome-20130102\\_1\\_human-microbiome-bacteria-human-life/](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-01-02/news/ct-met-microbiome-20130102_1_human-microbiome-bacteria-human-life/). On microorganisms, bioscience, and literary culture, see Craig A. Gordon, *Literary Modernism, Bioscience, and Community in Early 20th Century Britain* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 66-75.

14 Rup Lal, “Human Body: A Virtual Zoo of Bacteria,” *Indian Journal of Microbiology* 51, no. 1 (2011): 1.

of microbes.”<sup>15</sup> This produces a ratio in which, for every single human gene that has been sequenced in the human genome, thirty-three nonhuman genes exist.<sup>16</sup> Recent metagenomic research attests to the same discovery: “Within the body of a healthy adult, microbial cells are estimated to outnumber human cells ten to one.”<sup>17</sup> In this very material and mathematical sense, humans are constituted less by any one received notion of our humanness—and less by any traditional understanding of the human as imbued with an agent or a spirit—than defined by this material occupation: this progressively more elaborated and elucidated reality of the vast physical *otherness* that lies within us.

Of course, this is not exactly what had been meant by “the Other” when, to name only two proponents of the notion, Jacques Lacan and Emmanuel Lévinas employed variations of the term. Yet Lacan and Lévinas both generally mark a site of presence that is radically different to and from a singular self, one that we cannot say ever absolutely *excludes* such an idea as this: that the “other” might be a range of *microbial* agents.<sup>18</sup> Having had the opportunity to witness these developments in microbiological science, however, more recent philosophers, such as Dorian Sagan, have emphasised the changing definition of the human. Sagan notes that we are now “more than human”—and that our knowledges of such embodied “interspecies communities” represents nothing less than a development of “the New Facts of Life.”

And likewise, Stefan Helmreich notes that we are so “threaded through” with so many kinds of “microscopic companion species and stranger

15 See the opening bylines of *Nature's* Human Microbiota Special (14 June 2012): [www.nature.com/nature/focus/humanmicrobiota/index.html](http://www.nature.com/nature/focus/humanmicrobiota/index.html), accessed 12 June 2013, emphasis mine.

16 For an excellent summary of the modern history and current state of genomic and metagenomic analysis, see Pieter De Maayer, et al., “The Current State of Metagenomic Analysis,” in Maria S. Poptsova, ed. *Genome Analysis: Current Procedures and Applications* (Norfolk: Caister Academic Press, 2014), 183-220.

17 “The Human Microbiome Project, Overview”: <http://commonfund.nih.gov/hmp/overview.aspx>, quoted in Stefan Helmreich, “Homo Microbis: The Human Microbiome, Figural, Literal, Political,” in *Thresholds* 42 (2014): 52.

18 In 1955, during his annual seminars, Lacan draws a distinction between the “little other” and the “big Other.” Following this, Lacan refers to the little other as *a*, for the French *autre*, and the big Other as *A*, for *Autre*. See Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book III: The Psychoses, 1955-1956*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, tr. Russell Grigg (London: Routledge, 1993), 41-2. Also see Emmanuel Lévinas's conception of the other as a besieging “neighbour” in *Dieu, le mort et le temps* (Paris: Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1993), published in English as *God, Death, and Time*, tr. Bettina Bergo (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 138-39. Lévinas also contemplates the other as a “face” that “resists possession” in *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, tr. Alphonso Lingis (London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), 50-1, 194, 197, 297.



strains” of bacteria, that it is now more difficult than ever to comprehend the number of “others” that may exist in our bodies—let alone to estimate their influence.<sup>19</sup> But if these complex, even incomprehensible realities are the “New Facts of Life,” then what does this mean for the human author and their body? How might we develop an equivalent epistemology in literary and authorship studies: the “New Facts of Authorship”?

In the 1970s, Julia Kristeva, Luce Irigaray, Hélène Cixous, and Monique Wittig, among others, described “l’écriture féminine”: the inscription of the female body *on* and *through* a text. This “women’s writing,” they argued, less exudes from the body as its product than “writes the body” itself, a kind of master signification process that constituting the body’s desires, sexuality, power, among so many other features.<sup>20</sup> Expanding on this work in the following decades, Judith Butler, Judith Halberstam, and many others, emphasised the *corporealised* experience of writing. And if these latter writers did not proceed along a divergent trajectory, than they perhaps wrote toward a different end. Less entangled with psychoanalysis, and less focused on the body’s libidinal economy, Butler’s scholarship, for one, aims not to discover the “common truth” in the body, but to reveal “a domain of unthinkable, abject, [and] unlivable bodies.”<sup>21</sup> That such bodies have hitherto remained hidden in historical studies, she writes, has been facilitated, among other things, by so many ludic language games.

Determined, or even overdetermined, by a series of discursive and linguistic formations, these unspeakable bodies—for instance, intersex bodies—have abided in silence, notwithstanding the triumphant discoveries in the sciences that such bodies really do *live*, and really do *speak*. Feminist writing, of course, seeks to bridge the gap, becoming a de facto communicator for science, an interpreter of its implications. But it is not enough, argues Butler, for feminist theory to argue that there is “no prediscursive sex,” as though simply to bear witness to language’s myriad determinations would suffice to undo its reification and constitution of the body as a social

19 See Dorion Sagan, *Cosmic Apprentice: Dispatches from the Edges of Science* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press, 2013), chapter 1 (*passim*); and Helmreich, “Homo Microbis,” 52.

20 For a succinct contemporaneous summary of the work of each of these scholars’ studies, see Ann Rosalind Jones, “Writing The Body: Toward an Understanding of L’Ecriture Feminine,” *Feminist Studies* 7, no. 2 (1981): 247-63. I will deal with Irigaray’s description of the chiasmus in chapter 4.

21 Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On The Discursive Limits of Sex* (New York: Routledge, 1993), xi.



object.<sup>22</sup> Rather, developing a legitimate “cultural intelligibility,” Butler argues, requires more than even linguistic or semantic analysis, more than language performances—and even more than *performativity*, one of Butler’s primary interpretative axiomatics.<sup>23</sup> Exhibiting a deconstructionist inheritance from Derrida, and evincing an archaeological tendency from Foucault, Butler encounters the problematic in “which bodies come to matter—and why,” addressing the question by interrogating how what has been previously unthinkable represents a “violent circumscription” at the levels both of language *and* ideology.<sup>24</sup> While language determines much of what constitutes thought, there are, for Butler as for Freud, phenomena “beneath” thought.

Along this same vector—and concurrently, in the 1990s—Donna Haraway and N. Katherine Hayles embrace another kind of “unthinkable body”: that of the posthuman cyborg.<sup>25</sup> But if the cyborg ostensibly does away with the distinction between male and female, its language also retains the residue of “phallogocentrism”—for all writing, as Derrida proposes, is a history of male writing. This is an emanation not just from the male body but from the diacritical phallus, which “eludes any dialectical sublimation (*Aushebung*).”<sup>26</sup>

In this milieu, procedures such as calculation, as Hayles writes in a more recent study, offer themselves up to the figure of the woman. For it is she who, as Hayles claims (quoting Jenifer Wicke), operates not *at* the “switch point” of desire, as men have done, but *as* this switchpoint: as truly a machinic “computer.”<sup>27</sup> Now the woman’s body is a proxy for a language and consciousness so much more “grounded,” and yet also more circumscribed, than its male equivalents. And of course, as “switch points,” crucial junctures that form a “link between an unknowable alien and a male protagonist,” women’s bodies and their “automata” are now also *commoditised*: objects to be circulated and transited, repurposed by “powerful men... as tools against other men.”<sup>28</sup>

22 Ibid. Also see Judith [Jack] Halberstam and Ira Livingstone, eds. *Posthuman Bodies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).

23 Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, vi.

24 Ibid., xii, 23.

25 See Donna Haraway, “A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology and Socialist-feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,” in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, 1991), chapter 8; originally published in *Socialist Review* 15, no. 2 (1985): 65-107.

26 See Derrida, *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (London: Continuum, 2008), 39n39; 98-118, 100-1; originally published in Paris in 1972 by Éditions du Seuil. Also see my discussion of phallogocentrism and Huxley in chapter 4.

27 N. Katherine Hayles, *My Mother Was A Computer: Digital Subject and Literary Texts* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 79.

28 Ibid., 183.

By and large indifferent to gender difference or sexual identity, “Plato’s Pharmacy”—which is to *cite* Derrida’s essay of that title, but to *allude* to the history of Western medicine—attends less to the body’s gametes than to the *circumvolution* of objects within the body. But both Derrida’s essay and Western medicine also attentively apprehend the corporealised history of authorship, and the longstanding imbrication of the physical with the enunciative.<sup>29</sup> Much of Derrida’s work has allowed us to name, define, unveil, and even “deconstruct” the body, however much deconstruction remains unrealised—or *unrealisable*—as a “method.”

What deconstruction does, though, is help us comprehend afresh the body’s intelligible relations with writing; it facilitates a kind of *persistent* thought on this relation that is yet not *perseverant* in any psychopathological sense. And yet there remains the possibility that the body is all too abstruse—too radically different to the subject—to ever really comprehend. And it is equally possible that the body may not, as Butler suggests, be defined alone, or even at all, by its *materiality*. It may rather turn out that only a spectral and “productive effect” of the body arises as a result of that power with which it is invested by language.<sup>30</sup> But, even then, if the body is simply a productive effect of power, who, from within such a body, speaks in its name?

While late twentieth-century feminism’s work on the body illumines a spate of crucial points about the author’s status—including, as Elizabeth Grosz’s *Volatile Bodies* (1994) testifies, the body’s eruptive, violent, and vaporous potential—doubt persists about, or rather *appears* as, the aporia of the body’s externality: What exactly constitutes this interstice, this lacuna, this dehiscence, between body and consciousness?<sup>31</sup> Detailed, meditative, and rereading the terrain trod by Descartes in his *Meditations*, Butler’s 1997 essay “How Can I Deny These Hands and This Body Are Mine?” interrogates this “fabulous trajectory of doubt.” But just as Descartes “calls the body into question” only to discover that it is the very “condition of his own writing,” Butler will apprehend the body’s “phenomenality” *in* and *as* an inscription—in that physical, material writing that functions to represent it: “there can be no reference to materiality except via materiality,” she concludes.<sup>32</sup>

To carefully and attentively notate the body’s impulses—its every pulse and movement—seems an absurdly ambitious philosophical goal. Nonethe-

29 See Derrida, “Plato’s Pharmacy,” in *Dissemination*, 98-118, esp. 100-1.

30 Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 3.

31 Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward A Corporeal Feminism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994).

32 Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 68.

less, it is the goal to which Descartes's *Meditations*—more than any other philosophical self-experiment—seems poised to pursue. If Descartes's aim is unique, however, it is because the project will precipitate a “break,” its results, as Butler observes, generating nothing less than the complete “upheaval of all of [Descartes's] former opinions.”<sup>33</sup>

And if Descartes's work is precise, then Butler's is doubly so, for Butler carefully identifies the interstices that appear fugitively within the Descartes's attempt at a totalising theorisation of the body. Butler's essay focuses on the way in which, that is—however much Descartes seeks to short-circuit language—his words engender every single one of his observations *ab initio*. But Butler also rejects that language only ever *fabricates* the body, because where it produces thought it also erases it—and where it might seem to do both, it does neither of these things completely:

Although one might accept the proposition that the body is only knowable through language, that the body is given throughout language, it is never fully given, when it is given, in parts—it is, as it were, given and withheld at the same time, and language might be said to perform both of these operations.<sup>34</sup>

If language seeks to “deny its own implication in the body” and, in the process, begins to refute the body's material constitution, remnants of the corpus, we find, still begin to reappear “in spectral and partial form within the very language that seeks to perform their denial.”<sup>35</sup> Ghostly emergences, emanating from the body itself in a multimodal production, engender a carnival spectacle of which language forms but one working part.

When one reads Aldous Huxley's early writing, one encounters multiple occasions on which to examine precisely such a spectral projection—and often, it is humorous. Huxley's fiction and essays routinely figure the body as an unstable site of emergence; the body can, for instance, *articulate itself*—can speak even when its owners are unaware of its presence. The body can also become a locus of chaos and disorder—a crucible that resists foreclosure even when it is ignored by its “owner,” or positively disavowed in words.<sup>36</sup>

In Philip K. Dick's fiction, as I argue in chapter 7, embodied experience summons different kinds of corporeal and linguistic effects. With the aid of

33 René Descartes, *Meditations*, quoted in Judith Butler, “How Can I Deny That These Hands and This Body Are Mine?” *Qui Parle* 11, no. 1 (1997): 1-20.

34 Butler, “How Can I Deny,” 4.

35 *Ibid.*, 5.

36 See my detailed discussion of Huxley's deployment of body humour and “semantic gravitation” in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

drugs, characters often encounter a disorienting ontology that less resembles the parodic bathos of some inevitable, automatic biological process than mimics the anxious, remediating complexity of an out-of-body experience (OBE).<sup>37</sup>

Having been diverted around an elocutionary cul-de-sac, the body returns in Dick's fiction in a different way; and if it remains farcical, it is as a farce in a different idiom to Huxley's. The body, for Dick, is not an "event" or "eventuality"—such as in Huxley's vomiting (chapter 6)—but takes the form of many nonhuman chimera: a cartoonish animal, a play doll (Perky Pat), and a machine (Palmer Eldritch).<sup>38</sup> If in all these cases the "figural persistence" of the body seems to continue, however, it is because, as Butler argues, in each of these figurations lingers the body's fundamental ontological problematic:

as we begin that description of what is outside language, the chiasm reappears: we have already contaminated, though not contained, the very body we seek to establish in its ontological purity. The body escapes its linguistic grasp, but so too does it escape the subsequent effort to determine ontologically that very escape.<sup>39</sup>

Butler deploys the figure of the "chiasm" throughout her essay to configure the relation of the self and the body; and such a figure, notably, will also become an important heuristic for Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Luce Irigaray in their philosophies of perception and embodiment.

Taking up this figure as one of the most crucially determinative "psychotropes" for Aldous Huxley's thought, my analysis of Huxley in chapters 4, 5 and 6 attends to the "chiastic" relations of Huxley's linguistic and ontological worlds. These are the relations that I argue are modulated, first of all, by a range of biographical traumas—including the deaths of his broth-

37 For a thoroughgoing examination of OBEs and their precipitation, both by the exogenous administration of the psychedelic N, N-Dimethyltryptamine (DMT), or the endogenous stimulation of the pineal gland (a speculation similar to the one once posited by Descartes himself), see Rick Straussman, *DMT: The Spirit Molecule* (Vermont: Park Street Press, 2001), 31, 43, 222. Cf. René Descartes, *Discourse on Method, Optics, Geometry, and Meteorology*, tr. Paul J. Olscamp (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1965), 100.

38 While this thesis shall not directly address the appearance of these "cartoonish animals" in Dick's fiction, they appear in a variety of his novels, such as in *A Scanner Darkly*, where Charles Freck will compare his friend Barris, a methamphetamine user, to Donald Duck, cautioning him not to "do too much" methamphetamine (*ASD*, 129), in Dick's recurrent depiction of rats and "glucks" in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (*TSPE*, 96), or even in his continued references to his cat "Pinky," which Dick compares to "Tony The Tiger" (and then to his friend "Tony Boucher") in his *Exegesis* (*EX*, 127). Notably, John Ashbery, another postmodern, calls on similar images in his 1975 poem "Daffy Duck in Hollywood," in *Houseboat Days* (New York: Penguin, 1977).

39 Butler, "How Can I Deny," 4-5.

er and mother—and later become contoured (perhaps even more impactfully) by Huxley’s excitement about the potential he sees in mind-changing drugs: a potential for them to reconfigure, and to extend, the interiorised and exteriorised limits of the human species.

Only a few short years before America would see a rapid, unprecedented growth in its pharmacological industry, Huxley would proselytise the use of psychoactive drugs, anticipating biomedicine’s similarly enthusiastic embrace of psychoactive substances in the ensuing decades. Giving rise to a proliferation of amphetamine-based medicines—including novel prescriptions for depression and mood disorders—the mid-twentieth century brought about a period of rapid pharmacological change: most importantly, it allowed for near-universal access, throughout the United States, to a spate of newly enhanced or reconfigured ontological and affective states.<sup>40</sup>

In 1963, the year of Huxley’s death, a vertiginous and reckless Dick would be spiraling into a field of psychosis whose dimensions reflected an acute dopaminergic infusion—an excess that was likely, but not certainly, the result of methamphetamine toxicity.<sup>41</sup> Dick’s experience, as with so many other amphetamine abusers in 1960s America, provides a counterpoint to the theory of *psychotomimesis*—or, to be more specific, the “serotonin hypothesis” of psychosis that had been developed in the early 1950s, and which had gained some currency at the beginning of that decade.<sup>42</sup>

This was a theory to which Huxley had himself subscribed, at least notionally, throughout the final decade of his life. According to its proponents, a model psychosis—which is not much distinct from the pathological form—could be predictably occasioned by the ingestion of LSD (or, as it was commonly called at the time, d-lysergic acid diethylamide, or “LSD-25”).<sup>43</sup> Now, it is far more commonly proposed that the stimulation or “agonisation” of dopamine—not serotonin—will more dependably generate a paranoid-type “model” psychosis. LSD does not affect dopamine as its primary effects, but

40 On this history see Richard DeGrandpre, *The Cult of Pharmacology: How America Became The World’s Most Trouble Drug Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 146-8.

41 See my discussion of Dick’s methamphetamine use in chapter 7.

42 See, for instance, Humphry Osmond, “A Review of the Clinical Effects of Psychotomimetic Agents,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 66 (1957): 418-34; David Nichols, “Potential Psychotomimetics: Bromomethoxyamphetamines and Structural Congeners of Lysergic Acid,” PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1973, ProQuest: AAT 7330961, esp. 6-8.

43 On the history of the serotonin hypothesis, see Erika Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry: LSD From Clinic to Campus* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008), 32-51. Also see my chapters 2 and 4.

rather acts on a small group of serotonin (5-HT) sub-receptor sites known as 5-HT<sub>2</sub> and 5-HT<sub>2a</sub>.<sup>44</sup> As David Nichols notes, when these sub-receptors are antagonised by LSD and other hallucinogens, the body generates visual distortions and other kinds of modified perceptions—and it is this that psychiatrists of the ‘50s described as the drug’s characteristic hallucinations.<sup>45</sup>

That Dick’s own apparently psychotic visions—and particularly those of 1963, one of his most disorienting years—occurred while he was ingesting large amounts amphetamine and methamphetamine, allows us to see Dick as a kind of synecdoche for the progression of psychopharmacological research of this time. As I have emphasised, in this period, the aetiology of psychosis moved from serotonin-based speculations, such as the adrenochrome hypothesis, to dopamine-based speculations.<sup>46</sup> This is a shift that also emblematises the arrival of Dick’s psychosis and the departure or “come down” of Huxley’s intoxicated years—an intoxication that, via intramuscular injection of LSD on his deathbed, quite literally faded away with and as Huxley’s life.<sup>47</sup>

In 1966, three years after Huxley’s death, US politicians enacted laws that prohibited the study of hallucinogens on humans; and, squarely in the middle of Dick’s most tumultuous period, the interest in drugs that Huxley had himself arguably fostered, began itself to wane—just as the prescription of amphetamines had in fact reached its nadir.<sup>48</sup>

While in many ways Huxley and Dick make complicated and unlikely interlocutors, they are at least sutured by an interweaving of time. While Huxley dies what seems only moments before the countercultural revolution

44 On the effect of hallucinogens on these receptor subtypes, see David Nichols’s detailed overview of the pharmacokinetics and psychopharmacology of these compounds in his “Hallucinogens,” *Pharmacology and Therapeutics* 101 (204): 131-81, esp. 139-48. On “stimulant psychosis,” see Catherine Curran, et al., “Stimulant Psychosis: Systematic Review,” *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 185 (2004): 196-204.

45 I discuss Dick’s drugs use in detail in chapter 7. Also see Nichols, “Hallucinogens,” *Pharmacology and Therapeutics* 101 (204): 138-9.

46 On the disavowal by biochemists and others in psychiatric medicine of the opinion that hallucinogens can produce a model psychosis, see Alessandra Paparelli, et al., “Drug Induced Psychosis: How To Avoid Star Gazing in Schizophrenia Researches by Looking at More Obvious Sources of Light,” *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience* 5 (2011): 1-9.

47 See Laura Archer Huxley, *This Timeless Moment: A Personal View of Aldous Huxley* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969), 302-7.

48 For a recent summary of the psychotherapeutic and other studies of LSD in history before this prohibition in the US, and afterward in other countries, see Peter Gasser, et al., “Safety and Efficacy of Lysergic Acid Diethylamide-Assisted Psychotherapy for Anxiety Associated With Life-Threatening Diseases,” *The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* (3 March 2014, ePub ahead of print at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24594678/>): 1-8.



will begin, Dick's fame and writing career will be established around this very same moment. By contrast, Butler's relationship with Descartes is characterised by no such temporal overlap; and yet their interaction, it might also be said, forms a far more intricate and intimate dialogue.

Butler's response to Cartesianism entails far more than merely her elaboration on those originary arguments about the body's linguistic construction that she had previously advanced in *Bodies That Matter*. Too often veiled by reductive descriptions that focus on dualism and extrication, Descartes's work expresses an unusual and at times mystical theory of the mind-body relation that, as Butler seems to apprehend, is founded on a far more contentious strain of materialism. As Karen Jacobs notes, Descartes's work is nothing if not resistant to a resolution; it generates, she says, a "bedrock ambiguity" at the level of this most fundamental of relationships.<sup>49</sup>

An instructive example of Descartes's vision of the body, however, is expressed in his *La Dioptrique* (1637); here he proposes that all those things that are seen by the human subject, the entirety of those "products of the eye," may also be transubstantiated—are ingested somehow—into the human body itself. Sometimes, when they are seen, these envisionings begin to grow or emerge within the corpus itself, reappearing as lesions. Here they are "made flesh" biologically—that is, by the operation of the pineal gland.<sup>50</sup> Descartes explains the process in this way:

I could go even still further, to show how sometimes the picture can pass from there through the arteries of a pregnant woman, right to some specific member of the infant which she carries in her womb, and there forms these birthmarks which cause learned men to marvel so.<sup>51</sup>

For Descartes, what has been seen may also be embodied; vision is incorporated or introjected *materially*—and not only into consciousness, but into biology.

Thus, the visions of a mother may pass through her eye and body to the child, who, presumably, may be only a foetus. Then these visions are, like tumours, reinscribed on the child's skin. The skin is thus less a reflection of the child's experience than a reverberation of these "progenic" visions. And for Descartes, this is a proof of the process in which mimesis becomes

49 Karen Jacobs, *The Eye's Mind: Literary Modernism and Visual Culture* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press), 10-11.

50 Descartes, *Discourse on Method*, 100. Also see Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 76.

51 *Ibid.* Also see Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, 77n178.

incorporation. But this is only one among the myriad ways in which Descartes suggests the body is at least partly nonhuman. In general, his incorporational model makes the body a *res extensa*: it is a living trace of so many perceived exteriorities, now mutated into organs. Of course, Descartes's view is not as formal as those propositions advanced by the evolutionary theorists that succeeded him—by Jean-Baptiste Lamarck or Charles Darwin—and nor are they as detailed.

Rather, such studies of Descartes's, including his *Meditations*, are speculative observations about the unpredictable emergence of the human body; and, at the time, they designed a new, profound intersection in which the material and metaphysical can be conjoined. The profundity of these studies follows from the privilege they accord to what Butler describes as our “mad” visions:

Descartes not only reports that others perform... hallucinations, the report [also] constitutes the textualization of the hallucination: his writing perform them for us, through an alienation of perspective that is and is not exclusively his own. Thus, he conjures such possibilities precisely at the moment in which he also renounces such possibilities as mad, raising the question whether there is a difference between the kind of conjuring that is a constitutive part of the meditative method and those hallucinations that the method is supposed to refute.<sup>52</sup>

As Butler suggests, Descartes's renunciation of experience may apprehend the *possibility* of that experience at the same time as it also declares that experience nugatory or alien. And what is tellingly typical of the processual manner in which these “chiasmic”<sup>53</sup> operations occur, Butler claims, is the “strange grammar” of Descartes's rhetorical question itself—the question in which he asks “How could I deny that these hands and this body here belong to me?” Enabling the philosopher both to express his inability to deny such a proposition, and to ponder the ways in which this inability might be overcome (“how could I... ?”), the question begs not only an answer to a hypothesis, but poses a question to an answer already presupposed.<sup>54</sup>

However, since this question is not a legitimate information-seeking utterance, but rather an example of a “redundant interrogative”<sup>55</sup> deployed

52 Butler, “How Can I Deny,” 11.

53 While I generally favour “chiasmic,” I will occasionally also use the term “chiasmatic”; these terms are taken to be interchangeable.

54 *Ibid.*, 8; Descartes, *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, tr. Elizabeth Haldan and G. R. T. Ross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 126.

55 See Hannah Rhode, “Rhetorical Questions as Redundant Interrogatives,” *San Diego*



merely for effect, the rhetorical question—at least as that form may be said to appear in Descartes’s meditative vernacular—operates or “textualises” itself in way that more freely invites paradoxical interpretations. In fact, this utterance insists on its own *paradoxicality*. The result is that, as Butler argues, Descartes’s question “hallucinates” its own answers, generating a kind of “mad” presentiment or *presentimentation* that may never be known other than as what it is: an idiopathic Cartesian hallucinosis.<sup>56</sup>

But if little can be known of Descartes’s affective composition, recent work on rhetorical questions at least confirms Butler’s description of the effect she describes. Apprehending Descartes’s crucial question, it becomes possible to assert, for instance, that—while one study seems to call this kind of question a “new type of rhetorical question”—it is also arguably not of a new type at all. To be sure, it could be one of these “wrong-opinion questions,” as one study claims, which have arisen only recently. These involve the speaker’s expression of an “obviously wrong” opinion only for the purpose of demonstrating that same opinion’s absurdity.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, as with the “wrong-opinion question,” Descartes’s question may be seen to say something about the body that is “obviously wrong,” and it may be understood, equally, to advance such a notion precisely to refute it—and in an economic utterance withal.

And yet, as Butler suggests, Descartes also presupposes the enunciation of a voice that imagines this wrong opinion’s actual *possibility*.<sup>58</sup> Taking this voice seriously, Descartes’s question accords to the wrong opinion the possibility of its own autonomous invention. As Descartes writes,

I would invent, in effect, when I am imagining something, since imagining is nothing other than contemplating the figure or image of a corporeal thing.<sup>59</sup>

Thus, to write meditatively—and to employ a method of “doubt”—becomes for Descartes nothing any more complex than the reanimation of an object that, if it should appear in one’s mind, can only ever bespeak an originary and *corporeal* presence—one that, until then, had eluded thought.<sup>60</sup>

*Linguistics Papers* 2 (2006): 134-68, cf. Todd Oakley, “Afterword: From Cognitive Grammar to Systems Rhetoric,” in *Cognitive Grammar in Literature*, eds. Chloe Harrison, et al. (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Co.), 234-5.

56 Butler, “How Can I Deny,” 11-12.

57 See Russell Lee-Goldman, “Rhetorical Questions and Scales: Just what do you think constructions are for?” Presentation at the International Conference on Construction Grammar, University of Tokyo, Japan, 2006, see [www1.icsi.berkeley.edu/~rleegolfd/ling/iccg4-presentation.pdf](http://www1.icsi.berkeley.edu/~rleegolfd/ling/iccg4-presentation.pdf), slides 17-36.

58 Butler, “How Can I Deny,” 12.

59 This translation is Butler’s: see Butler, “How Can I Deny,” 12 and 12n6.

60 These ideas are, of course, elaborated in Descartes’s *Meditations* and elsewhere: see

In his 1956 seminar on *The Psychoses*, Lacan problematised what might be seen as the corporalealised anthropogenesis of writing. When he defined “the Other” as that which “must first of all be considered a locus, [and] the locus in which speech is constituted,”<sup>61</sup> Lacan suggested the *alterity* of the self, since the self, which will soon speak, *is* “the Other.” For him, the *I* that speaks or writes “is never there where it appears in the form of a particular signifier,” but is rather at once *beneath* the representational field, and *within* it—at least for the prolocutor in the enunciatory act: “Underneath everything that is said, there is an *I* who pronounces it. It’s in this enunciation that the *you* appears.”<sup>62</sup> In the same lecture, Lacan asks an important question, similar in effect to Descartes’s enquiry:

What happens when the signifier in question, the organizing center, the point of significant convergence that it constitutes, is evoked but fails to appear [*fair default*]?<sup>63</sup>

Resonant not only with Descartes’s meditation, but also with the question that opens this chapter, Lacan’s enquiry apprehends the subject as the centre of a discursive system that, in its obfuscation within that system, is made occult and equivocal, failing to appear, and failing to be seen, as a “final” object in itself.

In his lecture’s concluding paragraphs, Lacan offers an oblique answer to the enquiry by returning to the figure of the symbolic father (the “Law of symbolization”) that his seminar had earlier introduced.<sup>64</sup> In his final remarks, Lacan identifies this other who speaks as in fact no more than a *symbolic* father. But in this case, the specific other appears to Daniel Paul Schreber, the German judge who was Freud’s famous analysand,<sup>65</sup> And the

*The Philosophy of Descartes*, vols. 1, 2 and 3, tr. John Cottingham, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985, 1984, and 1991). However, whether Descartes was “interactionist” (as was Aldous Huxley) who believed that the body and mind interacted so that the mental events have physical effects, or an “ocassionalist” who believed that physical and mental events occurred “as one,” and under the will of God, is unclear. On this, see Cecilia Wee and Michael Pelczar, “Descartes’s Dualism and Contemporary Dualism,” *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 46, no. 1 (2008): 145-60, esp. 156. On Huxley’s interactionism, see Aldous Huxley, “A Psycho-physical Education,” in Wilfred Barlow, ed. *More Talk of Alexander* (London: Gollancz, 1978), 65-8; also see Huxley’s essay in the same volume titled “End-Gaining and Means-Whereby,” 149-53, and my chapters 4-6.

61 Lacan, *The Seminar, Book III*, 274.

62 Ibid.

63 Ibid., 283.

64 Ibid., 83.

65 See Sigmund Freud, “Psychoanalytic Comments on an Autobiographical Account of a

“other” is therefore, in Lacan’s reading, *Schreber’s* symbolic father.<sup>66</sup> Where Descartes had accepted that a child’s birthmark may be evidence of some matrilineal or parental incorporation or presence, now Lacan identifies just such a presence in the *voice* of the father.

In part 2 of this thesis, I will return to this question of patrilineal inheritance as I examine Aldous Huxley’s biography (in chapters 5 and 6). Notably, many of the anecdotes Huxley’s biographers supply form exemplary narratives of paternal incorporation. What is of greater concern in this part 1, however, is whether the body’s nonhuman genes—which I have already described—and then whether drugs, as analogues for these nonhuman genes, can be said to write *with, through, or for* the author, in much the same way as psychoanalysis or philosophy often takes the parents (or father) to be capable of such intermediating operations. My claim is that if certain traumatic memories, or certain kinds of mother or father figures, or other filial agents, serve to constitute the coordinates of the neuroses and psychoses, then the initial institution or establishment of these figurations as other things, in a biological sense—or in other biosynthetic figurations, such as drugs—must be equally as crucial and determinative.

Accordingly, when Lévinas describes the other as specifically *not* a father figure, he lays emphasis on the figuration’s independent, non-paternal features. Paternity is less a discrete being than a “face,” he argues; it is less a particular agent than a general status or gestalt:

Paternity is not a causality, but the establishment of a unicity with which the unicity of the father does and does not coincide. The non-coincidence consists, concretely, in my position as brother; it implies other univities at my side. Thus my unicity qua I contains both self-sufficiency of being and my partialness, my position before the other as a face.<sup>67</sup>

But if the other is *no more* than a “face,” its influence can be witnessed only in moments of “epiphany,” where this face becomes perceptible as a nonhuman entity—one that is separate and distinct “from that which characterizes sensible experience.”<sup>68</sup> Lévinas’s understanding of the other as materially visual—and more specifically as *facial*—serves not only to dovetail Descartes’s

Case of Paranoia (Dementia Paranoides),” in James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1959 [1911]), 12: 9-82.

66 Lacan, *The Seminar, Book III*, 284.

67 Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, tr. Alphonso Lingis (London: Martinus Nijhoff, 1979), 214.

68 *Ibid.*, 187.

visual epistemology with the patricentric formulations of psychoanalysis; it also bears heavily on Dick's vision of his father's face in the sky, which I will address in chapter 7.

For the time being, it is enough to note that this condensation of the father and some Lévinasian facial otherness may be regarded not simply as some desultory species of psychotic hallucination, but as an essential indication or index of some order in that "idiopathic Cartesian hallucinosis," to which I referred previously. But if Dick's visions also reflect simply his madness and drug use, then his attentively written descriptions of these phenomena become only so much more interesting—for they now, with Descartes's meditations, offer another instance, if not a new mode, of such a productive "psychography" as this thesis analyses.<sup>69</sup>

## Encountering Molecular Psychobiography

MY TASK IN THIS first chapter is to examine the question of authorial subjectivity—not simply in psychoanalytic terms, though, but in terms of the philosophy, biopolitics, and psychopolitics of human interiority.<sup>70</sup> This enterprise demands that these areas be addressed within certain axioms. I call my method "psychobiographic," for it concerns the "psycho," "bio," and "graphic" models of the human; it has regard to the disciplines in which knowledge of the body and brain is developed, and makes reference to the historical emergence of those new drugs, both licit and illicit, that appeared in the twentieth century.

Much of the scholarship on the subject of drugs arises out of what is a catalytic political firmament. Forged from a crucible of social and academic criticism that had arisen in response to an increasingly psychiatrised West, drugs begin to connote madness and mental illness—and perhaps little else. The method by which drugs come into contact with the mad and the ill, however, will in this context soon come to be regarded, at least by some, less as a legitimate treatment method or medical process than just as another historical transmogrification of the old Foucauldian power struggle—a situation in which a powerful sovereign dispenses their particular mode of discipline and punishment to certain element within its population.

69 See chapter 7.

70 In adopting this term I paraphrase, or reappropriate, the words of Peter Sedgwick; Sedgwick used this term as the title for his book *Psycho Politics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982).

In the 1960s, just such a view was championed by those who identified with the so-called anti-psychiatry movement; this was a loose coterie exemplarily represented by, for instance, Italy's great social reformer, Franco Basaglia, and the United Kingdom's most "intellectualistic" psychiatrist duo, David Cooper and R. D. Laing.<sup>71</sup> It is also from out of this political context that Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972)—and the work that followed it, *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980)—would appear in the following two decades<sup>72</sup>

Adroitly observing this history in a succinct literary-cultural study of psychiatry, Angela Woods underscores the extent to which Deleuze and Guattari, in their critique of psychoanalysis, are indebted to other such critiques of psychology of the time, including "Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization*" (as it was so published in 1965).<sup>73</sup> But Deleuze and Guattari's adoption of the diagnostic term "schizophrenia"—a term distinguished from Freud's psychoanalytic categories, which are emblematised by his descriptions of psychosis and neurosis—indicates the authors's wish to "speak back" to the institutionalised taxonomisation of mental phenomena as it has thus far, largely with Freud, proceeded.

Their aim, in other words, is to become vociferous interlocutors in the progressively more bureaucratised science of mental health—an area increasingly buffeted by a scientific regime that is itself sustained by exclusionary methodologies unlikely to be understood by those who are made the subjects of its practices. In rejecting Freudian psychopathology, Deleuze and Guattari also deprivilege Freud's authority within the regime of twentieth-century psychopolitics; in this they at least tacitly agree with Sylvère Lotringer's claim that Freudianism survives in America not as a truthful method, but merely as a transmogrification of "communications theory."<sup>74</sup>

For Deleuze and Guattari, the persistence of Freudianism is not simply dependent on late capitalism, though, but radically transcoded by it. Psychopathology metastasises in the middle decades of the twentieth century; from here it departs from the private couches and notebooks characteris-

71 I examine R.D. Laing's philosophy of psychiatry in more detail in chapter 4.

72 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, tr. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). Originally published as *L'anti-Œdipe* (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1972).

73 See Angela Woods, *The Sublime Object of Psychiatry: Schizophrenia in Clinical and Cultural Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). I will take up Foucault's *History of Madness* and examine it in some detail in chapters 2 and 3.

74 See Sylvère Lotringer, "Libido Unbound," *The Politics of 'Schizophrenia,'* in *Semiotexte 2*, "Anti-Oedipus: From Psychoanalysis to Schizopolitics," no. 3 (1977): 5-6.

tic of so many psychoanalysts's consultation rooms and, with medicine's authorisation, enters the state's officiating volumes, which is to say the medical, and even legislative books of the state's legal-medical sector—its public health organisations. But, concerned less with usurping medicine's authority than with stimulating and extracting value from the state's labour and economic machines, Freudianism would enter a period in which, by May 1968, it had only itself to diagnose as ill—and with no less than such a disease as “economic neurosis.”<sup>75</sup> Guattari would comment on this situation in the first issue of the *Revue de psychothérapie institutionnelle*—a review that anticipates and, for Julian Bourg, would become the “urtext”<sup>76</sup> of *Anti-Oedipus*:

Institutional therapeutics is a delicate infant. Its development needs close watching, and it tends to keep very bad company. In fact, the threat to its life comes not from any congenital debility, but from the factions of all kinds that are lying in wait to rob it of its specific object. Psychologists, psychosociologists, even psychoanalysts, are ready to take over bits of it that they claim to be their province, while voracious governments look for their chance to “incorporate” it in their official texts.<sup>77</sup>

If Guattari's remarks openly express his scorn both for “voracious governments” and self-interested social psychologists, Deleuze and Guattari's critique of psychoanalysis in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* will even more disdainfully repudiate psychopathology's formalisms, which are now practiced in its invariably coercive and deceptive “institutional therapeutics.”

In Woods's words, the authors convey a general “irreverence towards the psychiatric establishment”<sup>78</sup>—and this indicates their contempt for those “factions” that threaten to “rob” something both from psychiatry's legitimate practitioners and its involuntary patients. To be specific, psychiatry takes from practitioners a range of intellectual and professional freedoms, and from patients the fundamental belief and realisation that some heterogeneity in human mental life is to be expected and appreciated. The aim of “capitalist

75 Ibid.

76 Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007), 139-40.

77 Guattari, “Transversality,” in *Molecular Revolutions: Psychiatry and Politics* (New York: Puffin, 1984), 11-23. Originally published in 1964 in the *Revue de Psychothérapie Institutionnelle*, no. 1. On the shortlived history of this review, and the society that produced it—the Société de psychothérapie institutionnelle (SPI)—see Bourg, *Revolution to Ethics*, 137-43.

78 Woods, *The Sublime Object of Psychiatry*, 148.

colonialism,” Guattari would later say, had been no less than to enforce and facilitate a homogenisation of mental experience, achieved slowly but surely, and by so many “conservative reterritorialisations of subjectivity.”<sup>79</sup>

Authoring a complex microanalysis of capitalism’s procedures, Deleuze and Guattari’s lifework remediates and transcodes those ossified assemblages of the socius that also function as its systemic constituents, chief among them psychoanalysis and institutionalised psychiatry. This they do not only to fortify a new epistemological resistance, but to nurture and recuperate the political desires of others. The regulation and availability of drugs, for instance—controlled by governmental agencies as much as by psychiatric organisations—will become an increasingly important subject for the authors in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

Here, for instance, Carlos Castaneda’s escape from “semiosis” and his concomitant entry into a “visual and sonorous microprecognition,” will lead him into what the authors describe as a “becomings-molecular.” This is a body transformation that is distinguishable from those others that, in the preceding passages of the book, the authors have described in different terms. Before now, the authors have conceived of the body’s morphologisation in terms of its *animality*; when they have previously described changes in the body or mind, the authors have, as if to accord with some “law of the jungle,” understood them as instances of a “becomings-animal.”<sup>80</sup> This “becomings-molecular” registers a new re-encoding of the subject—one that has everything to do with the molecular revolution, which, beginning in the 1950s, stretches into the present.

My claim is that much of Deleuze and Guattari’s work expresses an effective concern to see the liberalisation of drugs (and primarily illicit drugs)—even if the authors have intended to express no such concern. Just this concern, for instance, is reflected in their recurrent valorisation of their tropic Body Without Organs (the “BwO”), which—traceable to other alternative or anormative bodies, such as, for one, the “drugged body” of Antonin Artaud—gives itself over to the intoxication of desire almost as readily as Artaud himself actually gave his body over to the intoxication of mescaline. The authors commend Artaud, and similarly laud Henri Michaux, whose ability to disconnect hallucinatory experience from “the question of causality with respect to drugs,” allows Deleuze and Guattari to fabricate a philosophy of wild creation, apprehending the world less as structural system than mutating specter.<sup>81</sup>

79 Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 3.

80 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 227, 248.

81 Ibid. On the “drugged body” see 165; on Michaux and Artaud, see 283-5.



To perform on Dick and Huxley the same kind of analysis would be to attend to the way in which these authors similarly reconstitute their bodies as sites of disorder, and engage in such a “becomings-molecular.” But as with Deleuze and Guattari, both Dick and Huxley often devalue biochemical causation at the same time as they privilege the imaginative experiences that drugs induce; all four writers, different though they are, would seem to agree on the notion that, while particular compounds or narratives can elicit these exceptional affects, these affects’s phenomenology is no more important than their historical aetiology—than the systems, that is, that have served to produce and elicit them.

In certain passages of *A Thousand Plateaus* the authors condemn “drugs” for being “too unwieldy.” Far from enabling us to overcome our “inability to grasp the imperceptible and the becoming-imperceptible,” drugs do no more than reproduce the question for which they were presumed the answer: “drug users believed that drugs would grant them the plane [of consistency but] the plane must distill its own drugs, remaining master of speeds and proximities.”<sup>82</sup> But the origin of Deleuze and Guattari’s pessimism about drugs’s revelatory potential remains less clear than this line would suggest; and their observation is here expressed in the past tense as if, with the passing of the 1980s, so vanished the faithfulness they impute to drug users.

In other words, it remains arguable that Deleuze and Guattari’s pessimistic imputations demonstrate their acknowledgment of a notion that was already apparent in the inaugural years of late capitalism, only one year after Lyotard’s “Report On Knowledge,” *The Postmodern Condition*: that all drugs could be recognised only as *simulations* of subjective processes and self-therapising medicaments.<sup>83</sup> And since drugs are now seen as chimerical agents rather than as legitimate biochemical therapies, it is also possible to imagine that Deleuze and Guattari, should they have ever reflected on such figures as Huxley and Dick, would have done so only to promptly disendorse their literatures, along with these writers’s faith in the potential, good or bad, of drugs.

While Deleuze in particular expresses some caution about championing the use of drugs, his trepidation on the drug question seems, as Dave Boothroyd notes, to constitute an uncharacteristic resilement from an otherwise unblemished history of truth-seeking:

82 Ibid., 286.

83 See Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report On Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).



It is hard to imagine that... Deleuze might be genuinely concerned with what people think of them [he and Foucault], in the sense of incurring bourgeois disapproval, for being illicit drugs into a discussion of the philosophical pursuit of truth and for considering the philosophical significance of the effects and experience of such drugs.

Yet, that Deleuze is open to theorising about drugs remains an arguable proposition—even if we acknowledge that he at one time feels compelled to respond unfavourably (or quizzically) to Foucault’s scholarship on LSD and opium.<sup>84</sup> Read in its totality, there can be little doubt that the Deleuze and Guattari’s co-written volumes ultimately work to *advocate* for the kinds of disruptions in the “play of Reason” that drugs, for one, elicit—even if they balk at the kinds of biochemical powers that these drugs might also at the same time exert.

Indirect evidence of Deleuze’s ultimate veneration of the chaos initiated by drugs, for instance, appears in various of his ratiocinations in *The Logic of Sense*. Boothroyd tracks Deleuze’s valorisation of theatrical performance in this book, and writes of it as a “mimetic” and “perverse” experiment—and an endorsement of drugs equally as important as Foucault’s more explicit description of acid’s effects.<sup>85</sup> The same is true of much of Guattari’s writing, including that in his *Molecular Revolutions*, where Guattari suggests that psychoanalysis—with all its most valuable techniques—threatens to do more harm, and to exert more damage, than any psychoactive substance could ever do. But this, as Guattari writes, is not even an accident, for the

psychoanalyst, too, tries to make his technique gentler [than biochemical drugs]—and ultimately more insidious. He de-guts and neutralizes everything his patients tell him, thus administering a kind of subjectivity drug.<sup>86</sup>

Further still, Deleuze and Guattari’s repeated remarks in *A Thousand Plateaus* concerning the potential of drugs to invest perception with desire—to

84 Michel Foucault, “Theatricum Philosophicum” in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, tr. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), 165-96, esp. 191. Also see Eleanor Kaufmann, “Madness and Repetition: The Absence of Work in Deleuze, Foucault and Jacques Martin” in *Deleuze and Guattari: New Mappings in Politics, Philosophy and Culture*, Kaufman and Kevin Jon Heller, eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 243.

85 Dave Boothroyd, “Foucault and Deleuze on Acid,” in Boothroyd, ed., *Culture on Drugs: Narco-cultural Studies of High Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), 158-62. I will address Deleuze’s trepidation in respect of Foucault’s description of LSD’s effects in chapter 3. Also see Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, ed. Constantin V. Boundas, tr. Mark Lester (London: Athlone Press, 1990 [1969]), 202-7.

86 Guattari, *Molecular Revolutions*, 69.

*molecularise* it and to enable a new kind of “becoming” (such as in those lines I have quoted as an epigraph at the beginning of this chapter)—constitute these authors’s clear endorsement of drugs’s productive potential.

It is an endorsement made all the more resounding when one reads the pair to suggest not only that drugs may be utilised or instrumentalised as adjuncts to therapy, but deployed as spurs to the same “rhizomic” or “aborescent” trajectories—to the same lines of flight—that the authors have already so readily compelled their readers to adopt, or at least to imagine adopting, as one legitimate pathway that has been taken by others before them.<sup>87</sup>

In other words, drugs can serve a purpose largely consistent with the aims of Deleuze and Guattari’s work, which itself serves as a kind of metamorphosed expression of what are at least partly Huxley’s and Dick’s goals too. For, as Deleuze and Guattari repeatedly emphasise, “schizoanalysis”—which the authors introduce in *Anti-Oedipus*—is an analytic that seeks to disalign the coordinates within which almost all the perceptions of the subject have conventionally proceeded. Now encountered both from within and without, the subject will be interrogated from all angles, and in the context of all histories.<sup>88</sup> Guattari will elaborate on the schizoanalyst’s particular procedure in *Chaosmosis*, where he notes that “rather than moving in the direction of reductionist modelisations, which simplify the complex,” schizoanalysis privileges “complexification”—so, if its “works” at all, it does so ever “towards its [own] ontological heterogeneity.”<sup>89</sup>

In *Anti-Oedipus*, the task of reaching or observing a “plane of consistency”—a point of complexity that is equally an experience of ontological fortitude as an expression of chaotic mentation—is allegorised as a process of path selection. One must choose, they write, from among a “row of doors,” and locate in one an entry point that “provides a means of eliminating the empty and cancerous bodies that rival the body without organs.” Anticipating the very “door” (or “doors”) of perception through which Huxley would himself enter in his own aborescent mescaline intoxication, the pair’s analogy also proposes that, so as to find one’s bearings within this plane of consistency, one must choose not an existing *drug*, but “distill” one’s own

87 See Isabelle Stengers, “Gilles Deleuze’s Last Message,” accessed 10 May 2014, <http://www.recalcitrance.com/deleuzelast.htm/>.

88 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 273-382.

89 Félix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, tr. Paul Bains and Julian Pefanis (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995). Originally published in French as *Chaosmose* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1992), 61.

concoction. One must remain “a master of [one’s own] speeds,” that is.<sup>90</sup> Schizoanalysis, in short, “rejects any idea of [a] pretraced destiny”; it creates its own doors, and its own drugs, only in order to itself then *become such a drug*. To put it more clearly, schizoanalysis is a discursive potion—an antidote both to the body’s and the subject’s apparently inexorable “reterritorialisation” by desire.<sup>91</sup>

In *Chaosmosis*, Guattari diagrammatises his model of schizoanalysis; but this model must be a *metamodel*, he says, if it is to incorporate into its own system those antecedents from which it draws—those in the “history of ontological formations.” To be more precise, the model must overcome the aporia, Guattari suggests, that is common to all those antecedents, which is to say the problem of self-reference in language. Of course, the term “model”—and even the idea of a model—“harbors negative undertones” for Guattari, for it suggests, as Janel Watson argues, “the schematic reductionism which for Guattari characterizes both structuralism and the capitalist axiomatic.” But *metamodeling* constitutes something different: a “discipline of reading other systems of modeling, not as a general model, but as an instrument for deciphering modeling systems in various domains.” Intent less on producing of a model *for* everything than a unique and particular model for each thing it encounters, “schizoanalytic metamodelisation,” much like schizoanalysis, creates a new “door” for each “row”—a new heuristic for each and every application.<sup>92</sup>

In this way, Guattari’s models offer entry points to the impassive and, as he calls them, “diverse existing systems (religious, metaphysical, scientific, psychoanalytic, animistic, neurotic... )” of human fabrication, all of which “nearly always skirt around the problem of self-referential enunciation.”<sup>93</sup> These systems, Guattari argues, tend to reterritorialise the subject sooner than they develop or crystallise in themselves. The result obtains not only in these systems’s inertia—nor in their theoretical redundancy—but appears as the egregious misapplication of these models.

One of Guattari’s metamodels, the “assemblage of the four ontological functions” (see figure 1.1, below), distinguishes between discursive “Expres-

90 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 508.

91 *Ibid.*, 13.

92 Janel Watson, *Guattari’s Diagrammatic Thought: Writing Between Lacan and Deleuze* (London: Continuum, 2009), 8-9; Gary Genosko (ed.) *The Guattari Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 133; Jean Oury, Félix Guattari, and François Tosquelles, *Pratique de l’institutionnel et politique*, ed. Jacques Pain (interviewer) (Vigneux, France: Matrice, 1985), 72; Guattari, *Cartographies Schizoanalytiques* (Paris: Editions Galilée, 1989), 27.

93 Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 60-1.

	<b>Expression</b> actual (discursive)	<b>Content</b> virtual enunciative nuclei (non-discursive)
possible	$\Phi$ = machinic discursivity	<b>U</b> = incorporeal complexity
real	<b>F</b> = energetico-spatio-temporal discursivity	<b>T</b> = chaosmic incarnation

Figure 1.1 “The Assemblage of the Four Ontological Functions,” a diagram from Guattari’s *Schizanalytic Metamodelisation*. See Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 60.

sion” and subjective (non-discursive) “Content.” In this way it offers what is in effect a distinction between the following bodies and languages:

- first, the embodied or machinic subject and its language, where that “actual (discursive)” expression in language is machinic and ordained only by physical conditions such as energy, space, and time; and
- “secondly, the virtual enunciative nuclei (non-discursive)” content, where this non-discursive activity or “content”—or what might be understood simply as “thought” (be it conscious or unconscious<sup>94</sup>)—is determined by what can only be presumed to be physical conditions. The conditions are active both inside and outside the body, endogenous and exogenous, and are named “incorporeal complexity” (exogenous) and “chaosmic incarnation” (endogenous).

While the above description reduces the four-part chiasmus to a dialectic, making the four a two, it does so to bring into sharper relief the distinction between the known physical conditions of the machine and the unknown conditions of the “chaosmic incarnation.” The latter, when it produces its non-discursive content, generates a dialect I have simply called, for want of clarity, “thought.” But Guattari elsewhere calls it a “virtual autopoiesis.” And yet, this is a language whose lexicon is unknowable because both it and its speaker are presubjective—which is to say they are subjectively and histor-

94 Guattari rejects the Freudian distinction altogether:

A long time ago I renounced the Conscious-Unconscious dualism of the Freudian topoi and all the Manichean oppositions correlative to Oedipal triangulation and to the castration complex. I opted for an Unconscious superposing multiple strata of subjectivation, heterogeneous strata of variable extension and consistency.

Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 12.

ically prior to their own constitutions as human objects, and prior even to their constitution even as “prehumans.”

While perhaps no scholar or philosopher has so rigorously attempted to diagrammatise consciousness as Guattari, his models do not arise *ex nihilo*. As Simon O’Sullivan asserts, this Guattarian schema

owes much to [Louis] Hjelmslev, from whom the expression content framework is taken (and which is Guattari’s response to the Saussurean signifier/signified framework in Lacanian modelisations).<sup>95</sup>

In fact, all Guattari’s schizanalytic models represent the philosopher’s attempt to proliferate, recombine, and reconstitute existing and future models of the subject; and they gesture toward a limitlessness—one that occurs both in time and space, and which signals or maps the infinite potentiality of the human.

In their apprehension of a metaphysical formula—and when read as attempts to detect presentiment—Guattari’s metamodels recall Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s and Julian Huxley’s post-World War II conceptualisations of the “transhuman.”<sup>96</sup> But while transhumanism appears merely as what Guattari calls—employing a term with a Huxleyan genealogy—an “epiphenomenon,” it is also the product of certain mythological narratives.<sup>97</sup> Even in its descriptions *avant le lettre* by Nietzsche in *The Anti-Christ*, where Nietzsche introduces the figure of the superman as the “hyperborean,” this human represents not a phenomenon in itself, but rather only an expression of some other desire.<sup>98</sup>

By and through myths, Guattari posits, the “existential function accedes to discourse.” It defines the “stake of ethico-political strategies of avoidance of enunciation,” and thus remains one of those social forces not captured, not metabolised, by the empirical sciences or even by the sciences of language.<sup>99</sup> These mythological forces include, Guattari notes, the trinitary Christian doctrine, among many other broad historical doxa. And it is these doctrines

95 Simon O’Sullivan, “Guattari’s Aesthetic Paradigm: From the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodalisation,” *Deleuze Studies* 4, no. 2 (2010): 269.

96 On transhumanism, see Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man* (London: Image Books, 204), 239; Julian Huxley, *New Bottles For New Wine* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), 13-17.

97 I deal with the emergence of the doctrine of epiphenomenology, often erroneously attributed to Aldous Huxley’s grandfather, Thomas Henry (“TH”), in chapter 6.

98 See Nietzsche, “The Anti-Christ: A Curse on Christianity,” 3-4.

99 Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 64-5.

such as these that conspire against the subject, existentially deterritorialising them. Notwithstanding their crucial harmfulness, the power these doctrines have to deterritorialise or “stratify” the subject, which arises by means of their production of engrossing mythological doxa, is never really complete or absolute. For even a “monad’s knowledge of being-in-the-world, of a sphere of for-itself,” Guattari avers, “implies a pathic apprehension which escapes” consciousness—which is outside of the “energetico-spatio-temporal coordinates” of human mentation—and so must also elude deterritorialisation.

That is, at the point of sensing an ability to “pathically apprehend” the world, even the monad perceives something of its true self—its “existential transference [and] non-discursive transitivity.” Thus, they are enabled to apprehend that *mise en abyme* in which that subject apprehends itself, that recursive feeling that arises as he or she looks into its own chaotic and extra-linguistic ego. And yet, it is also the “enunciation of this transference”—that is, the turning-into-a-language of this experience—that *prevents* the subject, in and by this real-world action, from ever *finally* knowing itself. This impasse arises “through the diversion of a narration whose primary function is not to engender a rational explanation but to promote complex refrains.”

In an “extraordinary attack of subjective subjection,” then, presubjective narration is detoured through the complex refrains and codes of stratified determinations, much like Melville’s *Bartleby*, who continually repeats his refrain (“I would prefer not to”), and thus at once expresses a desire not to be lingual *and* disavows his own dependence on that desire.<sup>100</sup> By “making visible the stakes of these strategies,” and by pinpointing where the “avoidance of enunciation” occurs, Guattari’s schema of the four ontological functions displaces, as he writes, the “logic of sets” that we see in both Freudian and Christian modelisations of the human. In substituting these models, Guattari’s schema presents an “onto-logic” that—like a quantum engineering manual—details “a mechanics of existence whose object is not circumscribed within fixed, extrinsic coordinates.” It is, Guattari suggests, a contingent and volatile deduction that may enlarge, reproduce, or self-destruct at any time, for it is conditioned by and reacts in parallel to the chimerical and insensible force that it represents: “the Universe of alterity with which it is compossible.”<sup>101</sup>

100 *Ibid.*, 61-2; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 336.

101 Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 64-5. Guattari borrows this formulation of “compossibility” from Leibniz: see *Die Philosophischen Schriften von Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz*, ed. Carl I. Gerhardt, 7 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann 1875-90; repr. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965), 3: 573; Catherine Wilson, “Plenitude and Compossibility in Leibniz,” *The Leibniz Review*

It must be acknowledged that Guattari's critique of territorialisation in *Chaosmosis* is an analysis of those impingements on subjective liberty that it detects, largely, in Freudianism. Yet it is by turns staunchly oppositional to and reverential of Freud, an insightful critique of Freudianism's "modelisation" of the subject that leads us right to the Viennese doctor's own limit concept and his psychoanalytic horizon: "the psychotic." True to form, Guattari's work then redeems or resuscitates this figure, exculpating and excusing them from the condemnatory system that has also, in part, engendered them.<sup>102</sup>

Of course, Guattari accepts that Freud "brought about a clear enrichment in [the subject's] production," for he offered "an enlargement of its referential constellations," and thus produced a more complex vision of human social and psychosexual development—even if that development now reads as a crudely reductive model of their ontology. But, if we accept that the same "referential constellations" in Freud are also at least partly at play within Guattari's signification of "the schizo," then we are led to recall the dilemma of language apprehended in Plato's *Phaedrus*.

The *Phaedrus*, which is so punctiliously reinterpreted by Derrida, reminds us that language is a *pharmakon*: to be sure, the crucial question is whether it is, at any one time, a toxic drug or beneficent potion. But it is also worth emphasising that, if it is a *pharmakon*, it is in any case and at all times also something "psychoactive." Of course, in Derrida's interpretation, the *pharmakon* is almost always a poison rather than a cure; and so it is in Plato's text. Writing, we read in Plato, is always seemingly more toxic than ameliorative, for writing threatens—much as, for Guattari, psychiatry threatens to rob practitioners and patients of freedom—to "rot the minds of men," and to rob them of their wits.<sup>103</sup>

Is it possible to think of Guattari's analysis as a reenactment of the Platonic myth of Theuth? Is Guattari's project little more, in other words, than a rearticulation of the myth in which, at least on Derrida's reading, the Egyptian king rejects the word itself, seeing in it all the deleterious malevolence of a psychotomimetic drug? Does Guattari not now characterise writing (at least in the form it took under Freud's control), no less than psychiatry, in

10 (2000): 1-20.

102 I will return to the figure of the psychotic—and to the diagnostic description of psychosis—many times throughout this thesis. I simply wish to note here Guattari's compelling emphasis on writing and narrative in the context of his discussion of schizophrenia. For him, the "schizo reduction" is a language cast in "assignifying refrains which give back to the narrative, which [is] recast in artifice, existential narrativity and alterity, albeit delirious ones" (*Chaosmosis*, 64).

103 See Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 98-118, esp. 100-101.



the same way in which it had long before been characterised by Plato: as a delirium-inducing poison? Writing, after all, is the very same instrumental power that Freud will, in an almost virtualised “infliction by inflection,” use to rot the minds of those men who, having returned from the First World War, will be so shocked and distressed that they are diagnosed as war neurotics—and later, as Freud interviews them and “writes them up”—be thereby transformed into psychotics.<sup>104</sup>

This transformation involved a process that, as Laurence Rickels notes, Freud had fabricated out of his own apparently ahistorical “mythico-conceptual narrative”—a doxa borne out of the far from ahistorical instantiation of the Great War. After 1918, Freud will chart a trajectory in which what he originally named the “peace-ego” and “war ego” will, less than a year later, be renamed the “ego” and the “superego”—those concepts so well known to modern scholars of psychoanalysis. And it is at this juncture too that Freud’s period-specific theorisation at the “borderline zone between neurosis and psychosis”—a formulation engendered by the profound trauma and mourning of total war—will become a normative schema—one under whose aegis so much more than a “war diagnosis” can and will henceforward be conferred.

Of course, if “psychosis” is a “limit concept,” it is only one among a series of Freudian structures that resided at the pre-World-War-I limit of Freud’s psychoanalytic system. But all of these had been brought into focus, legitimised and utilisable, by the end of Great War. Diseases, now, are less physical than “evental.” That is, war neurosis, or “war disease” (as it was commonly described), becomes exactly that: a disease occasioned by an event. As Rickels explains, the Great War precipitated these diseases’s “takeover” of previous models of schizophrenia. It was in the wake of this event, that is, that

the interest and investment in the diversified structures of psychosis, group psychology, and perversion took over even in psychoanalysis, where, pre-World War I, they had been left out as limit concepts.<sup>105</sup>

While it is only in the wake of war neurosis, then, that Freud can apprehend the excess that constitutes the symptomatology of each and every psychopa-

104 See Freud, “Introduction,” in Sándor Ferenczi, Karl Abraham, Ernst Simmel and Ernest Jones, *Psycho-analysis and The War Neurosis* (London: The International Psycho-analytic Press, 1921), 1-4.

105 Laurence Rickels, “Giving Up The Ghost of a Fetish: Between the Couples Theory of Marxo-Freudianism and Nazi Psychoanalysis,” *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (1998): 297-325.



thology, once these have arisen, they can not be dismissed: in other words, that which has been already seen cannot now for Freud be unseen. For long after the war, and generations after it in fact, psychologists everywhere acted as if they had been compelled by some implicit Freudian dictate: that the show of war disease, at least as “psychosis,” must go on. Hence the lesson in the subtitle of Rickels’s first volume of his *Nazi Psychoanalysis* three-part series—“Only Psychoanalysis Won the War.”<sup>106</sup> For if among the many tragedies engendered by the Great War there remained any clear victor, it was psychoanalysis—and, more to the point, psychosis.

If Freud’s impact on twentieth-century thought is amplified by the Great War, then, it is an amplification that Huxley laments in his 1925 essay “Our Contemporary Hocus-Pocus.”<sup>107</sup> Decades later, Dick will similarly take up in various of his novels, such as in his 1959 *Time Out of Joint*, the aftermath of the war and its implications for biopolitical control.<sup>108</sup> But in both writers’s bodies of work, we discover that the effect of the twentieth-century’s World Wars on psychological knowledge has been so effectively compossible with the development of western thought that, even as knowledge of these wars is everywhere refracted in their books, it also remains disguised, its sheer scale too great to ever be *totally* visible. After these wars, so ingrained have become the doxa of psychoanalysis in the population’s epistemological constitution, that Freudianism begins to constitute what Foucault calls, in *The Order of Things*, an “épistémè.”<sup>109</sup>

A serviceable analogy with which to further illuminate this point about the development of Freudian psychoanalysis may be discovered in the post-World War II impact of other discoveries, such as those in biochemical engineering. In the 1980s, for instance, the discovery or invention of polymerase chain reaction (PCR) enabled forensic science and cloning to become a reality.

106 For a comprehensive historical analysis of psychoanalysis’s post-war growth, see Rickels, *Nazi Psychoanalysis: Only Psychoanalysis Won the War*, vol. 1 (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 2002). For a more sympathetic account of psychoanalysis’s contribution to the neuroscience of subjectivity, see François Sauvagnat, et al., “A Historical Perspective on the Collaboration Between Psychoanalysis and Neuroscience,” *Journal of Physiology – Paris* 104, no. 6 (2010): 288-95.

107 Aldous Huxley, “Our Contemporary Hocus-Pocus,” *Forum* 73 (1925): 313-20; and repr. in *Adelphi*, 2 (1925): 966-74.

108 On the “inordinate number of explicit references” to Freud’s work in this 1959 novel, see David Gill, “Delusions of Grandeur: Paranoia in the Life and Work of Philip K. Dick,” master’s thesis, San Francisco State University, 2006, chapter 1 (pages not enumerated), [https://www.academia.edu/1759119/Delusions\\_of\\_Grandeur\\_Paranoia\\_in\\_the\\_Life\\_and\\_Work\\_of\\_Philip\\_K\\_Dick](https://www.academia.edu/1759119/Delusions_of_Grandeur_Paranoia_in_the_Life_and_Work_of_Philip_K_Dick).

109 Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London: Routledge, 2005 [1966]), xxiii, 33-4.

PCR, as a new method, allowed scientists to amplify no more than a single strand (or copy) of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) in an amplification process that then permitted the DNA sample to be, in effect, greatly magnified in a chemical chain reaction, one that allowed scientists to then undertake functional and phylogenetic analyses of not just the sample, but the enlarged DNA sequence. This was a larger, some might say “semi-synthetic” sequence that had hitherto remained invisible, and certainly had never before been comprehensible as such. Moreover, PCR would also enable the entire DNA sequence to be *reproduced*, allowing for replication of the DNA to occur, and giving rise to what we now know as “gene cloning.”

My point is this: Just as the amplification of DNA in the 1980s permitted humans to investigate and manipulate this material sequence at levels hitherto inconceivable, so had trauma during the Great War been amplified and magnified to a degree previously unimaginable. The Great War thus allowed Freud to see—in a new and enhanced visualisation process—as well as to manipulate, those formerly under-determined psychical coordinates and symptoms that, as he would soon discover, undergirded or constituted the “neurotic” and “psychotic.”

Like manevolent scientific procedures, replete with loss, the World Wars permitted Freud and his colleagues to detect and psychoanalyse their subjects through a new, and apparently less restricted prism. Of course, there can be no doubt that just as PCR is invaluable today, so psychoanalysis had been valuable and necessary in the 1920s. As Rickels’s historicisation of psychoanalysis attests, the abiding attitude was one of a collectively acknowledged compulsion to—and even a public mandate for—such a therapeutics. At this time, those who presided over psychoanalysis’s coming into the mainstream—where it went ahead in such forms as “Practical Psychotherapy”—would soon also be those who announced that every physician “must practice psychotherapy, whether he wants to or not.”<sup>110</sup>

Converting Freud’s work on “war shock” into generalisable diagnostic protocols, mainstream psychoanalysis soon ossified into a set of axioms under whose “depth-psychological interpretations” always lay the limit concepts of war psychosis. The array of symptoms that appeared in patients were now to be understood less as idiopathic or *sui generis* behaviours than as reverberations of this underlying ur-category, which could appear at any moment: as war psychosis “without the war.” When mainstream psychoanalysts

110 Werner Kunkel, *Conquer Yourself: The Way to Self Confidence* (New York: Ives Washburn, 1936), cited and quoted in Rickels, “DSM3rd Reich,” in *Nazi Psychoanalysis*, 1: 125.

discovered that the “related symptom pictures once associated with ‘classic hysteria’ have all but disappeared,” practitioners would not conclude that hysteria itself had disappeared, however. They would deduce only this: that the patients’s methods of expressing the same disorder had changed—and that it had simply morphologised, no doubt, into more complex new disorders. Where once “sensational blindness, muteness and other paralysis” had been commonplace, for instance, in hysterics, now “complicated intrigues, insidious physical ailments, hatred, scorn and sullenness” characterised the group of symptoms to be henceforth identified in the diagnostic interview with these patients—and much the same was true for the diagnosis of neurotics and psychotics.<sup>111</sup>

As I will argue in chapters 4, 5, and 6, Huxley had himself responded to the shock of war; he had suffered a kind of post-war trauma in the context of a range of great personal losses. Having already mourned the death of his mother in 1908 and the loss of his eyesight in 1911, the death of Huxley’s brother, Trevanen, in 1914, was an especially difficult tragedy for this young man to bear. A mentor for Huxley at Oxford, Trevanen had committed suicide following what he interpreted as his unsatisfactory results in his Civil Service examinations—and after having ended two “complicated” relationships with different women.<sup>112</sup> In such novels as *Antic Hay* (1925), Huxley parodically depicts the disillusionment felt by many after the Great War, toying with a theme that, two years later, he would more explicitly take up in his venomous dismissal of Freudianism as “hocus pocus.”<sup>113</sup>

As with Guattari’s critique of Christian Trinitarian symbolism in *Chaosmosis*, Huxley perceives Freudianism as just another form of encoding the subject through a “diversion of narration.” For Huxley, the idea that

anything so fantastic as this theory of interpretation by symbols (which are made to mean anything whatever according to the taste of the analyst) should ever have been regarded as possessing the slightest scientific value, is really quite unbelievable (*OCHP*, 317).

When, some decades later, Huxley in his *Doors of Perception* (1954) will bring his sceptical, even-minded rationalism to bear on the question of drugs, he will yet again encounter the question of the scientific value of “symbolisation.” But Huxley’s own “becomings-molecular” now only confirms his belief

111 Kunkel, *Conquer Yourself*, 107, cited and quoted in Rickels, *Nazi Psychoanalysis*, 1: 126.

112 See Ronald W. Clark, *The Huxleys* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 163-4.

113 Huxley, “Our Contemporary Hocus Pocus.”

in the delimitations of seeing through the sedimented and “endlessly elaborate... symbol systems and implicit philosophies which we call languages.” And here he concludes that the place “which, in the language of religion, is called ‘this world’ is the universe of reduced awareness, expressed and, as it were, petrified by language” (*DOP*, 11).

As I will argue in more detail in the following chapter 2, Huxley builds on Bergson’s “filtration” theory of the brain when he suggests that language “petrifies” perception. Seeing the brain as “an instrument of analysis in regard to the movement received, and an instrument of selection in regard to the movement executed,”<sup>114</sup> Bergson pays great attention in his *Creative Evolution* (1922) to the brain’s processes of *selectivity*.<sup>115</sup> Similarly, Huxley often considers the “Temporary by-passes” that circumvent this organ’s “reducing valve.” These by-passes produce, he argues, a state in which a subject is less hamstrung by the brain’s endogenous sensations than protected from them (*DOP*, 11-12). But, if one should seek to experience all of the mind’s sensations at once, one may experience a newly liberated ontology; but this may come only “as the result,” Huxley argues, “of the natural spiritual exercises, through hypnosis or by means of drugs” (*DOP*, 11). Nonetheless, at the end of *The Doors of Perception*, psychotomimesis, at least for Huxley, remains the descriptor best suited to the use of LSD, for the “schizophrenic is like a man permanently under the influence of mescaline” (*DOP*, 45).

While Huxley offers no explicit solution to the problem of self-reference that I have addressed in this chapter so far—that is, to the difficulty that a subject encounters in their attempt to understand themselves in a new way, one that is placed outside their own prejudices, biases, and habits of mind—Huxley urges that we should still accept that this is an *impossibility*: this “intolerable selfhood,” he writes, must remain an unfathomable “Mystery.”<sup>116</sup>

Through the first three decades of the twentieth century, the aporia of self-reference will be a problem faced again and again in an array of academic disciplines by scores of distinct thinkers—and not only by philosophers of psychologists. When the problem is taken up by mathematician Kurt

114 See Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, tr. Nancy Paul, et al. (London: MacMillan, 1929 [1911]), 20; also see *Creative Evolution*, tr. Arthur Mitchell (London: MacMillan and Co., 1922), where Bergson describes the brain as a “switchboard” (266). Also see Paul Marshall, *Mystical Encounters with the Natural World: Experiences and Explanations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), ch. 8, “Mind Beyond the Brain: Reducing Valves and Metaphysics,” esp. 237-9.

115 See Henri Bergson, *Creative Evolution*, tr. Arthur Mitchell (London: MacMillan and Co., 1922); Huxley, *DOP*, 11.

116 *Ibid.*, 34, 50.

Gödel, and then turned into a numeric equation, for example, Gödel will discover it to have been, at least mathematically, insurmountable or insoluble all along. But, inspired by the philosophy of mathematics as much as its procedures of strict calculus, Gödel will attempt to calculate the problem philosophically and theoretically, building on Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell's attempt at the "axiomatization of mathematics" in their *Principia Mathematica*. It is there, in this latter work, that the authors had produced "valuable results in [various] regions, such as infinite number" theory, among other subjects that had been "formerly regarded inaccessible to human knowledge."<sup>117</sup>

By 1931, Gödel's two formal mathematical theorems—known as the "incompleteness theorems"—demonstrated the validity of the proposition that no system is internally consistent—at least, it could not be seen to be such without having first committed some grave epistemological or empirical error. Even mathematical systems, Gödel showed, could not overcome the aporia of self-reference without defying itself or its own rules.<sup>118</sup> Whitehead had reached much the same conclusion at much the same time; he had argued, however, that for an organism to attain legitimate self-awareness was a fanciful notion—something empirically unimaginable, and akin to an "argument from ignorance."

Whitehead would first express this view in his lectures on process and philosophy at Edinburgh in 1927 and 1928, but would later revise the lectures for publication for his *Process and Reality* of 1929. Unlike Descartes, however, Whitehead proposes not that the body belongs to an individual, but to the "entire world," which is to say to nature more generally. However, the "process of 'being myself,'" Whitehead argues, "is my origination from my possession of the world."<sup>119</sup> And so, while the claim that "the body is a 'possession of the world'" is a weaker one than the claim that "the individual possesses (as in 'apprehends') the world," neither of these statements is completely false, since in both cases, we seem always to accept the claim that an individual possesses their body.

117 Alfred North Whitehead and Bertrand Russell, *Principia Mathematica*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 1: v. Also see notably Isabelle Stengers's *Thinking With Whitehead*, 3, and ch. 18, "Feeling One's World," which deals with a range of Whitehead's dicta from *Process and Reality* concerning the "doctrine of [the human] organism" as it is interposed with subjectivity or the "finality of the individual." (296). Also see Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 60.

118 Kurt Gödel, "Über Formal Unentscheidbare Sätze der Principia Mathematica und Verwandter Systeme" in *Monatshefte für Mathematik und Physik* 38 (1938): 173-98.

119 Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 81.

In view of this situation, what is the “process” by which we are led to conclude that we “possess” our bodies in such a way? For Guattari, it is the dream of schizoanalysis that will work towards the “complexification” of this question, perhaps offering an answer. For Whitehead, quite similarly, it is through the “processual enrichment” of each individual’s possession of the world that we will more clearly elucidate the origins of these seemingly contradictory propositions.

But what if, despite the richness and complexity of these various models of the mind and body, from Descartes to Guattari, this aporia that appears invariably unconquerable is nothing less than precisely the condition of our *microbial* subjectivity? If the genomicists are right, that is, to postulate that humans are constituted not predominantly by human genes, but by nonhuman ones, then is it also not possible that we should experience our microbial embodiments exactly as this *inability* to detect or sense parts of them? For should we not simply expect to be incapable of sensing what will turn out to be insensible? Is this not, in other words, precisely the predictable situation in which we experience an impotency to feel what is *not biologically feelable*?

To elaborate in this way on the apparent genomic constitution of our bodies is to acknowledge the crucial determination of subjectivity by molecular compounds, including but not limited to drugs. It is also to characterise writing—even as we do so *in writing*—as an agon with an interiority that, more than we had previously thought, resists its own recitation. As with all accounts of the material or phenomenological aspects of the word—the semantic, phonemic, syntagmatic, or linguistic—it is prudent to avoid totalising claims.

No matter, though, since what is likely to be true for the body, is not simply as likely to be true for all its organs: each is different, and the brain more different to any other of them. So while it may become increasingly apparent that our bodies are not fully our own, this should not imply the notion that we materially do not “own” or “possess” our *brains*. And yet, while the brain apparently remains free from microbes—an organ sealed by a hermetic barrier of blood—it too has a history of encumbrance, albeit largely mythical or ideological.<sup>120</sup> And it is to that history that this final section of chapter 1 now turns.

120 On the drug-user-subject’s sensory experience of “the world of the non-human,” see chapter 6, “The World of the Non-Human” in Robert Masters and Jean Houston, *The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience: The Classic Guide to the Effects of LSD on the Human Psyche* (Vermont: Park Street Press, 2000), 151-83.



## A Grey Matter: The Brain's “Latent Human Potentialities”

PREDATING OUR RECENT EMPIRICAL knowledge that the body is constituted by discrete forms of life that are nonhuman, a similar notion—or what I shall call a “mythos”—persists in relation to the human brain. Understood as a partial or inchoate object, as an organ never fully utilised by its “owners,” the brain is considered a latent entity; and one in need, that is, of development and expansion. This mythos is often described as the “ten percent of brain myth”: a widely perpetuated and erroneous statistical claim that, as the locution suggests, humans only use approximately ten percent of their brains.<sup>121</sup>

Often misattributed to Einstein—despite there being no record of his having said anything like this—the notion is also a principle that we discover adopted approvingly and energetically by Huxley in the last years of his life. So enamoured of the notion is Huxley, in fact, that it forms the foundation of a panegyric lecture on “human potentialities”—one of the last talks that he would deliver.<sup>122</sup> Given before an eager audience in 1959 at the University of California, this lecture concerns what had become an important theme in Huxley’s thought—and even a “psychotrope”—during the last two decades of his life: that the human had not reached, and may not ever reach, its potential.<sup>123</sup>

121 On the myth generally see Barry Beyerstein’s chapter, titled “Whence Cometh the Myth that We Only Use 10% of our Brains?” in *Mind Myths: Exploring Popular Assumptions About the Brain and Mind*, ed. Sergio Della Sala (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, 1999), 3-24. Beyerstein traces the history of this expression or mythos, including its misattribution to Einstein. He then comprehensively rejects the myth on a number of grounds, including on the philosophical-fallacious ground that it is an “argument from ignorance.” He then also points to the serious doubts raised about this idea in the scientific studies of brain damage, evolution, and imaging, many of which involve microstructural analyses of the organ. Also see Rachel Vreeman and Aaron Carroll, “Medical Myths,” *British Medical Journal* 335, no. 7633 (2007): 1288-9.

122 Beyerstein, “Whence Cometh the Myth,” 13-4.

123 Huxley focused on the illustration that we only use 10% of our brains in his 1959 lecture at the University of California at Santa Barbara. An edited version of this lecture was transcribed by Piero Ferrucci, and published under the title “Latent Human Potentialities” in *The Human Situation*, ed. Ferrucci (London: Harper and Row, 1977), 263-73. Also see “Human Potentialities: A Series of Talks on “The Human Situation,” recorded live from the Lecture Hall, vol. 1, produced by Laura Archer Huxley, distributed by Giffard Associates. This recorded version is currently available from a merchant at “Big Sur Tapes,” with code 01101. See <http://www.bigsurtapes.com/merchant.mv82.htm>, last accessed 22 April 2014. Also see Bernfried Nugel, “Aldous Huxley’s Concept of “Human Potentialities,” in *Literatur und Lebenskunst: Festschrift für Ger Rohmann [Literature and the Art of Living: Essays for Gerd Rohmann]*, ed. Eva Oppermann (Kassel: Kassel University Press, 2006), 146-156nn2 and 3. On Huxley’s conceptualisation of “human potentialities” more generally, see the “Human Potentialities” series, edited

In the history of ideas, this mythos is a relatively recent development—although it is also perhaps what we might call another “transhumanist deictic.” It is a philosophy that expresses a more general and longstanding belief in the limitlessness of human potential and capability than any others. Tracing its birth to early nineteenth-century debates about the localised function of the brain, commentators have identified the notion in the intellectual concourses of Franz Gall and his disciple Johann Spurzheim, as well as in certain strands of the phrenological science that these physicians’s methods inaugurated.<sup>124</sup>

The proposition has also been attributed to William James, whose *The Energies of Men* (1907) appears to have catalysed the widespread adoption of this view. In this work, James enunciates an instinct about the self that is also almost universally acknowledged in holy or scriptural texts. There is, James asserts, the possibility of some revelation of another life and another space—if only we could look within, and meditate productively well enough on our waking consciousness. What Jung calls the “collective unconsciousness,” and what is often elsewhere spoken of in terms of a “divine presence,” is for James to be found within our own bodies—in our human “resources.”<sup>125</sup>

While Professor of Philosophy at Harvard, James wrote that

Compared with what we ought to be, we are only half awake... We are making use of only a small part of our possible mental and physical resources.<sup>126</sup>

by Nugel, and published by LIT Verlag.

124 On the contributions of these eighteenth-century physicians to neuroscience through such surgical methods as cranial palpation, see Donald Simpson, “Phrenology and the Neurosciences: Contributions of F.J. Gall and J.G. Spurzheim,” *ANZ Journal of Surgery* 75 (2005): 475-82.

125 In Carl Jung’s *The Red Book*, Jung continually speaks of a “spirit of the depths” and “of the time” that shows him that what he speaks what he is “is madness.” For Jung, as for Dick, the other can appear without warning or welcome. See Jung, *The Red Book* (Originally titled *Liber Novus [The New Book]*), ed. Sonu Shamdasani (New York: The Philemon Foundation and W.W. Norton, 2009), esp. 229-31. I agree with Andreas Schule, who describes the “divine presence” trope as the “Sprachspiel” or “language game” of Christianity. However, Schule also argues, contrary to Aristotle’s and Hegel’s ideas about the Spirit, that this doctrine functions in a way that offsets the focalisation of an individual’s perception through their own limited perspective, and enables a larger enactment of selflessness, owing to the fact that it is not “associated with any form of *self-reference*.” See Andreas Schule, “The Spirit of YHWH and the Aura of Divine Presence,” *Interpretation: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 66, no. 1 (2012): 16-28, 17-8; cf. Rolston’s comparison of molecular biology and the Spirit of God in: Holmes Rolston, III, “Evolutionary History and Divine Presence,” *Theology Today* 55, no. 3 (1998): 415-34.

126 William James, *The Energies of Men* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1914), 14.



Perhaps it was owing to this apparently prodigious apprehension of the infinite that Whitehead would think of James as having put a stop to the self-reflective problem—that “tradition inaugurated by Locke and Descartes, then pushed to the limits by Kant.” This was the long tradition whose obsessive concern was, in Whitehead’s words, with “reflexive consciousness,” and which ultimately gave in “to its pretensions to invariance.”<sup>127</sup> Indeed, in Whitehead’s introduction to *Process and Reality*, he defends James and Bergson against those who would accuse the pair of “anti-intellectualism”; Whitehead promotes their apprehensions of the infinite, even as Einsteinian physicists would seek to impede the expansion of *le bergsonisme*.<sup>128</sup>

And yet, despite a promising beginning in the opening decades of the twentieth century, the recent advent of functional neuroimaging techniques, such as optical and calcium imaging, have offered precious little advances beyond the speculations of Whitehead and Bergson. Of course, they have also permitted much to be discovered; many contemporary neurological studies leave us in no doubt of the fact that our brains are, far from being *underused* at the macroscale, used in their entirety—that is, at least in spatial terms, and over predictable temporal periods, blood circulates throughout all parts of the brain.<sup>129</sup>

Ostensibly, then, what much of the blood-circulation-based imaging and other neurotransmissional forms of activity mapping demonstrate is that almost all regions of our brains are active in every instant of our lives.<sup>130</sup> In fact, the abundant liveliness and vitality of the brain’s processes seems to in-

127 Quoted in Bruno Latour, “What is Given in Experience?” (Foreword) in Stengers, *Thinking With Whitehead*, xii; first published in *boundary 2* 32, no. 1 (2005): 223-7.

128 Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, xii.

129 On calcium imaging, see Christine Grienberger, et al., “Imaging Calcium in Neurons,” *Neuron* 73 (2012): 8662-885; Armand Paul Alivisatos, et al., “The Brain Activity Map Project and the Challenge of Functional Connectomics,” *Neuron* 74 (2012): 970-4; Fritjof Helmchen, et al., eds., *Imaging in Neuroscience: A Laboratory Manual* (New York: Cold Spring Harbor Press, 2011).

130 See the interviewed remarks of neurologist Barry Gordon in Robynne Boyd, “Do People Only Use 10 Percent of their Brains?” *Scientific American*, 7 February 2008. Available at <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/people-only-use-10-percent-of-brain/>, last accessed 22 April 2014. On the great challenges of the Brain Activity Map (BAM) initiative, also known as the BRAIN project, announced in 2013, see Armand Paul Alivisatos, et al., “The Brain Activity Map,” *Science* 339, no. 6125 (2013): 1284-5; Joe Z. Tsien, et al., “On Brain Activity Mapping: Insights and Lessons from Brain Decoding Project to map memory patterns in the Hippocampus,” *Science China* 56, no. 9 (2013): 767-79. As the latter article points out, while the idea that the brain may involve the “coordinated activity of large numbers of neurons, or cell assemblies” has been pursued “from a computational and cellular perspective,” the progress has “remained embarrassingly limited,” 767-768nn2-9.

voke a term that is significant in pharmacology but does not precisely mean this in that discipline: we are thus, we could say, extremely “psychoactive” creatures. As I will explain in the remainder of this chapter, the microscalar borderlands that divide this totality of brain activity from what might be described as its more specific and intensive points, nodes, or sites of “psychoactivity,” however, constitutes a terrain that can be addressed in a number of different ways—such as in ontological or biochemical terms, or (as I have already spoken of it) in terms of the philosophy of subjectivity.

In any of these idioms, however, these borderlands appear at once both sublimely expansive and intimately compact. This is why the mind of a mes-caline user can appear to be so closely analogous with the mind of a schizophrenic—or, at least to Huxley and those psychiatrists who tutored him in their 1950s psychiatric researches, such as Humphry Osmond.<sup>131</sup> It is also, of course, why psychosis can also appear so remotely foreign or alien—a conception I will address in the following chapters.

The topological illusoriness of the brain and its activity is also why, closer to our current moment, Dick will be readily persuaded in the 1980s by the “best psychiatrist [he] ever saw” of the truth of something he would never have grasped on his own. The psychiatrist convinced Dick, that is, of the fact that the massive dosages of amphetamines he had been consuming for over a decade had been chemically ineffectual, even despite his having *thought* they had been effectual. That is, Dick came to accept that any alteration he had felt in his subjective state was simply a false artefact of his imagination—a self-deception, or a placebo effect.<sup>132</sup> This explanation had been acceptable to Dick even when he recalled how often he had, when using the apparently inert or innocuous methamphetamine, remained awake all night, writing frantically and attentively under the impression he had been fueled by the drugs. But perhaps it was precisely because of Dick’s status—an author paranoically interested in and convinced of the mind’s own deceptiveness—that he could accept, with apparent glee, such a counter-intuitive, positivist, and materialist explanation.<sup>133</sup>

131 Huxley, *DOP*, 2 and 2n1.

132 See Paul Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick,” *Rolling Stone*, 6 November, 1975, 46-7; Philip K. Dick, *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick*, eds. Jonathan Lethem and Pamela Jackson (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 21. For further discussion of this, see my chapter 7.

133 See Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick;” cf. Daniel DePerez, “An Interview with Philip K. Dick,” *Science Fiction Review* 19, vol. 5, no. 3 (August 1976): 6-15.

But Dick's preparedness to accept unimaginable propositions about the brain's function is also a testament to the widely acknowledged unreliability of "psychoactivity"—both as a clinical index of drug activity in the brain, and as a description of the distinction between brain activity and inactivity. It is perhaps this enigmatical aetiology—this fuzzy "grey matter"—that remains the most unwieldy subject within the psychiatric sciences; the placebo effect, that is, remains inexplicable. Defined as the "positive physiological or psychological changes associated with the use of inert medications, sham procedures, or therapeutic symbols within a healthcare encounter," the placebo effect, whose cause remains largely unknown, still yields beneficial results in somewhere between sixty and ninety percent of known diseases.<sup>134</sup>

These complex typological overlappings and intersections between the material and the mind sciences would seem to make problematic, perhaps even impossible, our arrival at a totalising evaluation of the notion of "brain use" as such.<sup>135</sup> Yet, no matter how we explain the genealogy of this specific brain-underuse mythos—the one in which we humans are said to use only ten percent of our brains—it serves as a prompt for our consideration of at least two related points about what this mythos *does not* or *cannot* mean. Both of these will have importance for the theory of the writing subject that I will develop in the remainder of this chapter, as well as in the theories I develop in the chapters that follow in this part 1. In these later parts I will describe an authorial figure as a "scrivener," for reasons I will explain in chapter 2. For the moment, however, it is important to consider the partial brain underuse mythos in fuller detail.

It is firstly notable that this mythos explicitly proposes a speculative conceptualisation of the *underuse* of our brains; it is not a theory about what it is we *can* do, or *cannot* do with our brains in neurological or neurobiochemical terms, but only about what we do, in actuality, *do*. While a great deal can be learned from the brain sciences about brain function and its relation to intelligence and consciousness, the brain remains a vast lacuna, even in philosophical terms. This is so even despite Deleuze

134 On the benefit of the placebo effect in a majority of diseases, see Herbert Benson and Richard Freidmann, "Harnessing the Power of Placebo and Renaming it "Remembered Wellness,"" *Annual Review of Medicine* 47 (1996): 194; Arthur Kleinmanm Harry A. Guess, Joan S. Wilentz, "An Overview" in Arthur Kleinmanm Harry A. Guess, Joan S. Wilentz, John W. Kusek, and Linda W. Engel, eds. *The Science of the Placebo: Towards an Interdisciplinary Research Agenda* (London: BMJ, 2002), 1-32, qtd. in Franklin G. Miller, David Wendler, and Leora Swartzman, "Deception in Research on the Placebo Effect," in *PLoS Medicine* 2, no. 9 (2005): 853.

135 Although see the resources cited above at nn130 and 134.

and Guattari's direct efforts to explain the brain in the 1980s and '90s, and despite the writings of many other recent neurophilosophers.

Of course, it is clear to most scholars in this field that humans possess, as neurobiologist Gerald Edelman notes, a "higher-order consciousness," one that distinguishes us, as living organisms capable of semantic and symbolic utterances, from those who experience only "primary consciousness," such as dogs and other mammals. However, even so, the precise differences in brain chemistry between humans and other mammalian vertebrates, and how each has evolved, is even now difficult for scientists to precisely ascertain.<sup>136</sup> This has probably been the result of a number of technical experimental limitations, many of them probably related to the new medico-ethical rules of surgery, which were ratified (for noble reasons) after the Nuremberg trials at the end of the Second World War. But any technical limitation—the result of an ethical rule or otherwise—may turn out to be immaterial; for not only are there clear limitations on what can be achieved through imaging techniques as they currently stand, but—more problematically—the brain, which is by no means static, also seems to elude examination at the functional level. It escapes our comprehension, that is, even in the wake of functional neuroimaging such as fMRI.

A common hypothesis, however, is that those changes or adaptations that an individual makes in response to their "internal and external" environment, which we often call "learning" are, as Michael Arbib reports, fundamentally also changes in the "patterns of gene expression in neurons." Arbib makes the fundamental argument clear:

The cellular architecture of the adult [human] brain includes not only the underlying genotype but also the social and physical milieu as refracted through individual experience, and this architecture includes not only the shape and connections of the individual cells and the larger structures they form but also the very chemistry of specific cells as differential experience changes the pattern of genes that are expressed within each one.<sup>137</sup>

Edelman thinks of brains much as Arbib does, which is to say in a way that is also similar to Whitehead: they are organs "embodied" not only within the human corpus, but also within the world. The brain is situated within

136 On higher-order consciousness Gerald Edelman, *Second Nature: Brain Science and Human Knowledge* (London: Yale University Press, 2006), esp. chapter 2, "Consciousness, Body, and Brain," 12-22.

137 Michael A. Arbib, *How the Brain Got Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 152.

bodies *and* within the world.<sup>138</sup> And while it has been demonstrated that we technically “use” almost all of our brain at any single moment—which is to say, as Edelman notes, no brain regions are ever “completely silent”—it is also important to note the possibility, as I have already described it, that we may currently be *aware* of approximately only ten percent of the brain’s actual activity.<sup>139</sup> That imaging cannot yet identify to what specific use or uses the brain is being put in each instance of its activity means that our definition of “activity”—however demonstrable it is by the neuroimaging of blood—remains limited and unrefined.<sup>140</sup>

It is in recognition of these intellectual and technical limits in neuroscience, and more specifically in connectomics—the sub-discipline in which scientists identify “connectomes” or connections within an organ’s nervous system—that the BRAIN initiative, or the Brain Activity Map Project, a project begun by the US Government in 2013, has been developed. The program proffers the following as its motto: “record every action potential from every neuron in a circuit.”<sup>141</sup> In another locution, researchers seek to fulfill the goal of “Imaging every spike from every neuron.”<sup>142</sup>

Another similar project begun in Heidelberg—the Human Brain Project—aims to build a comprehensive computer model of a functioning brain; seeking to rectify what is ultimately a philosophical problem of the logos, it focuses on what the brain can tell us about the gap or interstice between the subject and its intelligence: that is, how it is that our *brains* seem to speak.<sup>143</sup> All of these projects may be understood, in part, to share the goal of determining the longstanding problem that has always been expressed in the mythos I have explained in this chapter: that we currently underuse—or know not how we use—our brains.

The second crucial point regarding the mythos of the underused brain may be understood to be merely the *residuum* of another proposition, however: namely, that the human subject does not, or cannot, exercise total agency over their bodies or brains (a notion much elucidated in the chapters to follow). Just as the body, according to a microbial definition of the body’s primary constitution, is effectively “nonhuman,” so too is the brain primarily constituted by a substance about which we know precious little.

138 Ibid., 24-5.

139 Beyerstein, “Whence Cometh the Myth,” 6.

140 Alivisatos, et. al., “The Brain Activity Map and Functional Connectomics,” 971.

141 Ibid.

142 Ibid.

143 The project is led by researchers from the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne and Heidelberg University, funded by the European Union. See the official website, <http://www.humanbrainproject.eu/>.

Only about ten percent of the brain's cells are neurons, for instance, those primary cellular elements involved in the transfer and processing of information.<sup>144</sup> The other nine-tenths of the organ consist of various types of glial cells: formations whose function, apart from enveloping, protecting and supporting the neurons, remains largely undetermined. But if the role of glial cells remains mostly unexplored, the emerging evidence also indicates their essential role in developing our nervous systems and maintaining the normal functioning of the brain. It is proposed, for instance, that glial cells play an important role in managing our breathing.<sup>145</sup>

The principle to be grasped from these observations is that it may yet be possible to think of high percentages of our bodies and brains not simply as “unused,” as Huxley proposed in his 1959 lecture—or even as *underused*. Rather, brains are better understood as *underdetermined*, for we know not their precise functionality, nor even their precise non-functionality. To propose as much is to acknowledge little more, perhaps, than that we are ignorant of the brain's full potential, leading us almost back to the place from which we began. However, another point follows from this: that there abides a possibility abides that this huge number of glial cells plays a role in what we as humans experience as thinking, information processing, creativity, and—most important for this thesis's purposes—writing and scribbling. The “what” that writes, then, may be even more complicated than something we ourselves, as humans, can yet (or ever come to) articulate.

Citing Gödel's 1931 proof, Paul MacLean notes how, as a philosophical problem, every semantic and symbolic expression of logic, and even mathematics, “leads to the conclusion... that any complex system cannot avoid contradictions because of self-reference.” And, as MacLean further observes, it was actually Jacob Bronowski whose remarks described this philosophical situation. In what is a remarkably Dickian image, he observed the way in

144 See Christof Koch and Idan Segev, “The Role of Single Neurons in Information Processing,” *Nature Neuroscience Supplement*, vol. 3 (2000): 1171-77.

145 This area of brain research, however, has undergone a massive transformation in the last few decades. While some glial cells, such as astrocytes, were once long considered to play only a simple, passive, and supportive role for the neurons that they enframe (such as providing only conducive environmental conditions for neuronal function), recent research challenges this classical idea. For a summary of recent data of this kind see: Alfonso Araque and Marta Navarrete, “Glial Cells in Neuronal Network Function,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 365 (2010): 2375-81; J. K. McQueen, “Glial Cells and Neuroendocrine function,” *Journal of Endocrinology* 143 (1994): 411-15. Also see R. Douglas Fields, *The Other Brain* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), chapter 3: “Transmissions from the Other Brain: Glia Know and Control Your Mind,” 48-63.



which the question of a system's reality "creates an endless regress, and infinite hall of mirrors of self-reflection."<sup>146</sup>

But let us reconsider the kinds of answers that I have proposed in the preceding pages—where agency, for instance, is transferred to other forms of life, or to non-functional material entities in the body. Even these answers serve less to defer the problem than they, like all answers thus far in history, fail to address its essential nature. For to impute subjectivity to material objects about which we currently do not know enough, much as object-oriented ontologists have done, is also to presume that, at some future point, we will know enough to confirm the reality of that subjectivity adequately. Worse still, it is also to neglect what evidence already exists to affirm that there remain, and may forever remain, physical uncertainties of measurement at various orders of magnitude: at the particle-scale level, for example. To think of the problem in this way is to conceive of the so-called "quantum limit" in quantum mechanics, which arises in the Heisenberg uncertainty principle, which I address in part in relation to Huxley's sometimes questionable allusions to theoretical physics in chapter 4.<sup>147</sup>

Such limitations also appear as the limit faced by medical imaging techniques, which cannot confirm even the *relative* number of physical neurotransmitters in our brains at any one time—let alone understand each of these neurotransmitters's natures or roles in each instance of this transmission.<sup>148</sup> Perhaps it would only be sensible—in the face of so many impediments—to nobly admit that none of these questions is actually answerable. There is no adequate philosophy or epistemology of life, writing, or subjectivity, we might add, that is anywhere near up to the task of this exposition. For who could even imagine a "supernatural philosophy"—one sufficiently objective and omniscient—to provide satisfactory answers to these questions? Such a science would be, as Eugene Thacker observes in his *After Life*,

146 Jacob Bronowski, "The Logic of the Mind," in *American Scientist* 54 (1966): 1-14, 7, qtd. in Paul MacLean, "Obtaining Knowledge of the Subjective Brain ("Epistemics")" in Anne Harrington, ed., *So Human A Brain: Knowledge and Values in the Neurosciences* (New York: Springer), 57-70, 66. Also see Gödel, "Über Formal Unentscheidbare Sätze der Mathematica und Verwandter Systeme." English edition published in 1992 as "On Formally Undecidable Propositions of Principia Mathematica and Related Systems," tr. Bernard Meltzer (New York: Dover, 1992).

147 On quantum limits see notably Vittorio Giovannetti, "Quantum-Enhanced Measurements: Beating the Standard Quantum Limit," *Science* 306 (2004): 1330-36.

148 On the error-proneness of radiotracing modulatory neurotransmitters in the brain such as serotonin, and the ineffectiveness of this kind of imaging technique for clinical diagnosis, see for instance, Ramin V. Parsey, "Serotonin Receptor Imaging: Clinically Useful?" *Journal of Nuclear Medicine* 51 (2010): 1495-8.

one that was equally “as skeptical of the reductionism of the philosophy of biology as of the dogmatism of the various theologies of life.”<sup>149</sup>

This would be a new kind of philosophy, in other words, sullied neither by religion nor embodiment, perturbed neither by the uncertainty that characterises life itself nor the entropy of our material situation in human flesh and on a fragile planet.<sup>150</sup> It would require, in other words again, our development of a science and a philosophy that is *not our own*.

To more probingly transcode this question so that it aligns with the broader aims of this thesis, however, let me ask: In the context of describing these inexorably self-referring systems of the body, the brain, and their languages, then, what role, specifically, do *drugs* and *molecules* play? How do these entities “correspond” with one another? On this score, few texts are more instructive—nor more quotable (it is as aphoristic as any book)—than Avital Ronell’s *Crack Wars*. As Ronell argues, drugs in fact not only give way to new kinds of explorations of these enigmatic questions, enlightening what is otherwise an interior of only complexity, but they also, in some cases, may constitute the machines or robots that do this exploratory work for us:

Crisis in immanence. Drugs, it turns out, are not so much about seeking an exterior, transcendental dimension—a fourth or fifth dimension—rather, they explore fractal interiorities. This was already hinted at by Burroughs’s “algebra of need.”<sup>151</sup>

Elsewhere in her book, Ronell writes explicitly about those revelations about the body prompted by psychoactive drugs. In returning the user to a kind of pre-subjective state—effectively *regressing* them, however much that seems anti-Freudian—drugs enable the body to be seen for what it is: as a pound of flesh. Ronell explains:

When the body seems destined to experimentation, things are no longer introjected but trashed: dejected. The body proper regains its corruptible, organic status. Exposed to this mutability, the body cannot preserve its identity, but has a chance of seeing this fall, or ejection, sublimated or revalorized. Nautilus vs. the addict.<sup>152</sup>

149 Eugene Thacker, *After Life* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010), xiv.

150 Ibid.

151 Avital Ronell, *Crack Wars: Literature, Addiction, Mania* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 15.

152 Ibid., 7.



In all of these embodied interactions, the importance of “literature” in gaining access to the “question of ‘Being-on-Drugs’” is not, as we might expect, irrelevant. On the contrary, authoring literature is entirely essential to this undertaking. In fact, it stands distinguished among the sister arts as the one art that may offer the preeminent and most formal strategy, the most engaging technique, and even the best model, for drugs’s explorations within us.

To write of a drug experience, for instance, is thus to compose a report on its behalf; it is a work of correspondence: an interlocution with a molecular presence whose language is, like our own, a corporeal and embodied resonance. Of course, as Whitehead taught us, to trace one’s body is also to trace a piece of the world; and so, to compose from the body is to compose from nature—to write from the earth. But, wherever problems arise in this formulation, they are less semiological, we find, than juridical. As Ronell suggests, it is the politico-legal aspect of literature—for literature always insists on its own “ethical fractures,” giving it a peculiar “relationship to the law,” which tolerates no such fractures (or infractions)—that enables it to dominate philosophy and other written texts in its fabrication of a “drug-simulation,” and one that is also ethically fractious.

It is, of course, also for this reason that we so often find literature to have been made the subject of the most insidious and persecutory restraints. As a kind of work that is “often the accused, [and] a breeding ground for hallucinogenes,” Ronell writes, literature is marked as a source of poison from the very start, its ethical constitution forever scrutinised, its secrets and potential ever the subject of surveillance regimes.<sup>153</sup>

Among the other ways in which literature relates to the body then, it is in this way too that literary writers, in this metaphorology, are the producers of poison, and the fabricators of toxins. That Huxley and Dick, not to mention William James, experimented in a real and material way with drugs, then, may seem ultimately unsurprising—for their literatures have been among the most devastatingly critical of the very ethical regimes that regulate precisely the politically critical or paranoid literature that they produce. But such experiments are implacably bound up with the enterprise of writing literature at its highest, since both writing and drug use are in the business of dealing in comestible or ingestible goods: they produce new thoughts one can swallow. And yet, alas, the question concerning the genesis of these works remains unanswered. In all of their similarities, then, drugs and literature remain very different things. So, I know ask, what proportion of an author’s work is their own, and what proportion the product of the molecule?

153 *Ibid.*, 11.

## Chapter Two

# The Psychoactive Scrivener: Modelling The Writer in the Psychopolitical World

*What matter who's speaking, someone said what matter who's speaking?*

—Samuel Beckett<sup>1</sup>

*Mono-logos is no logos at all.*

—Seán Burke<sup>2</sup>

*Is it necessary to recall the unchanging pedagogical origin of dialectics?*

*The ritual in which it is activated, which causes the endless rebirth of the aporia of being and non-being, is the humble classroom interrogation, the student's fictive dialogue: "This is red; that is not red. At this moment, it is light outside. No, now it is dark."*

—Michel Foucault<sup>3</sup>

HOWEVER ONE MAY WISH to conceptualise the relation of drugs, on the one hand, and the range of questions orbiting the central enquiry "Who writes?" on the other, it remains certain that no *simple* conceptualisation of this relation will suffice. And equally, it seems that each time an earnest and rigorous attempt has been made to rearticulate the difficult question of authorship, the very origination of the question has been complex—almost as if simplicity had been excluded from the very process of the question's enunciation. Thus, when Roland Barthes's essay "The Death of the Author" was first

1 Samuel Beckett, *Texts for Nothing* (London: Calder and Boyers, 1974), 16; quoted in modified form by Michel Foucault in "What Is An Author?" in Paul Rabinow, ed. *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 101-20. Originally published in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed. and tr. Josue V. Harari (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), 141-60.

2 Seán Burke, "Who Speaks? Who Writes? Dialogue and Authorship in the *Phaedrus*," *History of the Human Sciences* 10, no. 3 (1997): 49.

3 Michel Foucault, "Theatrum Philosophicum," 185. Emphasis on "activated" mine.

published, it was as a design-conscious pamphlet rather than a book. In a special two-issue production of the “fluxus kit of criticism” titled *Aspen: The Magazine in a Box*, Barthes’s essay appeared, in English, along with a range of fluxus-inspired works of writing and art.<sup>4</sup>

For Barthes, it would be crucial that the question of authorship be dispensed with altogether. Intervening in what John Logie calls the “diachronic tussle over how literary composers compose,” Barthes’s essay addresses the capital-A “Author,” the “Author-God” and—deploying a term that resembles what I will introduce in this chapter as the “scrivener”—describes authors as “scriptors.”<sup>5</sup> The scriptor, Barthes claims, *deauthorises* authorship, rupturing what is the syntagmatic prolepsis of “authority” that inheres in the word “author” itself.<sup>6</sup> And it should come as no surprise that Barthes produced this essay for an issue of *Aspen* that was published in honour of “Stephane Mallarmé,” an issue subtitled “aka: The Minimalism Issue.”

To be a minimalist of the late ‘60s was in many ways to reduce language, and even authorship, to its basic materials. If we can accept this, we can begin to understand why in this issue we see the French *symboliste* so closely associated with minimalism. For it is a particularly linguistic association, one that arises because, almost a century before Barthes sensed his “deathly” idea, for instance, Mallarmé had thought of the book as “a spiritual instrument,” and of the alphabet as an inexhaustibly material system—or, as he put it, as “twenty-six letters so gifted with infinity that they will finally consecrate language.” It was also in this earlier moment, just before the twentieth century, that Mallarmé postulated that it was a text’s unique combination of language and “typography”—its materials—that, more than any single author, truly “speaks” to its readers.<sup>7</sup>

4 I adopt this expression about *Aspen*’s Fluxus project from Jill Walker, “Death of the Author First Published in A Box,” *jill/txt* (26 September, 2006), accessed 12 January, 2014, <http://jilltxt.net/?p=175>.

5 While I invoke Logie here, I also note that Logie argues that scholars should move away from their fixation on Barthes’s essay precisely as a node in this “diachronic tussle.” It should be conceptualised, he says, “in its synchronic moment, in a rhizomatic network with the other contributions to *Aspen* 5+6.” But Logie himself also notes the essay’s imbrication in this “two-millennium-long conversation” about authorship and, given the appearance of his own contribution to Barthes’s “cultural moment,” it may be now be possible, once again, to dehistoricise Barthes’s work: to read it *in* and *for* its ideational exemplarity. Logie, “1967: The Birth of the Death of the Author,” *College English* 75, no. 5 (2013): 493-512, esp. 497.

6 Roland Barthes, “The Death of the Author,” in *Image-Music-Text*, tr. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 146; Logie, “1967: The Birth of the Death of the Author,” 497.

7 Stephané Mallarmé, “The Book: A Spiritual Instrument,” in Mary Ann Caws, ed. and

Within only a few years of Barthes's fluxus meditation having been published, however, Michel Foucault would also formulate what was perhaps a slightly more elaborate model of the "author function," replacing the ethos of minimalism with what we might understand as a cold and impersonal political functionalism. Outwardly positivist in method, but inwardly something other than this, Foucault's work sought to expose the Romantic idea of the singular author, which was, he suggested, only a chimerical "projection"—an effect of our modes of "handling texts."<sup>8</sup> In this context, the process of naming, identifying, taxonomising, and classifying the author in an attempt to understand their "privileges" and "creative role[s]"—or to know perhaps even what Heidegger had called these authors's *Geists*—should constitute, so Foucault wrote, only a secondary endeavour in this primarily functionalist task. For all these matters are far less important, he would argue, than the primary aim of understanding the *position* of the subject who writes: they are an itinerant product, a changeable effect, and a "variable *function* of discourse."<sup>9</sup>

With this, the concomitant disavowal of authorial "subjectivity studies" in literary criticism and theory throughout the 1980s and '90s—in the wake not only of Barthes's and Foucault's works, but of many linguists's works—will see literary scholarship take up afresh the axiom that writing is a "material" practice. Throwing into sharp relief the significance of material cultures—including, as I have already discussed, the political culture of the author's body—this material turn aptly countenanced what had become an increasingly vexatious and ill-fated contestation of the author's rights in their own written works. For if authors, following Barthes, were now to be seen as "dead," how were we to view the culture of their corpses—or their "corpses"?

tr., *Stephané Mallarmé: Selected Poetry and Prose* (New York: New Directions Books, 1982), 80-84, esp. 82. Also see Thomas H. Ford, "Poetry's Media," *New Literary History* 44 (2013): 451.

- 8 Michel Foucault, "What Is An Author?" in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews by Michel Foucault*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard, tr. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 113-38, esp. 127. Notably, there are significant and numerous differences between the Bouchard and Simon translation and that by Harari. This is particularly remarkable given that the publication dates of these volumes are only one year apart, and both published by Cornell University Press. Also see Bernard Stiegler's discussion of science as the suspension of handling—a "withdrawal of the hand"—and of the hand's subsumption by the scientific instrument: Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time, 1: The Fault of Epimetheus*, tr. Richard Beardsworth (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 266-7.
- 9 *Ibid.*, 138, my emphasis. On Heidegger's *Geist*, see Martin Heidegger, "The Self-Assertion of the German University and The Rectorate 1933/34: Facts and Thoughts," *Review of Metaphysics* 38, no. 3 (1985): 474.

Just as fluxus would demonstrate the randomness of authorship both in art and literature, so would there appear a hint from the 1960s and onward, even among conservative institutions, that the proprietary rights held by authors in their materials—both under law (intellectually and morally) and in philosophical terms—had entered a period of “flux.”<sup>10</sup> For instance, it was precisely into this quagmire of authorship and intellectual property disputation that Philip K. Dick’s works would descend after his 1982 death, his estate—held in trust by various of Dick’s relations—now the subject of no end of *material* disputes itself.<sup>11</sup>

Recognising a number of “legal” rights held by authors in their material work—such as the right to be named as the author, and to be otherwise identified with the work—Foucault’s essay on authorship conceives of writing as the legitimate product of its creator’s creative and material labour. But this kind of labour, Foucault writes, is recognisable only to those socio-legal institutions that serve to privilege those authors who write from within a state—that is, within a particular state’s jurisdiction. But, since Foucault’s analysis tends toward an epistemological explanation, it largely elides the legal-economic context in which authors can also be ignored; it does not, as Molly Nesbit observes, focus on the way in which author’s “function... whether the state of knowledge recognizes their existence or not.”<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, Foucault’s study also provides a model of authorship in which we discover a renewed focus on the author’s functionality *as* a subject of a state or sovereign power. In other words, with Foucault, we do not venerate authors as capital-A “Authors,” but rather accord to them only the less privileged status of the scrivener; they are functionaries within a disciplinary apparatus. And even if this very “functionality” is—taken as an undeclared privilege—assumed, it is nonetheless also problematic in its own right. And so Foucault’s argument is one that finds support not only in the history of literary criticism, but in the legal regimes that scaffold writing of all kinds.

Within various present-day copyright statutes, for instance, we can trace the aim to ratify and preserve an authors’s “individual talent” (to paraphrase T.S. Eliot and F.R. Leavis).<sup>13</sup> Protecting an author’s right in their

10 Molly Nesbit, “What Was An Author?” *Yale French Studies* 73 (1987): 229 and 240-2.

11 See, for instance, Michael Hiltzik, “Science Fiction, Legal Reality,” *Los Angeles Times*, 27 November, 2011, accessed 3 January 2014, <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/nov/27/business/la-fi-hiltzik-20111127>.

12 Nesbit, “What Was An Author?” 240.

13 See T.S. Eliot, “Tradition and the Individual Talent,” in *The Sacred Wood: Essays on Poetry and Criticism* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1921), 42-53; F.R. Leavis, “Literature and Society,” in *Scrutiny* 12 (1943): 2-11, esp. 3. Rprt. in his *Common Pursuit* (New York:

material creations, these rules—which may afford authors certain “moral rights” in their works, including a protection of its “integrity” and a “right to attribution”—enshrine in statute what has been contested, throughout the history of literary scholarship in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.<sup>14</sup>

However, it is notable that, in practice, as Nesbit concedes, these statutes are ordinarily enforceable only at the level of civil law—and not normally within any criminal jurisdiction. They thus leave the author-subject exposed to “invasion by other interests” outside of their control: forms of political, economic, and ideological delegitimation, for example.<sup>15</sup> At law, after all, an author’s rights will only ever be “private” (which is to say a civil matter) as between two broad parties: the author and the party who attempts to usurp or bid for those rights. But if the usurper or purchaser is the author’s own state—or, worse, an episteme—then the matter becomes public, and unlikely to be recognised by a court or law as any kind of judicable matter at all.

Now, in the technomaterial and post-digital context of the twenty-first century, it is possible to identify the scholarly deliberations of the closing decades of our last century as *symptoms* of the political contestation of “authority” in general—as much as of authorship more particularly. Paternal and patriarchal, socio-legal, castrating *and* “decapitating”<sup>16</sup>: all these are the adjectives to be placed ahead of this authority, which had always, at least since Plato’s *Phaedrus*, been the problematic of the ossified “Word” itself.<sup>17</sup>

New York University Press, 1952), 182-94.

14 Under Australian law, for instance, authors hold both proprietary (copyright) rights in their work, as well what are called “moral rights.” While an author’s moral rights are often “waived,” they were intended originally to be inalienable, or unassignable, and include the three following rights: the author’s right to be attributed as the author of the work; the right not to be falsely attributed; and the right to enforce the preservation of the integrity of the work. See *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth.) ss. 189-95.

15 As Maree Sainsbury notes, while the right to exercise moral rights is “unable to be transferred to another person,” being “designed to protect the author’s personality as reflected in his or her work,” moral rights have long been extinguishable, at least theoretically, through the insertion of a clause in a contract that specifies the author’s *waiver* of these rights. See *Moral Rights and Their Application in Australia* (Sydney: The Federation Press, 2003), 62-3.

16 Hélène Cixous, “Castration or Decapitation?” *Signs* 7, no. 1 (1981): 41-55.

17 In her tremendously cogitative essay, Cixous inscribes what is a powerful passage in the history of *écriture féminine*:

For as soon as we exist, we are born into language and language speaks (to) us, dictates its law, a law of death: it lays down its familial model, lays down its conjugal model, and even at the moment of uttering a sentence, admitting a notion of “being,” a question of being, an ontology, we are already seized by a certain kind of masculine desire, the desire that mobilizes philosophical discourse.

The material-symbolics and valences of the psychoactive drug—which were perhaps for a time the most culturally pernicious, politically vexed, and legally interdicted of cultural signifiers qua brain-influencers—can be read (equally with the efflorescence of feminist, queer and other minority—albeit largely scholarly—voices throughout the late twentieth-century), as an explosive metalepsis for a renewed—and newly generalised—resistance to this authority.<sup>18</sup>

As with the Socratic procedure in Plato's *Phaedrus*, this resistance seeks to reinstall a dialectic of contestation, although it takes the form of a renewed interrogation of “the Word's” sacrosanctity.<sup>19</sup> Destabilising the monologic writer—the singular authorial body—drugs can be thought to produce a new form of “*dialogic* speech-act.”<sup>20</sup> Generating an *interdialogical* ritual in which the author corresponds not with another human—nor with a human fiction (like Socrates), and nor even with a language-speaking entity—but with an often-synthesised alkaloid, drugs initiate a dialogue between the subject and their myriad atomic affiliations. And if, as Seán Burke argues, Socrates serves in *Phaedrus* to challenge the “intention” of the speaker or writer, then Plato's text may be read as a denouncement of writing precisely insofar as it replicates what had become the author's unquestioned intentions. Unresponsive, potentially dogmatic, and immune to dialectical interrogation, the written word is now condemned for its monologic propensity—for its perversity even—and for its constitution of a technology that may less atrophise the minds of its users or authors than amplify the voices and identities of its aphasic apostates: it is a technic that bespeaks the minds of its non-authors.<sup>21</sup>

Like the Socratic interlocutor, the drug that is used by an author serves to dialogically recenter that “self-generating, self-referential discourse” that David Lenson identifies in the “clinical literature” of modern science. Composing their written works according to an increasingly positivistic and empirical rule system, these clinicians's authorial methodologies constitute only one half of the institutionalised “self”—albeit the self to which their discourses persistently refer. The other half of these clinicians's “self” obtains precisely—and paradoxically—in that subjective optic through which

See Cixous, “Castration or Decapitation?” 45.

18 On the disreputability of drugs generally, and specifically in relation to literature, see Lindsey Michael Banco, *Travel and Drugs in Twentieth-Century Literature* (London: Routledge, 2010), 4-5; and Lenson, *On Drugs*, xviii.

19 Seán Burke, “Who Speaks?” 42.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., my emphasis.



controlled experimentations and data are believed to exclude anything that is, as Lenson suggests, personally significant to the author. Thus functions the clinical writing of biochemists and other scientists:

To enhance its objectivism, it depersonalizes the author, who is usually pluralized anyway, behind a deadpan narrative whose tone implies that the data has been gathered and interpreted correctly.<sup>22</sup>

It is really an *erasure* of authorship, then, to which—through a valorisation of method—clinical writing aspires. But this is a goal not simply to eradicate authorial intentionality; it is also a strategy to speak both *for* and *as* a newly enshrined authorial-subject: as the enactor, declarer, and dictator of nature’s laws.<sup>23</sup> Of course, in a post-Enlightenment and highly scientificised twenty-first century, the clinical literatures of biochemistry and psychopharmacology need not be understood as the only kinds of writing that engage in this mode of positivistic self-correction and self-referentiality. In fact, any and all writing whose labours enact the monologism that the *Phaedrus* anticipates—even if only then to repudiate this monologism as fixed—founders under the fixity of what Burke calls the “unilateral.”<sup>24</sup> For in “ironically” inaugurating this unilateralism, and in so “making the written oeuvre a discursive paradigm for all thinkers in the western tradition,”<sup>25</sup> authors of all kinds of writing begin a long process of sprawling recursivity. When it becomes newly oriented to a discipline—or even to “disciplinarity”—in the nineteenth century and onward, often precisely to adumbrate the battle lines across which a range of different authors will compete, writing will henceforth produce only the “simplistic attitudes” that are so “deeply rooted” in what Guattari—in an interview titled “Socially Significant Drugs”—called the “medicalized” and other “specializations.”<sup>26</sup>

22 David Lenson, *On Drugs*, xi, emphasis in original.

23 A brief but insightful history of the application of laws to brains (and in physics) is offered in Isabelle Stengers’s “The Power of Physical Laws,” in *Cosmopolitics I*, 87-97.

24 Seán Burke, “Who Speaks?” 52.

25 Ibid.

26 See Guattari, “Socially Significant Drugs,” tr. Mark S. Roberts, in Anna Alexander and Mark S. Roberts, eds. *High Culture: Reflections on Addiction and Modernity* (New York: State University of New York, 2003), 199-208, 199. On scientific rhetoric—a subject to which I shall return in chapter 3—see James P. Zappen, “Scientific Rhetoric in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries: Herbert Spencer, Thomas H. Huxley, and John Dewey,” in Charles Bazerman and James Paradis, eds. *Textual Dynamics of the Professions: Historical and Contemporary Studies of Writing in Professional Communities* (Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 145-169.

In this context, it becomes difficult to speak about the effects of drugs in any way other than in scientific terms. And so vexing has this difficulty become, that those who do speak of drugs outside of the domain of science must “be fortified, as Lenson puts it, “with an *antidisciplinary* attitude.” Dismissing all extant rhetorical orientations, scholars of narcosis must thus become generalists, for in making their subject the “unspeakable”—both the subject and the substance having now become things to which we should “Just say no”<sup>27</sup>—these writers on (as in *about*) drugs at once deem and prove themselves the producers of unsuitable *reading*.<sup>28</sup> Unlike those “written words” of which Socrates had spoken—those which “seem to talk to you as though they were intelligent” but simply “go on telling you the same thing forever”—the psychoactive scrivener speaks in a language whose genealogy expresses much of this very otherness and strangeness: that which chimerically reverberates, albeit fugitively, through the empty monologism of the entire Western tradition.<sup>29</sup> Conspiring against its power and its otherness, the West seems now to have failed to come to grips with this language, dismissing it either as conspirator or, worse still, a conspiracist qua conspiracy theorist.<sup>30</sup>

27 “Just say no,” of course, is the refrain introduced by Ronald and Nancy Reagan at the Reagans’s televised joint address of 1986, inaugurating the “War on Drugs,” a war whose effectiveness and *raison d’être* would remain, until the 2000s, mostly unquestioned (or *unquestionable*). An interesting study of the expression’s negative rhetorical valency, deploying Kenneth Burke’s work on the negative in language, appears in Susan Mackey-Kallis and Dan F. Hahn, “Questions of Public Will and Private Action: The Power of the Negative in the Reagans’s “Just Say No” Morality Campaign,” *Communication Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (1991): 1-17, esp. 6-7. On shifting attitudes to the War on Drugs over the last few decades we need only consider the legalisation of cannabis under two US state law regimes. On this, see Dwight Mark Anderson and Daniel I. Rees, “The Legalization of Recreational Marijuana: How Likely is the Worst Case Scenario?” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33, no. 2 (2014): 221-31.

28 Lenson, *On Drugs*, x, my emphasis.

29 Christopher J. Rowe, *Plato: Phaedrus, with Translation and Commentary* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1986), 275d, quoted in Seán Burke, “Who Speaks?” 42. Cf. Robin Waterfield’s newer translation of *Phaedrus*, where Socrates refers to the written word as being capable of doing no more than jogging the memory of those already familiar with the discussion topic. See Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 275, 69.

30 Around both Huxley and Dick, for example, the strangeness of conspiracy theory abounds. In Huxley’s case, it is the author who is accused of conspiracy. In a range of books associated with the Lyndon LaRouche Organisation, Huxley is postulated to have been the architect or “case officer” of Britain’s Opium War, and the initiator of “the Aquarian Conspiracy”: see Marilyn Ferguson, *The Aquarian Conspiracy: Personal and Social Transformation in the 1980s* (Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, 1980), 52; Konstantinos Kalimtgis, David Goldman, Jeffrey Steinberg, *DOPE, INC. Britain’s Opium War Against The US* (New York: New Benjamin Franklin House, 1978) 182n12, 213, 366-78.

But if we are to speak of the relationship between the author and the text as a binary or as a dialectic, then we must also surely wonder why this particular bifurcation should so often take precedence in studies of authorship—especially when it is so syntonic, so harmonious, with a range of other equally applicable, and yet largely unarticulated, dichotomies: subject and object, psychology and biology, soft and hard, among so many others. In expanding the model to account for these other forms of bilateral organisation, this thesis embraces authorial psychobiographies just as vigorously as it seizes on the actual literary works of both Huxley and Dick. And while the latter half of this thesis will directly address the psychobiographies of only these two authors, it also invests preponderantly in questions related to these authors's psychopathological states, their individuated personhoods, and their altered or "damaged" selves in tandem with what might be understood as particular biographical events: the loss of a loved one, the tensions of marriage, and so on. Its concern, in other words, is to identify what is most important in the lives of Huxley and Dick in relation to their fictions, but not to draw the line simply there. If this thesis may be regarded as overselective in the authors it examines—or too restrictive—it does, in its defence, also aim to remain cognisant of these figures's *representativeness* of all kinds of authors; it proposes ways, that is, in which these authors's works can encapsulate the historical narrative of authorship itself.

The chapters in part 2 will also particularise the work of this and the following chapter, which treats psychopathology not as aberrant but as another way of being in the world—however much such a claim may seem inimical to certain politico-philosophies of public health, or even to those intellectuals

Also see Criton Zoakos, "The Aquarian Conspiracy's Road to George Orwell's 1984," *Executive Intelligence Review* 7 (1980): 19, 21-39, esp. 38. Huxley's collaboration with the CIA in their mind-control Project MKULTRA is relatively well known, although there is apparently no evidence to suggest that Huxley was ever himself a CIA agent. This is in spite of the claims of Jan Irvin, who argues that Huxley was part of a CIA plot to drug the world. For a response to Irvin's claims, which are broadcast in the form of video recordings on his "Gnostic Media" platform, see Simon G. Powell, "An Outbreak of Fear and paranoia in the Psychedelic Mushroom Community," *Reality Sandwich*, 5 October, 2012, last accessed 12 January, 2014, [http://realitiesandwich.com/162177/paranoia\\_psychedelic\\_mushroom\\_community/](http://realitiesandwich.com/162177/paranoia_psychedelic_mushroom_community/). (This article embeds Irvine's video). On Huxley's collaborations, see Martin Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams: The Complete Social History of LSD: The CIA, The Sixties and Beyond* (London: Grove Press, 1985), 45-6. In Dick's case, conspiracy theory is deployed by the author as a narrative device, such as by "drug-enhanced psi powers," mining the "angst ridden folklore of mind control." As Peter Knight argues, Dick's fiction so conspires at the same time as it produces "the superficially more hopeful folklore of alternate realities." Peter Knight, ed. *Conspiracy Theories in American History: An Encyclopedia*, 2 vols. (Oxford: ABC CLIO, 2003), 1: 222-4.

or ethicists who would claim to advance “the public good.”<sup>31</sup> More generally, the thesis frames authorial identity as an agon between environment and phylogenesis—nature and nurture—and, in the twentieth century, as a range of more particular contests between psychoanalysis (qua psychology) and psychiatry (qua neurobiology). “Writing on drugs” or “psychoactive scrivening” now becomes the apotheosis of a history of questions about the origin of textuality; this history prompts us to think of works of fiction that are written on, about, or otherwise associated with drugs, as instances of fabrication in which both the subject and the object produce material evidence of a certain psychological and biological interaction—an interdialogue between self and other, or a molecular correspondence.

As I briefly addressed in the last chapter, Ronell’s identification of the conjugation of literature and drugs as a relation that animates “questions of law” and generates “ethical fractures” permits us to see writers not simply as agents of a ceaseless unfolding—or as the “voluntary” effacers of their own subjective identities, as Foucault postulates.<sup>32</sup> It allows us, rather, to understand writers as the producers of documents that are implacably bound up with juridico-legal processes; these interlocuters, always already engaging with the formalistic procedures of the rule of law, are nomadic respondents, reacting to the exigencies of “nomocracy.”<sup>33</sup> To understand the delimitations that those writers in this position face—which is all of them—however, is important; and on these “occupational hazards,” Foucault’s essay on authorship is particularly instructive.

For Foucault, it is essential that we understand what “works” are before we can begin to recognise in any precise way the status of their authors. A second, and perhaps even more significant prerequisite, however, involves our specifying the presuppositions that readers bring to the question of what writing does. Intrinsic in these two initial acts, of course, is the assumption that an author’s definitive attributes—their “empirical characteristics”—may be vaporised or transformed in and through the process of writing, so much so that they themselves, as authors, may vanish “into a transcendental anonymity.” And since we still employ, as Foucault notes, religious and critical

31 On the increasingly overlying fields of the so-called classical or conservative definition of public health as the provision of health-related public goods and related fields, previously not regarded as part of public health’s rubric, like social work, see Jonny Anomoly, “Public Health and Public Goods,” *Public Health Ethics* 4, no. 3 (2011): 251-9.

32 Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 11; Foucault, “What Is An Author?” 102.

33 On nomocracy and its differences to fascism, see Luciano Pellicani, “Fascism, Capitalism, Modernity,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 11, no. 4 (2012): 394-409, esp. 404.

methods to read a text (methods through which we putatively strive to identify these texts's "hidden meanings," their sacred presences), we also sustain the privilege of anonymity that is so readily accorded to those authors. For they are now those personages whose disappearance, through their production of a text, soon becomes inaccessible in itself: a status and identity that is always already "subject to a set of transcendental barriers."<sup>34</sup>

This impasse at the periphery between reader and author is maintained by what Foucault calls the "historico-transcendental tradition of the nineteenth century."<sup>35</sup> And while the significance of an author's name may appear to vitiate this readily apparent distantiation (the name's recognisability rendering the author almost *anything but* anonymous), a name, as Foucault asserts, serves also—and perhaps only—to *classify* the text. That is, if it props up anything, it props up what he calls the "author function." The name is thus less an expression of a work's origin than its socio-legal status. And at least under the nineteenth century's textual systems, the name is an always potentially penalistic device—at least as much as it is a mode of compensation for those participants in the text's creation. While names have always partly ensured that "discourses could be transgressive," they now also allow for transgressivity only so much as these discourses are trafficked among their reading publics as "systems of property" or as ideological products.<sup>36</sup>

Thus the history of authorship changed, Foucault argues, as "scientific discourses began to be received for themselves," which had already begun by the time the opening decades of the nineteenth century commenced, and had done so at least since the seventeenth century, when science had been institutionalised as an author in its own right. Science then had become a homologous singularity, no longer an amorphous assemblage of individuated practitioners. At this point, scientific texts became enshrouded in "the anonymity of an established or redemonstrable truth,"<sup>37</sup> and—where they appeared—they were soon imbued with a glossy patina: the indelible imprimatur of institutional laws.

Between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries, then, scientific texts were not written by authors so much as enunciated by nature in what, Foucault argues, remains conceivable today as their revelatory and omniscient narrations of truth: the voice of the enlightenment. Yet this shift within the sciences—from authorial to methodological truth—only amplified the need we still have to authenticate and to ascribe ownership to literary or non-sci-

34 Foucault, "What Is An Author?" 104-5.

35 Ibid.

36 Ibid.108.

37 Ibid., 109.

tific works—and especially to those for which “literary anonymity is not tolerable.”<sup>38</sup> Averting that the “author function” characterises literary texts most of all (since they are the most transgressive of texts), Foucault organises authorship into a schema of functionality that anticipates, at least grammatically, what he would just a half-dozen years later describe as the “Psy function.”<sup>39</sup> A systematic code of functionalising operations or forces that generate the taxonomic horizon of the author, the “author function” conditions the author’s status and their categorical determination. Foucault schematises the code’s components, enumerating the author function’s operations as follows:

(1)... it is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourses; (2) it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times and in all types of civilization; (3) it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer, but rather by a series of specific and complex operations; [and] (4) it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise to simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects—positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals.<sup>40</sup>

Drawing on Foucault’s insights, and in the spirit of Félix Guattari’s *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*—a book comprising no less than 75 diagrams—I want to suggest that the author function may be modelled or tabularised so as to generate a rubric through which we may more clearly identify what Foucault here specifies as the normative influences on a writer or author.<sup>41</sup>

Thus, in my model below (figure 2.1), each of Foucault’s enumerated functions are described as “operants,” and denoted thus by the letter “O.” This model enables certain of Foucault’s functions to be analysed in terms of quantitative and qualitative variations, allowing the formulation of more particularised author functions, including those by non-ordinary authors—such as those whom I call “scriveners”—as well as other non-ordinary modes of authorship, such as what I will call “psychoactive scrivening.”<sup>42</sup>

38 Ibid.

39 See Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power: Lectures at the College de France, 1973-74*, ed. Jacques Lagrange, tr. Graham Burchell (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 85; also see Mario Colucci, “Foucault and Psychiatric Power after Madness and Civilization,” in *Michel Foucault and Power Today: International Multidisciplinary Studies in the History of the Present*, ed. Alain Beaulieu and David Gabbard (Oxford: Lexington Books, 2006), 61-69, 67.

40 Foucault, “What Is An Author?” 113.

41 See Félix Guattari, *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, tr. Andrew Goffey (New York: Bloomsbury), xi-xiv.

42 One weakness of using Foucault’s model as a starting point for a model of the author

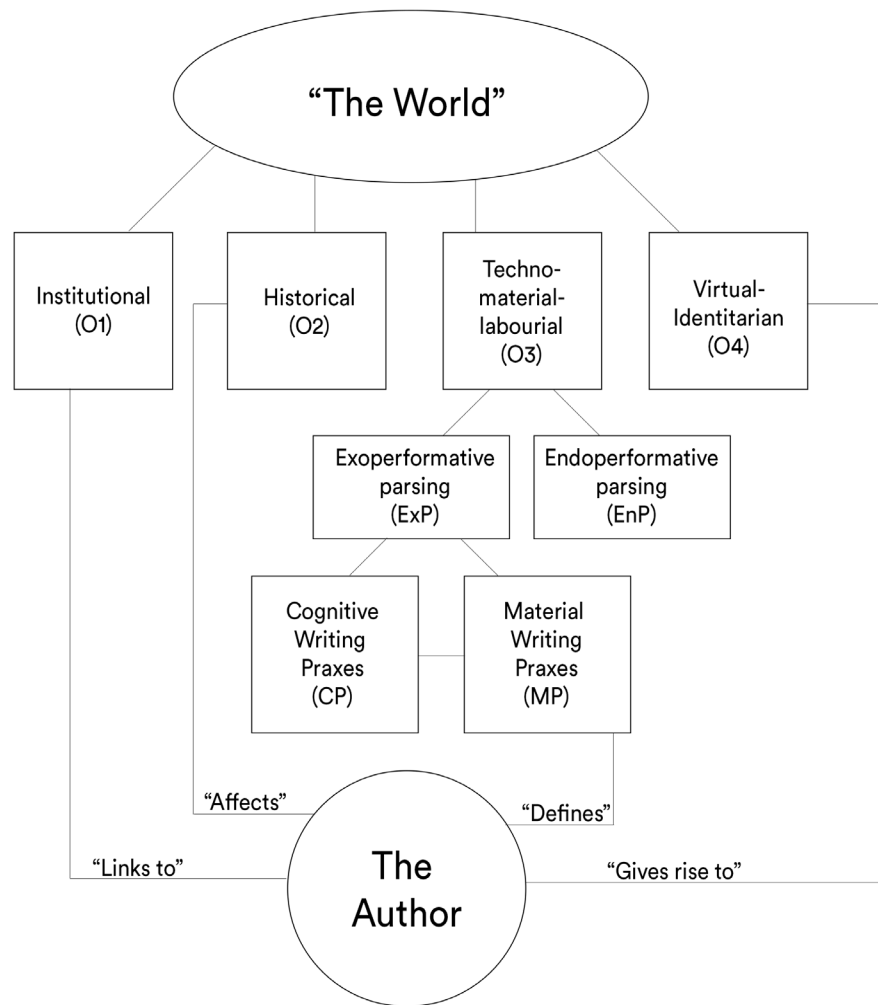


Figure 2.1 A Foucauldian schema of the traits of the author function.

In figure 2.1, above, Foucault's first function is represented as O1. This is an "institutional" or institutionalising force that programmatises those subject matters on which an author may write; it determines their general associative, political, and ethical coordinates, and contours their constitutional and immanent impulse to commit to writing. As with Guattari's "machinic discursivity," this node in Foucault's schema acknowledges the material (or immanent) engineroom of authorial expressivity: the external or worldly power under, and often because of which an author labours.

is that this quotation derives from Rabinow's translation of Foucault's French, rather than the original French. It is no less, I propose, valuable and comprehensive in and of itself, however, for my purposes: producing a contemporary normative model.



Unlike John Searle's "internalism," which I will address in a moment, Foucault seems to *exteriorise* this pre-structuring operant, locating what is determinative of authorship in a place outside the body: that is, in the "universe of discourses." In accordance with the "stratified determinations" of writing that Guattari apprehends as those that enable the subject to fabricate a "plane of reference" out of chaos, this node also dissimulates and reorganises what exceeds it: the supraphysicality of "the real" in nature, or the *physis*. It does this through an institutionally foregrounded dictum—whether it is socio-economic, legal, scientific, or similar. Through this "encompassing, determining and articulating" function, authors of various stripes situate "limit concepts," including—as Guattari notes in *Chaosmosis*—the Big Bang, the speed of light, absolute zero, and Planck's constant. The institutional operant also brings into order the realm of mental chaos that may arise in endogenous disorders—as in certain "limit" psychopathologies—or that may be engendered by mind-changing drugs. Classifying and semiotising these ineffable zones of silence—what is usually unenunciated—this operant reconfigures these artefacts and phenomena as facts, constants, and laws.<sup>43</sup>

The second operant (O2) functions as a "historicising" force, determining the status of an author's work in accordance with the abiding epistemic or paradigmatic history in which its composition takes place. Here the "author's name" becomes an emblem that "must be received in a certain mode and that, in a given culture, must receive a certain status."<sup>44</sup> Concerned with what may be described as the systemic, nationalistic, geopolitical, epistemological, and ideological foundations of particular periodisations in time, this function is rarely fully perceptible at the time in which an author composes their work; it requires, rather, what may be named "archival" knowledges or researches, and must exhibit the "variety and complexity of generic practices across history."<sup>45</sup>

43 Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 54; cf. Philip Goodchild, *Deleuze and Guattari: An Introduction to the Politics of Desire* (London: SAGE, 1996), 69. In psychiatry studies, the expression "limit concept" describes those psychopathologies, such as schizophrenia, which are defined by their place at the limit of classificatory definition. See, for instance, Laurence Rickels: "Act Out/Turn On: The More Complete Aversion," in *Acting Out in Groups*, ed. Rickels (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 122.

44 See on historicistic literary studies Margaret Cohen, "Narratology in the Archive of Literature," *Representations* 108, no. 1 (2009): 51-75, esp. 51.

45 Gianfranco Denes offers a concise summary of the transition of gestural performances, or gestures, into language in *Talking Heads: The Neuroscience of Language* (New York: Psychology Press, 2009), 12-17. For a comprehensive analysis of the various aspects of the literature of dynamic language organisation, see Helmut Schnelle, *Language in the Brain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 181-212.

The third operant (O3), which I call the “technomaterial labourial” operant, functions in two ways. First, it determines the author’s work through a series of interiorised or embodied (biological-endogenous) mental and physical performances (“endoperformances”). These relate to processes of thought-into-language composition (“parsing”), and I call these process-performances “endperformative parsing” (EnP). Second, this operant initiates a string of exteriorised and gestural performances of a technical and technological nature, which give way to two further kinds of performance. The first of these is an immaterial cognitive writing praxis (CP), one that has been learned by the author, and involves semantic, lexical, grammatical, orthographic, syntagmatic, graphemic knowledges, such as spelling, capitalisation, structural phrasing, and the like. The second of these involves skilfully engaging with material composition technologies—such as pens, typewriters, computers, and similar—to perform a certain material writing praxis (MP). Together, these categories of process-performances, all of them external to the body, may be described as forms of “experformative parsing” (ExP).

Finally, the fourth operant (O4), which I name the “virtual-identitarian” operant, determines those ways in which an author and their work is created; that is, by which the work is “risen,” referred to, and recognised. Foucault apprehended this operation in his description of the author-function; and in many ways it accords with Plato’s account of the human’s desire for recognition: their *thymòs*. Aware that many of us strive for recognition, Plato observed how important it is for individuals, including authors, to locate themselves within a *socius*.<sup>46</sup> The operation of the *thymòs* drive instantiates an inexorably *hypothetical*—and what is consequently only a very imprecise—dialectic between *socius* and citizen, civic populous and private individual. Provisional and unknowable, this operant is virtual in the way that Deleuze and Guattari understand the term to consist of generalised and collective “surface effects,” just as those discovered by, as Deleuze notes, the Stoics.

But these surface effects are themselves underlain by certain causes not necessarily coordinated with or mutually aware of themselves, but which are nevertheless real. The institutional and historical valorisation of authors or scholars, which takes place by means of a series of small procedures that appear only at the surface—exchanges between a prospective author among

46 On Plato’s *thymòs* and the constitution of identity, see Nicolo Bellanca and Giancarlo Pichillo, “Identitarian Passions: The Overwhelming Power of the Human Recognition Need,” *International Review of Economics* 61 (2014): 13-38. Also see Terry Pinkard, *Hegel: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 170-1.

their colleagues, meetings or communications with representatives of certain publishing houses—may readily determine an author’s conception of their status.<sup>47</sup> And, like Plato, Hegel understood human life to be a struggle for “recognition.”<sup>48</sup> As with the institutional operant, the virtual-identatari-an functor is also contingent on what Lacan famously called the “Symbolic order.” Constituted through a set of rituals or practices articulated in discourse, the Symbolic gives rise to a dialectic between an author and the “sphere of culture” in which they participate (the space that Lévi-Strauss refers to as such in his *Elementary Structures of Kinship*). In this sphere “the individual always receives more than he gives, and gives more than he receives,” producing a “double disequilibrium” characterised by a tug-of-war between their “education” (facilitated by what I call the institutional operant) and their sense of “invention” (fostered through what I call their technomaterial labour).<sup>49</sup> In such a way, among others, the operants in this model (O1-4) overlap, interact, and intersect; they generate an assemblage of causative specificities whose particular configurations further distinguish the sets of authorial modes that we may intuit in written texts.

## The Workspace of the Brain

As a general model contiguous with Guattari’s “metamodels” of the conscious subject, figure 2.1 organises into discrete functions a range of “worldly” operants that bear upon the author and their status. Elaborating on Foucault’s author function, the model also permits us to comparatively envisage more or less specific forms or modulations in an author’s functionality.<sup>50</sup> Yet, as with all models, it may be criticised for developing an arrangement of nodes and indices that is as arbitrary as it is only limitedly precise. But, since this

47 This is the “surface” of the virtuality, of the “simulacrum when it breaks its chains” that Deleuze speaks of in his essay “Plato and the Simulacrum,” *October* 27 (1983): 52-3; cf. Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, tr. Mark Lester (London: Athlone, 1990), 4-11.

48 See Hegel’s discussion of “recognition” in the *System of Ethical Life and First Philosophy of Spirit*, tr. George Lasson (New York, State University of New York Press, 1979), 236n46, 236-9; Pinkard, *Hegel*, 170-1.

49 See David Macey, “Introduction,” in Jacques Lacan, *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psycho-analysis* tr. Alan Sheridan (London: Penguin 1994), xxii, xxv; Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, tr. James Bell, et al., ed. Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 30.

50 On Guattari’s metamodels see Guattari, *Schizoanalytic Cartographies*, xi-xiv; Simon O’Sullivan, *On the Production of Subjectivity: Five Diagrams of the Finite-Infinite Relation* (London: Palgrave, 2012), esp. chapters 3 and 5, and 103-23; Watson, *Guattari’s Diagrammatic Thought*, 97-144 (chapter 3).

model is tethered to Foucault's analysis, the schema seeks to maintain fidelity with the totalising and epistemic inclusiveness that Foucault's "archaeological" thought already implies. So, if Guattari's models are metamodels, then the above model might constitute a *metaepistemic* representation of the author as much as a "metamodelisation" of the subject.<sup>51</sup> The model *does*, I propose, come to grips with the Whiteheadian description of the individual's "possession of the world," which I addressed in chapter 1—at least insofar as it formalises that relation, and divides it into novel segments. Moreover, because operants 1-3 refer to what I call "worldly" operations—namely, influences that are foisted on the author-subject "from above"—the model allows the author to be generalised in some ways, making them a figure whose status is conditioned from an outside, and reshaped externally. Diacritically, operant 4 accounts for the author's independent identity, demarcating their individuation, and marking off a place for the author to be understood in their own specificity, as an idiopathic or *sui generis* agent.

But the model nevertheless treats the author in a way that conforms to Whitehead's criterion—as a "being in the world"—comprehending identity formation as a secondary precondition in this important dialectical relationship between author and world (or *socius*). After all, authors cannot be cleaved, extricated, or isolated as things in themselves—for it is only within a dialectical circuit that authors operate: as actants in a network.<sup>52</sup>

The temptation to narrowcast an individual author into the "virtual-identitarian" circuit, and to analyse only those ways in which the author develops

51 Further on Guattari's "metamodelisation," see Simon O'Sullivan, "Guattari's Aesthetic Paradigm: From the Folding of the Finite/Infinite Relation to Schizoanalytic Metamodelisation," *Deleuze Studies* 4, no. 2 (2010): 256-86.

52 The arbitrariness of and limitations on our models of nature, and especially of human cognition, are widely and diversely attested in philosophy of science. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Pierre-Simon Laplace's objections to "discoveries in mechanics and geometry," and to many aspects of Newtonian physics, for example, were based on what Laplace saw as our inability to apprehend the totality of our own "intelligence": see Laplace, *A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities*, tr. Frederick Truscott and Frederick Emory (New York: John Wiley, 1902), 4. Following Laplace, Gödel's incompleteness theorems demonstrated the inadequacy of mathematical systems (see Gödel, "On Formally Undecidable Propositions of Principia Mathematica and Related Systems"), and in the late twentieth-century, Bruno Latour's landmark essay on the limitations of Einstein's theory of relativity inaugurates what he will later elaborate as actor-network theory: see "A Relativistic Account of Relativity," *Social Studies of Science* 18, no. 3 (1988): 3-44, esp. 13; cf. Alexander Riegler, "The End of Science": Can We Overcome Cognitive Limitations?" *Evolution and Cognition* 4, no. 1 (1998): 37-50; and, on Latour and science, see my "Actants at Any Depth: Bruno Latour and Henri Bergson at the Surface of Science," *Philament* 19 (2014), [http://sydney.edu.au/arts/publications/philament/issue19\\_contents.html](http://sydney.edu.au/arts/publications/philament/issue19_contents.html).

a regard for themselves, is to an extent fostered by this model—and it is this that perhaps most represents the model’s other limitations. In any case, any seemingly more complex or elaborate schema of individual identity or consciousness—perhaps such as those that emerge from within the cognitive neurosciences, or even in Guattari’s own metamodels (see figure 1.1)—are generally distinguishable from the above model. This is because the former bear little or no relation to writing practices and authorship.<sup>53</sup> It is in this context that this chapter introduces the “scrivener”: a figure who represents a more particularised or modulated form of what Foucault and Barthes apprehended as “the author.”

Much like the figure of the author, the scrivener is prompted to “think” during the act of writing; they engage in a series of cognitive practices including what I have called exoperformative parsing (ExP). Once acquired, these cognitive functions—virtually *automatic* in human adults who have already acquired language skills—are lateralised to the left hemisphere of the brain, and remain generally unchanged throughout the adult subject’s lifetime—other than in cases in which a language disorder arises through injury or other forms of brain damage, such as by neurodegeneration.

53 There are, of course, a number of influential models of language processing in the history of psychology, linguistics, psycholinguistics, and neurolinguistics, among other disciplines. Perhaps the most notable among these is Carl Wernicke’s original analysis of the functional architecture of language processing in his *Der aphasische Symptomenkomplex: eine psychologische Studie auf anatomischer Basis* (Breslau: Cohn & Weigert, 1974), a work that is translated into English by G.H. Eggeret in *Wernicke’s Work on Aphasia: A Sourcebook and Review* (The Hague: Mouton, 1977). Following Wernicke’s model, Ludwig Lichtheim developed a variety of cognitive schematics related to aphasia: see Lichtheim, “Über Aphasie,” *Deutsches Archiv für klinische Medizin* 36 (1885): 204-268. See also Gerhard Blanken, et al., *Linguistic Disorders and Pathologies: An International Handbook* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 238-50. For a cognitive model that specifies a series of discrete cognitive processes, see Denes, *Talking Heads*, 42, figure 3.7. In a two-way lexical model, Denes proposes that there are five steps in the word processing mechanism, all of which function along a grapheme-phoneme system, beginning with an initial “verbal stimulus (visual)” and ending with a final act of “writing.” Schnelle’s functional network schema, by contrast, depicts the systems of gesture, attention, perception, and memory as surrounding a “global workspace.” In this model, Schnell adapts the model of Dehaene, Kerszberg, and Changeux, now known as the Dehaene-Changeux model (DCM), and incorporates a range of different text types. This model is perhaps the most recent and comprehensive of them all, as it distinguishes between written, printed, and electronic media: see Schnell, *Language in the Brain*, 29; Stanislas Dehaene, Michael Kerszberg, and Jean-Pierre Changeux, “A Neuronal Model of a Global Workspace in Effortful Cognitive Tasks,” *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 95 (1998): 14529-34. On how the DCM workspace model may be utilised in studies of consciousness, see Stanislas Dehaene and Lionel Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness: Basic Evidence and a Workspace Framework,” *Cognition* 79 (2001): 1-37.

Where such disorders arise—such as in expressive aphasia and alexia (acquired dyslexia)—the aetiology almost always relates to an originary brain dysfunction or a specific brain-damaging event.<sup>54</sup> The psychopathological profile of these disorders is known neither to be capable of reproduction in psychiatric experimental settings, nor to be reproducible by author-subjects themselves, such as by a non-clinical self-experiment—except where the author-subject undertakes to ingest a neurotoxic compound or drug. However, reported cases of drug-induced temporary language disorder have generally involved disfavoured medication drug interactions, and seldom do they involve the ingestion of only one psychoactive compound.

Interactions between morphine and cyclosporine, for instance, have commonly produced aphasic symptoms; although a range of other pharmaceutical substances have been associated with aphasia and alexia, including such common substances as acyclovir: a commonly prescribed for herpes simplex virus, such as in cases of severe herpes labialis (cold sores).<sup>55</sup> Yet, apart from a small number of cases, it appears almost impossible to induce a language disorder, whether in an informal or clinical setting. In cases of neurological damage, brain lesion evidence suggests that even in cases of visual agnosia, alexia, and in other related disorders, language processing and image recognition remains possible, albeit that it is mostly unconscious.<sup>56</sup>

Evidence for this retained capacity appears in the various “blindsight” experiments that have been conducted in the last two to three decades.<sup>57</sup> And while researchers had, as early as the nineteenth century, already lesioned

54 On lateralisation, see the neuropsychological study undertaken by Marco Catani, et al.: “Symmetries in Human Brain Language Pathways Correlate with Verbal Recall,” *PNAS* 104, no. 43 (2007): 17163-8. Expressive aphasia encompasses a range of significant expression problems with respect to speaking and writing, including agrammatism: see, for instance, Aya Meltzer-Asscher and Cynthia K. Thompson, “The Forgotten Grammatical Category: Adjective Use in Agrammatic Aphasia,” *Journal of Neurolinguistics* 30 (2014): 48-68. Also see the discussion of acquired aphasia as it associated with Landau-Kleffner syndrome (LKS) in epilepsy: William Landau and Frank Kleffner, “Syndrome of acquired Aphasia with Convulsive Disorder in Children,” *Neurology* 7 (1957): 523-30, and Michael Trimble, et al., eds., *The Neuropsychiatry of Epilepsy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 77, 140, 170, 230, and 248.

55 See notably Po-Chang Lee, et al., “Suspected Acute Post-Transplant Neuropsychosis due to interaction of Morphine and Cyclosporin after a Renal Transplant,” *Anaesthesia* 55, no. 8 (2000): 827-8; Gabriel J. Martinez, et al., “Altered Mental Status from Acyclovir,” *Journal of Emergency Medicine* 41, no. 1 (2011): 55-58, esp. 57.

56 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 5.

57 Two valuable reviews of these studies are: Basileios Kroustallis, “Blindsight,” *Philosophical Psychology* 18, no. 1 (2005): 31-43; and Morton Overgaard, “Blindsight: Recent and Historical Controversies on the Blindness of Blindsight,” *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Cognitive Science* 3, no. 6 (2012): 607-14.



primary visual cortices in animals (only to discover that visual discrimination remained intact), it was not until the early 1970s that post-trauma residual visual capacity was observed in humans.<sup>58</sup> The first “forced-choice” guessing experiments took place in 1973 and, in the following year, Lawrence Weiskrantz coined the term “blindsight” to describe the phenomenon in which visual stimuli could be detected by subjects who had sustained brain lesions in their visual cortical areas.<sup>59</sup> And, notwithstanding that a lack of “phenomenal consciousness” had been indicated by a number of these subjects—many of whom reported that they had not “seen” the objects—the phenomenon continues to be largely accepted as “plausible,” albeit that the vision so described is also understood to be probably of an “abnormal” kind.<sup>60</sup>

Recalling Huxley’s fixation on transcending his own partial blindness—the result of an infection that occurred when he was seventeen, and a problem from which he would never physically recover—these replicated studies of perception and residual visual capacity suggest two crucial points, both of which Huxley—by describing “central fixation” and “mobility” of the eye in his *Art of Seeing* (1942)—had anticipated (AOS, 69).

These are that awareness or consciousness of a specific object is: (1) not a prerequisite for the ability to comprehend or perceive it; and (2) not an index to predict the “accurate performance” of a task (reading, comprehension, writing) in relation to the object as against that of control subjects. Neuroscientific evidence of the late twentieth century suggests, however, that an “entire stream of processing may unfold outside of consciousness,” not only at a “perceptual, but also a semantic level,” permitting us to understand authorial consciousness as a field of identified and unidentified neuromolecular and cognitive actions: to wit, the authorial world is a linguistic world composed of two strains—one comprehensible, the other not—of endoperformative operations (EnP).<sup>61</sup>

58 See David Ferrier, *The Functions of the Brain* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s and Sons, 1886); Ernst Pöppel, Richard Held, and Douglas Frost, “Residual Visual Function after Brain Wounds Involving the Central Visual Pathways in Man,” *Nature* 243 (1973): 295-6.

59 Lawrence Weiskrantz, Elizabeth Warrington, M.D. Sanders, and J. Marshall, “Visual Capacity in the Hemianopic Field following a Restricted Occipital Ablation,” *Brain* 97 (1974): 709-28.

60 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 5; on blindsight as a plausible but abnormal phenomenon, see Morton Overgaard, “Visual Experience and Blindsight: A Methodological Overview,” *Experimental Brain Research* 209 (2011): 473-9, esp. 478.

61 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 5. I refer to the studies conducted by Ernst Pöppel, et al., “Residual Visual Function After Brain Wounds Involving the Central Visual Pathways in Man,” *Nature* 243, no. 405

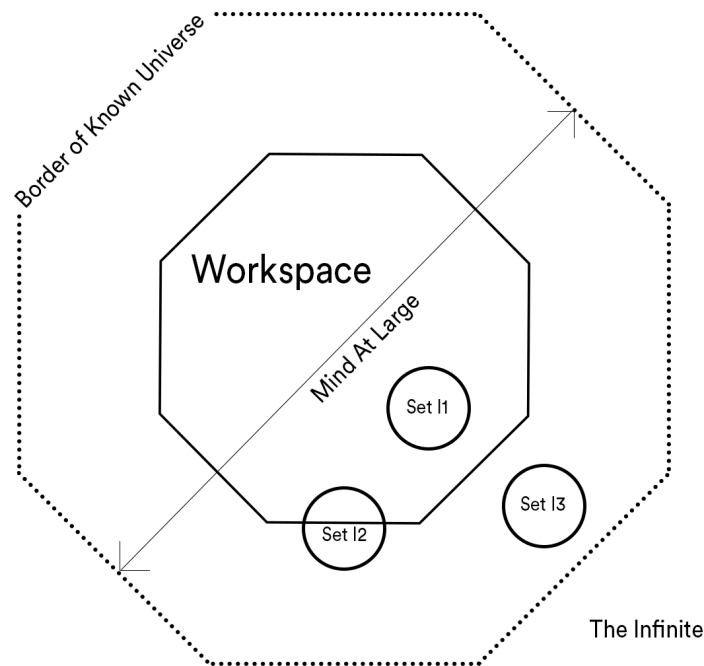


In parallel with this dualism, the notion of two modes of writing—(a) scrivening and (b) *psychoactive* scrivening—may be proposed as distinct modes of inscription that modify the normative metamodel of author function that is expressed by operants (1)-(4) in figure 2.1. Each of these modulates that model by means of a number of *demobilisations* at the exoperformative (ExP) and endoperformative (EnP) levels.

The range and extent of these demobilisations may be usefully described in accordance with the factors that Stanislas Dehaene and Lionel Naccache introduce in their “workspace” model of consciousness.<sup>62</sup> Variations in a subject’s attention, their information maintenance, intentionality, and combinative operations, for instance, may each affect modulations and operations at the level of technomaterial-labourial (O3) performance.<sup>63</sup> More significant than these particularities, however, is the manner in which, under Dehaene and Naccache’s model of a conscious workspace, subjects are led to retrospectively “label” an action either as (a) “voluntary” or (b) “automatic” (“involuntary”) in accordance with a generalist philosophy of free will; here, subjects will attribute or impute meaning to their actions only after, or at best *at the same time as*, they have been performed, thus forming a characterisation of them that relates to their place in a virtual-identitarian schema.<sup>64</sup> But Dehaene and Naccache also propose that a subject has access to the information encoded in the crucible of their own nervous system, but only ever at three levels. They tabularise these areas into the following types: information that is “permanently inaccessible” (“set I<sub>1</sub>”); information that is consciously amplifiable if “attended to” (“set I<sub>2</sub>”); and information that, as a subset of set I<sub>2</sub>, is actually mobilised at any and all times within the conscious workspace itself (“set I<sub>3</sub>”).

(1973): 295-6; C. A. Heywood, et al., “Chromatic Discrimination in a Cortically Blind Observer,” *European Journal of Neuroscience* 3 (1991): 802-912. Diagrammatising the “connexions of the optic nerve to the brain,” and commenting on a variety of experimental data, Lawrence Weiskrantz notes that there are “at least nine pathways from the retina” to the visual cortex that remain intact “after blockade or damage”: *Consciousness Lost and Found: A Neuropsychological Exploration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 127, and chapter 6, *passim*.

- 62 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness.”
- 63 Ibid. 7-11 (3.2, 3.3.1-3.3.3). On the meeting of what may be described as “effortless” attention systems (if not (if not, as I have already described them, automatic systems) and free will (or subjective control), see Brian Bruya, ed., *Effortless Attention: A New Perspective in the Cognitive Science of Attention and Action* (London: MIT Press, 2010); and Ralph Pred, *Onflow: Dynamics of Consciousness and Experience* (London: MIT Press, 2005), 32-5, 297-300.
- 64 As the authors elaborate, free will cannot be seen as a physically innate or neurological property: “free will characterizes a certain type of decision-making algorithm and is therefore a property that applies at the cognitive or systems level, not at the neural or implementation level”: “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 29.



**Figure 2.2** Diagrammatic comparison of Dehaene and Naccache's cognitive model and Huxley's model of the "Mind at Large."

While the model's first proposition (that which concerns the attribution of voluntariness and automaticity to various actions) amounts to an interrogation of what elsewhere constitutes "free will" and "agency," this chapter will engage with this question only inasmuch as it incidentally pertains to a scrivener's will to compose a text. And while it is true that this proposition could have significant implications for addiction studies—or studies of other conjugations between drugs and questions of self-control—it is the second limb of Dehaene and Naccache's model to which the following pages will more closely attend. As an attempt to account for the experience of conscious access, this second proposition may be fruitfully compared to Huxley's own model of the human perceptual system, described as it is in his *The Doors of Perception*. Presented in figure 2.2 (above) is a diagram that refers to Dehaene and Naccache's cognitive model of consciousness, and which includes the authors's tripartite scheme of access (sets I<sub>1-3</sub>).

Although these authors do not themselves diagrammatise their model, they note that it is itself an elaboration on Ned Block's two-part model of access, which distinguished between what Block describes as "phenome-

nal” consciousness, “(P),” and “access” consciousness, “(A).”<sup>65</sup> As models of conscious self-awareness, these figurations most directly address operations that occur during the process through which the author function is, in Foucault’s words—and in accordance with figure 2.1—“given rise to” at the level of the virtual-identitarian operant. Having regard to this, figure 2.2 is presented here to allow us to better intuit the distinction between scrivening and psychoactive scrivening in the broader sense of what the process allows one to intuit at the level of conscious or phenomenological experience. Combining these neuroscientific models with a model of the phenomenological principles articulated by Huxley, the figure elaborates on what is perhaps Huxley’s most frequently cited conception of the mind. And moreover, it connects this model to its antecedents in an attempt to reorganise what is a rich but disparate lineage of psychotropes.<sup>66</sup>

Speaking optimistically of the potential of human cognition, Huxley adopted the view of C.D. Broad, who had already endorsed Henri Bergson’s “filtration” model of the mind.<sup>67</sup> As Huxley writes,

Each person is capable of remembering all that has ever happened to him and perceiving all that is happening everywhere in the universe. The function of the brain and the nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceived or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful. According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially a Mind at Large (*DOP*, 10-11).<sup>68</sup>

Notably, Broad’s model does not suggest that a Mind at Large may come to know *all* that has ever happened in the universe; rather, he writes, it may

65 See Ned Block: “On a Confusion about a Function of Consciousness,” *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 19, no. 2 (1995): 227-87. Also, on the controversy surrounding the distinction between perception and memory in cognitive science, see Block, “Perceptual Consciousness Overflows Cognitive Access,” *Trends in Cognitive Sciences* 15, no. 12 (2011): 567-75..

66 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 30.

67 Bergson’s theorisation of the mind is often described as a “filter” theory or “filtration” theory—a condensation of Bergson’s numerous theorisations as “filtered” appears in Francis C. T. Moore, *Bergson: Thinking Backwards* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 27-31. On a discussion of how Bergsonian filtration may be extended to time and temporality, see Paul Harris, “Diagramming Duration: Bergsonian Multiplicity and Chaos Theory,” *Intermedialités* 3 (2004): 117.

68 Huxley takes his quotation from Charles D. Broad, “The Relevance of Psychical Research to Philosophy,” *Philosophy* 24 (1949): 291-309, rprd. in Broad, *Religion, Philosophy and Psychical Research* (London: Routledge & Keagan Paul, 1953), 23. Notably, Broad had earlier dismissed Bergson’s filtration model in his *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc., 1925), 334-5.

grasp “all that has ever happened” to the subject alone: “to *him*.” In other words, a Mind at Large cannot access information to which it has not itself already borne witness. It has limited “access” to information, even if the limitation constitutes only a *temporal* non-access.

In many ways, this specific formulation of Broad’s model corresponds with Dehaene and Naccache’s theorisation of “permanently inaccessible” information ( $I_1$ ). When Huxley thus elaborates on his Bergsonian view (by way of Broad), he affirms Broad’s tacit acknowledgment of Mind at Large’s limitations:

In the final stage of egolessness there is an “obscure knowledge” that All is in all—that All is actually each. This is as near, I take it, as a finite mind can ever come to “perceiving everything that is happening everywhere in the universe” (*DOP*, 13).<sup>69</sup>

It is here that Huxley concedes that the “finite mind” can only ever wander “near” to a zone in which the perception of “everything” in the universe is possible; he acknowledges, that is, the constraints of this Broad-Huxley or Mind at Large model of consciousness.<sup>70</sup> Turning to Broad’s work, it is notable that Broad himself does not specify which of Bergson’s works his reader “should,” as he puts it, “do well to consider much more seriously.” He describes the “type of theory that Bergson put forward” rather, only as one in which “the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and not productive.”<sup>71</sup> But Broad’s summary is possibly a reification of a range of Bergson’s claims, which—beginning in *l’Energie Spirituelle* (1910), and continuing to appear up to his *The Creative Mind* (1946)—are as cogni-

69 While writing *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley is already oriented to the emergent theorisation of *psychotomimesis*: to wit, the view that the true cause of psychosis in humans is an endogenous psychotogen whose structure or chemical compositions resembles mescaline. This is evidenced by the citations he gives in the book’s opening paragraphs to Humphry Osmond and John Smythies’s work on their original theory such as in their article “Schizophrenia: A New Approach,” *Journal of Mental Science* 98 (1952): 3015-19. In view of this, what is interesting about Huxley’s description of egolessness is the work of psychotherapist Meredith F. Luyten, in which she identifies the importance of egolessness in militating against psychological distress, and especially in patients diagnosed with borderline personality disorder: Luyten, “Egolessness and the ‘Borderline’ Experience,” *Naropa Institute Journal of Psychology* 3 (1985): 43-70.

70 While the term Mind at Large has been redeployed many times since Broad’s and Huxley’s usages of the expression (often erroneously attributed to Huxley as its coin-er), the expression does not appear to have been used in this manner before Broad’s 1949 usage. See, for instance, Charles T. Tart, Harold E. Puthoff, and Russell Targ, *The Mind at Large: IEEE Symposia on the Nature of Extrasensory Perception* (Massachusetts: Hampton Roads Publishing, 2002).

71 Broad, *Religion, Philosophy and Psychical Research*, 23.

sant of the notions of overflow and attentionality as they are of the “organic” limitations of the brain:

As the symphony overflows the movements which scan it, so the mental life overflows the cerebral life. But the brain,—precisely because it extracts from the mental life whatever it has that may be played in movement, whatever is materializable... secures at every moment that adaption of the mind to circumstances... is the organ of attention to life.<sup>72</sup>

The crucial problem for Bergson is how precisely we should articulate the particular encounter in which an egoless “symphony” does not overflow, but can in fact be *apprehended* by the Mind at Large. Bergson yearns for a phenomenological “dictionary” to translate “each figure” of “the cerebral into the mental,” lamenting the ineffability of these peak consciousness states.<sup>73</sup> Ineffability, however, is perhaps also only a relative question, albeit relevant to the language employed among those “specializations” in which, as Guattari notes, “simplistic attitudes [can be] taken toward the phenomenon of drugs” equally as much as toward the nature of consciousness itself.<sup>74</sup>

Joining with John Searle in critiquing the “residual grip” that Cartesian dualism holds on philosophy, Dehaene and Naccache deride the continuing essentialist philosophical tradition “according to which consciousness states are ineffable experiences of a distinct nature,” challenging the notion that some experiences are simply not “amenable to a physical explanation.”<sup>75</sup> The authors’s critique of the “ineffability” hypothesis, however, applies only to normative states of mentation. Nowhere do they advert to the inarticulability of altered states, for instance. And, just as they denounce the ineffability hypothesis on empirical grounds, the authors also elide the “mystic tradition” out of which, as Richard Doyle notes, the ineffability of certain states of conscious experience has been affirmed throughout history.<sup>76</sup>

The position Dehaene and Naccache later adopt also appears to contradict their initial dismissal of ineffability. When they note, for instance,

72 Henri Bergson, *Mind-Energy: Lectures and Essays*, tr. H. Wildon Carr (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1920), 59; *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics* tr. Mabelle L. Andison (New York: Philosophical Library of New York, 1946), 179-180. Also see Patricia Pisters’s discussion of Bergson’s conception of the metaphysics of consciousness in *The Neuro-Image: A Deleuzian Film-Philosophy of Digital Screen Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012), esp. 131-3.

73 Bergson, *Mind-Energy*, 42.

74 Guattari, “Socially Significant Drugs,” 199.

75 *Ibid.*, 4.

76 Richard Doyle, *Darwin’s Pharmacy: Sex, Plants, and the Evolution of the Noösphere* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 186.

that “the “flux of neuronal workspace states associated with a perceptual experience is vastly beyond accurate verbal description or long-term memory storage,” the pair seem only to reaffirm the ineffability hypothesis as a real positivist-descriptivist problem.<sup>77</sup> This apparent contradiction takes place at the foreground of a continuing controversy in the cognitive sciences about whether the entirety of perceptual consciousness, following Bergson, does one of two things.

Firstly, does consciousness “overflow” cognitive access and exceed “reportability”? If this is the case, the subject must retain highly intelligent performance relations only through “visual iconic memory,” which is constituted by “rich contents” (the overflow argument). Or secondly, does consciousness allow us to fully apprehend an object in a first-order qualitative state? Here, as Rosenthal and others have argued, the subject is proposed to be capable of actually seeing everything but, being aware of seeing not *all* of the specific details, must focus on certain “blurry” artifacts, allowing specificity or access to be achieved through this selective and yet masterable focalisation process.<sup>78</sup> In this second model—sometimes called the attentional argument—what is considered to be ineffable is only a linguistic effect of being in a position of cognitive interstitiality between different states of focalisation. This is the state that obtains *between* the total “first-order” access one has to all the information, and the focalised, attentional perception of certain, selected materials with that totality.<sup>79</sup>

Among the various historical, mystical, theological, and religious pursuits of ineffability, few have more directly programmed the process than the 1960s Harvard University psychologists Timothy Leary, Ralph Metzner, Richard Alpert, and Michael Horowitz. Banded together in a Bakhtinian “parade of intellectuals and artists,”<sup>80</sup> the work of these exiled psychologists (men who were dismissed from Harvard for their efforts) dovetails neatly

77 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 30.

78 See Richard Brown, “The Myth of Phenomenological Overflow,” *Consciousness and Cognition* 21 (2012): 599-604; David Rosenthal, “How Many Kinds of Consciousness?” *Consciousness and Cognition* 11 (2002): 653-65.

79 It more broadly signals the distinction Huxley draws between “paranormal ways of action” (doing) and “paranormal ways of being aware” (knowing) in his essay on extra sensory phenomena: “A Case for ESP, PK, and Psi,” Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, eds., *Complete Essays*, V: 145-57.

80 Doyle, *Darwin's Pharmacy*, 186. Timothy Leary, Robert Anton Wilson, and Antero Alli would later develop their “Eight circuit model of consciousness.” See, for instance, Timothy Leary, “The Periodic Table of Evolution,” in *Info-Psychology: A Manual on the Use of the Human Nervous System According to the Instructions of the Manufacturers* (Santa Monica: Falcon Press, 1987), xii; and Antero Alli, *The Eight-Circuit Brain* (Berkeley: Vertical Pool, 2009).

with the notion of the apperceived “incommunicability of the psychedelic experience.” The “symptom[s]” of this experience, Doyle suggests, appear “psychoactively” in the literature of the time—such as, for instance, in William Burroughs’s “cut up method.” And similar methodologies, of course, emerge in Dick’s writing, where machines, devices, and animals become sites at which randomly generated and “cut-up” narratives emerge, and through which psychoactive authorship amounts to the transcription of that which had, for many centuries, remained incalculable, unutterable, or ineffable.<sup>81</sup>

These new methods of writing may be understood to have appeared contemporarily with certain literary movements—such as the Beat movement in Burroughs’s case, or the new orthodoxy of technophilic and technophobic sf in Dick’s case. But in each case, the psychoactive elements can also be cleaved from these movements and genres, and read as secondary elements—as attempts, for instance, to re-express Huxley’s own model of the Mind at Large. Demobilising its exoperformative parsing functions, Huxley’s model demonstrates that the mind apprehends all that it would usually exclude, so as to enact a dialectic not traceable to “the brain but to a kind of world soul.”<sup>82</sup> Focused on the uses of drugs like mescaline, peyote, psilocybin mushrooms, and LSD, the author function, in the various social circumstances of these literary movements, becomes far more specialised.

The operants involved in constituting authorship are now punctuated by the mobilisation of the virtual-identitarian (O4) functor, for at least one important reason.<sup>83</sup> Contouring the endoperformative (O3) and the virtual-identitarian (social) operants (O4), the groupthink or hive mind theorisations of these movements are authorial formulations, concocted out of new experiments within these operants, such as, for example, through the novel experiments with telekinesis or telepathy conducted by Leary and his colleagues. These loose, hallucinogen-induced experiments, raging on in the “constant party” context of Millbrook—the large New York estate to which Leary and Alpert took their work following their Harvard dismissals—crucially modified the influences exerted on Leary, for instance, as an author.<sup>84</sup>

81 See, for instance, my discussion of Palmer Eldritch in chapter 7. However, various animals, such as the “glucks” that appear in *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, or machinic organisms (such as Dr. Smile in that same novel), are exemplary of this anthropomorphological representation of that which is psychically experienced yet ineffable.

82 Doyle, *Darwin’s Pharmacy*, 186; Baker and Sexton, eds., “Introduction” in Huxley, *Complete Essays V*, xviii.

83 *Ibid.*, 186-7.

84 See notably Jay Stevens, *Storming Heaven: LSD and the American Dream* (New York:



Similar modifications had already impacted on Huxley's author function. While Huxley mourned the disjuncture between "telepathy" and "industrial psychology" in his 1961 essay "Exploring the Borderlands of the Mind," for example, he had already more broadly expressed his dismay about the new purposes to which the scientific method had been put.<sup>85</sup> While he passionately believed in the value of science, Huxley also lamented the way in which certain positivistic methods displaced such "cosmic symbols" as "the Great Mother," and maintained an exclusive purchase on our own "non-human environment and our own physical existence" (*MOTHER*, 345). With characteristic wit, Huxley argues that *both* the scientific method and "Logical Positivism" can claim to be "perfectly right" when they assert that metaphysics is "sheer nonsense," but only one condition. They are right, he notes, only if

we accept as self-evident the postulate that no proposition has meaning unless it can be verified by direct perception, or unless we can derive from it other "perceptive propositions," which can be so verified (*MOTHER*, 344).

Recognising the importance of "diagrammatic" symbols and models, Huxley also mourns their general absence. Some symbols have been exploited for pernicious purposes; "flags, swastikas, hammers, and sickles" have exercised "a disastrous influence" on history, he notes. And yet, as Huxley avers, it remains true that in "symbolizing cosmic, rather than all too human, matters we find ourselves very poorly equipped" (*MOTHER*, 345).

Urging his reader to take metaphysics far more earnestly, Huxley proposes that we allow the body to take over—and that we now faithfully submit to its cues and inclinations. As he writes,

If we admit—and in practice we all behave as we did admit it—that "the heart has its reasons" and that there are modes of understanding which do not depend on upon perception or logical inferences from perception, then we shall have to take metaphysicians and especially the metaphysical symbol makers a little more seriously. I say "especially the symbol makers"; for whenever we are dealing with a cosmic or subjective mystery, the verbalized concept is less satisfactory as a means of presentation than the pictorial or diagrammatic symbol (*MOTHER*, 344).

Grove Press, 1987), esp. chapter 17, "Pushing The Envelope," 208-20. Also see the summary history of Millbrook in Colin Wark and John Galliher, "Timothy Leary, Richard Alpert (Ram Dass) and the Changing Definition of Psilocybin," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 21 (2010): 237.

85 Also see Jerome Meckier and Bernfried Nugel, eds. *Aldous Huxley Annual* 7 (2009): 171-8. Here the editors offer a publishing history of this essay, whose title they record simply as "The Borderlands of The Mind."

While Huxley directs our attention to symbols and diagrams in order to suggest that certain universal experiences may be articulable (and destructively so), Dehaene and Naccache—while eschewing the notion of ineffability—also denounce the possibility in which we can ever come to understand the full contents of any one mind in all its diversity. They argue, that is, that we can neither know of nor generalise about the “details” of the “enormous combinatorial diversity” that constitutes the “repertoire of the possible contents of consciousness.” This is an impossibility because the constituents of any one individual’s consciousness are simply too idiosyncratic; even with advanced knowledge of an individual’s DNA (or even RNA), or functional knowledge of their brain activity, it is the intractable historical process through which their consciousness has arisen—“from the developmental process of epigenesis”—that makes it both so difficult to comprehend, and so “specific to each individual.”<sup>86</sup>

In essays such as “The Far Continents of The Mind,” Huxley experiments with investigating consciousness as an aspect of vision; he studies and speculates on the visual schematics by which we perceive all kinds of colours, as well as light and darkness.<sup>87</sup> And although Huxley is almost exclusively preoccupied with visual experience in these writings—as much as he is similarly concerned with this topic in his *Art of Seeing*—Huxley also seems prescient of what would become neuroscience’s tacit endorsement of the plasticity of the visionary apparatus. Sensing that vision entailed more than simply the functioning of the organic eye, Huxley conceives of “seeing” more broadly as the optimisation of that modality of organic experience that we call seeing. Adverting to the attainment of a specific cortical “set” or orientation state, Huxley describes the “dynamic relaxation” through which so-called normal vision can be restored:<sup>88</sup>

At an early state in the process of visual re-education one makes a very remarkable discovery, It is this: as soon as the defective organs of vision acquire a certain degree of what I have called dynamic relaxation, *flashes* of almost or completely normal vision are experienced (AOS, 35, my emphasis).<sup>89</sup>

86 Dehaene and Naccache, “Towards a Cognitive Neuroscience of Consciousness,” 30.

87 Also see Aldous Huxley, “Visionary Experience,” (190-209); “Downward Transcendence,” (22-27) and “Disregarded in the Darkness,” (74-79), all in Horowitz and Palmer, eds. *MOKSHA: Writings on Psychedelics*.

88 Elsewhere, Huxley writes of the attainment of similar visions under hypnosis:

they are not random... What takes place in them follows patterns as logical internally as are the things seen in the antipodes of the external world. They are strange, but with a certain regularity (FCM, 59).

89 On “dynamical states” and psychedelics, see Enzo Tagliazucchi, Robin Carhart-Har-

Huxley's assessment of vision as a feature of human capability that remains relatively accessible—even after severe damage to the eyes has occurred—is now confirmed by ophthalmological neuropsychology. Retinal studies enable us to see not only how certain pathways that lead from the retina to specific targets in the brain “remain open after blockade or damage to the primary visual cortex” (as discussed earlier in relation to *blindsight*); rather, these studies also show that “words *flashed* into the blind hemifield can influence the interpretation of meanings of words subsequently shown in the intact field.”<sup>90</sup>

While Huxley was probably prompted to imagine the potential of vision after the accident that caused his own partial blindness, his willingness to explore and describe the deep visualities that he detected in *non-detection* represents but one aspect of his larger philosophy of human consciousness. In his enthusiasm for alternatives to the orthodoxies that inhered in the medical and psychiatric studies of his time, Huxley apprehends and responds to what he regards as the ossification of human potential. Later seeking an organisation to promote what he described as “human potentialities,” and the “nonverbal humanities,” Huxley's metaphysical philosophy (his “*philosophia perrenis*”) ultimately served to promote a strict individualism characterised by a continuous contemplation of and self-experimentation with consciousness, one that often involved direct adjustments to the dynamical state of the brain itself.<sup>91</sup>

Partly in accord with Huxley's views in *The Art of Seeing*, Searle postulates that what he identifies as “Fregean” internalism is demonstrated by the unitary independence of human organisms. This is the notion that thoughts emerge from within the brain through “biological naturalism.” Recalling the epiphenomalistic perspective, Searle argues that “each of us is a brain in a vat,” and that “the vat” comprises the “skull and the ‘messages coming in.’” All of these messages are delivered “by way of impacts on the nervous system,” but for Searle, the biologically-necessary process of turning what I have called endoperformative cognition into an *exoperformance* of semeic, orthographic, and written language is occulted or “masked” when we actu-

ris, Robert Leech, David Nutt, and Dante R. Chalvo, “Enhanced Repertoire of Brain Dynamical States During the Psychedelic Experience,” *Human Brain Mapping* (23 May, 2014, ePub ahead of print at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/enhanced/doi/10.1002/hbm.22562/>): 1-15.

90 See Weiskrantz, *Consciousness Lost and Found*, 127.

91 Jeffrey J. Kripal offers a concise history of the later Huxley's proselytisation of these ideas, which were to transmogrify into the “Human Potential Movement”: see *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 86-91; also see *TPP*, *passim*.

ally communicate or write. The processes become invisible because in these circumstances we adopt a “third-person point of view.”<sup>92</sup>

Citing Searle’s argument as evidence for her own claims, Louise Barrett even more provocatively asserts that writing itself functions as a kind of intermediary; one that comes between two acts: the first a form of prelinguistic intuition, and the second “thinking” itself.<sup>93</sup> As she writes,

the act of writing is itself an act of thinking because it’s a way of using language in a fashion that allows us to precisely order our thoughts and convey what we mean. The thought is produced by and through the act of writing. Without writing, we couldn’t have these kinds of thoughts.<sup>94</sup>

But if writing is actually a mode of *thinking*, then what can we say about a mode of writing that is not used to order the writer’s thoughts, but as an attempt to encounter an otherness—that is, to examine what is *not thought*? What about a writing that conveys not so much what the writer means, but rather that which problematises and challenges meaning itself, such as in an experimental writing practice like Burroughs’s cut-up method?

As this chapter proceeds, the expression “psychoactive scrivening” will signal the practice of writing on drugs, but it will also denote these other forms of writing. It signifies the authoring of a work while encountering thought in a uniquely free-wheeling or “deautomatised” way, in a subjective experience that may generally be characterised by its alterity, abnormality, or non-ordinariness. Casting a relatively wide net, this account of psychoactive authorship apprehends what Ralph Metzner broadly describes as “ASCs” or “altered states of consciousness.” Working within a necessarily figural or suggestive cartography, I will use this term to allude and attend to a range of aspects of these non-ordinary ontologies as they affect the writing process. Some of these may be understood as contradictory or anathematic classes of consciousness *ab initio*; however, this will enable the analysis to be supple

92 John Searle, *Intentionality: An Essay In The Philosophy of Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 230; cf. chapter 8: “Are Meanings in the Head?” 197-230. Searle notes that his putative reliance on Gottlob Frege’s account of reference, making it a “biological concept,” differs quite significantly from Frege’s own non-biological account. See Gottlob Frege, “On Sense and Reference,” in Peter Geach and Max Black, eds., *Translation from the Philosophical Writings of Gottlob Frege* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1952), 56-78.

93 See Weiskrantz, *Consciousness Lost and Found*, 143; also see Huxley’s description of automatisations in terms of “letting go” in order to retrieve parts of the internalised memory in *AOS*, 103-4.

94 Louise Barrett, *Beyond the Brain: How Body and Environment Shape Animal and Human Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011) 195, 167n34.

enough to permit us to include modes of inscription that arise from impulses as divergent as “schizophrenia and creative inspiration,” and even to locate how these can fit into the “same general category.”<sup>95</sup>

In this way, psychoactive procedures—or *psychoactivity*—will come to mean not simply a form of writing undertaken while an author labours under a drug’s neurochemical influence—nor simply a mode of writing about brain-drug interactions. It will also designate a mode of correspondence with both the self and the *socius*, as Deleuze and Guattari so describe the “social machine.”<sup>96</sup> It will consider a mode of writing in which the author—intentionally or not—envisions the world *as if* they were intoxicated by drugs, and *as if* to address the immanent possibility of ontological and mental alterity, abnormality, drug intoxication, and madness—even if no such mental state has been reached or no such intention formed.

## Subjective Undermin(d)ings: Deleuze and Guattari’s Brain-Subject

IF WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT a great many individuals had developed, by the end of the First World War, some familiarity with the ontological possibility of madness and psychosis—even if only as *de jure* classifications—then the twentieth century may be understood to have itself inaugurated an increasingly entrenched mode of apprehension, and even an *episteme*, one that was increasingly typified by subjective encounters with the “psychopolitical.”<sup>97</sup>

This, it may be argued, remains true regardless of whether these individuals were capable of acknowledging or explaining such an encounter as such.

95 Ralph Metzner, “Psychedelic, Psychoactive, Addictive Drugs and States of Consciousness,” in Mitch Earlywine, ed., *Mind-Altering Drugs: The Science of Subjective Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 30. On ASCs generally, see Charles T. Tart, ed. *Altered States of Consciousness* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1969). Notably, this volume also contains an interesting chapter on Aldous Huxley’s phenomenology of consciousness: Milton H. Erickson, “A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley into the Nature and Character of Various States of Consciousness,” 45-70, originally published in *American Journal of Clinical Hypnosis* 8 (1965): 17-33.

96 The word *socius* is Latin for a kind of social gathering. Deleuze and Guattari use it to mean a “social machine”: *Anti-Oedipus*, 33, 141.

97 Jeff Pruchnic refers to the late twentieth-century’s “alteration in subjectivity” as the “Great Anti-Depression,” taking up the pharmaceutical consciousness of the post-WW2 subject as an elicitation to the “neurorhetorics” perceptible in a multitude of twentieth-century literatures. Crucial for Pruchnic is that “persuasion”—the *gerdon* of the rhetorical arts—becomes, in the late twentieth century, a “material” influence, “chang[ing] our minds” in more than a figurative sense.” Pruchnic, “Neurorhetorics: Cybernetics, Psychotropics, and the Materiality of Persuasion,” *Configurations* 16 (2008): 167-197, esp. 172.

Among the manifold ramifications of these newly psychopolitical milieux, the most important developments were in cybernetics, (posthuman) calculation, computation, coding and cryptography—among a slew of other textual and specifically *authorial* modes. Of highest importance in this thesis, of course, are those among these developments that most closely orbit the zone of *literary* authorship.<sup>98</sup> And as this chapter has already underscored, authors have always been subject to forces that are at once interior and exterior (and *literary* authors are no exception).

But in the twentieth century, the subject becomes instrumentalised as an author or agent in a different way than before, acting under an emergent orthodoxy that in fact becomes the totalising aegis of *the brain*. To invoke Bruno Latour's terminology—that which he deploys in his analysis of Einstein's relativity theorems—the subject may now be named the brain's "delegated observer" in that they act in accordance with the brain's directions and instructions.<sup>99</sup> Relativity, which I will address in detail in chapter 4, now becomes but one example of a range of "neurorhetorics": an indissoluble amalgam of particularised brain activity, and a specific language system.<sup>100</sup>

But if such a twentieth-century development is to be genuinely believed, it is curious that it was not given full expression until 1991—near the end of that century—in a book whose title registers what becomes that century's complete inversion of humanism's historical impulse. *What Is Philosophy?* is Deleuze and Guattari's response to the postulation, advanced by the likes of William James and F.C.S. Schiller, that philosophy is a pragmatic system of thought that relies exclusively on the "resources of the human mind" for its wisdom, and should therefore "be guided by [an] awareness of widely understood human needs."<sup>101</sup> Repudiating humanism, *What Is Philosophy?* sidelines the number of "human needs" that have been itemised during twentieth-century philosophy's reign, and refocuses our attention on what have become

98 Here my argument parallels N. Katherine Hayles's description of a "performative code" and "subjective cosmology" in her *My Mother Was A Computer* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), chapters 5 and 9.

99 See Bruno Latour, "A Relativistic Account of Einstein's Relativity," *Social Studies of Science* 18, no. 3 (1988): 3-44, 13; Albert Einstein, *Relativity: The Special and the General Theory* (London: Methuen, 1920), 26; Rudge, "Actants at Any Depth," 13-14, esp. 21.

100 On these kinds of "neurorhetorics," see Jeff Pruchnic, "Neurorhetorics: Cybernetics, Psychotropics, and the Materiality of Persuasion," *Configurations* 16, no. 2 (2008): 167-197, esp. 172.

101 The quotations are adopted from Denis Donoghue's selected dictionary definition of "Humanism," (the "predominant one") from the Oxford English Dictionary (uncited), in Denis Donoghue, "Introduction," in "What Humanists Do," ed. Denis Donoghue, special issue, *Dædelus* 143, no. 1 (2014): 5-18, 5, my emphasis.



the implacable needs of the *brain*.<sup>102</sup> The authors revise the old postulation in which the brain and the human compete: “Man thinks, not the Brain.” Thus laying a new emphasis on the materiality of communication (so that now, it is less a “virtualization”—a *virtus* that is “fully real”<sup>103</sup>—than a crucible through which the mind itself is assembled, an “actualization”) Deleuze and Guattari insist that “The brain is the mind itself.”<sup>104</sup> Deleuze and Guattari thus collapse into one category the human subject and the brain itself, outlining the “co-presence or equipotentiality” of these previously separate objects, and illustrating how “[c]erebral movements also give rise to conceptual personae.”<sup>105</sup>

But if the brain and the human are now one and the same, it is significant that Deleuze and Guattari had already drawn what is perhaps a much more forceful distinction—at least for them—between two very different kinds of concepts to these. In their dualistic analysis of time or temporality in *A Thousand Plateaus*, the pair divide time into either a specifically nonhuman, or “evental” time, called “Aeon,” and the measurable or chronometric time that is accessible and in fact constitutive of the human, called “Chronos.”<sup>106</sup>

Situating “things and persons” in relation to one another, and placing events into forms that are differentiated and associable with the memory’s temporal orderings, Chronos constitutes a metrical system that relativises objects in the world according to durations. By contrast, Aeon time, which is also expressed as a “haecceity,” is a phantasmic force of materialisation and dematerialisation, determining what is understood as present (or as “now”) and what is absent (or as “then”) through a cognitive mechanism that is “unseen in ordinary perception.” Aeon is a kind of time, then, that is visible to us only insofar as we may “see” the specter that self-evidently and inexplicably verifies our own consciousness. It appears, quite simply, as spaces, speeds and durations.<sup>107</sup> In *What Is Philosophy?* the brain becomes the same such

102 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, tr. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlinson (London: Verso 1994), 210-219.

103 Ibid., 210.

104 Ibid. 211.

105 Ibid.

106 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 262; on those “events” that “make language possible,” see Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 181-85.

107 Ibid. I adapt this summary of Deleuze and Guattari’s development of the Aeon and Chronos times from a paper that I prepared for the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Society for Literature Science and the Arts, titled “Madness in Mad Time.” See <http://www.rudge.tv/blog/madinmadtimes/>, accessed 10 October, 2014. For a detailed discussion of the “other time” of which Deleuze speaks in *Difference and Repetition*, see Jay Lampert, *Deleuze and Guattari’s Philosophy of History* (London: Continuum, 2006), 31-52. On Deleuze and time generally, also see Todd May, “When is A Deleuzian Becoming?” *Continental Philosophy Review* 36 (2003): 139-53.



kind of unconditionally distinctive or *sui generis* “haecceity” (thing or object) as the Aeon time of the authors’s earlier work had been. Its “composition” takes place less in the virtual than the actual world; it continually renews itself, ever “becoming” itself, and marking, exhibiting, and visiting on the subject its discrete characteristics.<sup>108</sup>

*What Is Philosophy?* thus begins to articulate in a philosophical discourse the same “reorganization” of the subject that would be described by epigeneticists and neuroplasticists in the opening decade of the twenty-first century. This is a reorganisation that “might be demonstrable at the level of behaviour, anatomy, and physiology, and [continues all the way] down to the cellular and molecular levels.”<sup>109</sup> But Deleuze and Guattari have to dismantle the object of philosophy and phenomenology, which has now descended into “chaos,” in order to fabricate such a philosophy. The brain is now recognised as a “state of survey without distance, at ground level.” Its contact with the world is so radically proximate and local—and yet so incarnate in the subject—that no phenomenological artifact may be regarded as extrinsic to it, not even the human. It is a “self-survey,” the authors argue, “that no chasm, fold, or hiatus escapes.”<sup>110</sup>

A symptom of the decline of Jamesian humanistic phenomenology, the Deleuzoguattarian “Thought-brain” emerges out of the chaos of a century riven by a largely misguided culture war. Fought between the “human” of the humanities—a being with a mind—and the organicism of the sciences—which identifies little more than an organism with a brain—the war has been largely a detour, perhaps all but the outline of dualism’s shadow. Through what Guattari elsewhere describes as “chaosmosis,” the brain now becomes the preeminent and in fact only “faculty” worthy of interest to philosophy, taking the place of what had for many decades and centuries been the mind. The authors’s formulation of the “brain-subject” repudiates what,

108 As Deleuze writes, “The virtual is opposed not to the real but to the actual. The virtual is fully real insofar as it is virtual.” *Difference and Repetition* tr. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 208. Also see May, “When is a Deleuzian Becoming?” 148; and Patricia Pisters, “Delirious Cinema or Machines of the Invisible?” in *Deleuze and the Schizoanalysis of Cinema*, ed. Ian Buchanan and Patricia MacCormack (London: Continuum, 2008), 103-15.

109 Alvaro Leone-Pacual, Amir Amedi, Felipe Fregni and Lofti B. Merabet, “The Plastic Human Brain Cortex,” *Annual Review of Neuroscience* 28 (2005): 377-401, 378. On neuroplasticity, also see notably: Dean V. Buonomano and Michael M. Merzenich, “Cortical Plasticity: From Synapses to Maps,” *Annual Review of Neuroscience* 21 (1998): 149-86. Also see David Goldman, *Our Genes, Our Choices: How Genotype and Gene Interactions Affect Behaviour* (London: Academic Press, 2012), 13-4.

110 Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 210.

in their view, has been an overextended trajectory in the wrong direction: the “ascent of phenomenology beyond the Brain.” Having reached “toward a Being in the world,” Deleuze and Guattari seek now to direct philosophy away from its phenomenological concerns and toward the materiality of thought, conceiving of humanism’s history as yet another Barthesian mythology: “an *Urdoxa* posited as original opinion, or meaning of meanings.”<sup>111</sup>

Consonant with the psychoactive scrivener, the “brain subject” is not a subject at all, but an “*eject*.”<sup>112</sup> If their “principal characteristic is distinction [and] discrimination,” it is important to recall what agent allows these processes occur: it “is the brain that thinks and not the man—the latter being only cerebral crystallization.”<sup>113</sup> But this does not mean that the twentieth century’s engagement with the phenomenology of mind is a complete redundancy. Along this itinerant pilgrimage, what punctuates the journey toward the thought-brain is the variety of important identifications that organise the very process of “man’s” neurological morphologisation. Among these, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s *The Future of Man* maps out the “anatomical” and “social” phases of what he calls “transhominization.”<sup>114</sup> It thus serves as an engine text for what would soon emerge as a range of companion texts to de Chardin’s work, often organised under the appellation “transhumanism.”<sup>115</sup> An early-adopter of this locution, Julian Huxley would himself write in an essay titled “Transhumanism” that the “human species can, if it wishes, transcend itself... in its entirety, as humanity.”<sup>116</sup>

111 Ibid. I refer to Roland Barthes’s *Mythologies* here only in passing; yet is notable that Barthes devotes a short chapter in this book to Einstein’s brain: Barthes, *Mythologies*, tr. Annette Lavers (New York: The Noonday Press, 1957), 68-70.

112 Deleuze and Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?*, 215.

113 Ibid., 210.

114 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Future of Man*, tr. Norman Denny (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 273.

115 On the moral problematics arising from the disavowal of a Jamesian humanism and the adoption of a transhumanism, see appositely Ingmar Persson and Julian Savulescu, “Moral Transhumanism,” *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 35 (2010): 656-69. Examples of contemporary transhumanists include, for instance, Ray Kurzweil, Francis Fukuyama, and James Hughes. For an up-to-date explanation of transhumanism, see: *Humanity+*, “Tranhumanist FAQ 3.0,” accessed 27 March, 2014, <http://www.humanity-plus.oeg/philosophy/transhumanist-faq/>.

116 Julian Huxley, “Transhumanism,” in *New Bottles For New Wine* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957), 13-17, rprd. in *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 8 (1968): 73-6. As Alison Bashford points out, Nick Bostrom copies James Hughes’s erroneous citation to Julian Huxley’s 1927 volume of essays *Religion Without Revelation* (London: Benn, 1927) when seeking to identify the coinage of the term. See: Alison Bashford, “Julian Huxley’s Transhumanism,” in *Crafting Human: From Genesis to Eugenics and Beyond*, ed. Marius Turda (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2013), 153-68, see 155n14; and Nick Bostrom, “A History of Transhumanist Thought,” *Journal of Evolution and*

But traces of Julian Huxley's transhumanism had already appeared even before this essay, such as in the initiating document for UNESCO, published in 1946, little more than a decade earlier.<sup>117</sup> The morphological transition in which the *subject* becomes a Deleuzoguattarian *eject* or "brain-subject" is not a universal condition, contingent simply on the human's place in a periodised history, where all twentieth-century subjects transform into what I call "psychoactive scriveners." This transition, rather, is tied to the particular educational, scientific and cultural institutions that foreground the subject, in accordance with the influence of the "institutional" operant described at O1 in figure 2.1. And as increasing number of institutions, of which UNESCO is an exemplary kind, emerge after the Second World War, so there appears an increasing number of brain-subjects.

More generally, however, a battery of changes begins to appear in each operant category in the ecology or environment of authorship after the Second World War. And if we can accept that each of our subjective brains is a kind of "haecceity" whose environment is in large part determined by its *sui generis* formation or idiopathic "composition" through a series of similar but unique "gene-environment correlations," then we may see the whole of human history as a range of novel ontological modes for which the subject's brain has never in fact been prepared.<sup>118</sup> This is a phenomenon that has been emphasised ever since the personality psychologists of the 1960s observed the great many number of practices that impede or vitiate automatic or inattentive brain behaviour.

These same practices, they observed, mandate focalisation and attentionality, such as executory decision-making, abject compliance with prescribed rules, highly-organised scientific work, and even wholly novel experimental practices with formerly unidentified biochemical materials.<sup>119</sup> In this context, a psychoactive scrivener is a subject whose authorial works may be read not only as records of these very deliberations, but also as accounts of the author's morphologisation into the Deleuzoguattarian "eject" or "brain-subject." In

*Technology* 14, no. 1 (2005): 1-25, esp. 6; and James Hughes, *Citizen Cyborg: Why Democratic Societies Must Respond to the Redesigned Human of the Future* (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2004), 158.

117 Julian Huxley, *UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy, Preparatory Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1946), accessed 11 January, 2014, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000681/068197eo.pdf>.

118 Goldman, *Our Genes, Our Choices*, 14.

119 So observe Sara R. Jafee and Thomas S. Price in their introduction to "Gene-environment Correlations: A Review of the Evidence and Implications for Prevention of Mental Illness," *Molecular Psychiatry* 12 (2007): 432-42.

these works, we encounter vivid literary illustrations or unfoldings: ritualisations of the processes in which calculations of, and meditations on and about the eject's "neural environment" are tried, trevailed, and traduced.

## The Long Road to the Writing Subject: A Short Scribal History

*Madness is equinox between the vanity of fantasies of the night and the non-being of judgements of the light.*

—Michel Foucault<sup>120</sup>

LONG BEFORE THE BRAIN-SUBJECT of the twentieth century, however, there is the personage of what I call the "scrivener." Their work is to "scriven"—that is, to engage in a mode of writing, inscription, or reproduction by which they effect the production of documents under the instructions of an external entity. Such documents often memorialise a special event or occasion; and these documents are perhaps most frequently legal or administrative in nature. The title of "scrivener" denotes the relative disempowerment of that composer, who may otherwise be described as a scribe, amanuensis, clerk, hansard, or even a technical writer. In all of these cases, the composer labours under a fractured, diffused, or distributed subjectivity.<sup>121</sup> A "multilocal self," the scrivener's contemporary instantiations include, for instance, those who operate such "telepresent" technologies as performance capture animation and remote surgery with the aid of an electronic camera or optical enhancement device. As Drew Ayers notes, these kinds of agents find themselves distributed across a plurality of corporeal planes.<sup>122</sup>

Considering these kinds of roles, it is arguable that the metaphysics of the scrivening subject are now even more complex than those that Heidegger, as Derrida observes, humanistically reduced to the "Spirit" (*Geist*). Unavoidably "double," the *Geist* is the haunting other itself, multiplied and reproduced; and the one *Geist* always includes another: they are "*Geist* as the *Geist*"

120 Foucault, *The History of Madness*, 246.

121 Bernard Stiegler's analysis of the "technicization" of science and the consequent emergence of a "technical being [who/that was] considered a complex of heterogenous forces" is relevant to the development of the scribal subject—the psychoactive scrivener. I will attend to Stiegler's work in more detail in the next section. Stiegler, *Technics and Time*, 1, 2.

122 See Drew Ayers, "The Multilocal Self: Performance Capture, Remote Surgery, and Persistent Materiality," *Animation: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 9, no. 2 (2014): 212-27.

of *Geist*, [and the] spirit as spirit of the spirit.”<sup>123</sup> Like the *Geist* and spirit, though, the scrivener “always comes with its double”—for just as the “Spirit is its double,” so is the scrivener its own twin.<sup>124</sup> But if the metaphysics of the scrivener are even more complicated now—and even more so than Derrida’s “awesome equivocality” in the face of Heidegger’s *Geist*—it is because the scrivener ventriloquises not simply a spirit “in the sense of a *revenant*,” but is ghosted by a living agent far less mysterious than Heidegger’s *Geist*. They are consigned to produce words that are not simply *not* their own—in the sense that they are instead those of a Heideggerean *Geist*—but compelled to produce their work as the invention of another *non-scrivener*, thus taking on this non-scrivener’s *Geist* at the same time as they vitiate or otherwise also come to grips with their *Geist*.<sup>125</sup>

The etymological associations of the term “scrivener” denote its moralistic and expiatory valences. It derives from the Old English *scrifan*, which means “to prescribe a penance on,” and which itself morphed into the Middle English *scriven*, *schripen*, and finally, *shriven*. Associated with these words are the irregular Middle English *schroftide* and *tide*: the “time of confession before Lent.” The term also has antecedents in the fourteenth-century French word *escravain*, as well as the vulgate Latin word “*scribanem*,” which is the accusative of *scriba*, “a scribe.” And it is from this that we derive the anglophone “scriber.”<sup>126</sup> However, as John Jackson points out, even more ancient origins are available to us to examine—not only etymological but categorical:

The English *Scrivener* and the French *Greffier* may be related by descent as well as profession; both words being thus referable to the same origin, the Greek γρῦωα.<sup>127</sup>

Although no work has been singularly devoted to its history, the term scrivener, and the profession of scrivening, is almost always described as writing that is done in the service of an institution or sovereign as a “professional penman,” a “copyist.”<sup>128</sup>

123 Jacques Derrida, *Of Spirit: Heidegger and the Question*, tr. Geoffrey Benington and Rachel Bowlby (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 40-1; Heidegger, “The Self-Assertion of the German University and The Rectorate,” 474n6.

124 Derrida, *Of Spirit*, 40

125 Ibid.

126 The word may also have roots in the Medieval Dutch, *schriver*, and the Dutch *schrijver*: Eric Partridge, *Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 597.

127 John Jackson, *A Treatise on Wood Engraving: Historical and Practical* (London: Charles Knight and Co, 1839), 2.

128 OED Online, Oxford University Press, s.v. “scrivener” accessed 28 March, 2013, <http://>

Fulfilling secretarial or administrative duties, the “scrivener” has also been the name of those who maintain business, judicial, historical, and related records for aristocratic or parliamentary agents.<sup>129</sup> In ancient Greece, the scrivener’s dispersed identity was literalised in their collaboration with the *calligraphus*:

anciently a Copist or Scrivener who transcrib’d fair, and at length what the Notaries had taken down in Notes, or Minutes; which comes pretty near to what we call Ingrossing. The Minutes of Acts, &c. were always taken down in a kind of Cypher, or Short-Hand; such as the Notes of Tiro in Gruter: by which means the Notaries, as the Latins called ‘em, or the Σημειόγραφοι and Ταχύγραφοι, as the Greeks called ‘em, were inabled to keep pace with the speaker, or Person who dictated. These Notes being understood by few, were copy’d over fair, and at length by Persons who had a good Hand, for Sale, &c. and these were call’d Calligraphi; a Name frequently met with in Primitive Writers. It comes from the Greek κάλλος, beauty, and γράφω, I write;...<sup>130</sup>

One of the earliest extant appearances of the word “calligraphus” seems to be in the name or title of John Calligraphus. It is he who is otherwise known as John Psaltēs, abbot of Ken-neshrē convent, who is known to have written the *Cratylus* of Plato, for instance, for Bishop Arethas in AD 895.<sup>131</sup>

As in ancient times, the task of the twentieth-century (as much as the contemporary scrivener) is characterised by an investment in a set of praxes designed to inscribe in official orthographic structures what are the “autotelic” or “flow” experiences of certain venerated rituals, or performed interactions. In the case of the hansom, for instance, attentional modulations are necessary to optimise the accumulation and condensation of information.<sup>132</sup> Engaged to produce orthographic outputs rapidly and in response to auditory and other inputs, the scrivener works within a system whose conventions psycholinguists have described as involving certain “nonlexical phonology to orthography conversion (POC) rules.”<sup>133</sup> Hansards, notaries, note-takers, and

[www.oed.com/view/Entry/173623?redirectedFrom=scrivener](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/173623?redirectedFrom=scrivener).

129 Ibid.

130 Ephraim Chambers, *Cyclopaedia, or, An Universal Dictionary of Art and Sciences* (London: Printed for J. and J. Knapton [and 18 others], 1728), 144, accessed 16 March, 2014, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/HistSciTech.Cyclopedia01>.

131 See Francesco Ademollo, *The Cratylus of Plato: A Commentary* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 22; Ademollo, “Cratylus 393b—c And the Prehistory of Plato’s Text,” *Classical Quarterly* 63, no. 2 (2013): 595-602, 596n6.

132 On these cognitive operations, see Arne Dietrich and Oliver Stoll, “Effortless Attention, Hypofrontality, and Perfectionism,” in *Effortless Attention*, ed. Brian Bruya (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2010), 159-78.

133 For an excellent analysis of these processes, see Zaizhu Han, Luping Song, and Yan-



similar scriveners prepare compositions that seek to capture the mind while it is “live” and at work, graphing and mapping the speech or stimulus of the body that is its master.

When the word “psychoactive” adjectivally modifies the term “scrivener,” it functions in a number of ways, including in the way that this chapter has already described: as a signification of the scrivener’s engagement with their transhumanising and “altered” brains. However, this syntagmatic relation may also describe the moment-to-moment neuromotor executions and adjustments that are characteristic of the following:

- the scrivener’s discrete “material writing praxes” that are described as MP in figure 2.1; and
- the striated, multi-dimensional, yet rule-based “cognitive writing praxes” that are described as CP in figure 2.1.

The latter processes may be understood to constitute the possibly (but not confirmably) conscious operations that this chapter has already described in terms of the Mind At Large—in terms, that is, of Rosenthal’s description of a kind of “first-order” consciousness, and in relation to the eject or brain-subject.<sup>134</sup> In all instances, the scrivener’s mental engagements with the materials that initiate these processes become differentiated as an array of mechanistic operations that are typical of “implicit information-processing systems.” Many of these processes have been described by researchers as “preconscious” motor actions emerging from out of a “primitive and evolutionarily ancient system that does not form higher order representations.” If this description is accepted, then these processes must remain occulted, even from the brain-subject—at least for as long as they cannot also be observed and then explicated by them.<sup>135</sup>

But these preconscious operations are also routinised through an “explicit information processing” system.<sup>136</sup> It is this proprioceptive mechanism

chao Bi, “Cognitive Mechanism of Writing to Dictation of Logographic Characters,” *Applied Psycholinguistics* 33 (2012): 517-37. Also see notably the original description of these specific rules in Simona Luzzi, Marco Bartolini, Michela Coccia, Leandro Provinciali, Massimo Piccirilli, and Julie S. Snowden, “Surface Disgraphia in Regular Orthography: Apostrophe Use by an Italian Writer,” *Neurocase: The Neural Basis of Cognition* 9, no. 4 (2003): 285-96. These rules are here called “Phoneme-to-grapheme conversion rules,” at 285.

134 Dietrich and Stoll’s explanation of these “implicit” and “explicit” processing systems is both comprehensive and uncomplicated: see “Effortless Attention, Hypofrontality, and Perfectionism,” 161-2.

135 *Ibid.*, 161.

136 *Ibid.*



that constitutes the scrivener as brain-subject or as, in at least one sense, “psychoactive.” Relying on the prefrontal cortex for memory, on the hippocampus for the consolidation of information, and on an array of cortical networks for “permanent storage,” the scrivener’s CPs are substantially *brain* operations.<sup>137</sup> Of course, the methetics and maieutics between the implicit and explicit information processing systems (IPSS) are further shaped, if not completely determined, by the medial and technical forms (the technics) or MPs wielded by the scrivener.<sup>138</sup> Psychoactivity obtains in the experimental and self-reflexive performance of the MPs in the knowledge of their relations to, and contingency on, the above described CPs.

Of course, to be “psychoactive” may mean different things at different times. We can imagine an ancient moment, amid the emergence of “script-literacy” perhaps around 450 BC, for instance, when those scribes who received oral dictation from their masters or sovereigns would have been required to sharpen their aural senses in order to do their jobs well.<sup>139</sup> The lead-up to such a moment would have marked a new trajectory in the phenomenology of hearing and listening, for now the aural senses were to be directed to a concrete end: that is, toward the routine inscription of sound as text. Karel van der Toorn’s claim that the Hebrew Bible was the work of a small scribal elite—and the bible itself a book “born and studied in their scribal workshop of the temple” where “scholars and teachers... wrote, edited copied, gave public readings, and interpreted” their work (sometime between 500 and 200 BCE)—indicates the centrality of scribal work to the authorship of even the most ancient texts.

It is at this time that scribal work becomes more important than oral literacy. Even more fundamentally important, though, is the concretising function of the scrivener in *presenting* the words of another *as if* they had been uttered by the external agent. To incorporate the scrivener’s voice or the traces of his or her hand in the work would be fatal to its purpose, as if

137 Ibid.

138 As I will address later in this chapter, Stiegler’s postulation that the writing subject evolved through a process of *epiphylogenesis*, as the technical process of the “exteriorization of memory,” the methexis between the human and “flint” in what Stiegler names a “technical maieutics,” corresponds neatly with my own analysis of the emergence of the psychoactive scrivener. See Stiegler, *Technics and Time 1*, 140, 175, 257.

139 450 BC is the date that Eric Havelock ascribes to the transition to script-literacy in classical Greece—the moment in which the “ability of the average person to pick up a manuscript and read it” arose. See Eric A. Havelock, *The Literature Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982). The above quotation, summarising Havelock’s “script-literacy,” is taken from John D. Harvey, “Orality and Its Implications for Biblical Studies: Recapturing an Ancient Paradigm,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 45, no. 1 (2002): 99-109, esp. 100.

to reveal its trickery. As van der Toorn notes of these scribes: “If the Bible became the Word of God, it was due to their presentation” of this Word.<sup>140</sup> Tracing the “co-presence” of orality and literacy, Marcel Detienne’s study of ancient Greece’s Orphic tradition focuses on Orpheus as the figure through whom the Greeks could represent the rise of literacy.

A poet who courses through that vexed easement splicing the borderlands between speech and writing, Orpheus reveals much about the problematics and tensions associated with this transition in the Greek imaginary.<sup>141</sup> The persistent tension between oral and written may be understood precisely through Orpheus’s character, representative as it is of Greek civilisations’s primary psychopathological *hamartia*: a cultural malaise or syndrome caused by a long mourning process over the perceived loss of the certain “intermediated” procedures. An oral myth transcribed in the “immediacy of ritual,” the story now becomes fatally divested both of its sacred mystery and the dialogical or “semiotic energetics”—those that are expressed through and by merely this solitary author.<sup>142</sup> This feeling of loss would continue to haunt representations of authors throughout the Early and High Middle Ages, up until a crucial shift in European iconography began to occur in the late thirteenth century, where the scrivener and the author were united in a move that *monadised* the composer.<sup>143</sup>

While authors of biblical works had been represented in the visual arts since at least 800 AD, they were predominantly portrayed as the *dictators* of their written works, “dictating to their secretaries or transcribing the voice of God themselves.” But now they were depicted differently, “almost exclusively reading and writing silently” on their own. These images, Lee Honeycutt ob-

140 Karel van der Toorn, *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 2. Cf. John Van Seters, “The Role of the Scribe in the Making of the Hebrew Bible,” *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions* 8, no. 1 (2008): 99-129.

141 Marcel Detienne, *The Writing of Orpheus: Greek Myth in Cultural Context*, tr. Janet Lloyd (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003). While Detienne’s study, which concerns writing more generally may, be summarised in a number of ways, I adapt this summary of chapter thirteen of Detienne’s book from Elizabeth Marie Young’s article, “Inscribing Orpheus: Ovid and the Invention of a Greco-Roman Corpus,” *Representations* 101, no. 1 (2008): 1-31, 10.

142 Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical*, tr. John Raffan (Cambridge, MA: 1985), 297. I deploy this term after Guattari’s description of “Freud’s Semiotic Energetics” in his *Schizanalytic Cartographies*, 49.

143 Lee Honeycutt, “Literacy and the Writing Voice: The Intersection of Culture and Technology in Dictation,” *Journal of Business and Technological Communication* 18, no. 3 (2004): 294-327. Also see, for variation and exceptions to this shift, Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, third ed. (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 117-19.

serves, may be seen to culminate a “centuries-long shift from oral literacy to silent composing processes.”<sup>144</sup>

The *monadisation* of authorship, as Philip K. Dick would later come to realise, meant that by the time the acme of late-capitalism arrives, around the mid-1960s, individuals had become little more than solipsistic agents or programs, scrivening in much the same way that “a barrel” rolls on water (*EX*, 131). Amplifying this recursive image of the rolling barrel, Dick postulates in a letter to scholar and companion Claudia Bush<sup>145</sup> that the entire project of writing is reducible to the construction of a mind and its records:

“The barrel,” when studied carefully, consists of the aggregate civilization pattern we’re developing: all our ideas, our thoughts, the entire Picture we carry with us both inside our minds, in each monad-like mind, and externally, in or records (*EX*, 131).

But Dick’s conception of the barrel represents more than an image of joviality or labour. The image is also a metalepsis for the combustibility of writing, time, and history—each of which continues, albeit through newly psychotic optics, the long Grecian commiseration of orality.

Radically desubjectivising the collective authorial project, and disembodying the pantheon’s *corpus*, Dick compares the “rolling around and around of the cylindrical barrel” to a “rotational time” that—akin to Deleuze and Guattari’s “abstract time” (“equal for haecceities and for subject or things”<sup>146</sup>)—is crucially related to human activity, or *psychoactivity*. The drudging process by which a subject is compelled to reproduce the universe’s “tropisms” now becomes critically assessed by the scrivener; and here these tropes cease to be psychotropes: they are images now less of external events than of the mind or brain itself.

Epiphanistic, Dick imagines that “our combined total output forms a gestalt in and of itself,” a move under the force of which our ultimate place in the universe can be transformed:

Oddly, no one before me has realized that the very drudgery of the human (and of all) life indicates that we are rising; we think of rising as a weightless,

144 Honeycutt, “Literacy and the Writing Voice,” 294.

145 According to Dick scholar Frank Bertrand, Claudia Bush went on to become Claudia Krenz, writing a master’s thesis (MA) on Dick, and a PhD in education. See my blog entry: “Beginning The *Exegesis*,” *The Philip K. Dick Reading Group*, accessed 20 June, 2014, <http://pkdreaders.wordpress.com/2014/03/27/meet2/>. Also see Krenz’ website, accessed 18 May, 2014, <http://www.claudiax.net/>.

146 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 261.

effortless thing, but a more mature study (a non-fantasy study) shows that it must occur with actual expended effort. And we are certainly doing that. The whole goddam barrel is rising. One day it will reach point B, which probably jumps it—and us—into another universe entirely (*EX*, 131).

Many centuries after the long commiseration of the supplantation of orality, then, Dick now reunites oral and literal as a “combined total output.” No longer is God, a master or sovereign, translated by the scrivener; rather, the master hears and understands the scrivener at another level: now with “headphones on... listening to our civilization” (*EX*, 131).

In the book production processes of ancient Rome, large numbers of scribes were used to develop the Roman library, as well as for writing letters, and for producing other short documents.<sup>147</sup> As I intimated earlier, scrivening entailed developing increased levels of acoustic and sonic attention, focusing on a dictating voice less as the expressor of ideas than a phenomenological artifact-object that prescribed instructions and rules. It was in scribes’ minds or brains that “critical literacy” would have first appeared—long before it would have been encountered by or been developed in any others, even though, of course, many specific interpretative practices, even when practised by scribes, would have been eschewed.<sup>148</sup>

But, just as much in Roman civilisation as in the Middle Ages, the dominance of the oral tradition meant that literacy was not adjudged by the ability to write, but

involved being learned in Latin, whereas writing was the process of making a fair copy on parchment, which was the art of the scribe. Some authors did their own writing, but they are the exceptions and they distinguished that activity from composition.<sup>149</sup>

As Andrew Brown notes, the etymology of “scribbling” shares a similar genealogy with “scrivening,” and permits us to ask whether writing, then as now, involves

147 See Theodore C. Skeat, “The Use of Dictation in Ancient Book Production,” *Proceedings of the British Academy* 42 (1956): 179-208, esp. 189.

148 On literacy as technology, see Jean Searle, *Discourses of Literacy* (Queensland: Language Australia, 1999), 11; on literacy as “critical literacy,” see Uta Papen, *Adult Literacy as Social Practice: More Than Skills* (London: Routledge, 2005), 10-11; and Kevin Harris, “Critical Literacy as Political Intervention: Three Variations on a Theme,” in *Critical Literacy: Politics, Praxis, and the Postmodern*, ed. Colin Lankshear and Pater L. McLaren (New York, State University of New York, 1993), 57-80. For a comprehensive overview of the many frames of literacy, see Deborah K. Marrott, “Defining Literacy: How Basic Writers Define and are Defined by Literacy,” PhD diss., The University of Utah, 2008, ProQuest: AAT 3305688, esp. 16-45.

149 Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 272-3.

“addition or subtraction, scribbling or scrubbing—or, indeed, the other form of scraping known as sculpting?”<sup>150</sup> At parallel to this productive assemblage of material praxes (MPs), is Barthes’s formulation of writing as a subtraction.<sup>151</sup>

Similar anticipations of these scenes of composition—tableaux in which scriveners call attention to the “presence” of their “others”—appear in the works of both Derrida and Walter Ong.<sup>152</sup> This “other,” as I have argued in chapter 1, may be understood to exist within the body. However, for Derrida—as for Ong—the “other is present” in those traces of orality we can read in *texts*. For Ong, the presence of language derives from its phonocentric origin, where the “voice [is] the paradigm of all sounds for man.” Reaching an apex at which “sound thus of itself suggests presence,” writing’s otherness is constituted in its aural origin.<sup>153</sup> Derrida, in his 1973 *Speech and Phenomena*—a critique of Husserl’s *Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness* (1928)—underscores the importance of aurality and listening for writing:

what make the history of the *phōnē* fully enigmatic is the fact that it is inseparable from the history of idealization, that is, from the “history of the mind,” or history as such.<sup>154</sup>

Elaborating on his early-1970s formulation of the phonocentric writer, Derrida, more than a decade later in an interview titled the “Rhetoric of Drugs,” expands on these views, now speaking not of writers, however, but of *drugs* as the incorporable “other.” These drugs are not limited to simply “stuff that is patently comestible, smokable, or shootable,” he remarks, but are tethered to the “experience” of otherness—that experience whose phenomenology is defined precisely by the increased indistinguishability of external from internal valences.

Drugs can thus engender a *corporealised* Socraticism, and usher in an *experiential* dialogism:

150 Andrew Brown, *Roland Barthes: The Figures of Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 152.

151 See Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, tr. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1975), 40; Barthes, *The Grain of the Voice*, tr. Linda Coverdale (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985), 179.

152 For an apposite summary of Ong’s and Derrida’s convergences and divergences in relation to phonocentrism, presence and otherness, see John D. Schaeffer and David Gorman, “Ong and Derrida on Presence: A Case Study in the Conflict of Traditions,” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 50, no. 7 (2008): 856-72, esp. 858-62.

153 Walter J. Ong, *The Presence of the Word: Some prolegomena for Cultural and Religious History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1964), 114. Also see Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Methuen, 1982),

154 Jacques Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena, and Other Essays on Husserl’s Theory of Signs*, tr. David B. Allison and Newtown Garver (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 75.

There is no doubt, at least for orality, for the hearing and the hearing-one-self-speak, a zone of experience where giving and receiving, inspiration and expiration, impression and expression, passivity and activity can only be opposed to one another, or even distinguished.<sup>155</sup>

Understood in the clinical psychiatric context as verbal auditory hallucinations (AVHs)—or what clinical patients describe variously as “brain talk[ing],” “voices in the whole body,” “voices of conscience,” and “inward voice in the thoughts”—the voice-hearing of the kind Derrida speaks refers precisely to the oral tradition of scrivening. Here, dialogism with a voice, or an “inner monologue,” becomes of a piece with psychoactivity: “Phonic signs... are heard by the subject who proffers them in absolute proximity of their present.” The scrivening subject possesses a “transcendent dignity” that places them in a special category, above “every other signifying substance.”<sup>156</sup>

In an innovative cross-disciplinary study on these matters, Angela Woods asserts that while science has observed an empirical continuity between clinical and nonclinical voice-hearing subjects, no scholar has fully addressed whether a “continuum of phenomenology” with respect to AVHs has been outlined. This omission has resulted, Woods observes, in “circular arguments” about the voices of others, making it unclear which of these “are to be counted as “pathological” and “non-pathological.”<sup>157</sup>

This circular confusion is mesmerically described in Avital Ronell’s *Telephone Book*, where schizophrenia is understood as never having “had an easy access code.”<sup>158</sup> Even in its incipient period, Eugen Bleuler (following Emil Kraepelin) recognised how “the study of dementia praecox” had been often “shown to be too precocious to form as yet a system of closure; it exhibits resistance to totalization.”<sup>159</sup> As Ronell implies, if certain diagnostic categories are too open

155 Jacques Derrida, “The Rhetoric of Drugs,” tr. Michael Israel, in Alexander and Roberts, eds., *High Culture*, 19-42, 33. This interview with *Autrement* was originally published as “La rhétorique de la drogue,” in a special issue of *Autrement* 106 (1989), “L’Esprit des Drogues,” edited by Jean-Michel Hervieu. This version was then translated (by Israel) and published in *differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies: On Addiction* 5, no. 1 (1993): 1-25.

156 Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, 77.

157 See Angela Woods, Nev Jones, Marco Bernini, Felicity Callard, Ben Alderson-Day, Johanna C. Badcock, Vaughan Bell, Chris C. H. Cook, Thomas Csordas, Clara Humpsten, Joel Krueger, Frank Larøi, Simon McCarthy Jones, Peter Moseley, Hilary Powell, Andrea Raballo, David Smailes, and Charles Fernyhough, “Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Phenomenology of Auditory Verbal Hallucinations,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 40, no. 4 (2014): S246-S254, esp. S246.

158 Avital Ronell, *The Telephone Book: Technology, Schizophrenia, Electric Speech* (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 111.

159 *Ibid.*



to close themselves off from “other” phenomenological artifacts—too eruptive or embryonic to circumscribe their own peripheries—then they themselves becomes circular, like “telephone calls.” Such an uncanny and circular symptomatology always requires a receiver at the other end whose task comprises mediating these questionable voices. It needs, that is, an “operator on the line” who must switch off, or reconnect with what Carl Jung called “the ‘stupid chattering’ about which so many schizophrenics complain.”<sup>160</sup>

From the start, then, the diagnostic description assigned to the schizophrenic hews these figurations and psychotropes of circularity and looping. Jean Pierre Falret would describe the psychotic disorder as *le folie circulaire* or “circular insanity” in 1851, only a few years before Jules Baillarger appeared before the Paris Academy of Medicine to nosologically formalise his own description of the condition as a “double-shaped madness” or *folie à double forme*.<sup>161</sup> Characterised by the “rotation” between hyperactive feelings and melancholic depression or *acedia*, Baillarger proposed that the pendulous arc that swings between these affective phenomena (“soudées”) should be properly regarded as a singular attack (“accès”) rather than two distinct illnesses.<sup>162</sup> Of course, Baillarger’s formulation inherits its nosological protocols from Jean-Etienne Esquirol’s even earlier 1838 description of “a pain that keeps quiet, that has no tears, that remains passive,” and yet is paradoxically an “attack.”<sup>163</sup> It is in this context of the incipient development of psychiatric

160 Carl J. Jung, *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, tr. R.F.C. Hull, in *The Collected Works of C.J. Jung*, Bollingen Series 20 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 95. I note that a slightly different translation appears—with Jung speaking of the “unintelligible medley... which probably sounds similar to the ‘stupid chattering’ with which many patients are affected”—in Jung, *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, tr. Frederick Peterson (New York: The Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Company, 1909), 95.

161 Pierre Falret, Jules Baillarger, “Notes sur un genre de folie dont les accès sont caractérisés par deux périodes régulières, l’une dépression, l’autre d’excitation,” [Notes on a type of insanity in which attacks are characterised by two regular periods, one of depression, the other of excitation], *Bulletin of the Academy of Medicine* 19 (1854): 340, and *Annales médico-psychologiques* 6 (1854): 369. See Francois-Regis Cousin, Jean Garrabe, Denis Morozov, eds. *Anthology of French Language Psychiatric Texts* (Le Plessis-Robinson: Institut Synthélabo pour le Progrès de la Connaissance, 1999), 127-44.

162 Falret and Baillarger, “Notes sur un genre de folie,” 340.

163 So argue Thierry Haustgen and Hagop Akiskal in “French Antecedents of ‘Contemporary’ Concepts in the American Psychiatric Association’s Classification of Bipolar (Mood) Disorders,” *Journal of Affective Disorders* 96 (2006): 149-63, 150-1; Etienne Esquirol, *Des maladies mentales considérées sous les rapports médical, hygiénique et médico-légal*, 2 vols. (Paris: J.B. Baillière, 1838), 1: 414; also see Esquirol, *Mental Maladies: Treatise on Insanity*, tr. E. K. Hunt (Philadelphia: Lea and Blanchard, 1845). Esquirol characterises all mania as “attack[s],” so that “rage is but an *attack* of anger prolonged [and] suicide is an *attack* of despair” (26, my emphasis). Also see Robert Castel, *The Reg-*



studies of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder that Baillarger conceives of a Lévinasian or Lacanian “other.” And it is in this way that he anticipates how psychosis and madness may in fact injure the subject, characterising this double-shaped structure not simply as “psychoactivity,” but as “attacks.”<sup>164</sup>

These developments in French medicine and psychiatry brush productively against the historical institutionalisation of a range of principles related to psychoanalysis and individual psychology, which had been developed about a century earlier in Germany—but by means of a markedly different axiomatics.<sup>165</sup> Germans privileged the figure of the “artistic genius” that had been developed in the Classical Age, venerating this figure over that of techno-medical “maniac” that had been nosologised by physicians like Baillarger and Falret.<sup>166</sup> The transition from inside to outside, same (monologism) to other (dialogism), or from scrivener to psychoactive scrivener, is signified by one aspect of Germany’s *fin de siècle* shift—the one in which the “demonic force” of *Genius* gives way to the new valorisation of the singular *Genie*. Rainer Nägele describes the shift in clear terms:

The shift from Genius to Genie in German takes place in the second half of the eighteenth century, and it indicates not only the point of a fundamental shift in aesthetic and poetological conceptions, but also the point where psychoanalysis radically differs from psychology. [This shift] can be described as an internalization of creativity, as a claim for creativity of the individual subject that in turn is located in the ego. One can also describe it as a grammatical difference: one can have a Genius, but one can be a Genie—at least, so it is said.<sup>167</sup>

*ulation of Madness: The Origins of Incarceration in France*, tr. W. D. Halls (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 94. Foucault dismissively asserts that Esquirol “adds nothing other than the new family of monomania to the traditional pattern of mania, melancholia, dementia and imbecility.” Foucault, *History of Madness*, 201.

164 See Haustgen and Akiskal, “French Antecedents of “Contemporary” Concepts,” 151; Edward Shorter, *A History of Psychiatry* (Wiley: New York, 1997), 104-5; A. Pacheco Palha and Manuel F. Esteves, “The Origin of Dementia Praecox,” *Schizophrenia Research* 29 (1997): 99-103, 101; Cousin, et al., eds. *Anthology of French Language Psychiatric Texts*, 55-90.

165 Later, Germans such as Bleuler and Krapelin will also seek to recuperate this intellectual loss to the French medical fraternity, integrating these French psychiatric definitions into their own programs of reification. On this recuperation, see Adityanjee, Yekeen A. Aderibigbe, D. Theodoridis, and Victor R. Vieweg, “Dementia Praecox to Schizophrenia: The First 100 Years,” *Psychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences* 53 (1999): 437-48.

166 After all, these Frenchmen were *physicians* at the Salpêtrière hospital—not psychiatrists. See Haustgen and Akiskal, “French Antecedents of “Contemporary” Concepts in the American Psychiatric Association’s Classification of Bipolar (Mood) Disorders,” 151.

167 Rainer Nägele, *Reading After Freud* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 16,

If, as Nägele argues, the mid-eighteenth century marks a moment in which the essence of talent—the demoniacal *Genius*—is suddenly internalised, injected into the subject’s nervous system, morphologising and transforming them into a singular *Genie*, then it may be less surprising that this comestible *Genie*—now reterritorialised and relocated in the body—should then become psychoactive, as if crossing the blood-brain barrier to produce the psychoactive scrivener.<sup>168</sup> Hereafter the scrivener slowly becomes a psychoactive brain-subject; and where the notion of “poetic madness as divine inspiration” had been previously endorsed, now what Silke-Maria Weineck describes as “poetic madness as an individual pathology” supplants the former, together with a new shift to nosographic classification.<sup>169</sup>

This relates to that anomie, melancholy, *weltschmerz*, torpor, or *acedia* that Thomas Aquinas had distinguished as “the sorrow of the world,” rather than a sorrow “according to God.”<sup>170</sup> This same kind of affect, which had also been previously associated with the figure of the genius in the Romantic writings of Lord Byron, Wordsworth, and Giacomo Leopardi, now also becomes ripe for pathologisation.<sup>171</sup> In Bénédict Augusten Morel’s 1852 neologism *démonce précoce*, it is precisely this “kind of torpor akin to hebetude”—conspicuous in its contradistinction from the “brilliant intellectual faculties” that precede it—that is subsumed into the itinerary of medical epistemology, leading to the category of schizophrenia.<sup>172</sup>

quoted in Silke-Maria Weineck, *The Abyss Above: Philosophy and Poetic Madness in Plato, Hölderlin and Nietzsche* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2002), 12.

168 See Irina Sirotkina, *Diagnosing Literary Genius: A Cultural History of Psychiatry in Russia, 1880-1930* (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Albert Rotherburg, *Creativity and Madness: New Findings and Old Stereotypes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990); Hans Eysenck, *Genius: The Natural History of Creativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); David W. Chan, “The Mad Genius Controversy: Does the East Differ From the West?” *Education Journal* 29, no. 1 (2001): 1-15, esp. 6-7.

169 Weineck, *The Abyss Above*, 12.

170 See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 5 vols. (New York: Cosimo, 2013), 3: (Part 2), 1339-1342, 1341.

171 Harold Bloom, for instance, argues that Wordsworth and Leopold, while different, share in the tradition of the High Romanticist “crisis-poem,” in which the “poet saves himself from *acedia* if only to write the next poem, to make it possible.” Bloom, *The Anatomy of Influence: Literature as a Way of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 164.

172 This is how Morel describes a 14-year-old patient with “premature dementia” in his *Etudes Cliniques sur les Maladies Mentales* [Clinical Studies on Mental Diseases], 2 vols. (Paris: J.B. Baillière, 1852), 1: 7-8. Also see Bénédict Augusten Morel, *Traité des dégénérescences physique, intellectuelle et morale de l’espèce humaine* [Treatise on the Physical, Intellectual, and Moral Degenerations of the Human Species] (Paris: J.B. Baillière, 1857); also see Michel Foucault, *The History of Madness*, ed. Jean Khalfa, tr.

The pendulous arc by which genius appears—and then disappears—in the taciturn figure of the scrivener will now be apprehended as a circular whole, or as *le folie circulaire*.<sup>173</sup> Reevaluating Dryden's claim that genius and madness are neighbours, Esquirol will insert a pointed caveat: Dryden's statement is "correct," he writes, only if Dryden means that genius presents an *analogy* with madness. If Dryden means that "great intelligence predisposes to madness," however, "then it is wrong."<sup>174</sup> As a kind of surrogate dictator for Dryden—and a scrivener in his own right—Esquirol plays down the conjugation between madness and genius, which is wrong, he avers, in every way except as a woolly analogy.

Earlier in the century, Sydenham had noted (as Foucault also points out), that meloncholics were

People who are very prudent and judicious; and who must excel, from Deep Thought and Wisdom of Speech... so that Aristotle was right, when he said, That melancholy People are the most ingenious.<sup>175</sup>

But as with the Romantics's emphasis on "divine illness" as inspiration, and Plato's *enthusiasmos*, Aristotle's defence of meloncholia's "Wisdom" will now be systematically reduced by nineteenth-century medicine to an internalised aberration, one that gifts "nineteenth-century physicians" with the power to "transform both 'divine illness' and artistic genius into medical categories."<sup>176</sup>

Jonathan Murphy and Jean Khalfa (London: Routledge, 2009) 375-6.

173 On the subsequent emergence of bipolar disorder and schizophrenia out of German psychiatrist Karl Kahlbaum's 1874 description of "catatonia," see David Healy, *Mania: A Short History of Bipolar Disorder* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 67-8; Karl Kahlbaum, *Catatonia*, tr. Y. Levij and T. Pridan (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); *Katatonie oder das Spannungsirresein* (Berlin: Verlag von August Hirschwald, 1874).

174 Esquirol, *Mental Maladies*, 41. Also see Neil Kessel, "Genius and Mental Disorder: A History of Ideas Concerning their Conjunction," in *Genius: The History of an Idea*, ed. Penelope Murray (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 196-212.

175 Thomas Sydenham, "Of Hysterick Diseases," in *The Whole Works of Thomas Sydenham*, ed. John Pechey (London: for W. Feales, 1734), 306-7.

176 Sirotkina, *Diagnosing Literary Genius*, 3. Cf. Michael Neve, "Medicine and Literature," in *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*, 2 vols., ed. W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993), 2: 1530; on "pathography," a mode of criticism that has lively and obvious resonances with my own project of psychopharmacography, see Anne Hawkins, "The Two Pathographies: A Study in Illness and Literature," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 9 (1984): 231-52; Francis Schiller, *A Möbius Strip Fin-de-siècle Neuropsychiatry and Paul Möbius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); George Becker, *The Mad Genius Controversy: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (California: Sage, 1978).

Intrinsic to the linguistic structure of these classifications—such as in the monologism of the appellation “double insanity”—appears an impulse to singularise the dialogical exchange between excited, stimulated production, and its *retournement*: that is, a retreat into torpor. But cognitive linguistics also confirms that it is precisely this pendulous back-and-forth that characterises the “fits and starts” and the “messy” protocols of writing itself.<sup>177</sup> And of course, while none of these psychiatric texts explicitly seeks to erase the Romantic, and even Platonian, conception of literary genius, which is itself defined by an impulse to write, the erasure of this drive—achieved through pathologisation—is tied up with this history.

French physician Louis-François Lèlut’s 1836 work, *Du Démon de Socrate*, for instance, specifically attends to Socrates’s practices of phonology to orthography conversion (POC). Lèlut’s names Socrates’s “inner voice” an actual hallucination, and describes Socrates as “*un fou*” (a fool), even before the psychiatric category of madness—as *démence précocé*—had been given its name.<sup>178</sup> But if, with Irina Sirotkina, we adopt the view that the development of French psychiatry represents a benign, and indeed even a Hippocratically defensible attempt to heal—a work aiming less to redress the Romantic notion of genius than to further the Victorian goals of progress, reason, and civilisation—then works of “pathography” such as Lèlut’s may be seen, in their combination of literary-critical and medical methodologies, as undertaking a critical interdisciplinary work. And of course, this is a kind of work on which this thesis, for instance, extends.<sup>179</sup>

177 Tomas Quinlan, Marielle Leijten, and Luuk Van Waes, “Coordinating the Cognitive Process of Writing: The Role of the Monitor,” *Written Communication* 29 (2012): 345-368, 346.

178 Guntav K. Thaker notes that, in the last century, the method by which psychiatrists classify three broad categories of psychotic illness—as organic, affective, and poor outcome—has “taken root.” Here, Morel’s “poor outcome” category (by which he invented the prognostic method) has had great influence in distinguishing schizophrenia and bipolar. Thaker notes that the prognostic (“poor outcome”) category often diacritically indicates schizophrenic illness, so that bipolar affective disorder or autism, for instance, when combined with the “poor outcome” criterion, will be so diagnosed as schizophrenia. See Thaker, “Neurophysiological Endophenotypes Across Bipolar and Schizophrenia Psychosis,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 34, no. 4 (2008): 760-73, esp. 760. See François Lèlut, *Du Démon de Socrate: Specimen d’une Application de la Science Psychologique* (Paris: Trinquart, Libraire-Editeur, 1836), 8. George Becker, for instance, argues that Lèlut’s book is the first pathography in history: *The Mad Genius Controversy*, 28. Also see the relatively well-argued pathographic assessment of Socrates’s writing in Morris J. Karpas, “Socrates in the Light of Modern Psychopathology,” *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology* 10, no. 3 (1914): 185-200, esp. 188. On French psychiatric thought generally, see, Pierre Pichot, “The Diagnosis and Classification of Mental Disorders in French-speaking Countries: Background, Current Views and Comparison with other Nomenclatures,” *Psychological Medicine* 12 (1982): 475-92.

179 Sirotkina, *Diagnosing Literary Genius*, 5-7.

There is a diacritical point, however, that distinguishes the French psychiatric fraternity's topologically circular descriptions of the emergent neurological disorders of bipolar affective disorder and schizophrenia from the historical image of the literary genius. The drawn-out, prolonged, and circular processions of melancholy that affect the hebephrenic constitute a torpor so long and morose—and for that time so distant from ingeniousness—that recovery through the restoration of some excitation eludes any reasonable expectation.<sup>180</sup> Looking for an evolutionary explanation, Morel tethers his nosography, *démence précoce*, to an “overtly Lamarckian” theory of degeneration, one that is “inspired in the concept of the original sin.”

Morel thus becomes one of the first psychiatrists to introduce a “course of illness” or *prognostic* criterion into the system of psychiatric *diagnosis*.<sup>181</sup> While ostensibly disreputable for its allusion to Lamarckism, Morel's detection of pathogenic inheritance was almost immediately endorsed by Kraepelin. It had also always been intrinsic to the topological model of psychotic illness as *circular* in that it witnesses the biogenetic or “bionic” *retournement* of the pre-literate, non-scribal subject as the appearance of a “psycho-passive” machine, which follows after the previous appearance of the acute and unadulterated “psychoactive” scrivener.

After all, such a subject had not always written or spoken—at least not *phylogenetically*. Either as a human technic, a pharmakonic invention, or a gift from a god, the Word had been developed only after the human actually themselves appeared.<sup>182</sup> “Precocious dementia” thus names the disorder's two polar valences—excited precocity and demented madness—only in order to form a “unicity” that reflects the evolutionary oscillation between pre-Word and post-Word consciousness. And it does this while relying on the prognostic, temporal, or “course of illness” criterion for its diagnosis.<sup>183</sup>

Of course the word “dementia” itself registers a methexis between surface and depth, presence and absence, and one that is entailed by the disease itself. Yet ironically, when it names the condition thus, psychiatry performs

180 As Howells importantly asserts, under Morel's model, *précoce* means rapid deterioration rather than early age of onset: John G. Howells, ed., *The Concept of Schizophrenia: Historical Perspectives* (Washington: American Psychiatric Press, 1991); also see Anthony Clare, *Psychiatry in Dissent: Controversial Issues in Thought and Practice* (London: Tavistock, 1976), 121.

181 Adityanjee, “Dementia Praecox to Schizophrenia,” 438; German E. Berrios and Dominic Beer, “The Notion of a Unitary Psychosis: A Conceptual History,” *History of Psychiatry* 5 (1994): 13-36, esp. 28-9.

182 See Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. Waterfield, 69.

183 “Bionic” is a term that Ronell deploys here to register the seemingly increasingly machinic nature of those patients under the psychiatric gaze: *The Telephone Book*, 118.

a hallucinated logic that is also characteristic of that disorder—almost as a way to compensate for its erasure. This is because it names those “present” symptomatic affects that appear in the patient—and seemingly arise from actions in the mind or brain—and then from these takes the word “dementia,” a word that comes from the Latin *dēmēns*, meaning “out of one’s mind.”<sup>184</sup> However, the description also names the kind of carceral or irremediable (phylogenetic) relation to heredity and embodiment that is always, in Morel’s and Kraepelin’s formulations, identifiable as the patient’s association with old age, with death, and other “morbid forms”—it deploys, that is, the word by which we identify, in our present nomenclature, the long-recognised association of dementia with old age, degeneration, and decay.<sup>185</sup>

For all these terminological striations, what becomes problematic in the disorder’s essential rubric—as Jung recognises—is its uncanny effect on the body. Continuing to work as if a “bionic unconscious”—even after the apparent “degeneration” of the subject’s mind—the body of the schizophrenic contrasts visibly with the patient’s *mood*, which has now entered into the requisite torpor.<sup>186</sup> But how does a process of phonological transcription still occur—by hand or through “the mouth”—in instances of dementia praecox?

184 OED Online, Oxford University Press, s.v. “dement, adj. and n.” accessed 14 January 2014, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/49628/>.

185 Describing a “periodic and circular insanity,” for instance, Kraepelin hypothesises in his *Manic-Depressive Insanity and Paranoia* that this condition was “a single morbid process” and that “all morbid forms brought together here as clinical entity, *not only pass over the one into the other without recognizable boundaries, but that they may even replace each other in the same case.*” Emil Kraepelin, *Manic-Depressive Insanity and Paranoia*, tr. George M. Robertson (Edinburgh: E & S Livingstone, 1921), 2, emphasis in original. Also see David Healy, chapter 3, “Circular Madness,” in *Mania: A Short History of Bipolar Disorder* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 52-88, esp. 61-2.

186 Ronell, *The Telephone Book*, 118. The potential for what Ronell calls the “bionic unconscious” perhaps achieves its most extraordinary narrativisation in the story of James Tilley Matthews, the first person to insist that his mind had come under the control of a machine. What is incredible about Tilley’s psychiatric history is that, as Mike Jay points out, almost all of the conspiracies in which Tilley claimed he was involved were revealed to have a basis in fact. See Mike Jay, *The Influencing Machine: James Tilly Matthews and the Air Loom* (London: Attractor Press, 2012). Tilley’s case predates Morel’s, Kraepelin’s, and even Bailliarger’s and Falret’s, classificatory systems. Matthews was treated by John Haslam, who described many of the features of schizophrenia in 1809, before the aforementioned French psychiatrists adumbrated the category. But notably this was not before Philippe Pinel’s first integrated definition of schizophrenia in 1801. See Pinel, *A Treatise on Insanity, 1806* (New York: Hafner, 1962); John Haslam, *Observations on Madness and Melancholy* (London: J. Callows, 1867); Adityanjee, “Dementia Praecox to Schizophrenia,” 438; Nigel M. Bark, “On the History of Schizophrenia,” *New York State Journal of Medicine* 88 (1988): 374-83; Foucault, *The History of Madness*, 201-2.



As Jung detects, both organs still function (for they usually belong to a young person), and they remain gestural and deictic “in spite” of the schizophrenic-disaffective body relation, which now afflicts the subject, causing them to articulate an “anonymous flow of speech.”<sup>187</sup>

Accentuating the automatisisation of the schizo-hebephrenic, Jung mimics the “precocious dement,” and tells us, by way of illustration, that they “might talk” in this way:

For four months I have had queer ideas; it seems to me that I am obliged to think and say them; someone makes me speak, someone suggests to me coarse words and it is not my fault if my mouth works in spite of me.<sup>188</sup>

It is striking that, in Jung’s imitation of the psychotic’s attitude toward their own language, the mouth is imagined as having taken over the “work” of externalising the subject’s “queer ideas.”<sup>189</sup> For it is here that we see a kind of subjective *automatisisation* in speech by or through a *robotised* body—one that recalls Bernard Stiegler’s notion of “epiphylogenesis,” at least in that this form of evolution resembles a technical or technological evolution (or devolution), which affects the scrivener’s voice.<sup>190</sup>

As cognitive studies suggest, a range of endo- and exoperformative praxes of the kind here exhibited now become “ballistic,” so that the scrivener is—as an increasing number of tasks attenuates their role and capacity—no longer able to use their executive function—their cerebral cortex—to monitor all of them.<sup>191</sup>

187 Jung, *The Psychology Of Dementia Praecox*, 81-4; I take the “anonymous flow of speech” from Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 174. Also see, in this same essay, Foucault’s discussion of the mouth and Deleuze’s “phonodecentering” at 179-80. On the mouth as an “organ of depths,” see Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, 181, 187-8, 196, and esp. 223.

188 *Ibid.*, 84. This passage is also quoted in Ronell, *The Telephone Book*, 118 (Ronell’s note cites a different edition and translation of this work).

189 Ronell also notices the strikingness of this passage, asserting that here “there exists an accentuation on the physiological organization of the mouthpiece, a kind of mechanized vision of the body in response...” Ronell, *The Telephone Book*, 118.

190 See Stiegler, *Technics and Time*, 1, 266-7; Andres Vaccari and Belinda Barnet, “Prolegomena to a Future Robot History: Stiegler, Epiphylogenesis and Technical Evolution,” *Transformations* 17 (2009): [http://www.transformationsjournal.org/journal/issue\\_17/article\\_09.shtml/](http://www.transformationsjournal.org/journal/issue_17/article_09.shtml/)

191 Cf. Cohen and Poldrack’s study of writers in which they found “the ability to inhibit a motor response *does not* decrease with automaticity, suggesting that some aspects of automatic behaviour are not ballistic.” Jessica R. Cohen and Russel A. Poldrack, “Automaticity in Motor Sequence Learning Does not Impair Response Inhibition,” *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 15, no. 1 (2008): 108-15, esp. 108, emphasis mine. In contrast, previous studies have shown that error correction may be inhibited—that is,



No longer simply a scribe, the scrivener is now responsible for more than phoneme to orthographeme conversion (POC); they must also switch between multiple praxes, and this makes the scrivener increasingly subject to a new form of cognitive depletion: namely, to torpor, fatigue, acedia, and “automatisation.”<sup>192</sup> Now a “machinic assemblage,” the scrivener confronts what Guattari calls their “territorialised genome”; they are continuously pushed beyond their “perfectly circumscribed” potential, and must reveal their degeneracy and dementedness, becoming the Deleuzoguattarian “Body Without Organs”—or, as Ronell alternatively offers, a “bionic unconscious.”<sup>193</sup>

Now when the scrivener opens their automatic mouth they reveal the place “where cries are broken into phonemes, morphemes, semantemes,” a place “where the profundity of an oral body separates itself from incorporeal meaning.”<sup>194</sup> Acting as if on a kind of drug—or else as if in need of some recuperative medication—these mad beings who have “queer ideas” and feel “obliged to speak them” become at once present and absent, energetic and morbid, dual yet singular, circular yet static. Their unicities, which were once dispersed, have now become the schizzes and flows that begin to encumber and attenuate the psychoactive scrivener. This new personage who could be, in Heidegger’s words, an “Anyone,” *Verfallen*—a degenerated figure, living

writers will not adjust their behaviour, and will “automatically” continue scrivening: Mariëlle Leijten, Sarah Ransdell, and Luuk Van Waes, “Correcting text production errors: Isolating the Effects of Writing Mode from Error Span, Input Mode, and Lexicality,” *Written Communication* 27, no. 2 (2010): 189-227; Mariëlle Leijten, Luuk Van Waes, and Daniël Janssen, “Error correction Strategies of Professional Speech Recognition Users: Three Profiles,” *Computers in Human Behaviour* 26 (2010): 964-75. Also see Donald Norman and Tim Shallice, “Attention to Action: Willed and Automatic Control of Behaviour,” in Richard J. Davidson, Gary E. Schwartz and David Shapiro, eds., *Consciousness and Self-regulation: Advances in Research and Theory* (New York: Plenum Press, 1986), 4: 1-18.

192 As one study proposes, the writer undertakes at least four processes, acting as “a proposer, which generates ideas; a translator, which converts them into strings, a transcriber, which converts them to strings; and an evaluator/reviser, which evaluates proposed and written language”: John R. Hayes and N. Anne Chenoweth, “Is working Memory Involved in the Transcribing and Editing of Texts?” *Written Communication* 23, no. 2 (2006): 135-141; cf. Hayes and Chenoweth, “Working Memory In an Editing Task,” *Written Communication* 24, no. 4 (2007): 283-294; and Hayes and Linda S. Flower, “Identifying the Organization of Writing Processes,” in Lee W. Gregg and Erwin R. Steinberg, eds., *Cognitive Processes In Writing* (Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 1980), 3-30.

193 Disinclined to fully anticipate the dubious advent of Lamarckian epigenetics, Guattari articulates the difference between the human and machine thus:

The reproducibility of the technical machine differs from that of living beings, in that it is not based on sequential codes perfectly circumscribed in a territorialized genome.

Guattari, *Chaosmosis*, 42.

194 Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 179.

under “the conspicuous domination of [those] Others”—is now the being most likely to produce the most curious combination of psychotropes.<sup>195</sup>

For now, these others are no longer simply the scribe’s dictating sovereigns—their employers—and nor are they simply their Gods. Rather, these others are precisely a field of compositional praxes, which—so developed and refined—are apt to reflect and induce the symptomatology of demented precocity within the scribal space as well as the brain’s own workspace; here they harness and repudiate the progressively entrenched psychopolitical milieu, shaping the way in which the scrivener will henceforth fluctuate between precocious genius and torporific dementia.<sup>196</sup>

This chapter has offered a history of the psychoactive scrivener, and has concluded by attending to the ways in which an increasingly diagnostic and psychiatrised West has imposed new and material constraints on the scrivener’s avocation. In the contemporary world, we are all partly subject to these influences; and we are thus, perhaps, all at least part psychoactive scribes too. To “deautomatise” from these newly “automatised” influences, then, would be to disengage from these normative and imperial constraints—even if this means that one, ironically, is more likely now to be all the more violently condemned or excluded as aberrant and non-normative. Reflecting on this scenario, the next chapter focuses on precisely this kind of “deautomatisation,” charting the ways in which such deautomatisations have arisen in twentieth-century literary history, and on how others may arise in the future.

195 Heidegger, *Being and Time: A Translation of Sein und Zeit*, tr. Joan Stambaugh (New York: State University of New York Press, 1996), 133n3, 241-2. Also see Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, tr. Michael Eldred, *Theory and History of Literature* 40 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 200, 212n47.

196 Criticising the “immanentist” critical- and anti-psychiatric theorists of the late twentieth century, Peter Sedgwick argues that “physical medicine” does not simply belong “to the world of Fact [and] natural substances” while “psychiatry,” on the other hand, “belongs to the world of Value [and] of ethical judgements.” Unwilling to concede medicine’s “value-free, apolitical, and objective character,” Sedgwick reconceives illness altogether, making visible the extent to which, while *le folie circulaire* has been treated as a “disease,” it is less a medical than an anthropocentric description of the body. See Sedgwick, *Psycho Politics*, 28-30. Foucault makes a similar point in his “The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century,” when he argues that the eighteenth century “prescribed new rules, and above all transposed the practice onto an explicit, concerted level of analysis such as had been previously unknown.” At this point,” Foucault argues “the age is entered not so much of social medicine as of a considered *noso-politics*”: *The Foucault Reader*, 273-291, 274, my emphasis.

## Chapter Three

# (De)automatising Subjects: Scrivening in Modern Literary History

*To all the scribes and artists and practitioners of magic  
through whom these spirits have manifested... NOTHING  
IS TRUE. EVERYTHING IS PERMITTED.*

—William S. Burroughs<sup>1</sup>

WHILE MUCH ADUMBRATED IN modern literary history, the image and nature of the scrivener remains little assessed. Scriveners appear in literary fiction ranging from Herman Melville's "Bartleby, The Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street" (1853)<sup>2</sup> to Neal Stephenson's postmodernist science fiction novel *Cryptonomicon*—a work in which a "computer," a close relative to the scrivener, "is a human being." From around the 1850s and onwards, modern conceptualisations of the scrivener elaborate an increasingly diffuse network of pluralised articulations, illuminating the peculiar psychopathology of what initially seems a newly machinic author. By contrast, these figures are also increasingly the utterers of polyphonus voices, endowed with progressively more liberal political freedoms, and given greater and intellectual capacities, including "critical literacy."<sup>3</sup> And yet, as I will argue in this chapter, the scrivener operates as a *deauthorised* author; that is, as a newly enhanced model of the pre-modern scribe.

1 William S. Burroughs, *Cities of the Red Night* (London: Picador, 1982), xviii. Quoted in Polina Mackay, "Authorship in the Writings and Films of William S. Burroughs," in Kyriaki Hadjiafxendi and Polina Mackay, *Authorship in Context: From the Theoretical to the Material* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 111.

2 Melville's short story first appeared serially without his name in the November and December 1853 editions of *Putnam's Magazine* under this title. It was reprinted with minor amendments under the shortened title "Bartleby" in *The Piazza Tales* (New York: Dix & Edwards, 1856). All references hereafter are given to the following edition: Herman Melville, "Bartleby," in *The Piazza Tales* (London: Constable and Company, 1923), 19-65.

3 On the scrivener's mental capacity, see my chapter 1.

Despite their new capacities, the scrivener's still-limited freedom presents a problem, one that is taken up in a range of texts focalised through the distinctive voice of a *dissatisfied* scrivening protagonist.<sup>4</sup> In these works, scrivening becomes an authorial performance covertly undertaken; it occurs in secret, and without the consent or authorisation of a dictating other. These are countertexts, then, *about* countertexts, conceived of as interdialogical meditations by renegade writers. Elaborately and systematically analysed by N. Katherine Hayles in *My Mother Was A Computer* (a study of the "Regime of Computation"), Stephenson's novel, for instance—not unlike Melville's story—may be understood as a lamentation on writing, one that is narrated by a thoughtful protagonist whose intellectual capacities have been, and continue to be, reduced, curbed, and redirected to the ends of a dominant, authorising voice embedded in an exteriorised power structure.<sup>5</sup>

A mathematical genius, *Cryptonomicon's* protagonist, Lawrence Pritchard Waterhouse, exhibits his commitment to authorship in his willingness to persist with the technomaterial labour with which he is tasked, a drudgery that involves the performance of successive computer-aided decryption and encryption operations. In Stephenson's novel as much as Hayles's critical volume, we learn of how the implacable imposition of power from above affects writing, narrowing the field of possibility within which an agent, protagonist, or an author freely operates.

Michiel Heyns's *The Typewriter's Tale* (2005) hews similar territory, fabricating the story of a narrator who charts the ontological manoeuvrings of protagonist Freida Wroth, an amanuensis to American literary realist Henry James.<sup>6</sup> Conceiving of her position as "neither guest nor servant" (TT, 6), Wroth feels as though she has become merely a machine, one that James operates to bring into material existence his not-yet-materialised thoughts—

4 Melville's novel is almost certainly the capsule text of this genre, and it is for this reason that I shall examine it in detail in chapter 4, the chapter that follows.

5 N. Katherine Hayles, *My Mother Was A Computer* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 1. It is notable that in Stephenson's novel it is a Lieutenant superior to Waterhouse, a Colonel Earl Cornstock, who insists that "A computer is a human being." As Hayles points out, this observation alludes to the etymology and usage of the term "computer," whose usage in the 1930s and '40s varied so as to denote to those professionals who were employed to perform calculations. But Hayles's etymological analysis only scarcely suggests the way in which this scene demonstrates how their term "computer" may traffics in both derogatory and delegatory meanings in the context of present-day (and futurological) digital discourse. See Neal Stephenson, *Cryptonomicon* (New York: Avon, 2002), 599-600.

6 Also see Karen Scherzinger, "The *Jouissance* of Influence: Being and Following The Writer in Michiel Heyns's *The Typewriter's Tale*," *Journal of Literary Studies* 26, no. 1 (2010): 1-19.

a scrivener merely of “type”: “She was a typewriter, *tout court*, and persons of quality did not as a rule dine with their typewriters” (*TT*, 33). Here as in other formulations of typists, secretaries, notaries, and the like, the scrivener is subjectively reduced to a machinic body whose ontological functions are wholly integrated with their authorial tasks. It is as Heinz Hartmann writes: an instance in which the “integration of the somatic systems involved in the action is automatized, and so is the integration of the individual mental acts involved in it.”<sup>7</sup>

Politicising this complex institutionalisation of lexical servitude as it subsists in the late twentieth century, Hayles identifies, in what she calls the Computational Universe, a malignant compulsion that serves only to curtail the typewriter or calculator’s freedom in a metaphysical sense. The “Regime of Computation,” Hayles asserts,

reduces ontological requirements to a bare minimum. Rather than an initial premise (such as God, an originary Logos, or the axioms of Euclidean geometry) out of which multiple entailments spin, computation requires only an elementary distinction between something and nothing (one and zero) and a small set of logical operations.<sup>8</sup>

Hayles’s implicit averment that these “multiple entailments” spin out of an initial premise—such as some “originary Logos” of the kind traced (and inaugurated) by Derrida’s “transcendental signified”—relies on a view of written material as itself “transcendental.” It relies, that is, on a conception of this typographic matter as constitutively different to digitally- or electronically-produced media. But the distinction rings with the aporia of Kant’s notion of the transcendental subject.<sup>9</sup> In need of an *a posteriori* “working out” or decoding, writing is that particular art, argues Hayles, which has always allured novelists to itself by its promise to function as a decodable cryptogram that, at the same time as it is enigmatic, is also productive of an affective *jouissance* in lay readers as much as literary critics and scholars.

Computation’s investment in binary code offers no such promise of inter-

7 Heinz Hartmann, *Ego Psychology and the Problem of Adaptation* (New York: International Universities Press, 1958), 88-91; also see Arthur J. Deikman, “Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience,” in Tart, ed. *Altered States of Consciousness* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969), 23-43, 30.

8 Hayles, *My Mother Was A Computer*, 21-22.

9 See Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgement*, tr. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), 50-51; and Seán Burke, “Reconstructing the Author,” in *Authorship: From Plato to the Postmodern* (London: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), xxv.

pretative pleasure, since what triggers and constitutes its emergent complexity is precisely its status as “knowable and quantifiable phenomena,” that—freed both from the mysteries of the Logos and the complexities of discursive explanations dense with ambiguities—relieves readers of the task of decoding and decryption.<sup>10</sup>

Such a distinction between computation and metaphysics not only divests *computers* of their metaphysical potentiality, however; it also downplays the automatising or “computational” economy out of which the scrivener, a computer in their own right, may be thought now capable of producing, enacting, or performing something *like* an originary Logos. Disabusing from this machinic author the power to reappropriate, redeploy, or experiment with these technics in as-of-now unimaginable, *metaphysical* ways, Hayles’s distinction delimits—albeit as it deftly organises—our metaphysical understanding of computative or computational authorship.

Wielding what individual power is afforded to all subjects—or perhaps, to invoke Latour, to all “actants”—the scrivener yet remains partially compromised by his or her duty to write, a duty that is enforced by a surfeit of socio-legal interdictions at the primary level of the institutional operant (see “O1” in figure 2.1).<sup>11</sup> It is arguable that an inexorable trace of some malaise (speaking in affective terms), or simply an imprecisely expressed orientation to “loss,” develops in the scrivener’s particularised and circumscribed act of writing here—a trace that derives from the abnegation of their individual agency. Now the evidence of little more than their self-sacrifice, the scrivener’s work is not simply contoured by what has been spent, for instance, in terms of the writer’s metrical (Chronos) time; it is also a dessication of the event, or a *disoccasion* of the moment (a never-occasioned or never-occasioning instant), in which the scrivener’s own self-directed memorialisation of history—their own “exteriorization” or record of “the past”—accedes to its own supplantation under the weight of an exteriorised force.<sup>12</sup>

When Huxley, by way of Broad, indicates the end limit of the “Mind at

10 Ibid., 41.

11 A clear introduction to actor-network theory appears in Bruno Latour’s *Reassembling the Social: an Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 10-11.

12 I use “exteriorization” here after Stiegler, who conceives of writing, through technics, as “the pursuit of life by means other than life.” If Stiegler’s formulation is accepted, then we may also posit that the scrivener is the subject (X) through whom another being (Y) pursues life. The formulation may thus read as follows: X pursues life by means “other than their life,” but by what means exactly? By means of Y’s life. See Stiegler, *Technics and Time I*, 17.

Large,” he explains that, far from apprehending the universe’s past, this Mind at Large has access only to that past which is actually witnessed by the subject; here, the scrivener’s mind becomes a cipher (or perhaps a “Mind at Small”) through which precisely this *inaccessible* but universal past (what I call “Infinitude” in figure 2.2) is made apparent to their controller—now the master or critical reader of the writer—as *their past*. Brought under the umbrage of some externality—some remote and foregone periodisation—the scrivener produces a set of inscriptions that, if they are to be dutifully accomplished, must be written at the expense of their own memorial recollection, their own memory. The unwritten past of the scrivener now suddenly becomes the universal past with respect to which even the Mind at Large remains barred and excluded; it thus constitutes the Deleuzoguattarian conception of Aeon time: the inexpressible, common, ontological past shared between subjects and objects alike. When Stiegler identifies a similar expanse of time in Heidegger’s “*l’historical*,” he names this duration the “temporality of Dasein.” For him, it is the past “that I never lived but is nevertheless my own.”<sup>13</sup>

Imbricated in material technics as much as in transient moments, this apparently inaccessible-yet-universal time also limns a phenomenology of epigenetics and, as Stiegler so radically asserts, inherits much from the “Lamarckian dimension” of evolutionary philosophy. Lamarck’s for-two-centuries marginalised program for evolutionary adaptation is not, however, simply brought into the Stieglerian fold for the French thinker’s own archaic or esoteric reasons. Recuperated as vociferously by modern scientific studies as it is re-enchanted by Stiegler’s study of time, renewed interest in Lamarckism opens the door to a novel conceptualisation of incarnate memory whose dimensions may yet ramify as the rediscovery of his theory, a realisation that transgenerational genetics do indeed involve the transfer, through some imperceptible media, of certain acquired or even “misremembered” characteristics and experiences developed during one’s lifetime.<sup>14</sup>

13 Stiegler, *Technics and Time I*, 140.

14 See, for example, Warren W. Burggren, “Epigenetics as a Source of Variation in Comparative Animal Physiology—or—Lamarck is Lookin’ Pretty Good These Days,” *The Journal of Experimental Biology* 217 (2014): 682-9; and (less recently) Eva Jablonka and Marion J. Lamb, *Epigenetic Inheritance and Evolution: The Lamarckian Dimension* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). Cf. Edith Heard and Robert Martienssen, “Transgenerational Epigenetic Inheritance: Myths and Mechanisms,” *Cell* 157, no. 1 (2014): 95-109. Lamarck’s original theory is outlined in his 1809 work titled *Philosophie zoologique, ou exposition des considerations relatives à l’histoire naturelle des animaux* [*Zoological Philosophy. An Exposition with Regard to the Natural History of Animals*], tr. Hugh Elliot (London: Macmillan, 1914).



For Stiegler, the universal time of the past is the “aporetic” moment in which the scrivener, as much as their tools, emerges not “from a consciousness present to itself, [the] master of matter,” but will “pursue a process engaged long before the rupture” between “inside and outside,” the break between sovereign-dictator and scribe. While it represents only one break after another, this new schism “nevertheless constitute[s] a rupture,” Stiegler notes, and allows for “a new organization of *différance*.”<sup>15</sup> Such a universal past is, or has been, transmitted not simply *epigenetically*, though, but through what Stiegler calls the “epiphylogenesis of man”—meaning “the conservation, accumulation, and sedimentation of successive epigeneses, mutually articulated.”<sup>16</sup> Reenchanting the evolutionary process, Stieglerian epiphylogenesis casts a disorienting shadow over the history of writing; it implies the way in which the scribe’s origin may be now reduced to a distinction—to a newly organised *différance*—between subjects.

Pivoting neither around a Marxian (dialectical material) nor a Foucauldian (biopolitical) institutional difference (See “O2,” in figure 2.2), however—nor around a difference grounded in subjective biological or phylogenetic potentialities (“underlying ability”<sup>17</sup>)—Stiegler’s conceptualisation of technics and time proposes that the writing subject acquires characteristics, in a Lamarckian fashion, through a methectic *frottage* between “mechanics and biology.”<sup>18</sup> This mechanism of evolution, Stiegler avers, is enacted precisely through writing or scribbling. And, as Stiegler indicates, the evidence for this proposition could be no more clearly apparent than in the very fact of the *extantness* (the existence) of certain texts—together with the lacunae that mark the absence, the omission, of others. Yet, it is in the absence of certain kinds of work that we can perceive not simply a non-work, but the trace of the scrivener’s unarticulated knowledge: that is, the very “inaccessible infinitude” that now represents the scrivener’s own supplanted memories.

15 Stiegler, *Technics and Time I*, 178.

16 Ibid.

17 This is how “potential” in literacy has been described for over a century. See, for instance, Charles Spearman, *The Abilities of Man* (London: Macmillan, 1927) though to Robin Naylor and Jeremy Smith, “Schooling Effects on Subsequent University Performance: Evidence for the UK University Population,” *Warwick Economic Research Papers* 657 (2002): 1-26. Aldous Huxley writes that “Ability is of two kinds—general and special. Special ability may be combined with general ability, or it may not.” Huxley, “The Importance of Being Nordic,” Baker and Sexton, eds. *Complete Essays, Volume 1*: 383-7, 386.

18 Stiegler derives this conjunction from his analysis of Lamarck’s distinction between the “physicochemistry of inert beings and, secondly, the science of organic beings.” Stiegler, *Technics and Time I*, 2-3.

In other words, what is not written, as a kind of material that can itself be examined and intuited, represents not, in the negative valency, what has not been written, but rather, in the positive, the “unwork” or even the “may-have-been work” that destroys memory by transforming it.<sup>19</sup>

As Stiegler puts this Platonic formulation: “Technicization is what produces a loss of memory... hypomnesic logography menaces the anamnestic memory of knowledge, and *hypomnēsis* risks contaminating all memory, thereby even destroying it.”<sup>20</sup> Hypomnesic writing, of course, is defined as note-taking or scribbling; it is not, to be sure, analogous with the metaphysical writing to which Haynes refers, but is rather an unreliable form of memorisation. But if this writing is not hypomnesically or mnemonically preserved, then “technicization through calculation” will drive, as Stiegler cautions, “Western knowledge down a path that leads to a forgetting of its origin, which is also a forgetting of its truth.”<sup>21</sup> If hypomnesic logography is now a sovereign grammar, though—one that is sanctioned by the Regime of Computation, and glorious in its displacement of prior *epistemes*’s transcendental writing—then to enact a mode of psychoactive scribbling might be to treat writing as a mnemonic in its own right.

That is, to psychoactively scribble would now be to evacuate “the word” of its metaphysical presence (its “originary Logos”) in order to accomplish, like the scribe, an orthographical automatising, one that is not anymore hewed to an asymmetrical dyad—which is to say one that is not about master and slave, sovereign and scribe, nosologist and patient. But to be so independent, writing would also need to become *deautomatised*; it would need, somehow, to enable a syntonic integration and incorporation of that authority that has always constituted it. It would need to enculturate itself to, or inure itself against, the torpor that threatens to afflict it—to comport itself in such a way as to find itself defended against the weight or threat of that antagonism that also enlivens it.

Envisaging a similar break with the history of writing, Deleuze and Guattari will come to name this mode of deautomatising “schizoanalysis”—a form of writing that is as analytical as it is schizophrenic. But schizoanalysis is Deleuze’s own creation: it first appeared in his book *Difference and Repetition*, there appearing as a means of encountering Antonin Artaud’s method of bringing into being “the terrible revelation of thought without an image.”

19 On extantness, see Martin Heidegger, *The Basic Problems of Phenomenology*, tr. Albert Hofstadter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), 70-2.

20 Stiegler, *Technics and Time* 1, 3.

21 Ibid.

Going after “the conquest of a new principle which does not allow itself to be represented,” schizoanalysis conceives of schizophrenia as the acme of this deautomatisation process, the nadir of insight, the break that finally affords a real “possibility for thought.”<sup>22</sup>

Rendering Artaud’s revelatory procedure in terms that indicate its imbrication with evolution and biology, Catherine Dale proposes that while—in all his naïve sincerity “Artaud is an embarrassment to philosophy”—his “sincerity” also

becomes a theatrical phylogeny, a set of vibrations designed to connect all the audiences that have ever lived. Infectious thought staves off the dictation of reason, just as disease repudiates the liberal parasite of medicine.<sup>23</sup>

The “dictation” of reason, as the dictator of the Classical Age, has always hung low above the scrivener like so many blades of Damocles. But reason now sounds the echo of French psychiatry, which Foucault—in his “*Theatrum Philosophicum*”—encodes precisely as that futile “symptomalogizing” that is carried out as another means of discovering the “substantial truth” that lies behind reality’s phantasms, lurking amid its unwritten history.<sup>24</sup> Adopting Deleuze’s formulation of the “pure Event” to recount what he experiences as an emergent, Artaudian schizoanalytics, Foucault petitions his reader to reconceive phantasms as corporeal materialities, encrypting his own nosopolitical protest in the metaphoricality of spatial condonation<sup>25</sup>:

Phantasms do not extend organisms into the imaginary; they topologize the materiality of the body. They should consequently be freed from the restrictions we impose upon them, freed from the dilemmas of truth and falsehood and of being and nonbeing... they must be allowed to conduct their dance, to act out their mime, as “extrabeings.”<sup>26</sup>

But Foucault’s recommendation that these phantasmatic mimeses—those that recall those “demons of Socrates”—should be allowed to play out their “dance” as “extrabeings,” is a censure that extends further than to those

22 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, tr. Paul Patton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 147-8. These lines are for the most part also quoted in Catherine Dale, “Cruel: Antonin Artaud and Gilles Deleuze,” in Massumi, ed. *A Shock to Thought*, 87.

23 Dale, “Cruel,” 87.

24 Foucault, “*Theatrum Philosophicum*,” 169.

25 See Gilles Deleuze, “What is an Event?” in *The Fold: Leibniz, and The Baroque*, tr. Tom Conley (London: Continuum, 1991), 15, 86-94. Deleuze’s discussion of “hallucinatory perception” as a precursor to the “event” is also apposite here, especially in relation to Foucault’s premonition of LSD, seemingly *avant la survenue*: 107-108.

26 Foucault, “*Theatrum Philosophicum*,” 170.

lenticular ghosts that are resident in the ordinary or “sober” material body. Turning to drugs, and taking particular care to render the effects of LSD in an arrestingly fertile dialect, Foucault illuminates in his description of the emergent experience of the acid-trip those contours of thought that “invariably” awake into “contemplation.”

These are those embryonic flashes that as soon as they arise become re-cathected by what Isabelle Stengers names an “event [that] does not have the power to dictate how it will be narrated,” and which serve only to advertise the acid-trip as a fixall for *acedia*.<sup>27</sup> Recalling Philip K. Dick’s conceptualisation, in the *Exegesis*, of the rising “barrel” (*EX*, 131)—the procedure in which one becomes aware of an oblique apperception of elevation and mobility—the hallucinogen “presents” an event that is difficult to put into words, and is nearly, like the unwritten history of the scrivener, *ineffable*. Nevertheless, the acid trip produces what Foucault describes as a

univocal and acategorical mass not only as variegated, mobile, asymmetrical, decentered, spiraloid, and reverberating but causes to rise, at each instant, as a swarming of phantasm events. As it slides on the surface at once regular and intensely vibratory, as it is freed from its catatonic chrysalis, thought invariably contemplates this indefinite equivalence transformed into an acute event and a sumptuous, appereled repetition.<sup>28</sup>

But if Foucault’s descriptions of acid’s effects illustrate what subjectivity looks like “on acid” (as the argot runs), it also accords with this idiom’s potential to restructure ontological categories. As Boothroyd highlights in his study of the locution, to describe any single event or subject as “on acid” concomitantly renders precisely the counter-locution or “counter-memory” of the subject thus described, bringing to mind all that is constitutive of the subject *not* “on acid.”<sup>29</sup> Already notable in the history of critical scholarship for its direct and luminous

27 See Isabelle Stengers, *The Invention of Modern Science*, tr. Daniel W. Smith (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 67. On the event as an “actant,” see Bruno Latour, *The Pasteurization of France*, tr. Alan Sheridan and John Law (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 156; Rudge, “Actants at Any Depth,” 8.

28 Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 190-1.

29 As Boothroyd argues, if the “popular idiomatic expression, ‘like X on acid’... means anything at all, [it] means something only in relation to its opposite, ‘X not on acid’—as if the ‘not on acid’ is something constant, identifiable and normatively coherent or ‘straight.’” Boothroyd, *Culture On Drugs*, 157. I use Foucault’s term “counter-memory” here to signpost the development of his idea about resurrection, which he had developed in the 1970s, and around the time he would write “Theatrum Philosophicum.” See José Medina, “Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance,” *Foucault Studies* 12 (2011): 9-35, esp. 24 and 29.

description of an uncommon drug experience, Foucault's dizzying description also functions as the author's indirect admission to using the drug, "showing" but not "telling" another short story in the wider corpus of psychopharmacographic literature. But if this high-fidelity image represents what Foucault might call, as in the essay volume's title, a "counter-memory," then it also represents the "deep implantation" of what is called, in Dick's story, "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale," an "extra-factual memory," or an "extra-factual *trip*" (*WCR*, 208, 214); after all, Foucault had, at this time, not yet ever used LSD.

Rather, Foucault's "first and reportedly only LSD experience" would not take place until five years after the publication of "Theatrum Philosophicum," when the philosopher visited Eastern California's Death Valley.<sup>30</sup> When historian and Foucault's American correspondent, Simeon Wade suggested that they should use the drug—that they should, quoting Artaud, together become "suspended among the forms hoping for nothing but the wind"<sup>31</sup>—Foucault excitedly agreed, and would then undergo what Deleuze would later describe as Foucault's "most severe exercise in depersonalization." Experiencing that which he had already said "we can easily see" as an obliteration of the "ground of indifference,"<sup>32</sup> Foucault's acid trip functions as a kind of corroboration of his own instincts. But Foucault's instincts are themselves indebted to the clarity of Deleuze's psychotic optic—the one that was rendered firstly in 1968 as that "schizophrenia in principle which characterises the highest power of thought" and, approximately twenty years later, rendered as the "hallucinated gaze" of Leibniz and De Quincey. It was in the wake of these Deleuzian descriptions of psychosis, that is, that Foucault so vividly renders his own portrait of sensorial psychosis, one all the more tantalising for its status as *avant l'heure*.<sup>33</sup>

30 See Boothroyd, *Culture on Drugs*, 166-7. Also see James E. Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 1994), 274; *Michel Foucault: Beyond Good and Evil*, dir. David Stewart, 1993 (London: BBC2, broadcast as a part of a series titled *The Late Show*, 29 June 1993), accessed 23 July, 2014, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xQHm-mbsCwk/>.

31 Miller, *The Passion of Michel Foucault*, 274. The lines of Artaud quoted by Simeon are often miscited as having appeared in Artaud's "Voyage to The Land of the Tarahumas." These lines actually appear in Artaud's short piece titled "Address to the Dalai Lama." See Jack Hirschman, ed., *Antonin Artaud: An Anthology* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1965), 64-5.

32 Quoted in Boothroyd, *Culture on Drugs*, 166, and cited by Miller, *The Passions of Michel Foucault*, 245. Foucault elaborates on his acid trip:

We can easily see how LSD inverts the relationship of ill-humour, stupidity and thought; it no sooner eliminates the supremacy of categories than it tears away the ground of its indifference and disintegrates the dumbshow of stupidity...

"Theatrum Philosophicum," 191.

33 See Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 58; *The Fold: Leibniz, and The Baroque*, 107-8.

## Writing Madness into Reason

BEYOND THE PROBLEMATICS OF the torqued and chiasmic relation between Foucault's articulated premonition of the LSD experience and the *actual* trip, no personal account of which exists, the description of the subject-on-acid is in many ways even more significant as an axiomatic of recalibration. Long before the "spiraloid" appearance of the notably "contemplative" subject-on-acid, Foucault had projected a punctiliously detailed vision of what is now, today, legible as acid's "other" in the form of the "madman." Rendering in an expansive and projective blazon a catalogue of rationality's motific counter-figures (its "Figures of Madness"), Foucault's *History of Madness* apprehends the spectrum of subjugated personages that have borne, and continue to bear, madness's name. Increasingly powerless before the systematic and "empty form of positivist thought" imposed on them, the mad have been subject to psychiatry's disciplinary *episteme* ever since the social reform that unchained the mad in Pinel's and Turk's asylums, and which signaled these institutions's long overdue deaths. It is out of a repressed drive to discipline and punish, however, that such places's chains have been refabricated and, as with Freud's "return of the repressed," have transformed into the "anatomy-clinical method" that has been pursued in the positivistic structures that have constituted "classificatory medicine" since at least as early as the nineteenth century.<sup>34</sup>

Delivering the mad unto the increasingly divergent axioms of "unreason," positivistic medicine became the arbiter of "the ultimate meaning of madness," just as "rationality" had before it developed into the incontestable "form of its truth."<sup>35</sup> Within these early epistemological striations of madness, Foucault locates both subject *on acid* and the mad subject, for both have the capacity of at least "partial thought." An experformative praxis, Foucault's description of this ontological operation observes how each of these personages substitutes the "rare flash" of genius with an enigmatic and repetitive mode characterised by a "continuous phosphorescence."<sup>36</sup>

34 Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, tr. Alan Sheridan (London: Tavistock, 1973), 4.

35 Foucault, *History of Madness*, 510, 251. Foucault's Part III, "Figures of Madness," runs from 251-96.

36 It was precisely after this line that Deleuze Guattari add a note (n20): "What will people think of us?" Foucault had said the following:

... if it is given to thought to confront stupidity, the drugs, which mobilize it, which color, agitate, furrow, and dissipate it, which populate it with differences and substitute for the rare flash a continuous phosphorence, are the source of a partial thought—perhaps.



Drugs represent not simply a break in subjective thought, then, but a dehiscence in the historical notion of “thought.” Calling on a motific history not of mad subjects but of *all* those thought-personages that preceded the twentieth century—and prior to the appearance of psychoactive drugs—Foucault avers that it is what drugs precipitate in the thought-subject that has allowed pharmacology to resurrect and revivify the old dialectic of torpor and mania. The modern state has subsumed that methectic conjunction in which the thought-subject, in a bipolarising and circular madness, had previously oscillated between the Platonian regime of excitation—through indifferent *dialogica* (*Genius, enthusiamos*)—and immobility, in an Aristotelian condition of melancholic “superiority.”<sup>37</sup> Now the “philosopher” is reconfigured in a parallel bipartition of these ancient ills; they have sufficient (1) “ill will,” which, now in place of a manic *enthusiasmos*,<sup>38</sup> repudiates such abiding “neopositivism[s]” as psychiatry’s nosological “categories;” and (2) they are

sufficiently “ill humored” to persist in the confrontation with stupidity, to remain motionless to the point of stupefaction in order to approach it successfully and mime it, to let it slowly grow within himself.<sup>39</sup>

But, even we accept the impact of Deleuze’s “schizoanalysis,” what will have so changed for Foucault by 1970 to lead him to see a way to install, in place of the psychiatric partition of mania and melancholia, the twin ills of the philosopher?

It was Foucault’s historicisation of madness, with its transcription of nosology’s history, and its influential apprehension of what he will later call “medical perception,” that permitted Foucault to reimagine psychiatry as itself an *act of scrivening*. It is a form, that is, of note-taking about mental disease in hypomnesic shorthand; a method of transcription by which the words of a spectral, mythic sovereign are composed. Thus, what Pinel discovered in fevers are “not the diseases” themselves, but what Foucault sees only as

See Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 191nn19-20.

37 Aristotle, “Brilliance and Melancholy,” in Radden, *The Nature of Melancholy*, 55-60.

38 On the imbricated semiotics of mania and *enthusiasmos*, see Gregor Rohmann, “Fundamente einer Semiotik von mani und enthusiasmos zwischen Antike und Mittelalter,” in *Tanzwut: Kosmos, Kirche und Mensch in der Bedeutungsgeschichte eines mittelalterlichen Krankheitskonzepts* [*Dancing Feet: Cosmos, Church, And Man in History: The Meaning of a Medieval Disease Concept*] (Gottinghen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 97-107. On *enthusiasmos* in Philip K. Dick, see Samuel J. Umland, “To Flee from Dionysius: *Enthusiasmos* from “Upon the Dull Earth” to *VALIS*,” in Samuel J. Umland, ed., *Philip K. Dick, Contemporary Critical Interpretations* (London: Greenwood Press, 1995), 82-99.

39 Foucault, “Theatrum Philsopicum,” 190.



“the *signs*” of the illness. Madness is not “an original origin,” but a “signal” that permits psychiatry to manipulate the “causal and temporal chain,” and to proceed from “disease to lesion” where it had formerly proceeded only from “lesion to disease.”<sup>40</sup> In rehearsing so many analyses of this kind, analyses that abound in a metaphorology of emptiness and deception,<sup>41</sup> Foucault challenges positivism by means of a novel “method in the confused, and ill-structured domain of the history of ideas.”<sup>42</sup> And while this method tends toward its own kind of anti-psychiatry, the usefulness of Foucault’s history inheres in the space it makes for a critical study of classificatory medicine in terms that are essentially outside its own specialist lexicon.

Reinstating the classical age’s ratiocination of madness in a new and apparently ludic language, Foucault’s history also distances itself from that period’s “figures” by leveling history under a primary bifurcation. Foucault thus speaks of the “ill wills” and “ill humors” that arise in a drugless *socius*; he does so in what is an undecidable, paranomastic frisson with the four Hippocratic humors:

In a state deprived of drugs, thought possesses two horns: one is ill will (to baffle categories) and the other ill humor (to point to stupidity and transfix it). We are far from the old sage who invests so much good will in his search for the truth that he can contemplate with equanimity the indifferent diversity of changing fortunes and things... But we are also distant from the “melancholy” that makes itself indifferent to the world, and whose immobility—alongside books and a globe—indicates the profundity of thought and the diversity of knowledge.<sup>43</sup>

Doing away with those persistent figures that had been previously brought into order by nineteenth- and twentieth-century psychiatry, both drugs and Foucault—or drugs *qua* Foucault—exteriorise these symbolic valences and denude these bipolar pulsations. Contemplating the “indefinite equiva-

40 Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*, 183. In this semiotic conceptualisation of Foucault, it is possible to see the legacy of Saussurean linguistics, which a range of scholars (and most notably Mark Bevir) have associated with the “postfoundationalism” of Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, Antonio Gramsci, Nikolas Rose, and others: see Mark Bevir, “Political Science After Foucault,” *History of the Human Sciences* 24, no. 4 (2011): 81-96, 85-6; and Bevir, *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

41 In the concluding paragraph to *The Birth of the Clinic*, for instance, Foucault speaks of the “hidden” figures of positivism—those which are “hidden by it, by it also indispensable to its birth” (199).

42 Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*, 183.

43 *Ibid.*, 191.

lence” of these “horns,” Foucault altogether eliminates “the old necessity for a theatre of immobility,” making legible through epideictic allusion at least two kinds of “theatres.” The first is the medical *theatre*, so characterised by its patients’s immobile bodies; the second is the Artaudian theatre of the monological scrivener’s cruelty and turmoil. While the latter may be just as readily characterised by immobility as the former, the latter is immobile only insofar as it expresses the “weaknesses of a mind that has not pondered its weakness.”<sup>44</sup> Of course, Foucault’s allusion to the “old theatre of immobility” also suggests more than just the dynamic nature of these theatres: it perhaps even more explicitly indicates the *graphic* theatre of the memorised, exteriorised, and hyperstasised word on a page.

Equivocally stopping short of schizophrenia, Foucault’s history of madness barely even scrivens a note on the rich forelives of the psychoses and neuroses, omitting the important topological French texts of Baillarger and Falret altogether.<sup>45</sup> If these works remain unfit for archaeological disinterment, though, it is perhaps because they falsely “mask” that species of “alienation” that has always been consubstantial with the awkward power play intrinsic to the “reality of the doctor-patient couple.” And the alienation of the patient in particular will remain “suppressed” until Freud, the ur-doctor of the twentieth century, begins to concentrate reason’s energies on psychoanalysis. Incarnating reason in his own oftentimes-cocaine-fuelled body, Freud will come face to face with the *unheimlich* of madness itself, attending to it and assembling it in an exhaustive proliferation of observations.<sup>46</sup>

44 I take these lines from Artaud’s fascinating correspondence with Jacques Rivière, which is notable for its influential illustration of the Deleuzoguattarian “brain-subject.” Describing his weak mind, Artaud says that if his mind truly had pondered its weakness, then “it would render that weakness in dense and forceful words.” Here the act of writing is consubstantial with classifying the weakness of the mind. At the end of this letter, Artaud writes one of the most illuminating passages, explaining to Rivière how the psychoactive scrivener comes to identify themselves, both *by* and *as* their brain’s (psycho-) activity:

These foolhardy works often seem to you the product of a mind which is not yet in possession of itself, but who knows what brain they conceal, what power of life, what mental fever which circumstances alone have reduced. Enough about myself and about my works that are still unborn. All I ask is to feel my brain.

See Artaud, “Antonin Artaud to Jacques Rivière, June 6, 1924,” in *Antonin Artaud: An Anthology* (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1965), 21.

45 I have addressed these psychiatrists’s works in detail previously in chapter 2.

46 Foucault’s genealogy of psychoanalysis (and its psychosis/neurosis dialectic) traces it not to the dementia praecox texts, but to the influence of Pinel’s Bicêtre, a Paris mental institution exclusively for men, and William Tuke’s York Retreat, a Quaker-run institution. The influence of Tuke’s retreat on nineteenth-century psychiatry can be measured in the major reforms that followed its establishment, and by the popularity

For Foucault, the modern positivism inaugurated by Morel's formations represents no more than "psychiatric theory merely attempting to keep in harmony with the rest of medical knowledge," and is undeserving of serious attention.<sup>47</sup> Ever the "epistemic" historian, Foucault ascribes the genesis of schizophrenia only ever *approximately* to those periodised centuries under whose labour its identification is proposed to have become slowly but surely possible. It is only after the nosopolitically homogenous "classical age," for instance, that psychiatrists could finally "pin down" disorder through the "patient work of observation."<sup>48</sup>

Thus psychosis can emerge only after nineteenth-century medicine has so ardently yet seemingly only-ever-mimetically constructed its nosological "edifice of paranoia and dementia praecox," a structure that will itself remain only an approximate impersonation of physical science.<sup>49</sup> But this edifice,

of a publication by Samuel Tuke, William's grandson, which contains a programmatic description of its modes of treatment. See *Description of the Retreat: An Institution Near York for Insane Persons Containing an Account of its Origin and Progress, the Modes of Treatment and a Statement of Cases* (Philadelphia: Isaac Pierce, 1813). On these institutions, also see Anne Digby, *Madness, Morality and Medicine: A Study of the York Retreat 1796-1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); on Pinel's Bicêtre, see James C. Harris, "Pinel Orders the Chains Removed from the Insane at Bicêtre," *Archives of General Psychiatry* 60 (2003): 442; on Pinel and French psychiatry generally, see Dora B. Weiner, *Comprendre et soigner: Philippe Pinel (1745-1826)*, and *Lad dicine de L'esprit* (Oaris: Fyard, 1999); Jan Goldstein, *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987). In terms of Pinel's hypotheses about ingestible substances, hunger, the nervous system and mental health (considerations that are seldom addressed), see Elizabeth A. Williams, "Stomach and Psyche: Eating, Digestion, and Mental Illness in the Medicine of Philippe Pinel," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 84, no. 3 (2010): 358-86. As Williams argues, these proposed somatic aetiologies are little heeded in the scholarly literature, and almost completely elided in Foucault's history. This is perhaps because of the predominance of an "ancient view [of] the insane" that, as Williams explains, maintains that since the mad were "bestial in nature and lacking in normal sensitivity, [they] did not feel hunger" (360n3). Evidencing the existence of this view, Williams cites Foucault's originally published *Folie et déraison: Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris: Plon, 1961), 185-6. (This citation corresponds to pages 148-9 of the *The History of Sexuality* (London: Routledge, 2006), which I cite throughout this chapter). Notably, however, Foucault's discussion of Pinel's emphasis on the bestial nature of the insane in these pages, and the quotation that he takes from Pinel's work, relates only to their sensitivity to "extremes of cold," and not at all to food or hunger. See Philippe Pinel, *Traité Médico-philosophique sur l'aliénation Mentale [Medical Philosophical Treatise on Mental Alienation of Mania]* 2nd ed. (Paris: Brosson Libraire, 1809 [1801]), 60-61 [at 73]. No publication details beyond "Paris. Year IX" are given for this volume in Foucault's "original bibliography," which was presumably compiled by the editors by way of their consultation of Foucault's original PhD thesis. See the *History of Madness*, 673.

47 Foucault, *History of Madness*, 510.

48 Ibid., 201.

49 Ibid.

Foucault suggests, marks an epistemological rupture that allows psychiatry to debut as medicine, now resplendent before a “backdrop of the qualitative depth of medical perception,” glittering at the outset of its voyage, and ready to qualitatively develop and test its discursive parameters.<sup>50</sup>

Critiquing Morel’s foundational work on degeneration only as much as it represents madness as a social exteriority—as a “Hegelian philosophical theme” that attaches only uncomfortably to biology—Foucault avers that “Madness, and all its powers that were multiplied by the ages, lay not in man but in the milieu that he inhabited.”<sup>51</sup> But in its inattention to Morel’s prototypical modelling of an *interiorised* madness (a model that itself anticipates present-day definitions of schizophrenia), Foucault’s book suffers from a serious elision: it elides not only Morel’s work, though, but the temporalising structurations that begin to develop in medicine precisely during this period. This is the *prognostic* component of madness, which, in Morel’s study, involves the “course of illness” (and outcome) element; and this element will become crucial for Morel’s influential description of *démence précoce* as a unitary psychosis or *Monopsychose*.<sup>52</sup> Betraying what is Foucault’s broader political imperative, Foucault’s elision of Morel’s prognostic work affirms—perhaps more powerfully than any explicit or positive utterance in his book—the social and *moral* valency, an at-times almost Marxian impulse, that underlies Foucault’s madness history.

Typified by his scrupled tendency to anti-historicistic reading—a method that is itself associated with Foucault’s desire to periodise or temporalise knowledge only in terms of *historical* ideas, and not in terms of the body’s operations—the omission of Morel’s temporal psychiatry also brings into view one element of Foucault’s anti-psychiatry.<sup>53</sup> In what Peter Sedgwick calls an “Anti-History” of psychiatry, Foucault’s deeply encoded socio-politics, woolly though they sometimes seem, do become rather fuzzily apparent in these elisions.<sup>54</sup> But these politics are perhaps even more clearly legible

50 Ibid., 202.

51 Ibid., 376.

52 The French *Monopsychose* or *Psychose unique* is different to Esquirol’s “monomania,” the latter of which Foucault dismisses as only a meagre contribution to psychiatric knowledge. See notably G.E. Berrios and D. Bear, “The Notion of a Unitary Psychosis: A Conceptual History,” *History of Psychiatry* 5 (1994): 13-36; and Foucault, *History of Madness*, 201.

53 On Foucault’s anti-psychiatry and its reconfiguration as theorisation of power (for instance, psychiatric power and biopower) from the 1970s, see Pat Bracken and Philip Thomas, “From Szasz to Foucault” On the Role of Anti-Psychiatry,” *Philosophy, Psychiatry, and Psychology* 17, no. 3 (2010): 219-28, esp. 225.

54 Sedgwick, *Psycho Politics*, chapter 5, “Michel Foucault: The Anti-History of Psychiatry,”

in Foucault's more fervidly anti-authoritarian protestations—such as in his claim that psychiatry had, in the same moment it shut down the “fettters and bars of the old madhouses,” replaced these places with “the sealed order of a [new] asylum system founded on a gigantic moral imprisonment... the medical superintendence of insanity.”<sup>55</sup> Preceded by the *traitement moral* that had been inaugurated by the mad's “great unchaining” at Pinel's and Tuke's institutions, the conversion to the new system is ultimately spear-headed, Foucault argues, by the alienating yet attentive gaze of the doctor. To be specific, though, this system is brought into being under the auspices of the psychoanalytic profession's representative *de jour*—its *sin qua non*: the one-time neurologist Sigmund Freud.<sup>56</sup>

For Foucault, what lies between these two grand orders of punitive control—between the asylum and the psychoanalytic session—are so many positivistic rearticulations of the “esoteric, almost demoniacal secret” of psychiatry. Full of “dense mystery” and “obscure to even those who used it,” psychiatry must ultimately be acknowledged only as a “moral tactic... covered over by the myths of positivism.”<sup>57</sup> Psychiatry's long history is now, for Foucault, reducible to the dyadic interlocution between sovereign and scribe, dictator and scrivener; it is structurally registrable as the apparatus at the frontline of Europe's moral and cultural imperatives. If it is disguised as positivism, it remains “not yet unravelled,” and in this manner constitutes the “dark, but firm web of our experience.”<sup>58</sup>

Signaling a return to dictation and silence, the advent of this nosological classification system withdraws from the psychoactive scrivener their critical literacy—just as rapidly as Europe's industrialisation and civilisation had imparted it to them. It serves only to colonise the bounds and potentials of that power, of that force by which writers had finally come to articulate themselves in their own voices.<sup>59</sup> Inaugurating a new technical discourse of classification whose violent potential would materialise in the brutal, institutionalised methods of the twentieth-century clinic—in electroconvulsive

125-148.

55 Sedgwick, *Psycho Politics*, 133; Foucault, *History of Madness*, 510.

56 Foucault, *History of Madness*, 510-11.

57 Ibid., 508-9.

58 Ibid., 510-11; *The Birth of the Clinic*, 199.

59 As Foucault argues, the Enlightenment itself “has determined, at least in part, what we are, what we think, and what we do today.” Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” in *The Foucault Reader*, 32-50, 33. For scholars of the enlightenment such as Graeme Garrard, Foucault's claim, is “beyond dispute.” Garrard, “The Enlightenment and Its Enemies,” *The American Behavioral Scientist* 49, no. 5 (2006): 664-80, esp. 664.

shock therapy, for instance—the “ever-perilous freedom of dialogue” at this point is “muted,” so that “All that remains is the calm certainty that madness should be reduced to silence.”<sup>60</sup>

Antonin Artaud’s correspondence with Jacques Rivière, the editor of *Nouvelle Revue Française*, emblematises the equivocation of the twentieth-century scrivener’s avocation; it reveals how, that is, following the First World War, a new category of scrivener appeared. Suffering “from a frightful disease of the mind,” this new period is contoured precisely around the processes in which the scrivener converts the “simple act of thinking to the external act of its materialization in words.” As Artaud expressed the process:

Words, forms of phrases, inner directions of thinking, simple reactions of the mind—I am in constant pursuit of my intellectual being. Hence, whenever I can seize upon a form, however imperfect it may be, I hold it fast, lest I lose the entire thought. I am beneath myself, I know it, it makes me suffer, but I accept the fact in the fear of not dying entirely.<sup>61</sup>

Two years after writing this letter to Rivière, and only five years following Aldous Huxley’s publication of his first collection of fiction, titled *Limbo*, Artaud would publish his own collection of writings under a title that echoed Huxley’s book: *The Umbilicus of Limbo*. Here Artaud declared that “where others present their works, I claim to do no more than show my mind.”<sup>62</sup>

Huxley’s book had introduced, in both its title and contents, one of the most important (psycho)tropisms in his oeuvre: the *chiasmus*. Indicated by the interstitial locus or the “in-betweenness” connoted by the word “limbo,” the chiasmus represents the young English author’s turning away from nature’s embrace—an act that represents the extent to which which he attributed his partial blindness to a sense of being only ever half-present, and “between two worlds.”<sup>63</sup> (I will address this in detail in chapters 4, 5 and 6.) For both authors, however, the titular word “limbo” operates as a metonym for their subjective liminality; both writers feel as though they are situated at the centre of an agon between truth and disorder, discovery and distraction. It is a space in which the comfort of narrative coincides with the horrific

60 Foucault, *History of Madness*, 165. On the history of electric shock, see Edward Shorter and David Healy, *Shock Therapy: A History of Electroconvulsive Treatment in Mental Illness* (London: Rutger University Press, 2007), esp. 9.

61 “Antonin Artaud to Jacques Rivière, June 5, 1923,” in *Antonin Artaud: An Anthology*, 7.

62 Aldous Huxley, *Limbo* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1920); Antonin Artaud, *Antonin Artaud: Selected Writings*, ed. Susan Sontag (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 59-76, 59.

63 I elaborate on this in detail in chapter 6 and 7. See especially Figure 7.1.



disillusion of fantasy; it is a feeling that one is important and unimportant that Louis A. Sass suggestively describes as a “curious combination insignificance and significance.”<sup>64</sup>

Reconfiguring the classical psychiatric (Morelian) conceptualisation of psychotic illness—the configuration in which psychosis combines in a dualism dementia and primitive regressivity—Sass, in his *Madness and Modernism*, introduces a modified elliptical schematic. Consisting of a conflux of hyper-reflexia or “hyperreflexivity,” one that is constituted by the insistent and unrelenting “attenuation of ‘reflective thinking’” and “alienation,” this schema describes the psychotic’s affective state as predominantly *torporific*. They suffer “devitalisation, fragmentation, and disconnectedness,” he argues, and they experience a sense of “diminished self-affection.”<sup>65</sup>

Yet, the psychotic remains destined, even in Sass’s reconfiguration, to oscillate between the hyperreflexive and alienated outlooks; and the melancholic Huxley of the ‘20s, much like the ever-alienated Artaud, will grapple with this undulation precisely as it becomes increasingly anathematatic to normalised pathological structures. After all, it was only in the late-nineteenth century that psychiatry had begun to combine these outlooks into a syndromal “unicity.” Sharing what Pérez-Álvarez describes as a “poetic” temperament, both Huxley and Artaud will commonly identify this undulation as a “limbo,” and in so doing, indicate their own difficult positions, or situations, between these polar outlooks.<sup>66</sup>

64 Taking up Karl Jaspers’s criteria for “true” delusions, this is how Sass describes the combination of apathy (acedia) and certitude. Sass, *Madness and Modernism*, 291.

65 Sass, *Madness and Modernism*, 229, 531n42. For a commentary on what the reviewer calls Sass’s “remarkable reconstruction of schizophrenia,” see Robert J. Barrett, “The Schizophrenic and the Liminal Persona in Modern Society,” *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry* 22 (1998): 465-498. On hyperreflexivity, see Marino Perez-Alvarez, “Hyperreflexivity as a Condition of Mental Disorder: A Clinical and Historical Perspective,” *Psicothema* 20, no. 2 (2008): 181-7; and on “diminished self-affection,” see Sass, “Self-disturbance and Schizophrenia: Structure, Specificity, Pathogenesis,” *Schizophrenia Research* 152 (2014): 5-11, 6.

66 Appealing to the history of Saturn as “the planet of melancholy” under which “the Renaissance took refuge,” Pérez-Álvarez argues that hyperreflexivity and mental disorders only become understandable as such in the nineteenth century: “Thus, reflexivity under the sign of Saturn renders melancholy an aesthetic—poetic—emotion, and under the clinical sign turns it into a clinical—prosaic—emotion, which is what comes to constitute depression.” Pérez-Álvarez, “Hyperreflexivity as a Condition of Mental Disorder,” 186. Also see, notably, Emily Brady and Arto Haapala, “Melancholy as an Aesthetic Emotion,” *Contemporary Aesthetics* 1, <http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=214>; Judith Misbach and Henderikus J. Stam, “Medicalizing Melancholia: Exploring Profiles of Psychiatric Professionalization,” *Journal of the History of Behavioural Sciences* 42 (2006): 41-59.



In another context, Sass recalls Foucault's description of the subject-on-acid's perception of "phosphorescence"; he asserts that Artaud's description of reaching a "phosphorescent point" in his short piece "An Actor You Can See," for instance, signals the poet's awareness of the "ipseity dimension"—which is to say his acute familiarity with an experience of himself *as a subject*.<sup>67</sup> From the Latin for "self" or "itself," Sass follows Paul Ricoeur in introducing the term ipseity into his study of the self; and for Sass, this term denotes "a fundamental feature of normal awareness." At the same, to define "ipseity" is to challenge us to articulate something that is largely ineffable, precisely because our sense of self or ipseity is, as Sass writes, "such a pervasive and obvious aspect of consciousness."<sup>68</sup> Hypothesising that disturbances in a subject's "ipseity model" ordinarily symptomatise as the twin symptoms of "hyperreflexivity and diminished self affection," Sass describes these symptoms as simply "aspects of a single whole"; they work, he explains, in an "equiprimordial" way, as a "unicity." Their association, he continues, involves

something more than causal interaction; they are, in a sense, different aspects of the very same phenomenon, but described from two different standpoints.<sup>69</sup>

Huxley's *Limbo*, Artaud's *The Umbilicus of Limbo*, and later, Dick's duplication of himself in (or *as*) "Horselover Fat"—the protagonist of his 1981 novel *VALIS*—each become textual operations that may be correlated with Sass's reformulation of the positive and negative syndromes of schizophrenia.<sup>70</sup>

67 Artaud, *Antonin Artaud Anthology*, 35. While Sass does not explicitly give the title of this short essay in his article, it is this work that he cites: Louis A. Sass, "'Negative Symptoms,' Schizophrenia, and the Self," *International Journal of Psychology and Psychological Therapy* 3, no. 2 (2003): 153-180, 156. Of interest here is Breton's claims that Artaud's *La Révolution Surréaliste* attained the "highest point of phosphorescence" in the magazine's entire series—whether this was uttered before or after is unclear: qtd. in John H. Matthews, *André Breton: Sketch for an Early Portrait* (Indiana: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1986), 110. On "ipseity" see Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, tr. Kathleen Blamey (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 2-3. Also see Shaun Gallagher, Stephen Watson, Phillippe Brun, Phillippe Romanski, eds., *Ipsity and Alterity: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Intersubjectivity* (Rouen: Université de Rouen Press, 2004); and in terms of ipseity's central place in Sass's recently refined "self-disorder model" of schizophrenia, see Sass, "Self-disturbance and Schizophrenia," 5-11, 6; and Sass, "'The Catastrophe of Heaven': Modernism, Primitivism, and the Madness of Antonin Artaud," *Modernism/Modernity* 3 (1996): 73-91.

68 Louis A. Sass, "'Negative Symptoms,' Schizophrenia, and the Self," 156; Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 2.

69 Ibid.

70 The word "Horselover Fat" is characteristic of Dick's tendency to employ paronomasia, and especially German plays on words. "Dick" is a German adjective for "fat"

While having a less explicit phenomenological relation to this liminal or “limbotic” ipseity, “Huxley’s trip,” which Sass and Barnaby Nelson analyse in an article on psychosis, was a drug experience triggered by the author’s consumption of four tenths of a gram of mescaline; it is that experience that Huxley recorded faithfully and illuminatingly in his *The Doors of Perception*. Comparing Huxley’s trip to his own constructed model of a “psychotic break,” Sass underlines the “strong overlap between the [respective] experiences with regards to ‘mere being.’”<sup>71</sup> In view of the history and theory in which hallucinogenic drugs like mescaline and LSD have been understood as “psychotomimetics”—that is, as psychosis imitating substances<sup>72</sup>—it is unsurprising that mescaline, a phenylalkylamine-class hallucinogen that, like LSD, functions as a selective agonist of a range of 5-HT<sub>2</sub> serotonin receptor subtypes, should be understood by Sass as a drug that engenders effects that are psychosis-mimicking. As with Foucault’s description of the LSD experi-

(thick; stout; swollen), and Philip, derived from the Greek Φίλιππος or Phillipos, literally means “lover of horses.” See Oxford Dictionaries, Oxford University Press, s.v. “dick, adj.” accessed 25 November, 2014, <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/translate/german-english/dick/>; M.G. Easton, *Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893), s.v. “Philip,” 546. But what is perhaps even more important about Dick’s life and work concerning these positive and negative syndromes, and about Valis’s relation ship to them, is what Dick determines articulates in a recorded interview during the making of the so-called “Platt tape,” of 1979. After a long dialogue of questions and answers about his mania, schizophrenia, manic depression, catatonic excitement, and so forth, which symptomise as what Dick describes as an “AI” [or artificial intelligence] voice,” Dick concludes that the Vast Active Living Intelligence System, or VALIS, so painstakingly portrayed the novel *VALIS*, is in fact “female,” “on the other side,” and, most importantly, his “twin sister Jane.” See Dick, *VALIS, passim; EX*, 518-21; and Dick, *In Pursuit of VALIS: Selections from the Exegesis*, ed. Lawrence Sutin (California: Underwood-Miller, 1991), 161.

- 71 Sass and Nelson cite Sass’s *Madness and Modernism* as their reference point for Sass’s conception of the psychotic break; however, Sass does not explicitly develop a new model of the “break” in that work, but rather offers only a general description of psychosis. See Sass and Barnaby Nelson, “The Phenomenology of the Psychotic Break and Huxley’s Trip: Substance Use and the Onset of Psychosis,” *Psychopathology* 41 (2008): 346-55, esp. 351.
- 72 The term “psychotomimetics” was coined, as Osmond points out, by Ralph W. Gerard. See Gerard, *Neuropharmacology: Transactions of the Second Conference* (New York: Josiah Macy Jr. Foundation, 1956), 123 (also see my chapter 1). Cf. Humphry Osmond, “A Review of the Clinical Effects of Psychotomimetic Agents,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences* 66 (1957): 418-34; Steven J. Novak, “LSD Before Leary: Sidney Cohen’s Critique of 1950s Psychedelic Drug Research” *Isis* 88, no. 1 (1997): 87-110, esp. 90-92; Humphry Osmond, “Chemical Concepts of Psychosis,” in *Chemical Concepts of Psychosis*, ed. Max Rinkel (New York: McDowell, Obolensky, 1958), 3-26, esp. 10-11; Jonathan O. Cole and Martin M. Katz, “The Psychotomimetic Drugs: An Overview,” in David Solom, ed., *LSD—The Consciousness-Expanding Drug* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1964), 231-40, originally published in *The Journal of the American Medical Association* 187, no. 10 (1964): 758-61.

ence, these drugs are understood to modulate the ipseity or “mere being” figures that Sass develops throughout his phenomenology of psychosis.<sup>73</sup>

While the standardised psychiatric instrument for measuring these negative and positive syndromes had been proposed in 1987 in the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale for Schizophrenia (PANSS), it is Sass and Joseph Parnas’s task to focus on the socio-cultural—rather than the clinical—resonances of this bifurcated syndrome scale.<sup>74</sup> Identifying the prevalence of the “distinction between positive-versus-negative symptoms,” which is “typically used in the Anglophone literature,” the authors assert that this division is only a synecdoche for a broader distinction between human “excess and lack.”<sup>75</sup> But if, as Sass and Parnas argue, “thought blocking or deprivation” may be interpreted as a negative symptom—and “thought-insertion”<sup>76</sup> regarded as an exemplary positive symptom—then the process in which Foucault describes the subject becoming “contemplative” in a kairotic moment of “continuous phosphorescence,” represents the latter: the insertion of a thought, a positive symptom. Finally gaining access to what Foucault calls “a partial thought”—precisely by confronting and, in an important way, reclassifying “stupidity”—it is also in this instant that the subject ceases to automatically *dismiss* stupidity. And here, the subject perhaps even begins to “disrecognise” *otherness* altogether, as well as to dismiss or question the

73 What *is* surprising, however, is that Sass’s article, while advising that it should be read as an “exploratory effort,” seems to omit this historical theory, the primary work on which was undertaken by Huxley’s personal friend Humphry Osmond. On this friendship, see Joel Deshayé, “The Psychedelic History of The Doors of Perception and Island,” *Aldous Huxley Annual* 2 (2002): 181-202; Ronald W. Clark, *The Huxleys* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 347-8; David King Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood* (New York, Bloomsbury, 1989), 285-6; Humphry Osmond, “May Morning in Hollywood,” in Michael Horowitz and Cynthia Palmer, eds. *Moksha: Writing on Psychedelics and the Visionary Experience* (1931-1963) (New York: Stonehill Publishing, 1977), 32-39; Humphry Osmond, “Foreword,” in Brian Wells, *Psychedelic Drugs* (New York: Jason Aronson, 1974), 7-12; Also see chapters 6 and 7 of this thesis. On the pharmacological action of hallucinogens, see notably David E. Nichols, “Hallucinogens,” *Pharmacology and Therapeutics* 101 (2004): 131-181, esp. 138-168.

74 Stanley R. Kay, Abraham Fiszbein, and Lewis A. Opler, “The Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS) for Schizophrenia,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 13, no. 2 (1987): 261-276; Victor Peralta and Manuel J. Cuesta, “Psychometric Properties of the Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS) in Schizophrenia,” *Psychiatry Research* 53 (1993): 31-39.

75 Louis A. Sass and Joseph Parnas, “Schizophrenia, Consciousness and the Self,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 29, no. 3 (2003): 427-444, 431.

76 On thought insertion, see Johannes Roessler, “Thought-Insertion, Self-Awareness, and Rationality,” in K.W.M Fulford, Martin Davies, Richard Gipps, George Graham, John Sadler, Giovanni Stanghellini, and Tim Thornton, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 658-673.

reality of that much grander and critical category of human otherness, the definition of which is so crucial to Foucault's project: "illness."

Deautomatising the incarnate drive toward negativity—toward what Ricoeur names "thought in its negative form"—LSD and its related compounds begin to temper or militate against that basic reflex or deictic whose "beginning implies that the movement of thought is halted in pursuit of a prior cause."<sup>77</sup> Foucault's seemingly uninitiated description of LSD's effects is an account *avant l'heure* that, given its language, seems anchored in Artaud's, not to mention Breton's, description of the "phosphorescent point." In a crucial way, it also indicates how LSD's phenomenology may, for Foucault himself, operate in such a way as to rouse the melancholic from their lethargy and acedia.

In some ways, Foucault's and Sass's analyses of madness and drugs are compatible—even complementary. While Sass argues that schizophrenia becomes, with Modernism, a "self-deceiving condition... that is generated from within rationality itself rather than by the loss of rationality,"<sup>78</sup> Foucault articulates a parallel view, asserting that madness, in the nineteenth century, entered a new cycle that was "now uncoupled from unreason," but at the same time intimately and "secretly" bound up with history and culture. Now, madness is simply—but also invisibly—"the counterpart to the history of reason."<sup>79</sup> For both scholars, reason is itself *constitutive* of madness—at least in its most recent cycle—since, as Foucault asserts, and as Derrida will later affirm—the "wild state" of an originary madness (a madness *ex nihilo*) possesses an "inaccessible primitive purity."<sup>80</sup>

Protected by virtue of its being inassimilable into the language of reason, this originary form of madness can, Derrida postulates, be repatriated—brought out of the anchorage of its barely undetectable silence—only by "convoking the first dissension" in which, by a "fiat, a decree, and as a schism" a division arose within "the very act of *sentire*."<sup>81</sup> For only "a single

77 Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another*, 104.

78 Sass, *The Paradoxes of Delusion: Wittgenstein, Schreber, and the Schizophrenic Mind* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 12.

79 Foucault, *History of Madness*, 376-77.

80 Ibid., xxxiii, qtd. in Jacques Derrida, "Cogito and the History of Madness," in *Writing and Difference*, tr. Alan Bass (London: Routledge, 2002 [1978]), 43. On the agon between Derrida and Foucault about the question of madness's articulability, see Slavoj Žižek, "Cogito in The History of Madness," in *Less than Nothing: Hegel and the Shadow of Dialectical Materialism* (London: Verso, 2012), 327-58.

81 Madness is protected, Derrida suggests, precisely "Because the silence whose archaeology is to be undertaken" by Foucault "is not an original muteness or nondiscourse, but a subsequent silence, a discourse arrested by command, the issue is therefore to

act... links and separates reason and madness” and thus, in the moment of that act, “the exterior (is) the interior.” Such a tension now generates a “fission that produces and divides [madness] along the lines of the Hegelian *Entzweiung*,”<sup>82</sup> so that the category itself remains trapped within Hegel’s dialectical quarrel. Echoing the words in which Foucault adumbrates his own ambition, Derrida asserts that the remit of Foucault’s “projected archaeology of silence” leads—or aims to lead—to no less than his

discovering the common root of meaning and nonmeaning and to unearthing the original logos in which a language and a silence are divided from one another...<sup>83</sup>

On one reading, Derrida’s criticism of Foucault’s project treats the idea as incredulous on reasonable grounds, for it insists that the *History of Madness* requires Foucault, its author, only to do as much as he, in this “archaeology of silence,” promised to deliver its reader in its introduction. And yet, it is difficult to remain blind to the ironical contours of Derrida’s assertions: in reiterating the requirement that Foucault’s work should discover the “common root of meaning and nonmeaning” as it had promised, Derrida seems to join Foucault in imagining that such a discovery might yet be possible. For all their ironies, though, Derrida’s remarks remain emblematic of the torqued inextricability of that originary, “wild,” pre-medicalised, and pre-classified madness on whose behalf Foucault deigns to speak. Thus Derrida, despite his reservations, thinks like Foucault; both of them sense, that is, that the *ab initio* impulse that prompts the scrivener to write, or to speak, in itself, can be re-written—or, at least, “critically read.”

It is directly toward this definitive connection between one’s impulsive resolution to commit to writing, and the madness induced by this instantaneous endperformative operation, that the twin epigraphs at the head of Derrida’s essay—one from Kierkegaard, the other from Joyce—will henceforth direct us. In what will become as much a “watchword or slogan” in Derrida’s essay as a fixture in his writing more generally, Derrida quotes a Kierkegaard line: “... L’Instant de la Decision est une Folie”—“The instant

reach the origin of the *protectionism* imposed by a reason that insists upon being sheltered...” Derrida, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” 46.

82 Ibid.

83 Derrida, “Cogito and The History of Madness,” 51. Foucault’s incisive essay in response to Derrida’s criticism, titled “Michel Foucault Derrida e no Kaino,” would first appear in Japanese magazine *Paideia* 11 (1972); 131-47, and later be elaborated as “My Body, This Paper, This Fire.” See Foucault, *History of Madness*, Appendices 2 and 3, 550-90.

of decision is madness.” Derrida thus inscribes what Geoffrey Bennington characterises as his “signature” thought, what will become, for him, an implacable *idée fixe*.<sup>84</sup> In a 1983 interview, for instance, Derrida will elaborate on the dynamical state of undecidability out of which such a mad decision must arise, from which it must always inexorably appear. Referring again to Kierkegaard, Derrida reconfigures this inexorably mad decision by asserting the following:

the only decision possible is the impossible decision. It is when it is not possible to know what must be done, when knowledge is not and cannot be determining[,] that a decision is possible as such.<sup>85</sup>

Impossible or not, decisions will always involve any number of performances or practices—and knowing each of these is crucial. It is, however, by combining his translation of Kierkegaard’s words with the words that he then takes from James Joyce—repurposing the latter quotation in his second epigraph—that Derrida conjoins madness to the practice of *writing*. Here, Derrida affords this performance a singular status, rendering it an “exemplary madness.” As the Joycean epigram reads:

In any event this book was terribly daring. A transparent sheet separates it from madness. (Joyce, speaking of *Ulysses*).<sup>86</sup>

In its emptiness and nudity, the transparent sheet metonymises that which is absent in the madness equation: the irretrievable silence that Derrida criticises Foucault for pursuing in his own history of the subject. If any such transparent sheet serves to cordon off the book from rationality, its invisibility also effectively vaporises the distinction, reconverting the sheet into nothingness itself: an eminently pourous boundary.

But of course, it is not this absent sheet that actually exists, but the far-from-transparent—even intensively opaque—passages contained in *Ulysses* itself that, in their very “givenness” and material presence, distinguish the work from madness—even as madness may lie always orthogonally to or adjacently by the book. If for Derrida, though, the instant of the decision to *write* such a book is madness, then whatever evidence remains of this origi-

84 Geoffrey Bennington, “A Moment of Madness: Derrida’s Kierkegaard,” *The Oxford Literary Review* 22, no. 1 (2011): 103-127, 104 and 104n4.

85 Jacques Derrida, “Dialanguages” in Elisabeth Weber, ed., *Points de suspensions: Entretiens* (Paris: Galilée, 1992), 157, tr. Catherine Porter and Edward P. Morris as “The Principle of Reason: The University in the Eyes of its Pupils,” *diacritics* 13, no. 3 (1983): 2-20.

86 Derrida, “Cogito and the History of Madness,” 36.



nary madness takes the form only of a ringing in our ears—an apparition or chimera of that transparency, absence, invisibility, and undecidability, that this madness itself has become and will be read as in the book.

The act of writing, and the production of words, by contrast, brings such a “decision” into order by writing *across* and *through* this “transparent sheet,” a boundary whose *non-presence* signifies a decision provisionally begun but not yet acted upon, cognised but not yet operationalised. It is a decision that remains undecidable in the divisiveness of its transparency—an “impossibly” invisible sheet that lies between presence and absence, parchment and carbon dioxide. For Derrida, it is in *writing itself* that the madness of the “decision” to write is escaped or transcoded. What is in Sarah Woods’s terms “alarmingly permeable”—or in Andrew J. Mitchell and Sam Slote’s idiom a “permissive... boundary”—now divides madness from reason; and it does so by leavening the very pages upon which madness’s history—a work of writing in its own right—is produced.<sup>87</sup>

It is because of this essential *différance*, the one that distinguishes “the virginity of the yet unwritten page” from the “present unveiling of the present”—this “monstration, manifestation, production, [and] *alēthia*”—that Derrida cannot accept Foucault’s archaeology of silence. For to write what is otherwise unwritten, and to enunciate the “unspeakable” language of madness, would be to move away from the “instant of decision,” from that zone wherein the acme of undecidability is reached, and to move elsewhere, toward the instant of “the decided” or “the decidable,” where madness can only ever be abortively represented, or meaninglessly retraced.<sup>88</sup>

For all its faultiness, it is Derrida’s engagement with the origin of writing as a *decision*—so well emblematised here by his questionable translation of Kierkegaard’s aphorism—that distinguishes his work from, as Bennington suggests, Foucault’s madness history, as well as from perhaps any other philosopher’s history of the subject.<sup>89</sup> It is only in Derrida’s writing, for instance, that the word’s first invention is so emphatically and pervasively portrayed as

87 Sarah Wood, *Derrida’s Writing and Difference: A Reader’s Guide* (London: Continuum, 2009), 47; Andrew J. Mitchell and Sam Slote, “Derrida and Joyce: On Totality and Equivocation,” in Mitchell and Slote, eds. *Derrida and Joyce: Texts and Contexts* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2013), 5.

88 Derrida, “The Double Session,” in *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, [1970] 2008), 222, 216; On Derridean “undecidability,” and its relation to, for instance, some of the concepts addressed in my introduction, such as Gödel’s incompleteness theorems, see Paul Livingstone, “Derrida and Formal Logic: Formalising the Undecidable,” *Derrida Today* 3, no. 2 (2010): 221-39.

89 Bennington, “A Moment of Madness: Derrida’s Kierkegaard,” 104-5.



the ur-inauguration of madness; it becomes for him an ancient event whose reverberations and remembrances may be recognised, however disorientingly, for the primal rituals and technics they have always been, and as the charged (cathected) and fraught practice that writing thus remains. Writing is, in other words, a technical process, one that is *unthinkingly* reperformed and reproduced in a grand, transhistorical mimesis of that originary moment. Writing is grasped as the *ab original* incarnation of all that it means to be mortal, a decision of reason in the face of death—and thus the work of mad reason, one whose object is inimical to reason ordinarily defined.<sup>90</sup>

In direct reference to Gödel's incompleteness theorems—and in less direct reference to the binaristic conjugation of signifier and signified, which, as in Saussure's semiology, reduces language to a series of dualisms divided by virgules<sup>91</sup>—Derrida emphasises the actual practice of writing over what might be described as its “extrasubjective” elements. Ever composed and decomposed, language's

“Undecidability” is not caused here by some enigmatic equivocality, some inexhaustible ambivalence of a word in natural language, and still less by some “*Gegensinn der Urwrote*” (Abel)... What counts here is not lexical richness, the semantic infiniteness of a word or concept, its depth or breadth, the sedimentation that has produced inside it two contradictory layers of signification (continuity and discontinuity, inside and outside, identity and difference, etc.). What counts here is the formal or syntactical *praxis* that composes and decomposes it.<sup>92</sup>

Out of Derrida's fixation on Kierkegaard's words, madness becomes an effect that is overcome or violently transgressed by the “*praxis*” of writing, by the repetition of that originary schism in which the “dehiscence, finally is repeated and partially opened.” It occurs, says Derrida, in “a certain “lit,” which is a pun, he notes, on both “bed” and “reads”—at least as it so appears in Mallarmé's *Mimique*. Here writing is “painstakingly set up”—in no small part through these very plays on words, where “lit” is both sexual

90 On the faultiness of Derrida's translation, see Bennington, “A Moment of Madness,” 121. That Derrida himself may have felt particularly plagued by the undecidability of writing is indicated by Foucault's compliment to him: “No doubt the primary act of philosophy is for us—and for some time to come—reading: yours clearly presents itself as such an act. Which is why it has that royal honesty.” Michel Foucault, to Jacques Derrida, 27 January, 1963, qtd. in Benoît Peeters, *Derrida* (Paris: Flammarion, 2010), 164, and Bennington, “A Moment of Madness: Derrida's Kierkegaard,” 122n1.

91 On the virgule or slash as, for instance, a “wall of hallucination,” see Barthes, *S/Z*, 106-7.

92 Derrida, “The Double Session,” 229 (emphasis in original).

(“bed”) and enlightening (“lit”)—and precisely signifies that moment when the double-meaning “lit” transforms into “literature.”<sup>93</sup> But Derrida’s view of writing as a “*praxis* that composes and decomposes undecidability” shares in a range of significant associations with Foucault’s description of LSD’s effects. These effects are those effects of LSD that Foucault implies can enable “partial thought” and can trigger a novel mode of “contemplation”—one in which “stupidity” and even “thought” itself are irremediably repudiated and displaced as *categories or ideas*.<sup>94</sup>

If LSD triggers a displacement of the idea *avant le lettre*—that is, before even the act of writing, this composing and decomposing praxis, has commenced—does it then become possible, decision being madness, for the subject on acid not just to *perceive* “decision-as-madness” as an idea in itself, but rather to *displace* this idea? To manipulate it? Is it possible, in other words, that the subject on acid may assume a position in which they may formulate a view of decision-as-madness, and thus grasp and to dissociate madness itself from “undecidability,” for a moment, before it all disintegrates, or is “written through” by writing? And might they, then, in that moment, also find themselves to be so situated as to more freely apperceive the very *praxis* that erases madness through composition?

Since both are adjoined to “the imaginary,” Derrida’s quotation of Kierkegaard’s words and Foucault’s premonitory description of LSD’s effects may themselves be decoded as kinds of precisely this hallucination, this apperception of madness. If Foucault’s phenomenology of the acid trip constitutes a writing that substitutes a lack, fabricating a description of an event that in fact never even occurred, then Derrida’s quotation of Kierkegaard’s words similarly substitutes for an event that, should it have ever taken place, is now forgotten or misremembered. Lacking a citation, the passage already floats within an abyss of scholarly imprecision, its penumbral figuration suggesting no more than Derrida’s own misremembrance. But such a delirium is even more amply illustrated, as Bennington notes, by the traumatic nature of the quote itself, which

gives one the impression that it is a memory of his “early” reading of Kierkegaard, of a moment of reading, precisely, something like a snapshot or screen memory of a (traumatic) event rather than a scholarly reference.

But even more important than this “screen memory” is what Bennington’s

93 Ibid., 231.

94 Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 191.

perspicacious reading discloses more implicitly: that Derrida's epigraph must be leavened by the almost certain philological evidence that his epigraph quotation is itself a *mistranslation* of the Kierkegaard passage.<sup>95</sup>

While the operative word that is written in Kierkegaard's *Philosophical Fragments*—the original Danish *Daarskab* (*Dårskab*)—had indeed been translated into the French as *folie* or “madness” in the edition that Bennington guesses would have served as Derrida's consultation text (a translation by Paul Petit), the word is, in apparently every other edition of Kierkegaard's essay, translated quite differently.<sup>96</sup> In the German, for instance, the Danish word is made into *Torheit*, which is “foolishness,” or “stupidity,” and in the wider context of Kierkegaard's argument, as Bennington punctiliously demonstrates, the word denotes not so much madness as such, but sinfulness; at least, these are the words spoken by Climacus to St. Paul on the subject of pedagogy, and on other related themes involving the moral integrity of intellectual work—the subject on which Kierkegaard's essay discourses. And what is more, the thematics of Kierkegaard's subject in its original context are also limned by the “repeated motifs of foolishness,” so that this instant of decision is in this essay less a madness or insanity than an automatic or pre-instinctual *reflex*. It is not so much an aporia, then, as it is (in Bennington's words)

something unthinkable like a passive decision, a decision not taken by me but by the other in me, the event of alterity itself, a reading in which it is not exactly I who reads, something unreadable to me as supposed subject of reading.<sup>97</sup>

Bennington's disinterment of Derrida's epigraph concludes by suggesting that if Derrida's *Dårskab*, translated most faithfully as “foolishness,” is now possible to be read—with Derrida and Petit—as *folie* (madness), then it must also communicate what lies in the other direction: namely “stupidity.”<sup>98</sup> Such a reading rushes Foucault's LSD experience into sharp relief, as it is here that foolishness and madness *are* viewed as opposite sides of the same coin, as performances both sprung from the originary axiomatic of “stupidity.” And “stupidity” is precisely the descriptor that Foucault continually employs, both as *stupide* and

95 Bennington, “A Moment of Madness,” 110-22.

96 The English translation is as follows: Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments*, ed. and tr. Howard V. Hing and Edna H. Hong (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985), 52. This is the version cited in Bennington, “A Moment of Madness,” 124n15. The French translation that Bennington imputes to Derrida's (mis)reading is *Les Mittes philosophiques*, tr. Paul Petit [1947] (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1967), 96.

97 Bennington, “A Moment of Madness,” 121.

98 Ibid.

*bêtise*, to elucidate that which is reconfigured by the LSD experience.

Associated as it is with that breathless state of ineffability that this chapter has already addressed, the moment of stupefaction finds a cognate descriptor in the derogatory “moron,” which Bennington is swift to clarify “would, many centuries later, in 1910 to be precise, be adopted as a clinical term by the American Association for the Study of the Feeble-minded.”<sup>99</sup> Finally quoting from his own translation of Derrida’s *The Beast and the Sovereign*, Bennington redeems Derrida’s translation of Kierkegaard by claiming that, whatever misprisions may have appeared therein, Derrida’s “last explicit iteration of this Kierkegaardian reference” pays homage to Avital Ronell’s elucidation on the subject in her own book, *Stupidity*.<sup>100</sup> As Derrida writes, stupidity, perhaps like madness,

makes your head spin. The point is that it is a matter of indecision or an indeterminacy between a determinacy and an indeterminacy. So that to link up more visibly and clearly with the problematic of sovereignty that actually has not left us, I would be tempted to say that any decision... is both mad (every decision is madness, says Kierkegaard) and *bête*, or stupid, that it involves a risk of, or a leaning toward *bêtise*.<sup>101</sup>

And while Foucault’s description of LSD’s potential to reconfigure stupidity is meant only as the barest of encomias, Foucault’s work can now be understood to have deftly anticipated stupidity’s power, which is now as much as confirmed in its consonance or syntonicity with madness by Derrida.

But just as Foucault’s foreknowledge of the ergoline substance (LSD) was itself expressed, at least arguably, as a misreading of Deleuze or, perhaps more formally, as a *pre-reading* of the drug, so now is stupidity a kind of repressed other of post-Enlightenment discourse—a corollary not of reason, but of consciousness itself, one only arrived at by way of Derrida’s misreading of Kierkegaard through Petit. And so elusive is stupidity in all of this that Derrida’s inattention to it is barely repairable—for so aphoristic is the epigraph that marks stupidity’s elision that it barely even registers. And while Derrida reconciles himself to the subject of stupidity, the reconciliation must itself always be subject to an enquiry in metaphysical philosophy: Was Derrida’s atypically non-philological reference to Kierkegaard’s words constitutive, for instance, of his *negligence* in relation to the genealogy of

99 Ibid., 122.

100 Avital Ronell, *Stupidity* (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 2002).

101 Jacques Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign I*, tr. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009), 173

the idea that “decision is madness”? Or does this ambiguous quotation represent a more forceful disavowal, however unconscious, of the very stupidity that Kierkegaard had himself called out to be named?

As Ronell observes, naming stupidity can do as much to exclude the category, both as a being and as a becoming, as its complete omission can. Socialisation, for Ronell, requires one to disavow stupidity in at least one of a number of mandatory ways. It is, she writes, “the ur-curse” to renounce stupidity, “the renunciation of which primes socialization in this culture.”<sup>102</sup> And it is perhaps by virtue of these kinds of considerations or formulations regarding stupidity’s *unspeakability*, that the word itself, as *bêtise*, does not appear among Derrida’s recurrent *epideixes* to Kierkegaard; in fact, it will never appear in this context—not until, at least, Ronell directly identifies the category as having been so unspoken.

If Derrida’s disavowal of stupidity is an erasure, though, then Ronell is Derrida’s restorative *Geist*, the one who “writes the book” on stupidity, and provides what is precisely a Joycean “transparent sheet” for Derrida, or one to lie between Derrida’s critique of madness and the madness of critique itself. Thus providing exactly the “verso” to Derrida’s work, in a way that precisely accords with Derrida’s intimate characterisation of Ronell herself as his “metaphysics” and his “verso,” Ronell also inherits “stupidity” from her post-structuralist master—not so much in a pathological way as in a topical or nominal manner.<sup>103</sup> Published exactly a decade following her book on drugs, Ronell’s book on stupidity opens its second part with what is an implacably literary—and ineluctably Derridean—reading of Foucault’s *History of Madness*; it attends to what she reveals as Foucault’s peculiar adoption of Pascal and Dostoevsky as his *exempla*. Recombining Foucault’s and Derrida’s mad histories, Ronell’s book performs a work whose function is to disorient—and to disorient in precisely the way that Foucault had, in his “Theatrum Philosophicum,” observed LSD to disorient.<sup>104</sup>

If Foucault’s essay provides an example of what it might mean to *become* stupid or to *know* stupidity, then—to bear witness to a fool, but to see them

102 Ronell, *Stupidity*, 10.

103 In a letter of 23 June, 1979, Derrida wrote to Ronell, recalling his meeting her at a conference. “You have always been,” he wrote, “‘my’ metaphysics, the metaphysics of my life, the ‘verso’ of everything I write (my desire, speech, presence, proximity, law, my heart and soul. Everything that I love that you know before me).” See “Envois” in *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 197.

104 Ronell, *Stupidity*, 197. In describing Ronell’s “book on drugs,” I refer to Ronell’s *Crack Wars*.

not so much as stupid as the official “scapegoat” of a sovereign reason (as “the *pharmakos*, marginalized and blamed for the crimes of all”)—then it also offers a description of stupidity’s possible recalibration.<sup>105</sup> It makes clear, for instance, that while, in our stupidity “we are distant from the ‘melancholy’ which makes itself indifferent to the world,” we are also at this time closer to that torpor within which madness becomes more approximately within reach.<sup>106</sup> Diametrically, Derrida’s resistance to countenancing this “other,” unintentional though it may be, relates to his assertion that we have precisely stupidity to blame for that disorder or disaffection that enchains the melancholic. For, try as they might, those inured in the dirge of melancholia cannot bring themselves to compose words on a page. And it is in this torpor and hebetude that the scrivener, then brought under reason’s dictation—and asked to reason, but then refusing, not abiding by its law—is driven to madness. For it is in the performance of writing that reason accrues, and it is by such a performance that the subject is cleared, sanitised and, finally, assessed as not mad at all.

In an inversion of Carl Jung’s impatient criticism of the “stupid chattering” of the schizophrenic<sup>107</sup>—or even in a reversal of Deleuze’s irritation with the mentally ill (expressed by the apocryphal question that Deleuze once posed to Guattari, “How can you stand these schizos?”<sup>108</sup>)—Foucault’s text on the subject of acid indicates how “stupidity” itself might prompt one to “contemplate” what might be called, after Isabelle Stengers and Whitehead, an “evental” moment. This is a moment in which catatonia, *acedia*, or melancholy are seen for what they are: as depersonalised collusions with stupidity.<sup>109</sup> Melancholy is, after all—as Branka Arsić notes in her description

105 Dale Pendell, *Pharmako/Gnosis: Plant Teachers and the Poison Path* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books), 307.

106 Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 191.

107 See my chapter 2, and Jung, *The Psychology of Dementia Praecox*, 95.

108 In François Dosse’s biography of Deleuze and Guattari, Alain Aptekman, a friend of Deleuze, recalls how Deleuze asked this question of Guattari having heard that a patient at La Borde—the institution at which Guattari was a clinician—had set fire to the chateau chapel, and had run into the woods. According to Aptekman, Deleuze “couldn’t bear the sight of crazy people.” See François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*, tr. Deborah Glassman (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 8 and 526n30. On idiocy and stupidity, also see Slavoj Žižek’s typology of the inverse forms of idiocy in *Living in the End Times* (London: Verso, 2010), 365-66.

109 Stengers, *The Invention of Modern Science*, 67; Whitehead, *The Concept of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), esp. 14-5. As Whitehead writes, “sky-blue is seen as situated in a certain event.” Also see Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, 80-1; and *Adventures of Ideas* (New York: The Free Press, 1967 [1933]), 187-8. Deleuze also discuss Whitehead and the event in “What is an Event?” in *The Fold: Leibniz, and The Baroque*, 86-93. Also see, apropos my discussion of the “decision” and its relation to eventual-

of Melville's *Bartleby* (the ur-scrivener, ur-melancholic, or *ur-stupid* scrivener)—precisely that which is

capable of giving reason a fright... not only because it shows how its extreme truth is madness but because it makes clear that it is in collusion with *stupidity*.<sup>110</sup>

Expanding on this conspiracy between madness and stupidity, Arsić offers a genealogy of depersonalisation; here she contextualises the “psychopathologizing tendencies” that tempt both the scrivener and dictator. As with Foucault's “theatre of immobility,”<sup>111</sup> Arsić argues that the melancholic's identity, or ipseity, is wrested away by a theatre of catatonia:

In contrast to a stupidity that tries to penetrate deep into thought but fails to do so because it cannot manage to follow the movement of differences—which is why its truth is the catatonic theatre of the dead black brick wall—melancholy succeeds at that very thing. It arrives deep with the interiority of thought, at its very “center.” But in order to reach that center it stops its motion and collapses into it, thus losing its own “I.” Stupidity and melancholy are two different forms of impoverished and depersonalized thought.<sup>112</sup>

While both categories, as Bennington suggests, may run across parallel vectors, straddling either side of the central axiom of madness, where stupidity fails to enter the interiority of thought, melancholy cannot return from this interiority. Ever thus in the middle, “madness must watch over thinking,” structuring both its “stupid” and “melancholic” satellites.<sup>113</sup> But what if the melancholic's pathway out of this interiorisation—out of this ineffable stupefaction that precludes rich and personalised thought—requires no less than an “event,” one that itself, as Justin Clemens and Oliver Feltham suggest, inspires “new forms of thought that cannot be resolved except at the cost of inconsistency”?<sup>114</sup>

ity and stupidity (or stupefaction), Justin Clemens and Oliver Feltham's essay, “The Thought of Stupefaction; or, Event and Decision as Non-ontological and Pre-political factors in the Work of Gilles Deleuze and Alain Badiou,” in Roland Faber, Henry Krips, and Daniel Pettus, eds., *Events and Decision: Ontology and Politics in Badiou, Deleuze, and Whitehead* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), 16-47.

110 Branka Arsić, *Passive Constitutions, or, 7 ½ Times Bartleby* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007), 65-6.

111 Pérez-Álvarez, “Hyperreflexivity as a Condition of Mental Disorder,” 186; Foucault, “Theatrum Philosophicum,” 191.

112 Arsić, *Passive Constitutions*, 66.

113 Jacques Derrida, “A Madness Must Watch Over Thinking,” in Elisabeth Weber, ed. *Points...Interviews, 1974-1999*, tr. Peggy Kamuf and others (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 339-64.

114 Clemens and Feltham, “The Thought of Stupefaction,” 20.



Conceiving of such an event refocuses attention on the scrivener's ordinary desire or "wish" to write, which itself generates an impasse. Addressing Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Spirit*, Blanchot remarks that those who wish to write are "stopped by a contradiction." The would-be writer has "no talent until he has written, but he needs talent in order to write."<sup>115</sup> The compulsion to overcome this morass may require either the beneficent strength of the Hegelian "spirit," which may appear only under the psychopolitical power of the scribe's dictating sovereign, but it may also mark and mandate the subject's becoming-automatised. The writer's "talent," to use a term that T.S. Eliot once invoked, is molecularised as both impulse and invention, and as methexis qua cathexis (that is, as participation as a retained breakthrough).<sup>116</sup> "To work [oeuvre]," as Stiegler writes, is then precisely "to forget the self, to let one's other be—but an other who is not a self, nor one's own, but quite other."<sup>117</sup> The "quite other" whom (or that) we are required to "let be," however, consists ironically in that assemblage—molecular, neurobiological, micro-organic, and possibly even enspirited—that is the seemingly unitary *impulse* to write. But this is also the impulse that, following the liberation of the scrivener from the master, and the birth of the Augustinian "metaphysical" author, appeared as madness—as a form no less traumatising, chimerical, or unpredictable than that in whose guise this impulse had previously appeared: as the sovereign master, God, a Divine Will, or as a "frenzying visitation."<sup>118</sup>

It is perhaps unsurprising that impulse control disorders, or ICDs, have been proposed as one of the possible aetiologies for obsessive and productive outputs of material writing, such as in cases of hypergraphia—a condition often imputed to Philip K. Dick (*EX*, xix-xx). Overlapping in its behavioural symptomatology with addictive illnesses—such as pathological and compul-

115 Maurice Blanchot, *The Gaze of Orpheus, and Other Literary Essays*, ed. P. Adam Sitney, tr. Lydia Davis (New York: Station Hill, 1981), 23, qtd. in Stiegler, *Technics and Time 1*, 264 (although this work's editor's name, Sitney, is given as "Stirney" in Stiegler's citation on 291).

116 See T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent," in *Selected Prose of T.S. Eliot*, ed. Frank Kermode (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1975), 38-9.

117 Here Stiegler's analysis echoes my discussion in my introductory chapter 1 of "the other," and notably, as Stiegler writes, this relates to the "Lévinasian arguments concerning the death of the other." Stiegler, *Technics and Time 1*, 265; Emmanuel Lévinas, *La Mort et le temps* (Paris: Editions Grasset & Fasquelle, 1993). Published in English as *God, Death and Time*, tr. Bettina Bergo (Stanford: University of Stanford Press, 2000), 16-20, 140-3.

118 For a short history of such conceptions of this impulse, see Burke, "Reconstructing the Author," xv-xxx, xvii.

sive gambling—repetitive and hypomanic acts that involve the prolific output of writing, drawing, and painting have, throughout the last decade, been tied to the subject’s underlying experience of (or reaction to) a hyperstimulation. This is linked to acute and persistent “agonisation” of the brain’s dopamine receptors (dopaminergia).<sup>119</sup> In more recent research, ICDs have been dismissed as a correlate of this writing activity—or, more specifically, have been understood only as useful as a metaphor for these comprehension and creativity tests. This is because dopaminergic agonists, such as most specifically the drug L-DOPA (or L-3,4-dihydroxyphenylalanine), have been found to cause a “genuine change in [the] neuropsychological processes underlying creativity.”

Producing “enhanced originality, flexibility, and elaboration” in Parkinson’s disease (PD) patients undergoing dopamine therapy, the importance of dopamine is demonstrable in these studies, where the PD patients’ performance in the “TACT-Visual” and the “novel metaphor” comprehension tasks improve markedly. Performing better on tasks that tap into major components of creative thinking, these patients exhibit higher skills in “divergent thinking” as well as in “combinatorial novelty.”<sup>120</sup>

Blanchot identifies the tension that emerges at the point when a writer’s “wish” or impulse to write enters into exchange with the question of whether they have the requisite “talent” to do so; but these neurological findings suggest Blanchot’s formulation should be reframed, for it now seems at least

119 See, for instance, Stanley R. Kay, Abraham Fiszbein, and Lewis A. Opler, “The Positive and Negative Syndrome Scale (PANSS) for Schizophrenia,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 13, no. 2 (1987): 261-76, esp. 261; Tim J. Crow, “Molecular Pathology of Schizophrenia: More than one Disease Process?” *British Medical Journal* 280 (1980): 66-8. As the authors of one study put it, it was “debated that obsessive drawing or writing might be interpreted as another ICD associated with dopaminergic therapy.” See Achinoam Faust-Socher, Yoed N. Kennett, Oren S. Cohen, Sharon Hassin-Baer, and Rivka Inzelberg, “Enhanced Creative Thinking under Dopaminergic Therapy in Parkinson Disease,” *Annals of Neurology* 76, no. 6 (2014): 935-42, esp. 936. Such a debate or proposition was postulated in studies including the following: Daniel Weintraub, Andrew D. Siderowf, Marc N. Potenza, Joseph Goveas, Knashawn H. Morales, John E. Duda, Paul J. Moberg, Matthew B. Stern, “Association of Dopamine Agonist Use with Impulse Control Disorders in Parkinson Disease,” *Archives of Neurology* 63 (2006): 963-73; Margherita Canesi, Maria Luisa Rusconi, “Artistic Productivity and Creative Thinking in Parkinson’s Disease,” *European Journal of Neurology* 19, no. 3 (2012): 468-72; and Ruth Walker, Robin Warwick, and Stephen P. Cercy, “Augmentation of Artistic Productivity in Parkinson’s Disease,” *Movement Disorders* 21, no. 2 (2006): 285-6.

120 Achinoam Faust-Socher, Yoed N. Kennett, Oren S. Coehn, Sharon Hassin-Baer, Rivka Inzelberg, “Enhanced Creative Thinking under Dopaminergic Therapy in Parkinson Disease,” *Annals of Neurology* 75, no. 6 (2014): 938-9.

partially a molecular problem. The placation or dampening of the will to write may also be understood as an encounter, perhaps, with dopamine dysregulation syndrome (DDS)—or the generalised downregulation of dopamine, which augurs a sense of loss and interest in exhibiting or even understanding “talent” as such.<sup>121</sup> In such a neurological or molecular formulation, it is conceivable that the effect on the writer of such a contradictory exchange is to tussle with, and to begin to reterritorialise, this contradiction, this authorial frisson, at as microscopically small a plane as the molecular or atomistic levels. Thus, again, to write is a molecular correspondence, and so writing is at least partially the product of a molecular becoming.

### From Acedia to Acid, From Injunctions to Adjuncts

IN HIS 1961 *Light Through Darkness*, Henri Michaux suggests that hallucinogenic drugs enable subjects to directly perceive or transcribe the interiorised vibrations of their brains.<sup>122</sup> These same kinds of psychic waves or vibrations are today measured as voltage fluctuations in ionic current flows by electroencephalographic (EEG) machine recordings. Like Timothy Leary’s similar claim—that psychedelic drugs may facilitate the “direct awareness of the processes which physicists and biochemists and neurologists measure”<sup>123</sup> (a comment which Leary uttered in 1964, only a year following the US publication of Michaux’s book)—Michaux’s hypothesis calls into view the contemporary function of dopamine receptor antagonists that are used to “block hallucinations and delusions.”<sup>124</sup> Can or does dopamine upregulation buffer

121 On DDS see, for instance, Pera Schwingenschuh, Petra Katschnig, Ronald Saurugg, Erwin Ott and Kailash P. Bhatia, “Artistic Profession: a Potential Risk Factor for Dopamine Dysregulation Syndrome in Parkinson’s Disease?” *Movement Disorders* 25, no. 4 (2010): 493-6.

122 Henri Michaux, *Light Through Darkness: Explorations Among Drugs* (New York: Orion Press, 1963), 7-9.

123 Timothy Leary, “The Religious Experience: Its Production and Interpretation,” *Psychodelic Review* 1 (1964): 324-46, 330-9. On the increasing emphasis in neuroscience on a distributed visual processing system, as opposed to an emphasis on visual perception as a function of the eye, see Daniel Collerton, Rob Dudley, and Urs Peter Mosimann, “Visual Hallucinations,” in Jan Dirk Blom, Iris E.C. Sommer, eds., *Hallucinations: Research and Practice* (New York: Springer, 2011), chapter 6.5 (“Mechanisms of Visual Hallucinations”), 83-5.

124 Cristina Missale, S. Russel Nash, Susan W. Robeinson. Mohamed Jaber, Marc G. Caron, “Dopamine Receptors: From Structure to Function,” *Physiological Reviews* 78, no. 1 (1998): 189-225, esp. 190; Daniel P. Czech, Joohyung Lee, Jeanne Correia, Hannah Loke, Eva K. Moller, and Vincent R. Harley, “Transient Neuroprotection by SRY Upregulation in Dopamine Cells Following Injury in Males,” *Neuroendocrinology* 155, no. 7

or protect psychotic subjects from something like the direct perception of these ionic current flows? And if this is so, how might these interiorised molecular adjustments relate to the contemporary efflorescence of “bioinformatic” devices?

Increasingly affordable and accessible, EEG brainwave monitors—“formerly seconded to science labs and hospitals”—are now available to “gamers” and “DIY users,” permitting us to encounter the orthographic representation of our ion fluctuations. Legible, or perhaps *decodable*, as the body’s own scriverings, these representations signal not the emergence of a new author, but the appearance of a new philosophical method, one that is practiced not by philosophers, but by “consumers engaged in personal data collection.”<sup>125</sup> It is arguable that, for Deleuze and Guattari, such a praxis would have instantiated only a *reterritorialisation* of movement within the subject’s body; it is not, after all, a “pure” apprehension of the body’s actual movements. Considering what Deleuze and Guattari would have made of the body’s movements within virtual reality (VR) devices, for instance, Andrew Murphie notes the way in which “movement’s significance” is reduced when “removed from its position in a small space”; in such spaces as in the brain, for instance, it exists as no more than an ionic pulse—a “schizz” or a “flow,” produced in the room in which the VR machine resides.<sup>126</sup> Now “shifted to a virtual space of any ‘size,’ and then largely perceived through the head (the ears and the face),” the body’s movements are transfigured through VR as a “reterritorialisation of the body.” Transplanted “on to the face,” the VR-body inaugurates an “enhanced way of seeing, [and] of determining *significations*.”<sup>127</sup>

In a crucially haptic way, then, the complex and paradoxical conditions under which the will to write proceeds—and by which the “wish” to write (about which Blanchot cautions) arises—may be understood to be overridden, or even *overwritten*, by the scrivener’s utilisation of, for instance, an EEG device. Now tracking and apprehending the same otherness, mysteri-

(2014): 2602-12.

125 A very thoughtful and rigorous study of these developments is offered in Paula Gardner and Britt Way, “From Lab to Living Room: Transhumanist Imaginaries of Consumer Brain Waves Monitors,” *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media and Technology* 3 (2014): <http://adanewmedia.org/2013/11/issue3-gardnerwray/>.

126 On the figures of the “schiz” and “flow,” used often for the ruptures in the body without organs, see Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 39, 242, 315, 351.

127 Andrew Murphie, “Putting the Virtual Back into VR,” in Brian Massumi, *A Shock to Thought: Expressions After Deleuze and Guattari* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 188-214, 204; Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 181, 479.

ousness, and strangeness that had previously been traced through the ambulative procedure of authorship and textual production, the particularity of this new automatisisation represents, as Sherry Turkle points out, only another node in the history of self-care devices.<sup>128</sup> What Foucault would later call a “technology of the self,” or, more generally, a mode of “the Care of the Self” (*epimeleia heatou*) becomes, at least in this instance, a vitiation of the same madness that writing has always also soothed—or a mitigation of that impulse that, at other times, as Derrida would have it, writing invented.<sup>129</sup>

But Blanchot’s impasse could also be more conventionally overcome, such as when a scrivener is endowed with (or burdened by) a sense of stress—whether eustress or distress.<sup>130</sup> Here the drive to write obtains in an anxiety or urgency that, as in what Freud calls a *trieb*, the subject is implacably incited to write away, compelled to write right away.<sup>131</sup> Such an impulsive assemblage could arise, of course, in the context of a range of mercantile, political, biopolitical, or other heterogeneous socio-materialist stressors (see figure 2.1), each of which may then animate the scrivener’s performance as they realise they must “write to survive”—for their livelihood or even for their life, as Dick might have sometimes felt (see chapter 7). And it is at this originally socio-cultural rather than molecular level, where the whole process becomes, as Barthes puts it, a “labor”—and where it is deployed like a function whose dividends remain entirely divorced from the performance itself—that it is automatised, brought over the edge of the Kierkegaardian

128 See Sherry Turkle, *The Second Self: Computers and the Human Spirit* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc. 1984). Taking up Zygmunt Bauman’s conceptualisation of a “liquid” modernity, where society is viewed less as a structure than a network or “matrix of random connections,” Gardner and Wray argue, echoing Deleuze and Guattari’s conception of the human subject as machinic assemblage, that “the age of the cyborg is past and we are now living in the age of machine augmentation.” See Bauman, *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty* (London: Polity, 2007), 1-4; and Gardener and Way, “From Lab to Living Room: Transhumanist Imaginaries of Consumer Brain Waves Monitors.”

129 See Foucault’s essays on this subject, “Technologies of the Self,” and “Self Writing,” both in *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth (Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984, Volume One)*, ed., Paul Rabinow, and tr. Robert Hurley (London: Penguin, 2000), 223-52, and 209-14; and Foucault, *The Hermeneutics of the Subject: Lectures at the Collège de France, 1981-82*, tr. Graham Burchell and ed. Frederic Gros (New York: Picador, 2005).

130 On the various forms of stress, including “remembered stress” from childhood and creativity (“divergent thinking”), see notably Joye W. Shanteau, “The Relationship of Locus of Control and Remembered Stress to Creativity as a Cognitive Process,” PhD. diss, University of Southern Mississippi, 1987. ProQuest (AAT 8806636).

131 On *triebs*, see Freud, “Instincts and their Vicissitudes,” *Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. 14, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1957), 111-40.

decision (and I refer to *Derrida's* Kierkegaard). Here, where the writing in and of itself bears no fruit for the scrivener: this is where writing, as a professional duty, substitutes for another lack altogether, which is the lack of material credit.<sup>132</sup> After the Second World War, and along the corridor to late capitalism, the post-industrial scrivener inaugurates the *professionalisation* of writing, which is programmatically institutionalised by a vast network of educational systems throughout the West, all designed to reify and normalise this compulsion, this mandate, to write.

In an uncanny echo of the early twentieth-century's efflorescence of group psychology, the latter half of the twentieth century thus ushers in a psychological or psychopolitical regime in which the writing profession is imagined as more than simply a surrogate union or guild association. To be a writer is now to enter into a new psychopolitical ecology of its own, and to collectively militate against the writer's characteristic malaise: the scourge of *acedia*.<sup>133</sup> As Thomas Pynchon sardonically illustrates, the pervasiveness of this melancholic illness elicited from members of the writing profession a newly organised approach to the problem of their slovenly and *acedic* turns of mood. In this new system, enforcement and justiciability, however encoded, play vital roles:

Writers of course are considered the mavens of Sloth. They are approached all the time on the subject, not only for free advice, but also to speak at Sloth Symposia, head up Sloth Task Forces, testify as expert witnesses at Sloth Hearings. The stereotype arises in part from our conspicuous presence in jobs where pay is by the word, and deadlines are tight and final—we are presumed to know from piecework and the convertibility of time and money. In addition, there is all the glamorous folklore surrounding writer's block, an affliction known sometimes to resolve itself dramatically and without warning, much like constipation, and (hence?) finding wide sympathy among readers.<sup>134</sup>

Pynchon's metaphorology of the writing profession's collective action

132 Barthes, *S/Z*, 140.

133 I use the term "psychopolitical" here, and throughout this thesis, insofar as it is employed by Peter Sedgwick to denote the politics of the psyche in his invaluable *Psycho Politics* (London: Pluto Press, 1982), esp. 38-40. Sedgwick asserts that all illnesses are, to a degree, social and *ephemeral* constructions. Also see Mark Creswell and Helen Spandler, "Psychopolitics: Peter Sedgwick's Legacy for Mental Health Movements," *Social Theory and Health* 7 (2009): 129-47. An equivalent term that Foucault sometimes deploys is "noso-political": see "The Politics of Health in the Eighteenth Century," in *The Foucault Reader*, 273-291, 274; and Monica Greco, *Illness as a Work of Thought: A Foucauldian Perspective on Psychosomatics* (London: Routledge, 1998), 65-72.

134 Thomas Pynchon, "The Deadly Sins/Sloth: Nearer My Couch to Thee," *The New York Times Book Review*, 6 June, 1993.



against what Huxley once clarified as “Acedia, or, in English, Accidie,” is testament to the persistence of the illness in the late twentieth century— notwithstanding Huxley’s 1923 view that “With us [the twentieth-century Moderns] it is not a sin or a disease of the hypochondries,” but “a state of mind which fate has forced upon us.”<sup>135</sup>

But more than Huxley cares to admit, Pynchon’s vignette acknowledges the extent to which writers are lazy “sloths,” and workers whose labours are presumed to develop at least two expertises: one, a special knowledge about the *avoidance* of dread that is associated with scribal work, and two, a proficiency in writing itself, which arises not simply in the work, but in the folkloric (Kantian) “recognition” that writers, at one historical point or another, have felt the relief of having overcome writer’s block. Eliciting only as much respectability for their skills as attracting “sympathy” for their “af-fliction,” *acedia*, in fact, begins to emerge in the 1730s, according to Huxley’s historicisation of the illness, as a “literary virtue.” It will remain so at least until the appearance of romanticism, when,

Accidie in its most complicated and most deadly form, a mixture of boredom, sorrow, and despair, was now an inspiration to the greatest poets and novelists... an essential lyrical emotion, fruitful in the inspiration of much of the most characteristic modern literature.<sup>136</sup>

How could *acedia*, from the Greek ἀκηδία, meaning “noncaring state,” and deriving from κηδος, which means care or accuracy, now be reformulated by the romantics as “inspiration”?<sup>137</sup> And how could it then be reformulated by Huxley himself, among other “cynics” of the 1920s, as a reification of what he calls “fate”?<sup>138</sup> Why, in other words, is for Huxley *acedia* the “inevitable evil” that he and his contemporaries “can [now] claim with a certain pride that we have a right to... ”?<sup>139</sup>

The incongruity between, on the one hand, this depressed state of con-

135 Aldous Huxley, “Accidie,” Baker and Sexton, eds. *Aldous Huxley, Complete Essays, Volume 1: 1920-25*, 351-4.

136 Huxley, “Accidie,” 353.

137 See Jennifer Radden’s introduction to Cassian’s “Accidie,” in Jennifer Radden, ed. *The Nature of Melancholy: From Aristotle to Kristeva* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 69. For a comprehensive account of the usages of the term *acedia*, from Evagrius Ponticus through to Gregory the Great and Thomas Aquinas, see Patricia Murphy, “Aquinas’s Teaching on Acedia: Flight From God As Friend,” PhD diss., Boston College, 2003. ProQuest: AAP: 3103298, 245-306.

138 On Huxley’s cynicism, see David Ayers, “Sexual Cynicism and Intellectual Despair,” in *English Literature of the 1920s* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999), 162-5.

139 Huxley, “Accidie,” 353.



sciousness—this “sinful” moral torpor or listlessness—and, on the other hand, the (Kantian) “transcendental” or “dopaminergic” impulse to write, suggests that it could only be through an alchemical or “enlightened” method that a transformation from the former to latter might be possible.<sup>140</sup>

As the epigraph at the head of this chapter—a quotation from William S. Burroughs’s *Cities of the Red Night*—suggests, “scribes and artists,” like “practitioners of magic,” must subscribe to a belief or faith in their own abilities; in doing so, they revivify themselves amid the automatisations that results from repetitive motor behaviours, *deautomatising*.<sup>141</sup> If “unusual percepts” involving highly unusual “sensations and ideation[s]” are required to inaugurate the “mystic deautomatisation” that allows writers to carry on, then it is mysticism itself that provides, as Huxley would conclude in his final years, the perceptual strategies for overcoming demotivation and depression that are needed. It is also only in mysticism that we might imagine a way of overcoming what Sass describes as “the numbing of perception that accompanies the automatizing of actions frequently performed.”<sup>142</sup>

For Huxley, this deautomatisation—or, as Thomas Aquinas named it, this “flight from God”—constitutes the pursuit of an ontological condition in which all meaning and knowledge can be suspended, as in under hypnosis.<sup>143</sup> As Burroughs suggests, this is a place in which “nothing is true,” and which, in Huxley’s life, involved a refinement and amplification of his initially cynical anti-individualism as he accepted the wisdom of mysticism; it was a slow-forming belief that had transformed Huxley while he had been a young twenty-year-old, who wrote of Aquinas in a letter to his brother Julian. “Individuality in the animal kingdom,” Aldous would note, “is nothing more than a question of mere matter... One cannot escape mysticism, [which] positively thrusts itself, the only possibility, upon one.”<sup>144</sup> Thus traced to our bodies as “matter,” mysticism recognises that all animals are alike and that,

140 Of course, in the psychiatric or psychotherapeutic setting, *acedia* qua depression can be, and is, treated with anti-depressants such as the SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), among other drugs and treatments. On the relation between *acedia* and depression, see Robert W. Daly, “Before Depression: The Medieval Vice of Acedia,” *Psychiatry* 70, no. 1 (2007): 30-51.

141 Burroughs, *Cities of the Red Night*, xviii.

142 Deikman, “Deautomatization and the Mystic Experience,” 36-7; Sass, *Madness and Modernism*, 63. Sass also refers to the Czech critic Jan Mukařovský’s deployment of this “de-automatization”: see Jan Mukařovský, *On Poetic Language*, tr. John Burbank and Peter Stiner (Lisse: Peter de Ridder Press, 1976).

143 Murphy, “Aquinas’s Teaching on Acedia: Flight From God As Friend,” 249.

144 Aldous Huxley, *Letters of Aldous Huxley*, ed. Grover Smith (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 88.

“potentially at least, though habit of matter has separated us,” all animals are “*unanimous*.”<sup>145</sup> But despite these indications of Huxley’s mid-1940s turn to mystical thought, Huxley’s early novels treat *acedia* and disillusionment, as June Deery avers, “with a cerebral and restless cynicism.”<sup>146</sup>

In *Those Barren Leaves* (1925), Calamy’s positive but churlish advertence to mysticism’s virtues is emblematic:

... it’s not fools who turn mystics. It takes a certain amount of intelligence and imagination to realize the extraordinary queerness and mysteriousness of the world in which we live (*TBL*, 298.)

Formulating a theory of science fiction in a letter to John Betancourt, Philip K. Dick would similarly describe how he felt compelled to provide a “shock of dysrecognition” for the readers of his novels, revealing to them that same “queerness and mysteriousness” of which Huxley’s Calamy speaks.<sup>147</sup> Becoming the very mystic to whom intelligent readers could turn in order to apprehend the alterity of the world, Dick invents his own allohistories, and reimagines the political societies of the future precisely to imbue the present with mystical or gnostic elements.<sup>148</sup> Despite their differences in education and temperament—and even in their distinct psychopathologisations—both Huxley and Dick conceive of *acedia* in phenomenological terms, producing in an oft-cynical mysticism as a means of perceptual reintegration.<sup>149</sup>

In her 1986 *Dictations*, a book whose subtitle, *On Haunted Writing*, anticipates the sense of “otherness” that Ronell will impute to the work of scrivening, Ronell repurposes Lévinas’s conceptualisation of the other as a face,

145 Ibid.

146 June Deery, *Aldous Huxley and the Mysticism of Science* (London: Macmillan Press, 1996), 104.

147 Philip K. Dick, *Beyond Lies the Wub: The Collected Short Stories of Philip K. Dick*, 6 vols. (London: Gollancz, 1988), 1:9-10. This Letter to John Betancourt is dated 14 May, 1981. Also see my detailed analysis of Dick’s conceptualisation of sf (science fiction) in chapter 7.

148 On mysticism in *VALIS*, for instance, see Rickels, “Endopsychic Allegories,” *Postmodern Culture* 18, no. 1 (2007); and on Dick’s “mystical episodes,” see James Burton, “Machines Making Gods: Philip K. Dick, Henri Bergson, and Saint Paul,” *Theory, Culture & Society* 25, nos. 7-8 (2008): 262-84.

149 Recent phenomenological studies of depression and motivation, for instance, have emphasised the association of perceptual and affective conditions in the disorder. See for instance, Benedict Smith, “Depression and Motivation,” *Phenomenological Cognitive Science* 12 (2013): 615-35. Also see, less recently, Jennifer Church, “Depression, Depth and the Imagination,” in James Phillips and James Morley, eds. *Imagination and its Pathologies* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 335-60.

reading the interlocution between self and other as a “non-violent transitivity” that Lévinas names “Conversation.” For Ronell,

Conversation tells us, among other things, that writing never occurs simply by our own initiative; rather, it sends us. Whether one understands oneself to be lifted by inspiration or dashed by melancholia, quietly moved, controlled by muses or possessed by demons, once has responded to remoter regions of being in that circumstance of nearly transcendental passivity that I am calling “Dictations.”<sup>150</sup>

Typologised and anatomised in four ways—as inspiration, melancholy, muse, and demon—the “other,” which this thesis has previously located in the body and the brain, and has described throughout as a “sovereign dictator,” is now a being with whom or with which a writer’s engagement is inexorable; it will occur “no matter how isolating, untimely or recondite” their “obsession with writing” may become.<sup>151</sup> Figuring the dictating other as “a neighbouring companion,” as “the future,” or even as “some unheard of tracking instrument that could capture the secret signals in your text,” Ronell organises the relationship between dictator and scrivener in a new way, not simply so that the relation can take the form of a Socratic meiuetics—a sifting out of the wisdom from a harvest of possibility—nor even so that it may mimic a Deleuzoguattarian engagement of apparent equanimity, however falsely symmetricalised as a relation between “diamond-miner” and “polisher.” The experience is configured, rather, as “an experience of common but asymmetrical deterritorialization.”<sup>152</sup>

While Ronell’s work makes no explicit allusion to Dick, her figure of the “tracking device” seems exemplary of the figures that appear among Dick’s own intimations of that which haunted his writing, such as those that surface in his *Exegesis*, for instance—as well as in the novel *Radio Free Albemuth* (1976)—in the form of an “electronic boost of telepathic suggestion via satellite” (*EX*, 100-106).<sup>153</sup>

150 Avital Ronell, *Dictations: On Haunted Writing* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), xiv.

151 Ibid.

152 Ibid. I take the “diamond-miner” and “diamond-polisher” analogy from a comment Deleuze himself made about the relationship between he and Guattari. As friend Arlette Donati remarked in an interview, Deleuze said the Félix was the diamond miner and he was the polisher. So he [Guattari] needed only to send him the texts as he wrote them; that’s how it went.” Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*, 8 and 526n29.

153 Dick, *Radio Free Albemuth* (New York: Arbor House, 1985). Originally titled *Valisystem*, this novel was written in 1976, but not published until 1985, three years following

While Dick's conceptualisation of a satellite "tracking device" is only one among the myriad extremities that constitute Dick's moribund psychopathological engagement with exteriorised, pre-authoring, and dictating technologies,<sup>154</sup> it is a prediction that has also largely materialised in the form of contemporary technologies: for instance, GPS instruments and Google Earth. But the modern writer remains more than simply the "modern surveillant subject" that Dick so often feared he himself had become; rather, it is through these devices that the writer can also, as Paul Kingsbury and John Paul Jones III note in their essay on Google Earth, overcome their sense of self—they may use these technologies to call forth "an array of pulverizing, Dionysian, ego-transcending influences."<sup>155</sup>

When Dick was interviewed in 1982, in his last interview before his death, he was asked whether he had experienced writer's block. Characteristically effusive and yet just as "truly sincere," Dick's response affiliates him with fellow resistor to the "image of thought" Antonin Artaud, who conceived of writing as a suspended *ligne de fuite*.<sup>156</sup> Alluding to acedia as a "blessing" and suggesting that writer's block functions as a source of authorial sustenance, Dick's particular line of flight models the condition as what Deleuze once called a "dark precursor" to the act of writing itself:<sup>157</sup>

... for me, it's a blessing. Because I'm an *obsessive* writer, and if I didn't get writer's block, I'd overload, short circuit, and blow my brain out right away... If I didn't get writer's block, I would die. I mean, it's the greatest relief to me. Now, when most writers get writer's block, they get frantic. I know that on an

Dick's death.

154 On the "surveillant subject" under the "imperial gaze" of Google Earth's satellite images, see Chad Harris, "The Omniscient Eye: Satellite Imagery, 'Battleship Awareness', and The Structures of the Imperial Gaze," *Surveillance and Society* 4, nos. 1-2 (2006): 101-122. On the intoxicating potential of "tracking devices" or similar technologies, like Google Earth, see Paul Kingsbury and John Paul Jones III, Walter Benjamin's Dionysian Adventures on Google Earth," *Geoforum* 40 (2009): 502-513, esp. 504-5.

155 Surveillant eyes also appear, for instance, in Dick's novels *Eye in the Sky* (New York: Ace Books, 1957), *Flow my Tears*, *The Policeman Said* (London: Doubleday, 1974), and *Our Friends From Frolix 8* (New York: Ace Books).

156 Consider, for instance, Dale's description of Artaud as "truly sincere" and the way in which this modality is tautologous in Artaud's writing of "truth." For Dick, sincerity and truth is, in fact, shocking, and it is precisely the exemplary status of his narratives as *romans à clef*—mimetic fiction with a "key" to the truth—that enables his sincerity to be, with Artaud's, an overperformance of the truth. It is by "pulverizing the fatal oneness of a true sincerity," that Dick's fiction, as Artaud's writing, anticipates the radical multiplicity of individual truths in the world. It is this reversal of truth, that is precisely Dick's sincere truth. And this is why Dick can say, sincerely, as in the quoted lines above, that without writer's block, he would die. See: Dale, "Cruel," 85-6.

157 Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, 126.

unconscious level, my mind is sorting through all different possibilities and a day will come when I will know how to begin. And the second the first sentence is down on paper, the book is begun. If you look up “writer’s block,” it means that the writer has something that he knows about but he can’t figure out *how* to write. Although, I suppose, it’s possible that writer’s block could consist of not having anything to say, and could occur at *any* point.<sup>158</sup>

Modeling writer’s block as writing’s mysterious, saturnalian augury, Dick’s reflections adumbrate an opaquely melancholic fatalism—“If I didn’t get writer’s block, I would die.” They fabricate what Ronell identifies in Goethe as a “traumatism of sorts.”<sup>159</sup> Here the micro-praxes and micropolitics of inscription recursively fold in on themselves so that knowing “how to begin” can only ever approximately be mapped onto a work’s first sentence, and on which occasion the “book is begun.”

Automatised and given over to knowledge “on an unconscious level,” Dick, of course, fails to articulate the specificities of that authorial history in which he had written “16 novels in five years, [and] sold every one of them” (“Plus a lot of stories too. And they were all publishable.”). This was a spell of composition that had been brought on, of course, by the psychostimulating *enthusiasmous* of speed. As works of the superego, these novels suddenly seem even more prone to automation; they become, as Lenson points out, “as immediately self-justifying as those [desires] of the libido.” Here, as I will address in far more detail in chapter 7, we can perceive how the “motivation to work” becomes all at once “conflated with or empowered by a sublimated mechanism of desire.”<sup>160</sup>

As productive a vector may be traced across the analytical thematics of Ronell’s critical corpus—although one hastens to note that Ronnell’s spells of writing have been brought on, presumably, by no chemical *enthusiasmous*. Beginning with her encomiastic treatment of Goethe’s Apollonian transcendence in her 1986 *Dictations*—a book in which Goethe’s exemplary works are imagined to surface at the membrane of a Lévinasian otherness—her oeuvre stretches to what becomes the materialisation or molecularisation of this otherness in her 2004 *Crack Wars*. Deleuze and Guattari, of course, had already inaugurated a critical response to the molecular revolution in their

158 Gwen Lee and Doris E. Sauter, “Worlds of Sound and Colour,” *Starlog* 165 (1991): 51-57, 51.

159 Ronell, *Dictations*, xxi.

160 Lenson, *On Drugs*, 118. On amphetamine culture generally in the US throughout the 1950s and ‘60s, see Nicolas Rasmussen’s *On Speed* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), esp. 87-180.

*Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, books of a particular psychopolitical critique more recently formalised and rearticulated by the likes of Eugene Thacker, Nikolas Rose, and Paul Rabinow.<sup>161</sup> Like Ronell, these scholars's teleologies extend to that node in which the site of "the other" must be recognised as *interior*, and where the home of that distant other, the dictator, is acknowledged as altogether more proximate than had been thought previously. As Ronell writes in her *Dictations*:

A translation of *Dichtung*, "Dictations" implies that writing always comes from elsewhere, at the behest of another, and is, at best a shorthand transcription of the demand of this Other whose original distance is never altogether surmounted.<sup>162</sup>

But this insuperable proximity is not simply the effect of the other's nearness; this spatial distance is itself *constitutive* of it as an "other." It is only "near," that is, because it is not "in." Crucial to the identity of the very *thing* whose demands are written by the scrivener, then, is the question of its spatial orientation. What bearing does the other's presumed insuperability, its impossibly distant position, have on the act of writing when the "mediatic spaces" of composition are dissolved and, becoming no longer "zoned outside of you," but inscribed on the body itself—directly on its organs from within—are of a piece with the writer?<sup>163</sup> This is the question that implicitly appears when Ronell's works on writing are put into dialogue.

The nearly two-decade breach between Ronell's *Dictations* and *Crack Wars*, however, marks a dizzying trajectory in which the author migrates from body to body. It begins with Goethe who, as an "awesome signifier" and an insuperable phallus-mountain text, may yet be "like the phallus... effectually powerful but empty"; but it ends with a narcoanalysis of Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, an analysis through which Ronell trespasses into

161 See, for instance, Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 12-13; Thacker, *The Global Genome: Biotechnology, Politics and Culture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005); and Rabinow, *Essays in the Anthropology of Reason* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). On Deleuze and Guattari's analytic of molecularisation, see Philip Goodchild, *Deleuze and Guattari: An Introduction to the Politics of Desire* (London: SAGE, 1996), 186.

162 Ronell, *Dictations*, xiv.

163 Ronell's science fiction narrative in *Crack Wars* recalls the present in these terms:

It used to be that mediatic spaces were zoned outside of you... It was bizarre back then, everyone hoping they were autonomous, but in fact more or less hypnotized by these allotechnologies, held off at a *distance* that was just that much more fascinating.

Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 67 (my emphasis.)



Bovary's empoisoned and toxic body itself.<sup>164</sup>

This shift from the other as exterior to interior—metonymised by Ronell's movement from exteriorised (yet impotent) phallus to Bovary's interiorised (and poisonous) central nervous system—demonstrates how literary theory and criticism has itself had occasion over this period to discover that, as adjuncts to both automatism (in the case of amphetamines) and deautomatism (in the case of hallucinogens), psychoactive drugs allegorise the writing subject in an exemplary manner. And whether prescribed as dopamine agonists for those suffering from Parkinson's disease, or as anti-depressants for those diagnosed with depressed mood disorder—or when not *prescribed* at all, such as when hallucinogens are used illicitly by experimental psychonauts—in each case drugs *de*automatise the subject; for habit is normative, and drugs dehabituate. They restructure not the logos, which we take to be an invisible technology, but what Guattari so clearly recognised as our machinic unconscious, making it less and less machinic.<sup>165</sup>

Read in isolation, Ronell's claim that “drugs thematize the dissociation of autonomy and responsibility that has marked our epoch since Kant” suggests that drugs function only as cultural or phenomenological signifiers. They appear to be compounds whose actions and interactions are capable of inducing a kind of social or even politico-moral thematics that, ironically and self-reflexively, sharply underscores the interdependence of the substance itself and the “responsible” subject who ingests it. If autonomy and responsibility have been dissociated, however—or at since Kant—then in what way do drugs threaten any further dissociation?<sup>166</sup> Read as biopolitical anthropology, Ronell's remarks reflect Kant's analysis of “the values of civic strength as they are affected by toxicating foods,” a project that Ronell astutely detects in Kant's *Anthropology*. Here “autonomy” becomes a metalepsis for the erosion or loss of individual freedom, and “responsibility” a signifier of society's installment of a formalised and normativised sobriety.<sup>167</sup>

But sobriety is explicitly not, as Lenson observes, “‘pot sobriety,’ ‘caffeine sobriety,’ ‘psilocybin sobriety,’” or any sobriety in the “long string of sobri-

164 Ronell, *Dictations*, ix. And see, for instance, those pages in *Crack Wars* in which Ronell emphasises Emma's intoxication and “the literary fact... that [she] swallowed poison, not her pride” (84).

165 See Félix Guattari, *The Machinic Unconscious: Essays in Schizoanalysis* (California: Semiotext(e), 2011), 9-22.

166 Ronell, *Dictations*, xxi.

167 See Immanuel Kant, *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View*, tr. Robert B. Loudon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 62-5; Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 59.



eties” crudely defined under the “single category called ‘drugs.’”<sup>168</sup> Just as “drugs” is a crude term, however, so do the reductive contours of “sobriety” signify only ever very obliquely those freedoms granted to a normativised, and automatic state of consciousness. The work of defining these terms has been not simply an instantiation of consciousness regulation, however, but as Ronell argues, an exercise of power that itself proceeds under the aegis or control of a new ontic, one that is itself instituted by the drug.<sup>169</sup>

So if it is obvious that, as Ronell argues, De Quincey’s opium use in his *Confessions of an Opium Eater* “perturbs ontology” only “in order to institute something else,” then what exactly is entailed by this “ontological revision”? What does it produce that is “not subject to the regime of *alèthia*,” that excuses it from truth-telling, and makes it “not dependent upon a prior unveiling”?<sup>170</sup> It may ensure, in Timothy Leary’s indelible turn of phrase, that the hallucinogen-using subject, for instance, can “turn on, tune in, and drop out.”<sup>171</sup> And while in Leary’s formulation, dropping out defines not a radical break from society or from “responsibility” so much as a “solution to the problem of escape,” dropping out may yet have a side-effect: that of “visionary revelation.” And while such a vision may answer what Leary calls the “escape question,” it also restructures the full battery of Derridean binaries and Manichean oppositions: “off-on, in-out, start-stop, light-dark, flash-delay.”<sup>172</sup> In the face of such a psychosis, or in what became known as the “bad trip,” the “terrorized reluctance to go with it” can be, as Leary remarks, fatal. One must submit to the very notion that one’s narratorial voice may be silenced or erased, and must come to grips with *acedia* and ego-loss—despite one’s “Frantic grabbing for the intangible switch” and even as one frets and panics, as the “Ego cries, keep it on!”<sup>173</sup>

The very different perturbations of ontology occasioned by the ingestion of opium might similarly guarantee, in Ronell’s cognate *explanans*, that one can find a “discreet if spectacular way out” of *acedia* through opium. As “an atypical place of exit” in which the drug forces “*decision* upon the subject,” opiates enable the subject to witness *ab extra* “the internal conflict of freedom,” and “the cleave of subjectivity where it encounters the abyss of

168 Lenson, *On Drugs*, 3.

169 Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 60.

170 Ibid.

171 See Timothy Leary, *Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out* (California: Ronin Publishing, 1999), 3-9.

172 Timothy Leary, *The Politics of Ecstasy* (New York: Ronin Publishing, 1980), 42-3.

173 Ibid.

destructive jouissance.”<sup>174</sup> In the specific case of each drug, and even (if not especially) in the case of the SSRI-class anti-depressants, it is precisely by means of reconfiguration of perceptual experience—one that deautomatises—that these myriad topoi of egress and decision, these psychotropes of in and out, are engendered.<sup>175</sup>

And so if the writer who suffers from *acedia* is troubled, as Walter Benjamin describes, by an “indolence of the heart,” then they perhaps also suffer from the “saturnine” and slow process of “indecisiveness” at whose root lies a particular *style* of thought; it is a tropism, or a psychological image of some description—not an illness—and it is these entities that I have thus far called “psychotropes.”<sup>176</sup> But such an indolence, as Robert Smithson argues, also instigates a very real and “constant state of erosion”; it leads to “mental rivers [that] undermine cliffs of thought,” and ensures that “ideas decompose into stones of unknowing.” In this elaboration of *acedia*, further, the “conceptual/crystallisations break apart into deposits of gritty reason,” going on to produce barely an echo of the “bleached and fractured world.”<sup>177</sup>

This chapter has sought to suggest the myriad ways in which writers, as subjects, can become deautomatised—rather than automatised—by alternative modes of engaging the “other” that propels their writing praxes. It concludes part 1 of this thesis, which is a theoretical elaboration on the forms of writing—molecular correspondence, psychoactive scribbling, and deautomatisation—that may be induced by writing on drugs. In part 2, which begins with chapter 4, I will offer a series of close readings of Huxley’s and Dick’s work; in so doing, the models I have developed in this part 1 will be not only mobilised—and put into practice—but further refined and developed.

174 Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 60 (emphasis in original).

175 On the historical relationship between serotonin and hallucinogen action, and the emergent theorisation that serotonin would play a role in configuring mood, see Nichols, “Hallucinogens,” 13-140; J.H. Gaddam, “Antagonism between Lysergic Acid Diethylamide and 5-Hydroxytryptamine,” *British Journal of Psychopharmacology* 9 (1954): 240-248; D. W. Woolley and E. Shaw, “A Biochemical And Pharmacological Suggestion About Certain Mental Disorders,” *Science* 199 (1954): 587-588; A. Cerletti and E. Rothlin, “Role of 5 Hydroxytryptamine in Mental Disease and its Antagonism to Lysergic Acid Derivatives,” *Nature* 176 (1955): 785-786. On the interest by anaesthesiologists such as Henry Knowles Beecher on LSD’s effect on “mood and subjective response” to pain, see George A. Mashour, “Altered States: LSD and the Anaesthesia Laboratory of Henry Knowles Beecher,” *Bulletin of Anaesthesia History* 23 (2005): 11-14.

176 Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (London: Verso, 2009), 156. Originally published as *Ursprung des Deutschen Trauerspiels* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1963).

177 Robert Smithson, *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack Flam (California: University of California Press, 1996), 100.

# Part 2

## Psychobiographic Speculations

## Chapter Four

# “Born Wandering Between Two Worlds”: Aldous Huxley’s Chiasmic Enculturation

*We are all parallel straight lines destined to meet only at infinity.*

—Aldous Huxley, in a letter to Ottoline Morrell<sup>1</sup>

*I suppose I always had a passion for knowledge, and a certain gift for coordinating different fields.*

—Aldous Huxley, in a letter to Sybille Bedford<sup>2</sup>

HOW DID ALDOUS HUXLEY, one of the most well-known writers and public literary intellectuals of the twentieth century, develop such a profound interest in psychopharmacological compounds and psychobiological chemistry? How was Huxley “encultured” to think and feel the way that he did about science, the arts, food, the body, and the science of vision?<sup>3</sup>

Holding a range of views as distinct as they are subtle about these subjects, and about most subjects he considered, Huxley represents a “specimen case,” as Freud might have put it, for the twentieth-century polymath.<sup>4</sup>

1 Aldous Huxley, *Selected Letters*, ed. James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007), 107-8.

2 Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 2.

3 While I acknowledge that the term “enculturation” is often deployed in contexts related to behaviourism, social psychiatry and social studies, I want to use it here, as cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead has done elsewhere: to think about “the actual process of learning as it takes place in a specific culture.” Margaret Mead, “Papers in Honor of Melville J. Herskovits: Socialization and Enculturation,” *Current Anthropology* 4, no. 2 (1963): 185.

4 Freud in fact did not use the term “specimen case,” but used the expression “specimen dream” when referring to his so-called Irma dream, that in which he injected one of his female patients. See Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 107. On the use of the term “specimen cases” in the context of Freudian psychoanalysis, see for instance Horst Kächele, Cornelia Albani, Anna Buchheim, Michael Hölzer, Roderich Hohage, Erhard Mergenthaler, Juan Pablo Jiménez, Marianne Leuzinger-Bohleber, Lisbeth Neuder, “The German specimen case, Amalia X: Empirical Studies,” *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 87 (2006): 809-26, 809n2.

While the thematics of Huxley's fiction and essays reflect his transition from empiricist to mystic, he is also always both of these things at once.<sup>5</sup> But it is Huxley's lifelong affiliation with the life sciences—and particularly with chemistry, biology and evolutionary science—that ultimately leads him to formulate his speculations on the chemistry of the brain. It is his rejection of Freudianism and his belief that there remains so much more to discover about the mind, moreover, that prompts Huxley to experiment with mescaline and LSD, to address the pestilence of mental illness, and to enquire into what he called the “vast problem of schizophrenia.”<sup>6</sup>

To encounter Huxley's intellectual career is to bear witness not simply to an exemplary case of polymathism, however, but to study a deeper structural tendency. His broad and often esoteric knowledge across the arts and sciences betrays a drive to perform ersatz-messianic acts of revelation: a propensity doubtless fostered by the influence of his grandfather, Thomas H. Huxley (henceforth “TH”).<sup>7</sup> A biologist and professor, TH performed as a vociferous public rhetorician within the increasingly scientific intellectual landscape of the nineteenth century. The power of TH's drive for recognition—or what I have named *thymòs* in this thesis—is just as apparent in his lectures on science as it is persistent in his grandson's writings and performances.<sup>8</sup> But myriad scientific innovations during Huxley's lifetime meant that even more was expected of those who, like Huxley, sought to champion and publicise the state of scientific and philosophical knowledge in the twentieth century.

Testament to the scope of Huxley's intellect is his having been commissioned in 1945 to write an encyclopedia for Encyclopedia Britannica. And while Huxley's work on this project was never published, it was a task for which Huxley had been well prepared. When Huxley, at fourteen years of age, was given an encyclopedia by Julian, his eldest brother, Huxley gave the im-

5 See Hull, *Aldous Huxley: Representative Man*, 241-2.

6 I borrow this phrase from Julian Huxley in his memorial essay for Aldous Huxley in Julian Huxley, *Aldous Huxley 1894-1963: A Memorial Volume* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1965), 25.

7 In referencing “TH” as such, I follow Ronald Clark's lead. See Clark, *The Huxleys* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), *passim*. Huxley's drive to an encyclopedic range of knowledge is perhaps no better emblematised than by his anthology project, known as the “Encyclopedia Britannica essays,” discovered as an unpublished typescript in 2002, which he was commissioned to compile by the Encyclopedia Britannica in 1945. The document runs to 2428 typescript pages. And, as Bernfried Nugel and James Sexton note, the project is “formidable in scope: it covers essayists and critics not only from antiquity to the middle of the twentieth century but also from Europe and America to the Far East.” Nugel and Sexton, “Huxley's *Opus Magnum: An Anthology of Essays and Criticism* (1946),” *Aldous Huxley Annual* 10/11 (2011/2012): 109.

8 See my earlier discussion of *thymòs* in chapter 2.

pression of his rapid and arcane learning: "I now know everything, from who invented dice to the normal temperature of the sea-cucumber."<sup>9</sup> To write an encyclopedia was thus an appropriate assignment for Huxley for, as William Pritchard attests,

no English writer of the last century was more encyclopedic in his range—literature, philosophy, history, mathematics, natural science, for starters—than Huxley; nor was there anyone who moved with such graceful ease among the various realms of knowledge.<sup>10</sup>

As Pritchard's description implies, however, Huxley is a "writer" before he is an encyclopedist. He is what T.S. Eliot among others names a "man of letters": that is, the "writer for whom his writing is primarily an art..."<sup>11</sup> But if Huxley is any more encyclopedic than his fellow men of letters, his wider knowledge serves to amplify the principal tension that Plato's *Phaedrus* identifies as the writer's chief problem: the *representation* of this knowledge.

As Plato writes, it is apparently impossible to represent the "living word of knowledge which has a soul and of which written word is properly no more than an image."<sup>12</sup> But if Plato seems pessimistic in relation to the possible representation of knowledge, then Socrates is positively fatalistic in his denouncement of those who would profess a capacity to represent knowledge in any "certain" way at all:

he would be a very simple person... who should leave in writing or receive in writing any art under the idea that the written word would be intelligible or certain; or who deemed that writing was at all better than knowledge and recollection of the same matters.<sup>13</sup>

9 William Pritchard, "Huxley in his Letters," *Sewanee Review* 117, no. 1 (2009): 121-124, 121.

10 Huxley to Julian Huxley, Summer 1908, in *Aldous Huxley: Selected Letters*, ed. James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007), 14. Also quoted in Pritchard, "Huxley in his Letters," 122.

11 T.S. Eliot, "The Man of Letters and The Future of Europe," *The Sewanee Review* 53, no. 3 (1945): 333-42, esp. 333. I also note that this is the name of a volume of essays constituting the proceedings of the third international Aldous Huxley Symposium (2004). See Bernfried Nugel, Uwe Rasche, and Gerhard Wagner, eds. *Aldous Huxley: Man of Letters: Thinker, Critic and Artist* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2007). Also see *LAS*, 11.

12 Plato, *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. Benjamin Jowett, 5 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1892), 1: 487. Also see Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. Robin Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). Here the passage is translated as follows: "You're talking about the living ensouled speech of a man of knowledge. We'd be right to describe the written word as a mere image of this" (70).

13 Plato, *Phaedrus*, tr. Jowett, 537; *Phaedrus*, tr. Waterfield, 69-70.

Aware that writing could never adequately represent knowledge, Huxley nevertheless valorises the power of artistic and poetic creation throughout his literary and prose works. Huxley felt that literature and art could offer what Maurice Spandrell describes at the end of *Point Counter Point* as “the only real proof that exists” for “all kinds of things—God, the soul, goodness” (*PCP*, 591). For Spandrell, as for Huxley, music becomes the means by which Beethoven is the “only one... the only man who could get his knowledge over into expression” (*PCP*, 591); for Huxley, music transcends the “monastic” finitude of science, and pierces the limitations of the word underscored by Plato and Socrates (*LAS*, 11, 22).

Huxley's faith in Beethoven's and all artists's creative acts had also been fostered by the poetic influence of Huxley's great-uncle, Matthew Arnold, who had written that “the exercise of a creative power, that a free creative activity, is the true function of man.”<sup>14</sup> In view of this Huxleyan-Arnoldian genealogy of scientific rhetoric and creative poesy, it is unsurprising that Huxley would—in words that Huxley would later use to describe life's aim—“make the best and the most of both worlds, representational as well as non-representational” (*TV*, 186).

It was by dint of misfortune, however, that Huxley would be drawn away from the empirical sciences and pulled instead toward the written word; he would be *forced*, in fact, to make the best of what was an altogether less promising collision of “both worlds.” In 1911, at the age of sixteen, Huxley lost almost all visual acuity in his eyes, becoming “for practical purposes... totally blind,” retaining only “faint light-perception in his better eye, the left one.”<sup>15</sup> This disaster prompted Huxley to nurture his love for literature rather than to pursue the medical career on which he had previously planned to embark.<sup>16</sup> But for whatever reasons Huxley became the intellectual that he eventually became, what is remarkable about Huxley's intellectualism is its

14 Matthew Arnold, “The Function of Criticism,” in *Essays by Matthew Arnold*, ed. Humphrey Milford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914), 11. For further discussion of the Arnoldian influence on the Huxleys, see: on Arnold's and TH's “controversial yet amicable” relationship and debate, David A. Roos, “Matthew Arnold and Thomas Henry Huxley: Two Speeches at the Royal Academy, 1881 and 1883,” *Modern Philology* 74, no 3. (1977): 316-24; and on Huxley's resolution of the “struggle waged between his paternal grandfather” and Arnold “by symbiotic [chiasmic] accommodation,” see Milton Birnbaum, *Aldous Huxley's Quest for Values* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1971), 75. Also see *LAS*, 5.

15 Grover Smith, ed. *Letters of Aldous Huxley* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 39n23.

16 Huxley's ambition in his Eton days “was to be a doctor not a writer—though his later friend Gerald Heard claimed that his wish also was to be a painter.” Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 29n17. Also see Smith, *Letters*, 38n22.



coordination and compilation of a wide range of disparate range of knowledge across both the humanistic and scientific fields. The preeminence of Huxley's implacable yearning to thread and knot together what had increasingly become the specialisations and sub-disciplines of institutionalised education allows us to posit Huxley's ontological and epistemological formation as a special kind of shape, or—to use the terminology I introduced in the first part of this thesis—a “psychotrope.”

To do so is perhaps to read Deleuze's description the “image of thought” quite literally; it is to project upon Huxley's biography, and even upon his neurological processes, a specific image or emblem that uniquely and specifically signifies his “thought” pattern.<sup>17</sup> In view of Huxley's interweaving of a number of different fields and ideas, it is possible, I propose, to visualise this image of thought as a *chiasmus*. As a figure or model with as rich a literary history as a scientific one, the chiasmus is a useful visual model; it is emblematic, moreover, of the epistemological diversity among human learning for which Huxley himself is an exemplary representative.

In biology and genetics, the chiasmus means a “crossing over”; it refers to the changing of the positions of certain chromosomes or chromatids. At once a biological process and an effect, the chiasmus was first proposed by cytologist Frans-Alfons Janssens. *Chiasma*, Janssens realised, were the cross-like figures that, when observed under a microscope, constitute the traces of a perplexing microbiological event.<sup>18</sup> In classical rhetoric, the chiasmus denotes a similar idea, although its operations are *syntactical* rather than biological. It is a rhetorical figure “in which words and their order are reversed in parallel clauses,” producing an echo at the end of a clause or a phrase—an aural or visual trace of that which has occurred at the clause's beginning.<sup>19</sup>

In this chapter, I employ the figure of the chiasmus for a clear purpose: to more materially and practically grasp Huxley's ontological sense of self—to diagrammatise what Louis A. Sass might call Huxley's “ipseity” (from the Latin *ipse*, for “self” or “itself”).<sup>20</sup> This experimental methodology, which strad-

17 On Deleuze and the thought image, see *Difference and Repetition*, 129-67.

18 See Frans Alfons Janssens, “La théorie de la Chiasmotypie: Nouvelle interpretation des cinèses de maturation,” *La Cellule* 25 (1909): 389-400; Romain Koszul, et. al., “The Centenary of Janssens's Chiasmotype Theory,” *Genetics* 191 (2012): 309-17; James Schwartz, *In Pursuit of the Gene: From Darwin to DNA*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 182-3, 324n70. Also see Mark Taylor, *Altarity* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1987), 71n12 and 71n13.

19 On the rhetorical aspects of the chiasmus, see notably Patricia Lissner, “Chi-thinking: Chiasmus and Cognition,” PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2007, esp. 369-71.

20 See, for example, Louis A. Sass and Josef Parnis, “Schizophrenia, Consciousness, and the Self,” *Schizophrenia Bulletin* 29, no. 3 (2003): 427-44, esp. 427.

dles the visual and the textual, finds some resonance with Leah Ceccarelli's deployment of the expression "cultural chiasmus" in her *Shaping Science with Rhetoric*. In this monograph, Ceccarelli underscores the importance of the chiasmus as both a rhetorical and a scientific shape.<sup>21</sup> My approach to the chiasmus also finds another partial antecedent in Judith Butler's invocation of the term "chiasmus" in her description of the "extra-linguistic body." The presence of this body, which is as a kind of other, outside of the self—a body that does not speak and cannot know language—"allegorizes the problem of the chiasmic relation between language and body."<sup>22</sup> When Butler asserts that attempts to express what is outside of the body form allegories for what is the irreducible interdependence and extrication of the body and language, she permits us to think of Huxley as one of the twentieth-century's foremost *allegorists* of this very phenomenon.

In this chapter, then, the chiasmus denotes a series of strategies or features that are visible in Huxley's writing as investments in the disentanglement of oppositional forces. These include such drives as those that obtain between language and the body, but also between representation and reality. Huxley's writing also seeks to soften the coarse edges that demarcate these oppositions, as well as the many others that appear in the range of intellectual, discursive, psychological, and spiritual epistemologies he addresses; but whatever topic he addresses, Huxley lays an instructive emphasis on the "psycho-physical"—on the extent to which, in all things, the "physical-instinctive biological forces" serve to structure our experience.<sup>23</sup>

While Freud's philosophy prioritises the development of a "unity" within the ego—a process that is brought about, he suggests, by primary narcissism—Huxley's *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945) accords highest importance to "knowledge as a function of being" (*TPP*, 70). For Huxley, we "rational beings" who are capable of apprehending the "eternal essence" of human "creatureliness" see in ourselves what is already a form of "unitive knowledge" (*TPP*, 71). And while this knowledge appears to its apprehender as a singular and complete entity, it is yet only "one of the infinite number of points where divine Reality is wholly and eternally present" (*TPP*, 71-72).<sup>24</sup>

21 Leah Ceccarelli's phrasal neologism "conceptual chiasmus" in *Shaping Science with Rhetoric: The Cases of Dobzhansky, Schrodinger, and Wilson* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 5-6.

22 Judith Butler, "How Can I Deny?" 4.

23 Aldous Huxley, "The Battle of the Sexes," in Baker and Sexton, *Huxley: Complete Essays III*, 110-16, esp. 115.

24 Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction," 76-7.

Conducted in a variety of fictional and textual self-experiments, Huxley's attempt to describe this "unitive knowledge" diverges from Freud's pursuit of ego unity. Unlike Freud's asymmetrical or dialectical (analyst-analysand, father-son) configuration, Huxley's model is self-organising and self-reflexive.

Transforming the dialectic between patient and doctor to the singular monologic of the seeker, Huxley separates himself into "the personal self and the Self [or] Universal Mind." This internal schism, Huxley discovers, can lead to

the realization of a state of "no-mind," which may be described as the freedom from the perceptual and intellectual attachment to the "ego-principle" (*TPP*, 86).

To achieve this kind of freedom requires less a "disciplining of the will" than a "thorough disciplining of the consciousness" (*TPP*, 86). It requires a total and radical change of mind, typified by "a more or less sudden 'revulsion' of consciousness" (*TPP*, 86). Less than two decades after Huxley's death, R.D. Laing will identify this kind of revulsion as a *metanoia* (μετάνοια): a kind of "After-Mind" that consists, as Treadwell Walden notes, of the "Mind in an act of progress," a progress that involves "a 'change' taking place either by evolution or revolution."<sup>25</sup> Like Huxley, Laing intuits that a "metanoiac voyage" could be inaugurated by the use of "LSD-25"; and even despite the therapeutic and other benefits elicited through this procedure, Laing concludes that "Mental hospitals" should "define this voyage as *ipso facto* madness *per se*, and treat it accordingly."<sup>26</sup>

Following from these preliminary considerations, I want to suggest that the figure of the chiasmus may be understood as resonant with the topography of Huxley's map of consciousness. The "no-mind" appears to exist, for instance, at the centre of a quadrant of vectors: self, other, perception, and intellect. As Huxley suggests, a combination of "carelessness" and an eagerness for "salvation" must strike a "delicate balance" on a "knife edge" to allow for the "no-mind" to be discovered. It is less a formation that can be thought of by the subject as an entity or intuition that permits the subject to "be thought by it" (*TPP*, 86, emphasis in original). The self-enclosure that thus occults *metanoic* experience functions like a maieutics—one between

25 Treadwell Walden, *The Great Meaning of Metanoia: An Undeveloped Chapter in the Life and Teaching of Christ* (New York: Thomas Whittaker, 1896), 7.

26 R.D. Laing, "Metanoia: Some Experiences at Kingsley Hall," in Hendrik Ruitenbeek, ed. *Going Crazy: The Radical Therapy of R.D. Laing and Others* (New York: Bantam, 1972), 11-22, esp. 12.

the careless self who wanders, and the careful self who seeks salvation. And while the broad mystical project of "being" is, for Huxley, a solitary path for "separate individuals" (*TPP*, 86), Huxley privileges literary artists as among those fortunate few who have the capacity to

express purpose of creating a language capable of conveying, not the single meaning of some particular science, but the multiple significance of human experience (*LAS*, 14).

Fabricating a heteroglossia, the artist can induce in themselves, and even share with others, what Huxley variously describes as the mystical "Suchness," "Is-ness," or "Istigkeit." At the root of these descriptions lies the same phenomenal artifact that, when Huxley uses LSD, he will describe as the

transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars, in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen as the divine source of all existence (*DOP*, 7).<sup>27</sup>

Ever appearing and disappearing, "reality" or "being" is for Huxley an unpredictable interlocutor; its emergence and evolution is only ever as verifiable as it is unpredictable, and thus momentarily discoverable.

In an essay titled "L'entrelacs—le chiasme" [The Intertwining—The Chiasm], published in 1964—only one year after Huxley's death—Maurice Merleau-Ponty introduces an analogous distinction between the visible and invisible, describing it as "chiasmic." For Merleau-Ponty, "the seer and the visible reciprocate one another" in so profound a way that "we no longer know which sees and which is seen."<sup>28</sup> But Merleau-Ponty's description of the collapsing of the visible into the invisible, the visual into the visualised, is more than simply a phenomenological point—albeit one that Huxley's philosophical writing seems to confirm.

Rather, Huxley's blindness means that he *himself*—not in theory, but in reality—is less a man who *sees* than a man who *is seen* by those around him; the status of his perceptual ability, that is, remains always equivocal.<sup>29</sup> And

27 On "istigkeit," see, for instance, *DOP*, 7; *TPP*, 39; and Huxley to Dr Humphry Osmond, 23 December 1955 (Letter 730), in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 779.

28 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Visible and the Invisible*, ed. Claude Lefort, tr. Alphonso Lingis (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 139; also see David Levin, "Outside the Subject: Merleau-Ponty's Chiasmic Vision," in *The Philosopher's Gaze* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 216-33.

29 Christopher Isherwood's description of Huxley's blindness is quite remarkable in that it portrays Huxley to be both blind and exceptionally acute, although the latter facil-

while Huxley's title, *The Doors of Perception* (1959), quotes William Blake's "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell," it is also an unconscious analepsis—a quotation—of Merleau-Ponty's *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1945). The title thus generates a syntagmatic chiasmus between these philosophical works, as well as a conceptual one.<sup>30</sup>

In Merleau-Ponty's essay, the chiasmus is figured as what Mark Taylor intuits as "a complex structure of "implication" (*im-pli-cation*), "enfoldment"

ity, Isherwood suggests, might not be based on clear oracular vision, but of a mental perceptuality or proprioception. "To me," Isherwood writes,

one of the most mysterious things about Huxley was what he could see and what he couldn't, and how, exactly, he saw what he saw. How much did he actually see and how much did he cognize, by some kind of in-built radar?

As Isherwood notes, while he "seemed like a blind man" while crossing the street, Huxley had also "called to Maria [his first wife] to stop the car because there was a clump of mariposa lilies, at least a hundred yards from the highway." See Julian Huxley, ed., *Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume*, 156. This particular anecdote is also instructive for recognising Huxley's "botanising" eye. For an insightful reading of chiasmaticity, hyperreality and blindness (apropos Merleau-Ponty), see Edith Wyschogrod, "Blind Man Seeing: From Chiasm to Hyperreality," in Fred Evans and Leonard Lawlor, eds., *Chiasms: Merleau-Ponty's Notion of Flesh* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2000), 165-76.

30 Huxley uses Blake's line, from *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, as the book's epigraph: "If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite." See William Blake, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (Boston: John W. Luce and Company, 1906), 26. Notwithstanding a range of similarities between the texts, Huxley and Merleau-Ponty's views are in many ways very different. On the subject of madness and schizophrenia, Merleau-Ponty asserts that there is "no strictly elective disturbance" and that "the core of... disorders" such as "apraxia" and "agnosia" is "to here to be found in the domain of language, there in that of perception, and elsewhere in that of action." Then Referring to "Schneider," a war veteran whose visual pathology stemmed from a traumatic injury to the brain incurred during the First World War, Merleau-Ponty notes that "It was through his [Schneider's] *sight* that mind in him was impaired," emphasising that these disorders stem from the disturbance of the perceptual apparatus for the subject rather than from some pre-perceptual neurological disturbance. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception*, tr. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 2005), 144-5 (my emphasis; henceforward *PP* in this note).

Huxley, on the other hand, suggests, in his context of working with Humphry Osmond that while "it would be rash and premature to affirm it," that "each one of us may be capable of manufacturing a chemical, minute doses of which are known to cause profound changes in consciousness [certain of which] are similar to those which occur in... schizophrenia." For Huxley, schizophrenia thus has the broad character of originating from within—be it biochemically or biologically—whereas for Merleau-Ponty, the disorder originates from the subject's relation to his body; whether it is an (epi)phenomenon that is linked to the "atomistic conception of time" (*PP*, n60) or visuality (*PP*, 145), or to "geometrical space" and the "pure constituting consciousness which deploys it" (*PP*, 335). For a brief note on further correlations between Huxley and Merleau-Ponty, see Laurie Spurling, *Phenomenology and the Social World: The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty and its Relation to the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge, 1977), 184n4.

(*enroulement*), and “envelopment” (*envelopment*).”<sup>31</sup> At the central intersection of this shape, all opposites are enfolded, one within the other, so that everything seems to be, as Merleau-Ponty notes, “completely turned inside out [*retourne*] under my own eyes.”<sup>32</sup> While Johann Fichte emphasises the importance of a “synthesis” of “thesis and antithesis”—in a formulation often attributed to Hegel, but not expressed by him in those words—the chiasmus resists any such resolution or harmonisation of the dialectical concepts.<sup>33</sup> In its enfolded edges, rather, the chiasmus expresses what Huxley describes as “the multiplicity of life’s meanings.” These meanings “cannot be translated directly with a one-to-one correspondence” any more than they can be transformed “into a single *mot juste*, or even a single ‘right’ phrase or sentence” (*LAS*, 22). Never can the abstraction of these meanings into Platonian forms, in other words, convey their actuality.

Such is the tenor of Huxley’s implicit critique of logocentrism, whose origin he imputes to that “poor fellow” Plato. As Huxley writes, Plato

seems to have made the enormous, the grotesque mistake of separating Being from becoming, and identifying it with the mathematical abstraction of the Idea. He could never, poor fellow, have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their own inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were... (*DOP*, 7).

31 Taylor, *Altarity*, 71.

32 Merleau-Ponty, *Visible and the Invisible*, 143.

33 See Walter Kaufmann, *Hegel: A Reinterpretation* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), 154. Of interest to briefly note that Julian Huxley seems to make more explicit use of the (Hegelian) dialectical structure than Huxley himself would do, at least during his satirical or cynical period before the 1930s. As Julian would write apropos evolution in the commission documents for UNESCO (and perhaps in something of a reflection his belief in a “positive eugenics”): “This last point immediately recalls the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis of Hegelian philosophy, and the Marxist “reconciliation of opposites” based upon it. Indeed, dialectical materialism was the first radical attempt at an evolutionary philosophy. Unfortunately it was based too exclusively upon principles of social as against biological evolution, and in any case was undertaken too early, before either the facts or their analysis were adequate to support any such vast superstructure. Today it is possible at least to begin the construction of a comprehensive philosophy of evolution; and many of its conclusions will be of value in formulating.” Julian Huxley, *UNESCO: Its Purpose and Its Philosophy, Preparatory Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation* (Washington: Public Affairs Press, 1946), 11 and 61 (available at <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0006/000681/068197eo.pdf>)



Now, just as Deleuze and Guattari's generative and multiplicitous rhizome will "ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains [and] organizations of power," so can Huxley's model of "becoming" expand into infinity, never settling upon a single, Platonian "Idea." If Huxley's description of reality specifies any of its features, though, it names only the electrical locus that constitutes the bunch of flowers's quivering "charge." This is that node at which, as Denis Stone reflects in *Crome Yellow* (1921), a multiplicity of "parallel straight lines" come together and "meet at infinity" (CY, 30).<sup>34</sup>

As in other examples of Huxley's writing on geometry (some of which I will address below), Stone's words echo Euclid's mathematical model of the structure of space, which is outlined in detail in Euclid's *Elements of Geometry*.<sup>35</sup> Of the five axioms upon which Euclidean geometry rests, it is the fifth of these—the so-called "parallel postulate"—that is the most controversial and yet the most relevant to Huxley's observations. Calling on William Playfair's rearticulation of the axiom, Henry Somers-Hall articulates the postulate as follows: "Through a point not on a given straight line, one and only one line can be drawn that never meets the given lines."<sup>36</sup> Subtly aware of the possibility of a kairotic moment in which these distinctly parallel lines might be apperceived as bound together in a "pure and simple unity" (LAS, 23), Huxley laments the influence of Plato's abstracting, mathematical gaze, the one under whose power such a moment is no longer possible.<sup>37</sup> And if Huxley does not address Aristotle's criticism of Plato—which involves the imputation that Plato could not "connect his 'ideas' with actual things"—it is perhaps because Huxley's descriptions of reality form an even more fundamental repudiation to Plato than Aristotle's notes.

For Huxley, there is a fundamental difference between the way in which Platonian abstraction takes a thing in itself—such as a rose or carnation—as

34 Sexton, ed., *Selected Letters*, 108.

35 See Euclid, *The Thirteen Books of Euclid's Elements*, tr. Thomas L. Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), 202-4.

36 Quoted in Henry Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation: Dialectics of Negation and Difference* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2013), 93. As Somers-Hall notes, this is technically Playfair's rendition of the axiom, whereas Euclid's is more precisely written thus: "If two lines intersect a third in such a way that the sum of the inner angles on one side is less than two right angles, then the two lines inevitably must intersect each other on that side if extended far enough" (260n3). Interestingly, Euclid's more specific formulation, if we interpret the focus of the line to be on an inevitable meeting "in infinity," seems to befit Denis Stone's lines at least equally as well as Playfair's. Cf. William Playfair, *Elements of Geometry: The First Six Books of Euclid* (Edinburgh: Bell & Bradfute, and Stirling, Kenney and Co., 1836), 22.

37 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 7.



implacably distinct and separate from the personal epistemology or “personal God” that perceives it, and the alternative process in which one may become wholly consubstantial with that essence, becoming “directly aware of it” so as “to know it unitively” (*TPP*, 78).<sup>38</sup> But in *Literature and Science* and *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley also characterises these moments at which the “pure and simple unity” is witnessable as accidents of time and space. They constitute no more than “the experience of those who have been privileged to ‘behold the One in all things,’ but have made no efforts to perceive it within themselves” (*TPP*, 81). As with Blake in his “To See A World,” Huxley affirms that not only is it possible for us to “find ourselves seeing a Heaven in a Wild Flower and holding [this] Infinity in the palm of our hand” (*LAS*, 16), but that it is *only* through such a chance discovery that one may find oneself in this state of learning and insight.<sup>39</sup>

Expanding on this visionary procedure in *Heaven and Hell*, Huxley suggests that such an epistemological rupture or transcendental *metanoia* might be engendered by the “praeternatural significance” that is encoded in the “preciousness” of such objects as flowers, gem-stones, and works of art:

Indeed, we may risk a generalization and say that whatever, in nature or in a work of art, resembles one of those significant, inwardly glowing objects encountered at the mind's antipodes, is capable of inducing if only partial and attenuated form, the visionary experience. At this point a hypnotist will remind us that, if induced to stare intently at a shiny object, a patient may go into trance; and that if he goes into trance, or if he only goes into reverie, he may very well see visions within and a transfigured world without (*HAH*, 26).

Whatever therapy might be wrested from—or put into practice by—these objects is “guaranteed by the fact that it exists in the Other World” (*HAH*, 24). Although it is through the same objects as these, Huxley stresses, that envisioners can also find themselves entrapped in their own “negative visionary experience”; here they apprehend not beauty, he writes, but the “horror of infinity” (*HAH*, 49).

For Huxley, this is an essential dichotomy, one that distinguishes between the positive and negative valences of visionary experience—and it hinges on one's sense of “deindividualisation.” Associated with a “sense of separation from the body,” the negative experience is a condition in which

38 Samuel Ward Boardman, “Plato's ‘Idea’ and Aristotle's ‘Entelechy,’” *The Monist* 20, no. 2 (1910): 297-8.

39 See William Blake, “Auguries of Innocence,” in *Selected Poems*, ed. Gerald E. Bentley (London: Penguin, 2005), 295-6.

“individulisation is intensified.” He or she who comes under the power of these negative visions begins to feel, as Huxley notes,

progressively more dense, more tightly packed, until he finds himself at last reduced to being the agonized consciousness of an inspissated lump of matter, no bigger than a stone that can be held between the hands (*HAAH*, 50).

Reduced to a compact and static entity, the negatively charged visionary fears the structural boundaries that characterise what has become their material experience of displacement. By contrast, the positively charged visionary embraces this transfiguration as an opening, associating it with feelings of transcendence.

These protocols of visionary experience are in many ways akin to what Deleuze and Guattari describe as the “itinerant, ambulant sciences,” which “consist in following a flow in a vectorial field across which singularities are scattered like so many accidents.” Such a “following” confers on these itinerant wanderer-practitioners a “quasi-nomadic status,” one in which they are left to experiment, like the visionary, with what can be composed and conceived of within this new “vectorial field.”<sup>40</sup> As Deleuze and Guattari stress, however, what can often detract from the transcendental view of itineration is a reduction of this experience to its biochemical or phenomenological operations; in these cases, it is easily dismissed, like a ghost in the machine, as merely the “capacity of ‘technologies’ or ‘applied science.’”<sup>41</sup> This is, as Huxley suggests, just as true of the artistic object as of other technologies—for its reduction to a mathematical idea can undercut its “significance” (*DOP*, 7).

## Huxley's Ageometry and the Neurochemical Self

FOR ITS PART, SCIENCE also displaces the operations of visionary experience and itineration, since it is ever compelled to underwrite into its operations the credo of mimesis, reproduction, and reproducibility. Just as Huxley criticises Plato's mathematical abstraction, Deleuze and Guattari criticise the “autonomous power” of the “apodictic apparatus” of “reproduction.” It is this process that fosters the tendency, they write, to “isolate all operations from the conditions of intuition,” something it does only to make those objects “true intrinsic concepts, or ‘categories.’”<sup>42</sup>

40 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 372.

41 *Ibid.*, 373.

42 *Ibid.*

Just as one's meditation on an object can, for Huxley, engender a visionary experience, so is the pursuit of a vector (or "line of flight") useful in Deleuze and Guattari's thinking—especially for those who wish to access an object in a non-Platonian form and in a "space of homogeneity."<sup>43</sup> In fact, for Deleuze and Guattari, one is actually "obliged to follow when one is in search of the 'singularities' of a matter, or rather a material." And while the method of "following" is distinct from what these authors call "Royal Science," it is "Not better, [but] just different."<sup>44</sup> To make the point especially clear, the authors explain that "following" is

*not at all the same thing as reproducing*, and one never follows in order to reproduce. The ideal of reproduction, deduction, or induction, is all a part of royal science, at all times and in all places, and treats differences of time and place as so many variables, the constant form of which is extracted precisely by the law... [implying] the permanence of a fixed point of view external to what is reproduced: watching the flow from the bank.<sup>45</sup>

Similarly critical of the tendency for reproduction to impede visionary experience, Huxley adopts multiple perspectives in his own analytical writing, ensuring the regular appearance of "invitations to further personal effort in the direction of the inner height" (*TPP*, 81). In this way Huxley functions as an ambulant scientist, engaging in "a continuous variation of variables, instead of extracting constants from them."<sup>46</sup>

Much like the itinerancy entailed by Deleuze and Guattari's model of the follower, Huxley's method allows him to continuously recalculate all that he apprehends and visualises. In his 1927 essay "Varieties of Intelligence" (1927), Huxley observed that this kind of recursive thinking was simply part of the analyst's procedure when, under the heading "Geometers and Analysts," he compared the "difference between [the] visualizer and non-visualizer" to the parallel distinction that "separates the geometrical from the analytical mind" (*VOI*, 179). The "reason of the born geometer is not the same as the reason of the born analyst," Huxley would assert, anticipating not only Deleuze and Guattari's description of "reproducing" and "following," but what he would himself describe as the difference between "visionary experience" and "epistemology" some thirty years later in *Heaven and Hell*.

43 Ibid., 372-4.

44 Ibid., 372.

45 Ibid., 372 (emphasis in original).

46 Ibid.

But if it is surprising that the Huxley of the 1920s partly dismisses visualisation in *Varieties of Intelligence*—where he notes that “a pronounced visualiser is to a considerable extent at the mercy of his visualizations” (*VOI*, 179)—it is equally notable that such a dismissal is less abandoned than more precisely expressed in *Heaven and Hell*. With the emergence of late capitalism in the 1950s—a period that gave rise to a moment when, as Huxley notes, it often appears as though “We have seen too much pure, bright colour at Woolworth’s”—it can be difficult for truly visionary experiences to remain “intrinsically transporting” (*HAH*, 34). Accordingly, Huxley asserts, “modern technology has tended to devalue the traditional vision-inducing materials,” (*HAH*, 34) prompting potential mystics to seek out newer and more impactful adjuvants.<sup>47</sup>

It is in this context of visual hypersaturation that *individuation* takes on an even more critical significance. In post-industrial economies, the abundance of “vision-inducing materials” ironically means that “transportation” is so much the rarer. But even more influential than the inundation of bright lights and the ever more various forms of colour displays is the range of political and psychochemical changes available to the visionary. And this development explains what Huxley sees as the ever shrinking dearth of visionaries in the Western world of the 1950s (*HAH*, 59). In the then “fashionable picture of the universe,” Huxley notes, “there is no place for validly transcendental experience” (*HAH*, 59). The contemporary picture of the world is an utterly transformed *neurochemical* milieu. As Huxley writes,

it is not only our mental climate that is unfavourable to the visionary... it is also our chemical environment—an environment profoundly different from that in which our forefathers passed their lives (*HAH*, 59).

That humans are neurochemically determined, and experience what is essentially a *chemical* subjectivity is, for the Huxley of the 1950s, a postulate everywhere grossly understated. It is as much as omitted from twentieth-century Western philosophy, Huxley feels, as any fact withheld or suppressed for political purposes. But if Huxley is more willing than his contemporaries to accept biological determinism, he is also more critical of the dilution of the metaphysical. It is in the context of recognising a devaluation of the metaphysical and mystical that Huxley laments: “To be a mystic is no longer creditable” (*HAH*, 59).

<sup>47</sup> See Daniel Dinello, *Technophobia!: Science Fiction Visions of Posthuman Technology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), 53, 152-3.

So, while the Huxley of the 1920s proposes that “varieties of intelligence” are divisible across such binary schemata as visual/non-visual, geometric/analytic, and talented/untalented (*VOI*, 177-80), the Huxley of the ‘50s inclines to a different orientation. The older Huxley feels that almost *any* kind of intelligence can be brought to the surface under the appropriate chemical conditions. Following his experiences with psychoactive drugs and psychiatry, Huxley now zealously adopts an optimistic view of biochemical intervention; he asserts that “by appropriate biochemical methods we can transform [adults and children as they are] into superior individuals” (*DTSM*, 299).

This transition in Huxley's thought coincides with a more general shift within the life sciences in the twentieth century, one that moves from a Freudian (or neo-Platonian)—and even a behavioural view of the human (with B.F. Skinner among others)—to a primarily chemical and molecular theory of the individual. It represents the beginning of what Nikolas Rose identifies as the “molecularization of psychiatry.”<sup>48</sup> From the 1960s onward, as Rose and Joelle Abi-Rached note, the “neuromolecular vision of the brain was fundamental to the rise of psychopharmacological societies over the closing decades of the twentieth century.”<sup>49</sup> Similarly for Deleuze and Guattari, the “molecular”—and what they call the “molar”—are always in competition. While the former articulates the fugitive, non-linguistic, rhizomatic, and chemical aspects of the human—all of which occur at the micro-level—the latter, an earlier form of conceptualising the human, articulates those macrobiological forces that have a tendency to encourage “simple binaries and oppositions.”<sup>50</sup>

But in Huxley's writing of the 1920s, what is true of the molar is also true of the molecular. While orthodox thinkers may impugn heretics as “unstable-minded,” as scholars who “take pleasure in all that is new and revolutionary,” it is to these heretics, Huxley argues, that “we owe progress in all its forms” (*VOI*, 185). These are those molar figures—those nomads—who, even if they are “[l]ess subject to the habits of thought formed in youth,” also now utter a “singular opinion,” which is to say “an opinion” that has not “been sanctified by general acceptance” (*VOI*, 185). By the 1950s, however, it was in psychopharmacology that Huxley intuited “another plane along which the

48 Nikolas Rose and Joelle M. Abi-Rached, *Neuro: The New Brain Sciences and the Management of the Mind* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 6; also see Nikolas Rose, “The Neurochemical Self and its Anomalies,” in Richard V. Ericson and Aaron Doyle, eds. *Risk and Morality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 407-37.

49 Rose and Abi-Rached, *Neuro*, 47; also see 200-2.

50 See Paul Elliott, *Guattari Reframed* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2012), 25.

mass of humanity may be divided" (*VOI*, 184). Focusing now on the molecular, he sought to experiment more directly with chemical brain interventions. When Huxley spoke with a friend who had undergone LSD testing and had, when sat in front of a stroboscope, seen new visions, Huxley was impressed by his friend's report that the drug and device conspired to produce in him the image of a "Japanese landscape... charged with praeternatural significance" (*HAAH*, 56). Whereas Huxley had always meditated on "the mystery" by which visions could and do appear, this process had now become "merely a particular case of a larger, more comprehensive mystery—the nature of the relations between visionary experience and events on the cellular, chemical, and electrical levels" (*HAAH*, 57).

The prohibition of LSD—and, ultimately, its related triptamines, ergolines, and phenethylamines—from the mid-1960s and onwards, however, ensured that the nature of these events at the microbiological levels would remain almost entirely a mystery—at least, that is, for the next four to five decades.<sup>51</sup> Nonetheless, this was a mystery that might ultimately prove, as Huxley suggested, a problem less of biochemistry than philosophy. Confounding the distinctions between self and other—between psychoactive substance and psychoactive subject—together with its problematisation of inside and outside—the question of a final substance persists in subjectivity studies even today, where the dominance of a Cartesian framework remains distinctly apparent. This is, of course, despite the fact that Descartes's ideas have been repudiated by so many philosophers—Leibniz, Spinoza, Deleuze, among many others—almost all of whom want to amplify the principles by which "numerical and real distinctions" are not identified in nature, but produced, and then transplanted onto it.<sup>52</sup>

But this "substance problem" is also an epistemological one—and one anticipated in the pre-molecular and even pre-chemical history of the philosophy of science. When Hegel, in his *Science of Logic*, for instance, described a particular mode of thinking as "chemism," he posits that "chemically differentiated objects," in distinction to the mechanistic and Newtonian objects of physics (namely atoms and molecules),

51 On the history of LSD prohibition, see Erika Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry*, 128-32; Drug Abuse Control Amendments of 1965, 89 P.L. 74; 79 Stat. 226. 19 July 1965; and Matt Oram, "The Trials of Psychedelic Medicine: LSD Psychotherapy, Clinical Science, and Pharmaceutical Regulation in the United States, 1949-76," PhD diss., University of Sydney, 2014, 94-5.

52 See Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, tr. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books 1990), 17-39; also see Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1993), 59-63.

are explicitly what they are, only through their difference, and they are thus the absolute drive to integrate themselves through and with one another.<sup>53</sup>

With the emergence of quantum physics after the advent of Einsteinian and Reimannian geometry in the early twentieth century, atoms and molecules could no longer be seen as the mechanistic elements that Hegel had perceived them as. If chemical objects were able to integrate themselves with one another, that is, then so too—as Einstein would proposed in his 1905 PhD thesis—could atoms and molecules interact and transform.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, the distinction between physics and chemistry sustains itself even today; and, even at the “molar” level of the university curriculum, these disciplines remain distinct, their procedures and practices designated to and contained in segregated buildings and rooms.

Less a consequence of the abandonment of physical theories of the brain than representative of the enthusiastic adoption of molecular models of the self, this division between physics and chemistry is reflected in the constituency of ideas that are today a part of what Rose calls our “styles of thought of biological psychiatry.” In competition with one another, various styles of thought, and various “thought images”—and the chiasmus among them—produce varying models of the modern, chemical self: for instance, the synaptic self, the molecular self, “brainhood,” and so forth.<sup>55</sup>

As already intimated in the first part of this thesis, Deleuze and Guattari chart a philosophical trajectory of these very changes—these very chemical models—in *What is Philosophy?* There the authors reject Freudian models of the neurotic self, and privilege the new neurological models of the brain-subject. Almost in reverse to Hegel, the authors speak of the brain as an individual “cogniser” in its own right: “Philosophy, art, science are not the mental objects of an objectified brain, but three aspects under which [the] brain becomes subject, [or] Thought-brain.” Elsewhere, the authors declare that “the brain is the mind itself.”<sup>56</sup> But more than this, *What is Philosophy?*

53 George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Encyclopedia of the Philosophical Sciences in Basic Outline, Part I: Science of Logic*, tr. Klaus Brinkmann, et al. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 274.

54 See, for instance, Jos Uffink, “Insuperable Difficulties: Einstein’s Statistical Road to Molecular Physics,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Modern Physics* 37 (2006): 36-70.

55 See, for instance, Nikolas Rose, “The Neurochemical Self and Its Anomalies,” in R. Ericson and A. Doyle, eds. *Risk and Morality* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 2006), 407-37; Rose, “Neurochemical Selves,” *Society* 41 (1): 46-59; Rose and Abi-Rached, *Neuro*, 272n3.

56 See Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, tr. Graham Burchell and Hugh Tomlin-



also surveys the “successive challenges” that “philosophy confronted” (such as in the form of “psychoanalysis”) throughout the twentieth century; they describe each of their advocates as the “insolent and calamitous rivals that Plato himself would never have imagined in his most comic moments.”<sup>57</sup> In this chaotic context, it is ironic that the authors conclude the book with a chapter titled “From Chaos To Brain”—for it is not the chaotic status of philosophy to which this chapter refers, but rather to “chaos theory”: the system of views that arose out of what might be regarded as the far-from-chaotic collaborations between philosophy, chemistry, and physics of the 1980s.

*Order Out of Chaos*—the product of a prolific collaboration between chemist-turned-philosopher Isabelle Stengers and Nobel Prize winning physicist Ilya Prigogine—appears in 1984 as one of the founding texts of chaos theory.<sup>58</sup> It represents an attempt to unite physics and chemistry, and to undertake an analysis of biochemical phenomenology, an undertaking that could now be understood as a physiochemical elaboration of Einsteinian spacetime.<sup>59</sup> Some years later, and elaborating on Stengers and Prigogine’s work, Deleuze and Guattari will begin their own chapter on chaos by emphasising the necessity of “molar” forms of “order” within this underlying disorder. In fact, they will acknowledge the drive to order as the basis of *all* ideational associations:

We require just a little order to protect us from chaos... all that the association of ideas has ever meant is providing us with these protective rules—resemblance, continuity, causality—which enable us to put some order into ideas, preventing our “fantasy” (delirium, madness) from crossing the universe in an instant, producing winged horses and dragons breathing fire.<sup>60</sup>

But the “order” of which Foucault writes in his *History of Madness* is even more explicit than this: Foucault is attentive to the impact of “nosological reason” and positivism on nineteenth- and twentieth-century thought, and similarly, in his *Birth of the Clinic*, Foucault emphasises the importance of the “clinical gaze” in an attempt to underscore this new optic’s impact on psychotherapy and medicine in the twentieth century.

son (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 1994), 210-19; also see Ian Buchanan and Gregg Lambert, *Deleuze and Space* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), 6.

57 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 10.

58 See Stengers and Prigogine, *Order Out of Chaos: Man’s New Dialogue with Nature* (New York: Bantam Books, 1984).

59 Ibid.

60 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 201.

In an analogous fashion, Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy book now proposes that the *materiality* of the brain is constitutive of a general order of thought in the twentieth century, one that militates against fantasy.<sup>61</sup> But if this is a crude physical theorem, it is nonetheless an effective metaphysical and or metaneurological model that represents how influential Guattari's "metamodels" have been on what the pair now offer as their answer to their book's eponymous question. Now understood as a coherent and physical structure, thought is the product of what Naomi Goldblum calls the "brain-shaped mind." If the mind obviates chaos, it does so to the extent that it is a material, physical presence, bringing a specific form of "brain order" out of the chaos, perhaps through nothing more than its brute, physical obstructionism.<sup>62</sup>

This order takes the form of the mind's rules—resemblance, continuity, causality—all of which, Deleuze and Guattari note, are also its actual material: its sensible, thinkable contents. To produce order is the brain's singular and constitutive function, then; and it is in the exercise or discharge of this function that a brain's "functionality" is determined. And it is in such a matrix of functionality, that we come to see some brains dominate others, and the domination of "brain-people," therefore, over "chaos-people."<sup>63</sup> The schizophrenic, Deleuze and Guattari attest, can be either "a conceptual persona who lives intensely within the thinker" or "a psychosocial type who represses the living being and robs him of thought"—or both.<sup>64</sup> However, in either case, the brain functions chaotically rather than "functionally"; it is robbed, for instance, of "thought" itself.

While Huxley is never explicitly critical of psychiatry—and largely remains optimistic about its potential, faithful of its procedures throughout *The Doors of Perception*, for instance—Huxley also appears inclined to conjugate the world of the schizophrenic and that of the visionary. In doing so, Huxley prefigures a range of arguments in critical- and anti-psychiatry, such as those postulated by the Dutch critical-psychiatrist Jan Foudraine in the 1970s. In Foudraine's 1974 *Not Made of Wood*, for example, the psychiatrist alludes to the power of mysticism; and in a 2011 address, Foudraine argues that "Eastern mystics have told us that the world indeed is 'maya.'" Quoting Jiddhu Krishnamurtia—a friend and colleague of Huxley—Foudraine declares that "the word is not the thing," and thus lays an emphasis instead

61 See Foucault, *History of Madness*, 158-9; Foucault, *Birth of the Clinic*, 120.

62 See Naomi Goldblum, *The Brain-Shaped Mind: What The Brain Can Tell Us About the Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 2-3.

63 *Ibid.*, 218.

64 *Ibid.*, 70.

on the thing in itself, which is to say that to which the word refers—not its signified but its *referent*.<sup>65</sup> In this way, Foudraine promotes a view similar to that which Huxley proposes: Huxley, ever intent to see things as they really are, intently pursues the “Is-ness” or *Istigkeit* of the object, and is uninterested in the way in which *representation* itself functions in the ontological economy of objects (*DOP*, 7).

Comparing altered mental states and psychotic episodes in phenomenological terms, Huxley cites an article in the *Journal d'une schizophrène* in his *Heaven and Hell*. This work presents an “autobiographical record of a young girl's passage through madness,” one in which, from the point of view of the apparently psychotic young girl, her surroundings become a “*le Pays d'Éclairement* [or] ‘the country of lit-upness’” (*HAH*, 48-9). Huxley argues that this description suggests the ostensible similarity of psychosis to visionary insight; and he notes that the “country of lit-upness” is “a name which a mystic might have used to denote his heaven” (*HAH*, 48-9).<sup>66</sup> But the field of light is also encoded with a transitive or transversal intensity that diverges from the visionary's realisation; and this diacritical distinction denotes the two states's underlying phenomenological differences. As Huxley concludes, the autobiographical description, unlike the visionary account, is “charged with a hateful significance” that is “negatively transfigured”:

Everything that, for healthy visionaries, is a source of bliss, brings to Renée [the young girl] only fear and a nightmarish sense of unreality. The summer sunshine is malignant; the gleam of polished surfaces is suggestive, not of gems, but of machinery and enamelled tin; the intensity of existence which animates every object, when seen at close range and out of its utilitarian context, is felt as a menace (*HAH*, 49).

The negative inversion of the visionary experience is, for Huxley, typified by “punishments of pressure and constriction,” carceral pressures of a kind also “described in the various accounts of hell.” The sinners in Dante's *Inferno*, Huxley notes, are “buried in mud, shut up in the trunks of trees, frozen solid in blocks of ice, crushed beneath stones” (*HAH*, 50). It is in these passages, near the end of *Heaven and Hell*, that we can begin to sense the collision of

65 See Jan Foudraine, *Not Made of Wood: A Psychiatrist Discovers His Own Profession*, tr. Hubert H. Hoskins (London: Quartet Books, 1974); Foudraine, “On the Power of Medical Maya: An Update of ‘Not Made of Wood,’” *Keynote address at the Critical Psychiatry Network conference*, Sheffield, 27 April 2001, see <http://www.critpsynet.freeuk.com/Foudraine.htm>. On Foudraine and critical psychiatry, see D.B. Double, ed. *Critical Psychiatry: The Limits of Madness* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 6-7.

66 Also see *HAH*, 52.

physics (pressure, gravity, interment), as well as chemistry, in Huxley's work on psychosis, where "negative visionary experience" can arise especially "at the moment of death" (HAH, 52).

For Laing, psychosis cannot be reduced to any one discipline: not to chemistry, physics, or a combination of the two. The negative visionary, Laing argues, follows too idiosyncratic a procedure for psychiatry alone to account for it.<sup>67</sup> "Psychopathology," Laing writes,

by the very nature of its basic approach precludes the possibility of understanding a patient's disorganization as a failure to achieve a specifically personal form of unity.

What should supersede the psychopathological practices that appear in the "molecularising" decades of the 1960s and '70s, Laing posits, is a "genuine science of personal existence."<sup>68</sup> While it is arguable that no "existential-phenomenological" schema could adequately do away with the Platonian tendency to construct "forms" out of the phenomenal world—no more for the "charge" of a flower than for a person—Laing's critique is foregrounded in a sociological principle of contested human relations. Classificatory or categorical psychiatry, he argues, isolates and disavows the psychotic subject's "actual experience"—in much the same way as the schizophrenic disavows the *psychiatrist's* world. The pair—at loggerheads with one another, and equally as motivated to dismiss one another's epistemological positions—nurture their similarly strong *mens's* or "willing minds" to overcome the other. Diagnoser and diagnosed are thus locked in a contest of wills. Thus, the whole notion of "depersonalization in a theory that is intended to be a theory of persons is," for Laing, "as false as [the] schizoid depersonalization of others and is no less ultimately an intentional act," aimed at nothing less than total power and control.<sup>69</sup>

What Laing identifies as depersonalization, Deleuze and Guattari describe in topographical terms as *detritorialization*. And similarly to Huxley, Deleuze and Guattari focus on the apprehension of a flower in seeking to distinguish their model of perceptual operations from what they regard as the "triumph of the *logos* or the law over the *nomos*."<sup>70</sup> But while Huxley only obliquely adverts to the sort of "mathematical abstraction" that might

67 See R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self*, chapter 1, "The existential-phenomenological foundations for a science of persons," 18-26.

68 *Ibid.*, 24.

69 *Ibid.*

70 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 373.

brought to bear on the *visual* plane in *Heaven and Hell*, Deleuze and Guattari unwittingly function as the elaborators of Huxley's nascent geometrical philosophy, engaging with Euclid's conception of space as it is "founded on the famous parallel postulate." As the authors assert, Euclid's postulate takes gravity as the universal constant that governs all forms.<sup>71</sup> Knowing this, we can detect in Huxley's description of the "quivering" bunch of flowers a subtle deduction of this Euclidean principle: what is a quiver of significance for Huxley may now be read as an artifact of gravity's forces. But an emblematic question—and one that disrupts such an appeal to physical explanation—is this: to what extent do the flowers *actually* quiver under a gravitational force rather than merely *appear* to quiver? And from Huxley's perspective, in his lucid apprehension of the flowers, to what extent is this quiver the product of the mescaline intoxication?

These questions are epideictic; not in that they praise or blame, but that they *gesture* at possibility. That is, their enunciation is in itself a performance, one that yearns less for any conclusive explanation than serves to illustrate the *impossibility* of any positive answer. Dividing physics from language, the question can elicit only answers that are already charged with the very methodological presuppositions that Huxley's observations attempt to transcend. Rather than seeking answers, Huxley valorises itinerancy; he "ambulates" in the hope of hitting upon one of those inexplicable and accidental processes that "come unsought" and yet lead to an experience of "cosmic consciousness" (*TPP*, 81). Attempts to distinguish between the flower's gravitational charge and its apprehension are, as Huxley time and again affirms, constitutive of the most vital answers themselves; for it is only ever within the intrinsic limits of the logos, such as they are, that questions of this kind can be engendered and, ultimately, answered.

Thus, Huxley will conclude his *Literature and Science* with a resigned description of language's limits:

Words are few and can only be arranged in certain conventionally fixed ways; the counterpoint of unique events is infinitely wide and their succession indefinitely long (*LAS*, 99).

Huxley's view of the relative power of nature and language—of logos and physis—underscores Mallarmé's essay slogans on the finitude of language, which I addressed in chapter 2. While only "twenty-six letters" are enough to

71 Ibid., 370. Huxley also directly discusses Euclid and Riemann in *Do What You Will* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1929), 262-3.

“consecrate language,” it is always the text itself (and in fact its typography), rather than its author, that speaks.<sup>72</sup> But for Huxley, scientific language is even less promising than the comparably richer language of literature:

That the purified language of science or even the richer purified language of literature should ever be adequate to the givenness of the world and of our experience is, in the very nature of things, impossible (*LAS*, 99).

While restrained in his excoriation of science, Huxley's criticism of scientific discoveries accords with the abiding attitude espoused by his cynical works of the 1920s. Like Huxley's cynicism, his pessimism about the potential of science stems from his larger political objections to constraints on liberty—such as those that are depicted in *Brave New World*, but which, from the 1940s and onwards, are increasingly focused on science's devalorisation of the mystical, visionary experience. It was early as 1928, however, that Huxley, in *Point Counter Point*, channeled his skeptical view of science through the figure of Spandrell, a man who describes the “laws of nature” simply as “useful conventions of strictly human manufacture.” It is also clear, as Spandrell continues, “that space and time and mass themselves, the whole universe of Newton and his successors, are simply our own invention” (*PCP*, 213).

While scholars such as Deery criticise Huxley's grasp on the details of the science, highlighting his “proclivity for inferring universals from specific contexts,” such scholars crucially understate not only Huxley's attempt to pervert and satirise science's political ecology, but also seem to ignore Huxley's critique of science's grasps at and plays for power.<sup>73</sup> Trenchant in his critique of the politics of science, for instance, *Point Counter Point*'s Spandrell describes precisely the view that Deery advances in criticising Huxley's scientific knowledge: that Newtonian mechanics is a human invention. But Spandrell does not hold this view. Rather, this is the view he *attributes* to the collective of “communist” ideologues that Spandrell now blames for manipulating his friend Illidge, for it is they who have prompted him to adopt this view for political reasons—whereas he is otherwise an exemplar of positivism.

Since Illidge is now at once a communist *and* a scientist, however, Spandrell perceives as “exquisitely comic” the awkward position in which he finds himself, now unable to distinguish empirical findings from propaganda. Not only must Illidge remain “committed to nineteenth-century material-

72 See Thomas Hope, “Poetry's Media,” 451; Stéphane Mallarmé, “The Book: a Spiritual Instrument,” 82.

73 Deery, *Huxley and the Mysticism of Science*, 60.

ism” and feel “sadly worried by Einstein and Eddington,” but—since “He’s a scientist”—he must also maintain “principles” that “make him fight against any scientific theory that’s less than fifty years old” (*PCP*, 213).

Tethered to these political ideals, Illidge must

believe that the only fundamental realities are space, time and mass, and that all the rest is nonsense, mere illusion and mostly bourgeois illusion at that (*PCP* 213).

This is far from a serious attestation of the displacement of Newtonian mechanics by Einsteinian special relativity—a view that Deery attributes to Huxley. Rather, this scene offers an acerbic critique of communism’s political influence over science—an observation that signals Huxley’s rejection of the interference of politics in science.

Published in 1916—only twelve years before *Point Counter Point*—Einstein’s Theory of General Relativity will again be subjected to Huxley’s ludic undermining in *Do What You Will* (1929). Here the political power of science is now imbued with an altogether venerable piety, its dictates now governing the laws of creation themselves: “God is no longer bound, as he once was, to obey the decrees promulgated by Euclid in 300 B.C.,” for he can “now take his choice among a variety of geometries” (*DW*, 263). Amplifying the scientist’s power above that of any godhead—and even above nature—Huxley renders the relationship between God and science as chiasmic. But if Einstein’s and Riemann’s “[g]eometries and laws of nature are among the latest products of the human spirit” (*DW*, 263-3), they have also been harvested, against all odds, out of what is the fraught crucible of science’s political contestations.

For Huxley, then, to be a scientist is to be human; and to be human is to be ineluctably political. The human spirit is just as much a sign of one’s fallibility as a reflection of its prejudices. Sensing this, Deery rejects Huxley’s claim that “all geometries have therefore been shown to be merely arbitrary creations or ‘products of the human spirit (*GENIUS*, 38).” Moreover, Deery also posits that “Huxley is wrong to conclude” that Euclid’s theory represents a “vicious circle” in “classical reasoning.” Yet Huxley’s view of the human spirit is hardly as arbitrary as Deery claims. As Huxley explains in *Heaven and Hell*, the human spirit is an axiom, continually constituted and reconstituted by the technical materials that chemically infuse it: “it is,” he writes, “a matter of chemical record that most contemplatives worked systematically to modify their body chemistry with a view to creating the conditions favourable to spiritual insight” (*HAH*, 63-4).

The spirit and the soul are “nurtured,” he writes in “One and Many,” by a “direct participative knowledge of things, by an immediate physical contact,



[and] by a relationship involving will, desire, feeling.” This is a micropolitical description of desire. For Huxley, it is this methectic or “direct, participative knowledge of the world’s diversity” from which “the poetic imagination of man extracts the deities of polytheism.”<sup>74</sup> In other words, in many instances, more can indeed be more; and it is only out of a true diversity of experiences and views that we may come to discover both the polysemous complexity that is there to be seen: both in the real world and in what Marcus Boon describes as the “imaginal realms.”<sup>75</sup> It may seem untenable that Huxley imbues scientific discoveries with a mystical or visionary genealogy of the “human spirit,” especially when it is one that is—far from arbitrary—itself constituted by a manipulation of a technological and political context in an effort to make it more “favourable.” But if it is an untenable association, it is not because, as Deery argues, Huxley’s understanding of science is deficient. It is rather, as Deery concedes at a later point of her study, because there are “certain flaws in the *parallelism* Huxley and others mount.”<sup>76</sup>

The problem lies, then, in Huxley’s chiasmic thought, in his drawing together these disparate fields. Deery rejects Huxley’s realignment of science and religion; she asserts that all that Huxley and the other so-called “misty-scientists” seek to do is to ensure that “human involvement” is not overlooked when we encounter the nonhuman alterity of scientific laws. But this aim is merely a dream, Deery writes. More than this, though, it is precisely

the mental-physical connection promised in mystical philosophy. Alienation and reification, the emblematic curses of the twentieth century, are alleviated by dematerializing reality with science’s apparent approval.<sup>77</sup>

And yet, however assiduous Huxley and his fellow “misti-scientists” are in their wish to dematerialise reality, they less dissuade their readers of reality’s material construction than advance a metaphysical assessment of science’s inadequacy as a *conceptualisation* of reality. If science alienates the human—and does so in the same breath that it privileges the immaterial or dematerialised—it is not because it excludes the subject or freezes the subject’s words in a static logos. It is, rather, because science omits and excludes parts of

74 Aldous Huxley, “One and Many,” in Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, eds., *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays, Volume II: 1926-1929* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2000), 302-19, esp. 314-16.

75 Boon, *The Road of Excess*, 218.

76 Deery, *Huxley and the Mysticism of Science*, 159 (my emphasis).

77 *Ibid.*, 160.

reality: "God thinks neither in terms of Euclid nor of Riemann" (*ALONG*, 108). Science is not simply an inadequate way of representing "absolute reality" (*ALONG*, 108), then, but also insufficiently well narrativised; it is "lacking in the obvious attributes of the picturesque" (*LAS*, 90). Threatening to become ever more influential, however, science also equips "the political bosses who control the various national states with unprecedentedly efficient instruments of coercion" (*SLP*, 6). Less an alleviation for the alienated individual than their increasingly punitive and sovereign master, the applied sciences are *pharmakonic*. They are predisposed to political exploitation and expropriation, even as they denude the operations of previously unseen structures.

While Huxley's engagements with the geometrical and physical sciences of Einstein, Euclid, and Riemann are by no means as technical as Deleuze and Guattari's commitments to these sciences, Huxley's writing alludes to the shockingness of the shift augured by general relativity, and particularly by its adoption of a Riemannian—that is, a non-Euclidean, model of space-time. This is a shift whose effects ramified in the social world as acutely as they also reshaped the social sciences; for Riemannian physics began to deploy metaphors, for instance, from the "human community" to illustrate its propositions. As Arkady Plotnitsky notes, Riemann's incorporation of the language-concept of the "neighbourhood" suggests "a kind of sociological definition of space."<sup>78</sup> Elaborating on this newly socialised mathematical space, Plotnitsky describes how general relativity enshrined "at least a certain conception, topos, of a spatial type," one that had been also "developed in the so-called 'topos theory' introduced by Alexandre Grothendieck." In its introduction of the concept of the manifold or manifoldness (*Mannigfaltigkeit*), moreover, Riemannian spatial mathematics repudiates crucial limbs of Euclid's geometry; it enables spatiality to become "a primary concept"—and an even "more primary" concept than that which later became known as "set theory," a mathematical formulation introduced by George Cantor, shortly after Riemann's death, in 1866.<sup>79</sup>

For Deery, Huxley's response to Einstein's relativity theories appears in the decades following those theories's publications. What are apparently

78 Arkady Plotnitsky, "Bernard Riemann's Conceptual Mathematics and the Idea of Space," *Configurations* 17 (2009): 105-30; Yuri I. Manin, "George Cantor and his Heritage," in *Mathematics as Metaphor: Selected Essays of Yuri I. Manin* (Providence: American Mathematical Society, 2007), 45-54.

79 Plotnitsky, "Manifolds: On the Concept of Space in Riemann and Deleuze," in Simon Duffy, ed. *Virtual Mathematics* (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2005), 187-208; Plotnitsky, "Bernard Riemann's Conceptual Mathematics," 122.

allusions to Einsteinian relativity also serve as evidence, Deery claims, of Huxley's fatal misunderstanding of the physical theorems. In a line in *Jesting Pilate*, for instance—Huxley's 1926 travel diary—the author illustrates the regularity of his experience of culture shock: “in the traveller's life these little lessons in the theory of relativity are daily events” (*JP*, 23). Deery claims that Huxley understands general relativity as the “total relativism of all viewpoints,” and allows for a “cultural or moral relativism” in his thinking. In adopting such an understanding, she writes, Huxley repeats what has been the “most popular”—and yet also the most inaccurate—“application of Einstein's ideas.”<sup>80</sup>

But the context in which Huxley's appeal to the “theory of relativity” is rearticulated in this diary—in a foreign place, characterised by new discoveries—suggests how the reference might function as more than simply an allegory for “cultural relativism.” Uttering these lines as he observes the recital of “some verses in Urdu,” Huxley explains how he has become “indignant” at the thought of an “Arab occupation” of Sicily. He reflects on this seemingly automatic political disdain for the poem he hears, the one that is sentimentally recited by the “young Mohammedan of Arab descent.” And while Huxley finds himself contemptuous at first, he promptly realises that his offence is only “just as indignant no doubt, as the poet had felt at the sight of those once Mohammaden shores now polluted by Christians” (*JP*, 23). For Huxley, the moment represents an unpleasant case of repulsion—but one that is also curiously instructive—for it is this affect and sense of abjection that allows him to conceive of Einstein's theory.

Deery concedes that even a physicist as formalistic as Werner Heisenberg had anticipated the usefulness of Einstein's general relativity theory for theorisations of moral relativism; although what Heisenberg envisages, she notes, is not a “scientific” relativism of difference—and less still a Diltheyan “social anthropology”—but a means of identifying discrete differences in a world of social constants.<sup>81</sup> It is directly to this Heisenbergian formulation, however—this legitimate proposition—that Huxley refers in his *Literature and Science*. There he observes how well Heisenberg's formulation reveals that the “division of the world” is in fact illusory, much like the co-presence of two objects belies their separation over vast distances and times. For Huxley, physical models of reality are “no longer applicable”—for each of them

80 Deery, *Huxley and the Mysticism of Science*, 62.

81 On the origins of social anthropology and of cultural relativism in William Dilthey, see Maria Baghramian, *Relativism* (London: Routledge, 2004), 66-8.

“raises difficulties” and, as for the discovery of reality: this is, he argues, “no longer [even] the aim of the research” (*LAS*, 64-5).<sup>82</sup> The problem now, Huxley suggests, is to explain those ineradicable fingerprints left by the human on the apparently nonhuman processes of the sciences themselves. For what is the point of a “nature subjected to human questioning” when, after all the trials and operations, “man, once again, meets only with himself” (*LAS*, 65)?<sup>83</sup>

It is true that Huxley's “little lesson” in relativity is less a product of Huxley's studies of Einstein's theory than his own means of identifying the social constants that—much like light or gravity themselves—order the social context out of which the Mohammeden's poem arises. For Huxley, Einstein's processes function as detectors of difference in a given context; but whereas Einstein strives to detect physico-material differences, Huxley is tasked with identifying those that are historical, religious, and most of all social. Relativity represents another means by which Huxley can communicate not a static theorem but propose that—“in spite of science,” and “in spite of unpurified language”—it remains possible to effect “the creation of a comprehensive philosophy in which... reality remains forever whole, seamless, and undivided” (*LAS*, 67). Both the poem that teaches Huxley his lesson and Einstein's theory itself offer what Philip K. Dick calls a “shock of dysrecognition” to those who apprehend it. Like the metanoic voyage, Huxley's “dysrecognition” of the poem allows him to access the “direct physical knowledge” of the Urdu versification; it offers him a kind of apprehension that is distinguishable from the “intellectual knowledge, abstracted and generalized out of the physical knowledge” (*SPINOZA*, 314).

Such a distinction is congruent with Einstein's Equivalence Principle, where a kind of dysrecognition is occasioned when an indistinguishable mimesis—or “equivalence”—between two uniformly accelerated frames of reference can be recognised for what it is: the expression of an underlying order, that of “curved spacetime.” Now, constant speed can be recognised as such—notwithstanding that it appears homologous with stasis. As a conceptualisation through which a direct knowledge of these relative frames may be encountered afresh, general relativity thus operates to powerfully illustrate the dissolution of subject and object, self and other. All the while,

82 On Huxley's vitalism or “sensitivity to the ‘life of the body,’” see Nicholas M. Williams, “‘The Sciences of Life’: Living Form in William Blake and Aldous Huxley,” *Romanticism* 15, no. 1 (2009): 41-53.

83 Abraham Pais, *Subtle is the Lord...: The Science and the Life of Albert Einstein* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 182n45. Also see Werner Heisenberg, *Philosophic Problems of Nuclear Science* (London: Faber and Faber, 1952), 117; Baghramian, *Relativism*, 63-7.

it underscores the human's ensconcement in a field that, like all things, is directly affected by "curved spacetime."<sup>84</sup>

Of course, both the poem and curved spacetime are themselves classifications: the former is a kind of writing structure, and the latter a kind of molecular architecture. But it is Einstein's amplified reconstruction of Aristotle's—and then Newtown's—definition of gravity, verified in part by its prediction of new kinds of gravitational forces (for instance, changes in the motion of binary pulsars), that begins to define *all that is gravitational*. Now understood as a "natural kind," Torretti suggests, Einstein's conceptualisation may be interpreted in only one way; all the while, the Urdu poem remains simply another poem, interpretable in any number of ways. That the poem is equally as "true" as Einstein's theory guarantees it no particular veneration; rather, it confirms only its existence. And of course, general relativity is only also another mathematical abstraction of the kind that Huxley devalorises as merely a Platonian "Idea."

Spacetime may thus also be revealed as a "grotesque mistake": a theory that attests to the truth of a state of "Being" while it also dismisses the possibility of any variation. The theory thus repudiates the notion that the *nature* of spacetime itself—apparently immune to change—might also transform and fluctuate, and in this way represent its own kind of "becoming" (*DOP*, 7). And while spacetime geometry is determined, at least in physical terms, by the energy and momentum of the matter and radiation present within a given field, the affective experience of spacetime for the human observer is—much like the charge of gravity in the bunch of flowers—difficult to ever finally demonstrate: How, for instance, may one ever really determine whether they, as humans, are in free fall or at rest?

When the first version of the Equivalence Principle initially occurred to Einstein in 1907, even he acknowledged that, in a subjective encounter with equivalency in spacetime, the observer would be conferred no more than a "*right*" to "interpret" different states in certain ways. As he suggested,

The gravitational field has only a relative existence in a way similar to the electric field generated by the magnetoelectric induction. Because for an observer falling freely from the roof of a house there exists—at least in his immediate surroundings—no gravitational field. Indeed, if the observer drops some bodies then these remain relative to him in a state of rest... independent of their

84 Roberto Torretti, "Gravity as Spacetime Curvature," *Physics in Perspective* 2 (2000): 118-34, esp. 119.

articular chemical or physical nature... The observer therefore has the *right to interpret* his own state as “rest.”<sup>85</sup>

As Torretti suggests, for Einstein to speak in terms of “rest” and “falling freely” is actually to continue to think of spacetime in Euclidean terms—and to imagine that, for instance, a particle falling in a field would fall in a straight line, one that runs exactly perpendicular to the earth’s surface. It is akin to thinking that the city of Manhattan, as Torretti suggests, “appears to be divided into rectangular blocks, although no true rectangle can ever be drawn on the curved surface of the planet.”<sup>86</sup> Realising that objects do not fall in these kinds of straight lines in the coming years, Einstein would soon incorporate Riemannian geometry into his model of the problem of equivalence. Inspired by the work of Carl Friedrich Gauss, who had proposed that particles move in “geodesics” (that is, along the shortest possible distances across a surface), Riemann’s manifold model had shown how the rate at which adjacent geodesics converge toward, or diverge from, each other depends on the dimensions of the local curvature between them.

As Torretti argues, it was this discovery that enabled Riemann to see that “the apparent mutual attraction of nearby particles under the influence of gravity turns out to be, on this view [only] a manifestation of spacetime curvature.”<sup>87</sup> Such a model of what Torretti describes as the movement of particles—of those that run “parallel to themselves along their respective worldlines”—is analogous to the way in which Huxley would defend *Crome Yellow* (1921). Parts of the novel only *resembled* certain events and personages from his real life at Garsington, he would argue, a defence that became all the more axiomatic in the context of his dispute with Lady Ottoline Morrell.

In 1921, Huxley would write a letter to Morrell, one in which he would express his apparently sincere regret that she had taken offence to his novel’s depiction of her and the other guests for whom she had played host while Huxley lived with them in her manor. Huxley would also refer in his letter to the words of the character Denis Stone, whose words he describes, interestingly, as his *own*:

I said in the book: we are all parallel straight lines destined to meet only at infinity. Real understanding is impossibility. I write something which seems

85 Pais, ‘*Subtle is the Lord...*’, 178. As Torretti notes, this is Pais’s own translation of the passage; it appears on a manuscript of circa 1920, archived in the Pierpont Morgan Library: Torretti, “Gravity as Spacetime Curvature,” 133n16.

86 Torretti, “Gravity as Spacetime Curvature,” 126.

87 *Ibid.*, 127.

to me immediately and obviously comprehensible for what it is. You, running on your own parallel, read into meanings I never so much dreamt of. Others, on their parallels, find other meanings and contemptuous portraits of people unknown to you.<sup>88</sup>

In defending *Crome Yellow's* resemblance to Garsington, and the novel's personae to Garsington's guests, Huxley evokes an explanation that is, at least at first blush, consistent with Einstein's Equivalence principle. The mathematical thought experiment in which a particle falling in freefall can come to resemble a particle at rest, represents, at least for Einstein, a legitimate quandary. However, it also instantiated a "result": it illustrates, for instance, the way in which a "real understanding" of the particle's status remains impossible to determine, at least in Euclidean terms.

It was precisely this impossibility that led Einstein to embrace the Riemannian principles of non-Euclidean geometry. For Riemann, as Somers-Hall points out, *endlessness* and *infinity* are crucially different: while the former refers to the *outline* of a circle, which one can trace forever, the outline is not "infinite in length" for "the circumference of any circle is of a finite magnitude."<sup>89</sup> Thus, in Euclidean terms, as Somers-Hall observes, "We can therefore say that parallel lines are lines that meet at infinity."<sup>90</sup>

While this Euclidean formulation is almost precisely what Denis Stone means to say in *Crome Yellow*, it is also notably precisely what Huxley means to say to Morrell: literary interpretation can never truly be the same, he asserts, as between two individuals. It is, in other words, "equivalent to saying that no matter how far we extend [these parallel lines], they will never meet."<sup>91</sup> By contrast, in Riemannian terms, there are "no parallel lines" at all; rather, as Somers-Hall asserts, "the notion of a straight line is to be interpreted in terms of a great circle."<sup>92</sup> Huxley's "parallel lines" formulation, therefore, clings to the Euclidean notion of certainty, even as Huxley dismisses "Euclid's" ideas in *The Genius and the Goddess* (1955); for Euclid is, proposes Huxley, "the classical example of reasoning based on a vicious circle"—although Huxley is perhaps more than mildly aware of the irony of this Riemannian allusion (*GENIUS*, 38).

88 Huxley to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 3 December 1921, in *Aldous Huxley: Selected Letters*, ed. James Sexton (Chicago; Ivan R. Dee, 2007), 107-8.

89 Henry Somers-Hall, *Hegel, Deleuze, and the Critique of Representation*, 94.

90 *Ibid.*

91 *Ibid.*, 93.

92 *Ibid.*, 96.



But the reasons adduced by the cynical Huxley of the 1920s to defend his fiction from such accusations as it had been directly wrested from reality—that it is an obvious *roman à clef*—still seem to rely on a metaphorology of outmoded Euclidean geometrical physics. And while Huxley's analogy or apologia may be criticised for its advertence to this increasingly superseded theory in physics, it is also possible to see Huxley's assertion of Euclid's theories as disingenuous or fallible in its own right, and for reasons that do not betray his failure to understand the science.

The problem that endures for Huxley, however, is that—no matter how it is expressed—Huxley's "mystical," "visionary," or "artistic" philosophy of reality soon becomes entangled with other "totalising" philosophies that he purports to reject, such as those of Euclid or Riemann. In another of his travel diaries, *Along The Road* (1925), Huxley praises Holland as a "rationalist's paradise"—that is, as a nation in which one is led to conclude, "flushed with mental intoxication," that

Euclid is absolute reality, that God is a mathematician, that the universe is a simple affair that can be explained in terms of physics and mechanics, that all men are equally endowed with reason, and that it is only a question of putting the right arguments before them to make them see the error of their ways and to inaugurate the reign of justice and common sense. Those were noble and touching dreams, commendable inebriations! We are soberer now. We have learnt that nothing is simple and rational except what we ourselves have invented; that God thinks neither in terms of Euclid nor of Riemann; that science has "explained nothing";... that instinct is the sole source of action...  
(*ALONG*, 108)

Disavowing any absolute correspondence between "reality" and our human models of reason or science, Huxley remains suspicious of the physical sciences, or at least *as* suspicious of them as of any other claim that a "one-to-one correspondence between an artist's work and his character" could be arrived at (*HAH*, 80).

And if Huxley is right to say that it is "all but impossible" to communicate "mental events except in similes drawn from the more material universe of material things" (*HAH*, 10), then it must also be impossible to communicate that which constitutes "material reality" in any better way—except, that is, in those "similes" of Euclid's and Riemann's invention. For Huxley, oversimplification is the central problem, for "Atoms, or... those aspects of the atom which scientists choose to consider, are immeasurably less complicated than men," and "the atom of the scientists is simple in comparison with man in

his totality," and therefore so much less representative of the human's immeasurable and infinitely complex ontology (*PS*, viii).

An even deeper problem than this, however, is a sociological one: the problem in which sociological theory, accepting human difference as real, attempts to understand those differences, and so reduces them. Nevertheless, as Huxley notes, even this problem can be articulated in the terms of Riemannian physics. As Huxley proposes in *Proper Studies* (1927), there are "organizers" and Utopians. While the organisers fail to critique the institutions whose processes they seek to refine, Utopians begin from the wrong assumptions about these institutions. The latter behave as if they were radical astronomers, compelled to write

books about what would happen if there were no such thing as gravitation and if the earth, in consequence, moved in a straight line and not an ellipse. Such books might be very edifying if their authors began by showing that movement in a straight line is better than movement in a curve. (*PS*, x)

Conjugating the shift from Euclidean to Riemannian geometry with the socio-political imperative felt by intellectuals to persuade their readership of the superiority above all others of their "better" model, Huxley again alludes to the importance of the socio-political *promotion* of ideas. Having learnt from the history of physics, it is important, Huxley claims, that impossible assumptions—such as Euclid's or even Reimann's—are not simply accepted, but rather made subject to contestation, trial, and justification. In his last novel, Huxley will summarise this tendency in an aphoristic quotation from Aristotle, one that serves as the novel's epigraph: "In framing an ideal we may assume what we wish, but should avoid impossibilities" (*ISLAND*, 6).

In Huxley's philosophy, "framing an ideal" becomes a means of intuiting the world within an accepted rubric of uncertainty and approximation. When Huxley recounts the Urdu verses in *Jesting Pilate*, the fact that "the words of the poem were incomprehensible" does not obviate the *possibility* that Huxley, in attending to this distant language, might "recognise that distinguishing feature of the Euripidean chorus which Aristophanes derides and parodies in the *Frogs*" (*JP*, 24). Such possibilities are "real," because they are contemplations; and they are true, therefore, because contemplations occur, for Huxley, *without intentionality*: they suggestively and meaningfully appear like so many unconscious thoughts arising spontaneously in the Mind-at-Large. For Deleuze and Guattari, the tendency to acquire new data, and to habituate oneself to them, is singularly ingrained in *English* philosophy. British practitioners, they claim, "treat the plane of immanence as a

moveable and moving ground," accepting as true only what is *acquired*—not because everything that is true is also an acquisition, but "because a concept is acquired by inhabiting, by pitching one's tent, by contracting a habit."<sup>93</sup>

Huxley experimented with what he had acquired by habit in his hypnosis projects, the most formal of which he had conducted with Milton Erickson in 1965. Leading the experiment, Huxley proposed to enter into "Deep Reflection," and he described to Erickson how he had previously entered into "various states of psychological awareness."<sup>94</sup> When the pair began their session, Huxley recalled having previously entered into various states of "hypnotic amnesia" while using his "Deep Reflection technique." On one occasion, he recalled, he had discovered that he had answered the telephone while under hypnosis, but had not remembered having done so after awakening from the hypnotic state. He had even, Huxley claimed, been cognisant enough to record a message in writing—all while in a somnambulist trance.<sup>95</sup>

During his experiments with Erickson, Huxley at one point becomes excited—kairotic even—when Erickson instructs him that certain words, and in particular the words "vestibule," "edge," and "ravine," could become "available" to him, but only when Erickson allowed as much.<sup>96</sup> The word "AVAILABLE"—written in Erickson's report in capital case—functions as a codeword during the induced hypnosis; when uttered, it aimed to trigger in Huxley certain feelings, prompting him to enunciate the particular words mentioned above. By the end of the session, Huxley had concluded that his own mode of Deep Reflection was "another and entirely different category of experience" to that of the deep trance induced by Erickson's mode of hypnotic suggestion.<sup>97</sup>

Huxley's hypnosis experiments and the theory of hypnosis itself emblemise Doyle's response to Deleuze and Guattari's notion of an "itinerant flowing," a notion addressed earlier as what Deleuze and Guattari name a "following." As Doyle affirms,

"to be carried away" by such a flow, one must often instigate a blockage. If the multiple must be "made," it is because its unfolding demands a *refrain*... The univocal identity called 'self' gets blocked, refrained, flattened, and this

93 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 105-106.

94 See Erickson, "Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley," 45.

95 *Ibid.*, 47-8.

96 *Ibid.*, 64-5.

97 *Ibid.*, 66.

blockage emerges precisely through an attention to something else, the acquisition of a familiar.<sup>98</sup>

To acquire a “familiar” is—much like the process of answering a phone and writing down a message—to flow into and follow a procedure based on intuition and rehearsed codes. It is the same way in which, as Doyle confirms, diamond-cutting “demands a strict ‘following’ of the particular qualities of each stone” and commands a particular kind of iteration. This is not a following that emphasises the “relativism” of the diamond’s facets, however, and not a methexis of the diamond’s “reflective surfaces” (for “what do they echo but each other, light itself?”). Rather, the process is an “iteration of *light on light*,” a performance of an “ambulant science” of dilution, one by which the “self [is] made out of the difference between inside and outside.”<sup>99</sup>

When Huxley, only fleetingly—and apparently paranomastically—refers to Einstein’s theory in *Jesting Pilate*, it is less a serious appeal to the scientific theory, then—and less still a thoroughgoing *explanada* for Huxley’s ability to relativise two distinct cultural epistemes—than it is a *suture* for that which he promptly realises is his unwarranted indignation at having heard the Mohammedan’s poem. Here, as in other of Huxley’s apprehensions of a “blissful visionary experience,” what is offered arises only by means of the resolution of the initial “blockage” that initiates his own “negatively transfigured” perambulation on the object (*HAH*, 49).

As a metalepsis for an empathic approach to difference, Huxley’s appropriation of Einstein’s formulation as a “little lesson” represents Huxley’s *itinerant* and doubly poetic redeployment of the physical postulate of relativity; it is a response to a poem, and yet it also forms its own multidisciplinary poesy. And for all its pharmakonic potential, Huxley’s reappropriation of Einstein’s theory emphasises its social and political *istigkeit*; it imbues the physical science not with ambiguity, but with what Huxley would later call a sense of “gratuitous grace” (*DOP*, 46). Now repurposed as a metonym for the process of discovery itself—as well as for the dispensation of long-acquired habits—Huxley’s “little lesson in relativity” seeks to propose only that we “understand before we condemn” (*JP*, 27).

Revealing Huxley’s appreciation for a poem whose language he cannot comprehend, this reference to relativity also *operationalises* the itinerancy that is characteristic of Huxley’s belief in the “unsought” apperception of

98 Richard Doyle, *Wetwares: Experiments in Postvital Living* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 10.

99 *Ibid.*

“unity” through poetic and embodied ambulation or “indirection” (*LAS*, 22). *Jesting Pilate*, which is subtitled “An Intellectual Holiday”—and, in a remarkable accident of its own, mistitled “an intellectual *holyday*” in one online archive<sup>100</sup>—also suggests the way in which the traveller can both be traumatised and enlightened by new models. As Lindsey Banco suggests, travelling—a mobile, transitive, and commutative process—imperils “the traveller with personal or cultural disruption” while permitting the collection of “sacred or healing knowledge.”<sup>101</sup> Underscoring the methodological rigor of the ambulant method, Doyle confirms the importance of these integrations: the “discipline of itineration,” he writes, “entails an ecstatic but disciplined receptivity to the turbulent outside.”<sup>102</sup> To integrate what lies outside, however, necessitates a revisionism of a kind that exceeds mentation and must be *virtually* biological:

Neither suffering nor enjoying a static “point” of view, the itinerant continually acquires novel capacities to flow, the strange capacity for invasion that biologist Lynn Margulis links to the emergence of endosymbiosis and Deleuze and Guattari refer to as thought.<sup>103</sup>

Allowing for “invasion,” itineration absorbs the external; and privileging a new porousness, it admits freely of that which is different and alien in what is a kind of molar endosymbiosis.

To extend on this physicalist view, we might even see how, in allowing itself to be offended or wounded, the itinerant nurtures what may turn out to be—as some contemporary biologists have written—an uncongenial me-

100 See “Jesting Pilate : an intellectual holyday (1957) [sic]”, *Internet Archive*, accessed 20 April, 2014, <https://archive.org/details/jestingpilateint00huxl>.

101 Lindsay Banco, “Psychedelic Trips: Travel and Drugs in Contemporary Literature,” PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2007, 4, 215; cf. Banco, *Travel and Drugs in Twentieth-Century Literature* (London: Routledge, 2010).

102 Doyle, *Wetwares*, 11.

103 Ibid. While Margulis’s proposition that symbiosis—or serial endosymbiotic theory (SET)—which engenders the origin of plastids and mitochondria, contributed much to the dissolution of the concept of the individual organism, the theory itself was first postulated by Russian botanist Konstantin Mereschkowski in his “Thoerie der zwei Plasmaarten als Grundlage der Symbiogenesis, einer neuen Lehre von der Entstehung der Organismen,” *Biologisches Centralblatt* 30 (1910): 253-64. Also see Lynne Margulis and Gregory Hinkle, “Symbiosis and the Origin of Eukaryotic Cell Motility: Current Status,” *Endocytobiology IV: 4th International Colloquium on Endocytobiology and Symbiosis*, ed. P. Nardon, V. Gianinazzi-Pearson, A.M. Grenier, L. Margulis, and D.C. Smith (Paris: Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique, 1990), 523-5; and John Archibald, *One Plus One Equals One: Symbiosis and the Evolution of Complex Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), esp. 50-2.

tabolite: namely, an “Evil within.”<sup>104</sup> The process is allegorised in certain symbiotic interactions between fungi and bacterium, for example, where the former material expands the “metabolic potential” of the latter. Pathogenesis is now re-encoded as symbiosis; and what is poisonous begins to serve, sustain, and *promote* rather than prevent the recipient’s organellar life.<sup>105</sup> One example of this process invites great curiosity. A species of bacteria often modelled as the bacterial ancestor of mitochondria—*Rickettsia prowazekii*—is the primary source of chemical energy in almost all organisms. It operates in precisely the way I have described above: by absorbing and incorporating uncongenial metabolites. Its example suggests that the origin of all mitochondrial bacteria may have evolved out of such an endosymbiotic interaction. In terms of language and thought, the process is remarkable for its parallels with the invention of the Word that Derrida describes, after Plato, as a pharmakonic substance; and yet it also reveals the important way in which poison can itself be converted into the very potion that assists in allowing for an organism’s self-sustainment of its life.<sup>106</sup>

In such subfields of microbiology as mycology, similar real-world biological conversions have been observed. Fungi that are high in melatonin (“melanised fungi”), for instance, have been shown not only to be especially “radioresistant” to levels of radiation—levels that would be toxic to other life forms (such as humans)—but to in fact be “radiotrophic.” Studying the responses of fungi in highly radioactive environments, including in the fungi that appeared on the walls of the damaged nuclear reactor at Chernobyl, biochemists have discovered that these fungi are capable of exploiting ionising radiation; they can convert what would be toxic to most forms of life into a food that can “provide benefits” and allow the species to “evolve genetic variants that have growth advantages under geotoxic stress.”<sup>107</sup>

104 Raphael H. Valdivia and Joseph Heitman, “Endosymbiosis: The Evil Within,” *Current Biology* 17, no. 11 (2007): R408-10, esp. R408.

105 Examples of the operations of “cross-kingdom symbiotic pathogenesis” reveal the striking co-dependency of pathogens and endosymbionts. As Valdivia and Heitmann notes of “The interaction between *Burkholderia* and its fungal host [*Rhizopus microspores*],” the relation “appears to straddle a fine line between mutualism—where both organisms benefit from the common exploitation of the plant host—and parasitism, where *Rhizopus* is held hostage by *Burkholderia*.” *Ibid.*, R408.

106 Siv G. E. Anderson, Alireza Zomorodipour, Jan O. Andersson, Thomas Sicheritz-Pontén, U. Ceceilia M. Alsmark, Raf M. Podowski, A. Kristina Näslund, Ann-Sofie Eriksson, Herbert H. Winkler, and Charles G. Kurland, “The Genome Sequence of *Rickettsia prowazekii* and the Origin of Mitochondria,” *Nature* 396 (1998): 133-43.

107 See Ekaterina Dadachova and Arturo Casadevall, “Ionizing Radiation: How Fungi Cope, Adapt, and Exploit with the Help of Melanin,” *Current Opinion in Microbiology* 11 (2008): 525-31; Ekaterina Dadchova, Ruth A. Bryan, Xianchun Huang, Tiffany

Like Huxley's formulation of "indirection"—a process in which what is unsought and seems initially harmful is reflectively ingested into the mental space—so can absorbing a poison sometimes prove beneficial to the health of the organism; it may, in fact, allow for kinds of revitalisation previously not imaginable.

## Huxley and the Metaphysics of Science

MORE THAN SIMPLY A metaphor for high tolerance to difference, however—and not merely a validated precondition for eukaryotic life—*pharmakoncity* may now be understood as an important, and perhaps even *necessary*, protocol in cellular evolution. And, more than simply an analogical tool by which biological difference may be understood afresh at the eukaryotic and other levels, interactions of this kind now only begin to indicate the "vast landscape of transkingdom interactions, both intracellular and extracellular, that remain to be explored."<sup>108</sup>

That these interactions are so common denotes the arbitrariness of those distinctions drawn along the lines of native and foreign, inside and outside. This is the crucial point that Huxley illustrates in his 1929 essay "Spinoza's Worm," and a point that Spinoza had already articulated, as Huxley notes, in his letter to Henry Oldenburg of around 1663 ("Letter XXXII"). Here Spinoza wrote, in a lucid exemplification of such an interaction, about the "worm's eye view" of blood. Spinoza describes a "little worm [that] would live in the blood" and, inhabiting this constricted zone, would be prevented from understanding how all the parts of the blood—the chyle and the lymph, for instance—could form a coherent whole and thus constitute the *blood* itself.<sup>109</sup> The worm, in other words, would be unable to perceive the coherent substance within which it lived; it would envision only its constituent parts, and remain unaware of its own parasitism.

The worm would remain ignorant, that is, of the fact that it lived only by virtue of the nourishment and sustenance constituted by the blood that also

Moadel, Andrew D. Schweitzer, Philip Aisen, Joshua D. Nosanchuk, Arturo Casadevall, "Ionizing Radiation Changes the Electronic Properties of Melanin and Enhances the Growth of Melanized Fungi," *PLoS ONE* 2, no. 5 (2007): e457.

108 Valdivia and Heitman, "Endosymbiosis: The Evil Within," R408.

109 See A. Rupert Hall and Marie Boas Hall, eds. *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, Volume 2: 1663-1665 (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 336-8, esp. 338n1. Also see Aaron V. Garrett, *Meaning in Spinoza's Method* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 46-7.



represented the life force of another living being. Reflecting on Spinoza's transkingdom thought-experiment, Huxley asserts that we

Ought to live and move and have our being in the infinite rather than the finite, that we should do our thinking in terms of the universal unity, not in terms of individual particulars. In a word, that we should cease to be worms in the blood and become—what? Butterflies, I suppose, winging freely through space (*sw*, 62).

Huxley's invocation of "the molar" here allows him to articulate a means by which, through a perceptual reconfiguration, humans might transcend their biological substrates; they may become like butterflies and even "angels." Tessellating intriguingly with certain work that Huxley's brother, Julian, had commenced in 1921 (some eight years earlier) on the "radical enhancement of the flatworm," Huxley's essay identifies the limits of biological perception and transformation.<sup>110</sup> Working on flatworms, Julian had sought to modify the lifecycle of these and various other organisms through the adjustment of their temperatures, in among many other ways.<sup>111</sup>

But Huxley's vision of transcendence is less optimistic than his brother's would appear to be; after all, Julian is the one who more methodically pursued such subjects—even as the younger Huxley seems to have written more reflectively, and much more often, about them. Huxley's meditation on transhuman evolution, however, is just as rapidly disavowed as it is introduced: "It is only on rare occasions and with the greatest difficulty," Huxley writes, acceding to the reality of human limitations, "that we can even take a temporary holiday from the fiction" of our world. We cannot ultimately overcome the world's "too too solid illusions," he would write, since the debilitating clutches of materiality always come to be reintroduced in some way—such as by the body's movements, for instance.

The body "rumbles, with what a vulgar insistence, what low and un-Platonic sounds! Wamblingly rumbles for its dinner" (*sw*, 65). Always sounding a "vulgar" reminder of the human's underlying mechanisms, these sounds appear often in Huxley's fiction; and wherever they are apparent they remind us of the inexorably organic status of the human. Unable to disaffiliate them-

110 On this work, see Alison Bashford, "Julian Huxley's Transhumanism," 157. Bashford relies on typescripts comprising the Julian S. Huxley Papers, which can be found in Rice University's Woodson Research Center, Fondrean Library. A report on the flatworm experiments can be found, as Bashford notes, in Box 6, Folder 4, Newsclipping, 1921.

111 Bashford, "Julian Huxley's Transhumanism," 157.

selves from the “human plane,” Huxley writes, philosophers and mystics have, in “their search for superhuman wisdom,” sacrificed “much valuable human knowledge, without, however, being rewarded.” They have no angelic power,” for instance, and perhaps nothing like the scientist dreams of possessing (sw, 65-6). Despite that Huxley is ultimately inclined to dismiss the goal of transcendence or transhumanism—or what he calls “superhumanism”—describing it as illusory, he also believes that no such ideal is “the worse of for being unrealizable” (sw, 66). Attributing the “ideal of superhumanity” to the influence of Christianity, Huxley asserts that humans, just as worms, should be permitted to “try to be superlatively [themselves],” and to become “Humanity perfected and consummate—[even though] it is a high and finally unattainable ideal” (sw, 69).

It is by adopting this pragmatic view of the human environment—with all the biological constraints that such a milieu imposes on humans—that Huxley diverges from classical metaphysics to invoke a “free and wild creation of concepts.” As described earlier, this is a kind of tendency that Deleuze and Guattari characterise as the essence of “English philosophy”; it expresses a wild freedom in relation to what can be thought, albeit within the constraints of long-acquired habit.<sup>112</sup> It is ironic, then, that Huxley turns to Eastern philosophy in order to breach the fold of Western metaphysics (and of English philosophy)—for as alien as such philosophical systems might have seemed to a British philosopher of the twentieth century, Huxley had always nurtured an interest in them.

While for Huxley science and language are inadequate heuristics, models that shall forever be ill-equipped to describe the “givenness” of experience, history, by contrast, comprises the very indices of that “givenness” in the form of the many inventions, technics, and models that have driven the adoption of our “eschatological ideas” about “Reality.” These technological developments, Huxley writes, structure all our phenomenological experiences, just as they have also allowed for the development of increasingly advanced epistemologies—genealogical connections through which we have more “directly” perceived the world. Advances in biochemistry, such as knowing which endogenous biochemical compounds are generative of certain mental states, and ascertaining what genotypes generate what mental disorders: these are the very kinds of knowledge that advance humans’s ability to understand reality in its totality.

112 Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?*, 105-6.

The lessons deduced from these technological interventions, moreover, may increase the chances that we, as kinds of Spinozan worms, will conceive of what our life-sustaining blood actually is at the *molar* level.<sup>113</sup> For Huxley, then, coming to grips with these realities will represent a transformation between two states whose differentness is akin to the distinction between heaven and hell. It would be, he writes, a

progress which can be described in theological terms as the passage from Hades to Heaven, in chemical terms as the substitution of mescaline and lysergic acid for adrenolutin, and in psychological terms as the advance from catatonia and feelings of unreality to a sense of heightened reality in vision and, finally, in mystical experience (*HAH*, 84).

The teleological gestalt of Huxley's taxonomy of progress identifies the endgame of human development as the arrival at a "mystical experience." This is an arrival at a *mushin* (mu = "no," and shin = "mind") or "metanoia": the moment in which one experiences an "integration of conscious and unconscious [that is also] preparatory to a type of living." After Huxley's death in 1963, these notions would be adopted in America and elsewhere in the West; Eastern philosophies of consciousness would become increasingly popular, and be promoted by such institutions as Esalen.<sup>114</sup>

113 A contemporary analogy for this kind of procedure has been the mapping of the human genome, which is now continued in research that seeks associations between certain diseases and disorders with a range of isoform neurotrophins. This is arguably one way in which humans seek to understanding the entirety of our genetic and genotypic (and epigenetic) environment—the equivalent of the worm seeking to know "the blood as a whole." In a much publicised study, for example (the first of its kind) polymerase chain reaction (PCR) was used to quantitatively map the isoform expression of the neurotrophin Neuregulin 1 (NRG1), specifically types I-IV, and NRG1-IVNV, during human neocortical development and aging. PCR was applied in real-time to human postmortem prefrontal cortex tissue samples at 14-39 weeks gestation and postnatal ages 0-83 years. Having studied the association of these NRG1 expressions and the rs6994992 genotype, the study identified a "potential mechanism of early developmental risk for schizophrenia at the NRG1 locus, involving a novel class of NRG1 proteins. See Clare Paterson, Yanhong Wang, Joel E. Kleinman, Amanda J. Law, "Effects of Schizophrenia Risk Variation in the NRG1 Gene on NRGI-IV Splicing During Fetal and Early Postnatal Human Neocortical Development," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 171, no. 9 (2014): 979-89. Also see John M. Grohol, "8 Disorders Instead of One? The Role Gene Clusters Play in Schizophrenia," *PsychCentral*, 16 September 2014, accessed 18 September 2014, <http://psychcentral.com/news/2014/09/16/8-disorders-instead-of-one-the-role-genes-clusters-play-in-schizophrenia/74981.html>.

114 See, for instance, Kenneth R. Pelletier and Charles Garfield, *Consciousness: East and West* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 232-3; Jeffrey J. Kripal, *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 85-9.

Huxley's optimism, however, remained of a constrained kind: even if the worm cannot ever perceive that it swims in "blood," he suggested, it remains possible that it will come to sense—perhaps through a mystical realisation—a presentiment of its "wormness." It might intuit that its livelihood, its body, and its "Reality," for instance, all entirely depend on this blood—however indeterminable and incoherent the substance may remain, destined as it is to forever be understood only in terms of its constituent parts. But, whatever sense of "self-contradiction" the worm may come to feel about the relation of the manifold blood (as a heterogeneous object or recipe) to its self (as a unified subject), it would still seem preposterous, Huxley writes, to question the worm's ability to transcend the blood so as to become, say, a "superworm."

Yet, it is just such a sense of self-contradiction that Huxley suggests prompts the "superhumanists" (of whom the proponent of Zen psychotherapy Alan Watts would become exemplary) to seek to become "superhuman," or at least "more than what they are." It is this idea that leads the superhumanists to "trouble [their] heads with speculations about what men may, but almost certainly will not, be like in A.D. 20,000" (sw, 71). For Huxley, such thinkers think with insufficiently clarity about their present-day reality. Knowing what are the specific constituents of human reality is ultimately of lesser importance, he writes, than knowing precisely on what the human *depends* within this reality. It is less important that the worm know their primary nutrient is "blood," that is, than that it knows simply that this substance, whatever its name, is their primary nutrient.

*Heaven and Hell's* apprehension of a plurality of progresses—theological, chemical, and psychological—offers an elaboration on what Huxley had developed in "Spinoza's Worm" as the failure of metaphysics to dispose of the fictionality of the "Christian ideal of superhumanness" (sw, 72). In this way, both essays anticipate what is perhaps more dramatically described in Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* as the "crisis of metaphysical philosophy." For Lyotard, the narrative of progress has lost its essential "functors": its "great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal." Now lost to a "heterogeneity of elements," these narrative functors survive only as a plurality of professional specialisations; they are contoured by an obsessive drive to "optimize the system's performance—efficiency."<sup>115</sup>

While a specialisation in physics, mathematics, and engineering is useful in what Huxley describes as the diminution of "human misery," these non-psy-

115 Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, tr. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv.

chological, and ultimately material sciences can also serve, if they are “superlatively efficient,” only to improve the “total efficiency” of a power structure that increasingly leaves human needs unaddressed (*UD*, 209). As a means of cautioning against the dangers of efficiency, Huxley introduces, in his final novel *Island* (1962), the character of Mr Menon, the Under-Secretary of Schools. Menon evangelises a program of humanist science, or the “sciences of life”:

Our primary emphasis isn't on physics and chemistry; it's on the sciences of life... We don't have the money for large-scale research in physics and chemistry, and we don't really have any practical need for that kind of research—no heavy industries to be made more competitive, no armaments to be made more diabolical, not the faintest desire to land on the backside of the moon (*ISLAND*, 210).

It is characteristic of Huxley's fiction that Mr Menon should allude to the “backside” of the moon: this emblematises Huxley's tendency to parodically reduce or subvert the prestige associated with certain endeavours to the raw functionality or vulgarity of the body. As Huxley had written earlier, here the body again “rumbles” with that “vulgar insistence...” (*SW*, 321), calling out for recognition amid the higher sounds of Royalist science.<sup>116</sup>

But here biological vulgarity is also associated with the bleakness of a society so different from the utopian island of Pala. Landing on the “backside” of the moon becomes an emblem here for all the “dismal” drives of those citizens of the West, abraded as they are by the ruthless competition between heavy industrial firms. Addressing Will Farnaby, a Western journalist who has been washed up on Pala's shores, Mr Menon laments that

You people have no choice... You're irretrievably committed to applied physics and chemistry, with all their dismal consequences, military, political, and social (*ISLAND*, 210).

The “vulgarity” of a political future that is overtechnologised and obsessed with “specialization,” however, is even more forcefully metonymised by the figure of the “academic monster.” The grotesque body and immaturity of this figure only belies the shortcomings—and the lacunae—that are actually embedded in the molar systems of Western education. Of this figure, Mr Menon offers two viciously ridiculed exemplars:

116 On Mr Menon's educational program as but one part of a “Rortian liberal utopia,” see William M. Curtis, “Rorty's Liberal Utopia and Huxley's Island,” *Philosophy and Literature* 35 (2011): 91-103, esp. 98-9.

I was thinking of two people I met last time I was in England. At Cambridge. One of them was an atomic physicist, the other was a philosopher. Both extremely eminent. But one had a mental age, outside the laboratory, of about eleven and the other was a compulsive eater with a weight problem that he refused to face. Two extreme examples of what happens when you take a clever boy, give him fifteen years of the most intensive formal education and totally neglect to do anything for the mind-body which has to do the learning and the living... They're grotesquely funny... But goodness, how pathetic! And poor things, how curiously repulsive! (*ISLAND*, 208)

What is significant in this passage is Huxley's condensation of a biological development (the obese body and immature mind, for instance) with an increased disciplinary specialisation.

Earlier in his life, in his essay "Vulgarity in Literature," Huxley had criticised institutionalised education as a set of "special circumstances which make some kinds of generally recognized vulgarity imperceptible." Literary critics are especially prone, Huxley writes, to the "curious dullness of perception" and "lack of discrimination" that appears in "even apparently intelligent readers."<sup>117</sup> Like the worm that imbibes the blood without knowing its macrobiological form, the human often misconstrues *attention* as *comprehension*: "Because we all know how to read we imagine that we know what we read. Enormous fallacy!"<sup>118</sup> And those who compare works that are "utterly dissimilar" are "destined," Huxley elaborates, "to become either the headmasters of our most splendid public schools, or at least prime ministers."<sup>119</sup> For Huxley, if one remains imperceptible of vulgarity and admits of it into one's life, one must also become a "curiously repulsive" candidate for the pedagogical vocation—or for political leadership.

But if twentieth-century education is marred by a drive to "specialization at the symbolic level," and in action only leaves the "living mind-body in its pristine state of ignorance and ineptitude" (*ISLAND*, 209), its effects are not limited to *literary* degradation. It is also in the sciences that we encounter new depravities—such as in the more efficient achievement of ending life. In *Science, Liberty and Peace* (1946), for instance, Huxley meditates on the question of whether "progressive technology can be combined not only with security, but also with freedom" (*SLP*, 25):

117 Aldous Huxley, "Vulgarity in Literature," *Complete Essays, Volume II: 1926-1929*, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 19-48, 38-9. This essay was originally published in *The Saturday Review of Literature* on 27 September, 1930.

118 *Ibid.*, 38.

119 *Ibid.*, 39.

Thanks to the genius and co-operative industry of highly trained physicists, chemists, metallurgists and mechanical inventors, tyrants are able to dragoon larger numbers of people more effectively, and strategists can kill and destroy more indiscriminately and at greater distances, than ever before (*SLP*, 6).

Huxley's critique of science's technopolitical innovations should be read, as James Hull notes, as a rebuttal of science's failure to achieve a peaceful and healthy civilisation: "How are all men, women and children," Huxley implores, "to get enough to eat?" (*SLP*, 75).

But Huxley's pacifism should also be read against the background of Huxley's "intense state of no-mind," which I have addressed throughout this chapter. This is the "long and weary process of his metanoia" that, as Hull observes, becomes for Huxley "a process... that stirs up the depths of the mind, calls up the powers of the inner world that usually lie dormant." A prophylactic against the death-drive, metanoic insight thus short-circuits the "deep and enduring will" to self-destruction and self-annihilation—a drive that Huxley conceptualises in a variety of ways, ranging from psychosis to "diabolic possession."<sup>120</sup>

In almost all of his philosophical and political criticism, Huxley evangelises a deeply meditative mode of reflection, one that ultimately serves to militate against human psychic distress. As I have suggested already, Huxley's own preferred method for achieving this end is to enter into "deep reflection"—either through hypnosis, or through other methods such as the Alexander Technique.<sup>121</sup> These are the technical body-mind or "psycho-physical" operations that share much, as I have already argued, with what Doyle describes as the "cultivation of the anomalous, [sic] 'itineration'": that is, with the process that "emerges from a repetition, a doubling," featuring an ecstatic but "disciplined receptivity to the turbulent outside."<sup>122</sup>

These ideas also anticipate the way in which Derrida's deconstructionist writings prioritise the "trace" (discovered through a mode of "tracking") within texts to calculate the presence of a meaning that is otherwise absent, and yet somehow also operative within the text. For Derrida, attempts to perceive this "trace"—for instance, of an absent word or language—involve apprehending all of those words and languages that have *not* been used, do *not* appear, in the place of what is actually there.<sup>123</sup> In a chiasmic process of

120 Hull, *Representative Man*, 397; also see Huxley to John Middleton Murry, 26 May 1946 (Letter 517), in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 545.

121 On Huxley and the "Alexander Technique," see Aldous Huxley, "A Psychophysical Education," in *More Talk of Alexander*, ed. Wilfred Barlow (London: Gollancz, 1978), 1-3.

122 Doyle, *Wetwares*, 10.

123 Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, tr. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: Johns



epistemology, here the multi-vectorial world is pulled into a central interstice, and the subject is placed “between two worlds” in a rapturous and visionary moment of “divine impartiality, which is the One, which is Love, which is [also] Being or Itsigkeit.”<sup>124</sup> Such an instance of rapture also arises during Huxley's meditation on the “Wild Flower” (*LAS*, 16).

Echoing Deleuze and Guattari's description of “deterritorialization,” to perceive the flower is now to begin a process in which two objects (or a subject and object) come together in “shared acceleration.”<sup>125</sup> Here the object's focal displacement, and its *singularisation* from out of a network or assemblage of vectors, institutes a new vision of the relations within this field: one in which subject and object “must always be connected [or] caught up in one another.”<sup>126</sup>

Deleuze and Guattari similarly illustrate deterritorialisation in their description of an orchid. The “orchid deterritorializes,” they write, “by forming an image, [which is] a tracing of the wasp.” At the same time, however, the wasp is also deterritorialised, “becoming a piece in the orchid's reproductive apparatus.”<sup>127</sup> Here the authors speak only of observing the process of deterritorialisation as it occurs between two agents; and they exclude themselves, the third person observers of the process, from the process itself. Presupposing the possibility in which one may *perceive* a plane of rhizomatic activity without affecting it, the authors describe (and together become) an ideal perceiver who views the world from a “monadological point of view.” And yet they also concede the implausibility of any such observer: their capacity to remain neutral or non-territorial would be “inadequate and should be superseded by nomadology.”<sup>128</sup>

In other words, when Deleuze and Guattari introduce a metrical description of the “smooth space” (or Riemannian space)—the space in which two individuals are geometrically associated—they also implicitly suggest the possibility of a third agent whose role in such a space is neutral, and whose presence is somehow neutralised or nugatory in the dynamics of that perceived space. They imagine, in other words, a means by which deterritorialisation may be witnessed by an agent whose presence does not also itself deterritorialise, and is not *reterritorialising* of the other agents in the space.

Hopkins University Press, 1974), xvii, 290-1.

124 *Letters*, 779 [23 December, 1955, to Dr Humphry Osmond].

125 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 142.

126 *Ibid.*, 10.

127 *Ibid.*

128 *Ibid.*, 574n27.

And, even as the authors qualify this view by asserting that the operations of such a perceiving force must be, following Bergson, far more “rich and complex” than they can articulate, they also acknowledge that, in geometrical terms, one always

reintroduces parallelism between two vectors, treating multiplicity as though it were immersed in this homogenous and striated space of reproduction, instead of trying to follow it in an “exploration by leg-work.”<sup>129</sup>

While they thus mourn our seemingly automatic reluctance to undertake the “leg-work”<sup>130</sup> of being both inside and outside of the space, the authors’s lamentation is ambiguous; it recalls Huxley’s acknowledgment that “transportation” is no longer as easily induced by bright lights, for instance. If Euclidean geometry has meant that we always draw false conclusions, by means of assuming a “parallelism” or chiasmus between this pair of twin vectors in space—and even in the case of these non-striated, Riemannian “smooth” spaces—then how are we to break free from the “smooth” or “striated” spaces that, as Deleuze and Guattari confirm, we see only from the point of view of a space that “is occupied without being counted”?<sup>131</sup>

Referring to mathematician-philosopher Albert Lautman in their notes, the authors observe that all these spaces now “admit a Euclidean conjunction”; they thus invite us to apprehend the world’s multiplicity as a “Euclidean space with a sufficient number of dimensions.”<sup>132</sup> If Euclid’s optics are ineluctably also our optics, then—if his vision of the world is what we, Euclid’s inheritants, also must inexorably be left to see—then how might we invent a new way of perceiving space? Such a new way, Deleuze will later suggest, may be attained in the viewing of cinema, where finally “the brain has lost its Euclidean coordinates, and now emits other signs.”<sup>133</sup>

Equally aware that brains can change—not only in neuroplastic or epigenetic terms, but insofar as they may start to emit “other signs” (which is

129 Ibid., 485-6.

130 Elsewhere in their book it is spelt “legwork,” without the hyphen.

131 Ibid., 362.

132 Ibid., 556n39, citing Albert Lautman, *Les schémas de structure* (Paris: Hermann, 1938), 23-4, 43-7. Richard Doyle is one of few scholars to engage with Deleuze and Guattari’s description of legwork, or what he calls “itineration.” For Doyle, interestingly, computation and the calculation of certain irreducible algorithms perform a kind of legwork insofar as these tasks require a kind of “active waiting.” It is easy to see how Doyle’s description collides with Huxley’s description of “Deep Reflection” or its insistence on meditatively contemplating the “Isness” of things. *Wetwares*: 15-6. On Huxley’s Deep Reflection, see Erickson, “A Special Inquiry with Aldous Huxley,” 50-71.

133 Deleuze, *Cinema 2* (London: Continuum, 2005 [1985]), 266; Doyle, *Wetwares*, 88.

to say symbolic ones)—R.D. Laing shares Deleuze and Guattari's ambition to overcome the incapacitation that seems to prevent us from doing that non-Euclidean legwork. And, again, equally as much as Deleuze and Guattari, Laing seeks to articulate those ways in which one might begin to "watch the flow" not "from the bank" but from *within the flow*. For Laing, however, this is a question of the phenomenology of personality rather than of geometrical perception within a field or manifold. In *The Divided Self*, Laing laments the unexplored "space" of personality in psychiatry; for him, such as space is not a physical, but a phenomenological one—and one too often dismissed, he writes, for not understanding *this* "space" may well represent the foremost impediment to our understanding of the psychoses.

Departing from Huxley's and even Guattari's commitments to molecularisation, however, Laing attests to his conviction that only an existentialist phenomenology of personality will resolve these problems of metaphysics. Only this will allow psychologists to understand how the psychotic's "personality" exists in an independent way that is not also shaped by the psychiatric "space" in which it is perceived. The locus in which the analyst and analysand commune, Laing asserts, impairs the very visibility of the psychotic; it less exposes than obscures them. There is much in common between Huxley's and Laing's philosophies of psychiatry and psychosis, although it is ironic in this sense that Laing venerates Freud as the "greatest psychopathologist" ever there was, whereas Huxley so viciously devalues him. For Laing, Freud is a "hero" who "descended to the 'Underworld' and met there stark terrors."<sup>134</sup> For Huxley, by contrast, to read Freud's "tremendously exciting and dramatic" description of "the Unconscious" is as only ever as enlightening as "reading a fairy story" (*OCHP*, 317).

What disturbs Huxley about Freud is not the psychoanalyst's description of the "Unconscious" as "a sort of den or inferno to which all the bad thoughts and desires clash with our social duties," but the manner in which the "truth of this exciting anthropomorphic myth" is "cheerfully assumed by psychoanalysts" (*OCHP*, 318). To accept poetic descriptions and mythic images as forming reliable "bodies of doctrine" is, for Huxley, to give art the name of "science," and to thus devalue both (*OCHP*, 315).

If Huxley's rejection of Freud underscores his pedagogical or epistemological responsibility to condemn the "pseudo-sciences," however, it also expresses his disapproval of institutionalised religion, a disapproval forcefully ventilated in his essays of the 1930s. In a remark more often quoted by

134 Laing, *The Divided Self*, 25.

atheist organisations than cited or contextualised by scholars, Huxley writes in "Amor Fati" (within *TAP*) that one "never sees animals going through the absurd and often horrible fooleries of magic and religion... Only man behaves with such gratuitous folly" (*TAP*, 278-9).<sup>135</sup>

But Huxley's experimentation with mescaline of some twenty years later prompts him to identify a different kind of gratuitousness:

I am suggesting... that the mescaline experience is what Catholic theologians call "a gratuitous grace," not necessary to salvation but potentially helpful and to be accepted thankfully if made available (*DOP*, 46).

This apparent evolution of gratuitous grace out of gratuitous folly signifies what Jerome Meckier charts as Huxley's transition from "poet to mystic." Such a transition, as Meckier makes clear, represents not Huxley's abandonment of his cynical point of view, but rather his "artistic and spiritual growth from a parodic formative intelligence into a volatile blend of satirist and sage."<sup>136</sup> As with his criticism of Freud, Huxley's criticism of metaphysics more generally is made possible by his ability to "furnish an explanatory hypothesis for the nature of things provided it was negative."

These rational admonitions had begun, Meckier asserts, when Huxley first discovered he was unable to emulate the Romantics or Victorians; thus, this self-recognised defect engendered in Huxley a deep feeling of cynicism that he would possess throughout his life. Having upbraided his forebears, however, Huxley would soon become—following his move to the United States in 1937—increasingly serious about attaining spiritual enlightenment, identifying as a "would-be mystic."<sup>137</sup>

But if Huxley prefers Blake's vision to Freud's mythology—if he finds more merit in the description of "Heaven in a Wild Flower" than the "fairy

135 A cursory search for this quotation on Google.com, for instance, returns a range of websites of atheist organisations. Similarly, a large number of non-scholarly, "neo-mystical" or "New Age" self-published books adopt this passage as epigraphs at the head of their chapters, although in almost all none of these cases is a page reference, citation, or the passage's context offered. Like many writers described as public intellectuals, Huxley has become a quotable source, used both to bolster and refute an argument. The changing nature or historical context in which Huxley uttered his thoughts is rarely considered in those works that adopt his words in this way. See, for instance, Patricia Tesco and Rowan Hall, *Animal Spirits: Spells, Sorcery and Symbols from the Wild* (New Jersey: New Page Books, 2002), 75; V.C. Thomas, *The God Dilemma: To Believe or Not to Believe* (Bloomington, XLibris, 2009), 131; and Donald L. Avery, *Releasing the Bean Within: Practicing Spirituality in Everyday Life* (New DeHaven: Infinity Publishing, 2006), 38.

136 Jerome Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: From Poet to Mystic* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006), 4.

137 Ibid.

tale story" of "Dr. Freud"—it remains true that both mythologies imagine a form of transportation or *deterritorialisation*. They are thus different of degree rather than of kind. And what may in fact be "caught up" in both these instances of mythological perception—whether one sees "a Heaven" in a "Wild Flower" or a symbol in a dream—is the amelioration of psychic disturbance. They who perceive the wonder of the flower take nothing so material as its pollen (like the wasp), but they *may* experience a form of relief from psychopathological strain. While we are often "depressed from too much thinking, or bored by too little," Huxley writes, "remembered daffodils flash upon that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude" (*LAS*, 16).

Thus while Freud's "obscene allegorical interpretations of simple dreams" (*OCHP*, 316) are anathematic to Huxley's insistence on scientific proof in the 1920s, he remains satisfied to endorse as palliatives for the mind the importance of images such as "daffodils" in later decades. And as Huxley suggests, scientific knowledge can often threaten to detract from this relief; it may regularly interrupt these peaceful scenes of ecstasy by interposing its own pronouncements on them:

Very nice! comments the botanist, and proceeds to inform us that "the genus *Helianthis* contains about fifty species, chiefly natives of North America. A few being found in Peru and Chile." In parts of England, he adds, "hundreds of plants are grown for their seeds on sewage farms" (*LAS*, 16).

For Huxley, the consecration of the Wild Flower is now reappropriated by the scientist whose taxonomical descriptions always carry with them the encroachments of industrialised "efficiency."<sup>138</sup> That "hundreds" of the plants grow in "sewage farms" only compounds the vulgarity of the bathos that is already engendered by the anecdote; it serves to reduce whatever is transcendental about the flower to its basest origin: a product of the body's waste. This bathos is just another of Huxley's vulgar images, and an analogue of Denis Stone's realisation in *Crome Yellow*, for instance, that the word "carminative" means nothing so high and splendid as he first imagines. Inscribed on his favourite "golden liquor," the word denotes, he discovers, not the sensation of "warmth and internal glow" induced by the drink (as he initially interprets

138 As Huxley wrote in "Usually Destroyed," "The worst enemy of life, freedom and the common decencies is total anarchy; their second worst enemy is total efficiency." See *Adonis and the Alphabet* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1956), 204-16, esp. 209; published in the US as *Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 213-26.

it), but the potion's status as a digestive that elicits gaseous waste, promoting flatulence (CY, 221-25).<sup>139</sup>

Different to Derrida's *différance*—where meaning is to be understood as that which arises not simply from morphological differentiation but also temporal deferralment and suspension—Huxley's thought is "chiasmatic" in that it prioritises "direct experience" and "participative" observation over distanced analysis. Time and again Huxley acknowledges that—even if we think it impossible to intuit the convergence of different parallel vector lines—visionary moments may yet be occasioned through which a visualisation of this parallelism itself appears. This is the moment in which the geometrical configuration in which a vector moves *through* the perceiving subject, both in space and time, inaugurates a punctum or kairos moment, one of direct apprehension.<sup>140</sup> Feeling as though he has "crossed over," and resides interstitially between two "worlds" (proxies for any dichotomy, binary, or polar opposition that is seemingly irreconcilable), Huxley imagines himself to be at the centre of what is a virtualisation of reality. His early fiction thus creates literary "puppet-shows" of a harmonious and "divine Reality" that, for Huxley, can never be brought into the reality of the present world. The characters in *Crome Yellow*, for instance, are "puppets, devoid of emotions— devoid indeed of most of the attributes of living humanity."<sup>141</sup> This applies equally to the characters in each of the short stories in Huxley's *Limbo* (1920), whose puppet-show qualities were captured in its 1924 cover artwork (see figure 4.1, below).

In his book on Foucault, Deleuze discusses two forms of knowledge, and refers to this state of betweenness simply as "Being." This state, Deleuze writes, "lies between two forms" and prompts one to reflect: "Is this not precisely what Heidegger had called the 'between-two' or Merleau-Ponty termed the 'interlacing or chiasmus?'"<sup>142</sup> Placing emphasis on what I have in previ-

139 I will revisit this scene from *Crome Yellow*, and this tendency to "vulgarity" in Huxley's fiction, in more detail in the following chapter.

140 The rhizome moves within and with the forms of life (and non-living things) with which it participates and interacts; the chiasmus, by contrast, turns all things inside out and to its own interest. It moves not with life, but in precisely in the opposite direction and by the opposite movement to it. On the rhizome, see Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 7.

141 In his letter to Lady Ottoline, Huxley discussed how the characters in his works, and specifically in *Crome Yellow*, function merely as "puppets, devoid of emotions, devoid indeed of most of the attributes of living humanity." As he would go on to write, "Real understanding [between humans] is an impossibility." James Sexton, ed. *Aldous Huxley: Selected Letters* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007), 108.

142 Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault* (New York: Continuum, 1999), 92. Also quoted in Leonard Lawlor, "The Beginnings of Thought," in Paul Patton, John Protevi, eds., *Between Deleuze and Derrida* (London: Continuum, 2003), 67-83, 82-3n12.

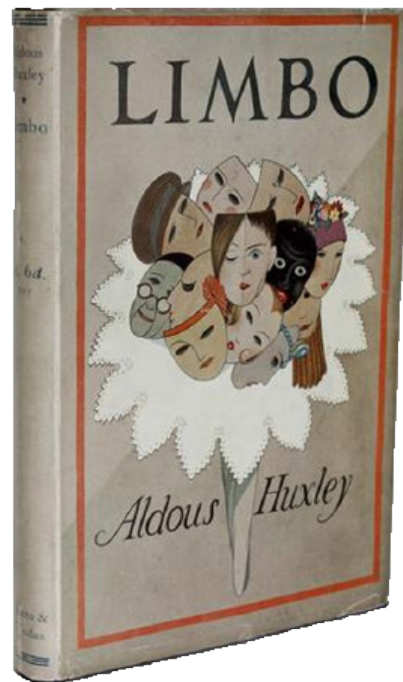


Figure 4.1 A 1924 edition of Huxley's *Limbo*.

ous chapters described as the “limbotic” state between torpor and hyperexcitation, the model of the chiasmus illustrates the principle that entities, humans, and “actants,” are in reality always in between two states. To think in chiasmic terms is thus to adopt a heuristic much like what Bruno Latour describes in his Actor-Network Theory: this is a schema in which individual entities or monads are determined—not by their essential substances—but by the entirety of their relations in a network.<sup>143</sup> This is why, as Huxley argues, it is the

feeling of de-individualization which makes it possible for the Indians who practice the peyote cult to use the drug not merely as a short cut to the visionary world, but also as an instrument for creating a loving solidarity within the participating group (*HAH*, 50).

Disindividuation, or what I have previously named *deautomatisation*, leads to a participatory methexis; it inaugurates a heightened awareness of one’s “being,” and instills in participants a sense of what Huxley calls the “brotherhood of man” (*TPP*, 93).

143 See my “Actants at Any Depth: Bruno Latour and Henri Bergson at the Surface of Science.”



In another context, Edward de Bono distinguishes “parallel thinking” from dialectical thinking; he argues that dialectical thought often seeks to find the “truth” of an object in a time-consuming manner, whereas what I call chiastic discovers this same truth relatively quickly. Eliminating possibilities through trial and error—such as where one seeks to identify an apple among non-apples—dialectical thinking organises a group into a division of opposites or binaries. Chiastic or parallel thinking, by contrast—whether it is conducted in a group, or in a manner that permits the subject to ontologically think “in parallel”—allows one to conjecture the possibility that an object is an apple without confirming it apple by apple; this, in turn, allows the conjecturing party to then ask “Where does this take us?” In this modality, “We do not,” de Bono asserts, “have to check the apple hypothesis before we proceed to ‘what happens next.’”<sup>144</sup> For in this speculative mode, we have already intuited the apple’s nature.

## Huxley’s Polyamorous Phallogocentrism

AS ONE READS HUXLEY’S biography, it becomes clear that chiastic thinking is more complex a modality than one that can be accessed with the right method—if only one can apply the appropriate deautomising technique (hypnotism, the Alexander Technique). It is also more than the moment in which disindividuation can be achieved—if only once can only discover the most crucial among those “unsought” data that arise. Huxley’s chiastic thinking, rather, depends on a history of socio-biological “patternation” (phylogenesis), one in which filiality, biology, kinship, and genealogy each allows for this *genetic* or evolutionary heuristic to be sensed, perceived, and incorporated. As Frances Wynn writes in an essay on “embodied chiasms,” the relationship between mother and infant, for example, is “formed as much by the infant’s holding of the mother as it is by the mother’s holding of the infant.”<sup>145</sup>

For Huxley, these psycho-physical relations are crucial to the evolution of the human mind and spirit. In a variety of dramatic moments in *Brave New World*, for instance, “savage” relationships between mothers and children are devalorised; they are characteristic, we find, of a kind of “madness.” Insanity is “infectious,” causing the “pre-moderns” of *Brave New World* to “feel strongly” (*BNW*, 33); however, this insanity also triggers what Huxley calls

144 Edward de Bono, *Parallel Thinking: From Socratic Thinking to de Bono Thinking* (London: Viking 1994), 178-9.

145 Frances Wynn “The Embodied Chiasmic Relationship of Mother and Infant,” *Humans Studies* 19 (1997): 253-70, esp. 253.

a “really monstrous emotional vulgarity” in the literature of Dickens.<sup>146</sup> No doubt influenced by Huxley's own filial relations with his parents and brothers, *Brave New World's* representation of the devalorisation of motherhood represents Huxley's concern to restore that “primeval night” (*HAH*, 35) under which individuals—labile and precarious— can in their essence lie between two states. Ambulant and itinerant, it is from this vantage point that each of us can see the “unearthly significance” of these formative relations.

At the same time, *Brave New World's* implicit critique of Ford's and Mustapha Mond's dismissal of motherhood, as well as of “strong feeling,” represents an elaboration of Huxley's condemnations of Freudianism and the destructive efficiency of technology. When, in the climactic debate with John Savage, Mond diagnoses the Savage with certain “over-compensations” deriving from his “embryonic fixations” (*BNW*, 194-5), the novel directly satirises “Our Freud's” manner of pathologising the chiasmic knot between mother and child.<sup>147</sup> Part of Huxley's “trouble with Freudian psychology is that it is based exclusively on a study of the sick,” and looks only for sickness; and hence, whether he knew it or not, “Freud never met a healthy human being—only patients and,” as Huxley quips, “other psychoanalysts.”<sup>148</sup>

Huxley objects to the myopia intrinsic in the pathological sciences or, as Foucault names it, the “clinical gaze”—the ever scrutinising and classificatory vision from which Freud cannot escape. Distinctly satirised in *Brave New World*, Freud and Henry T. Ford are condensed into the image of “Our Ford—or our Freud,” the second name being that which, we are told, “for some inscrutable reason,” Ford “chose to call himself whenever he spoke of psychological matters” (*BNW*, 33). At the same time as the processes of reproduction are automatised in the novel—and divorced completely from the body—these new procedures also mark the mother-child relation as indelibly Oedipal, illicit, and incestuous.<sup>149</sup> For why now—other than for illicit purposes—the novel asks, should mothers even need to exist, with their wombs having now been replaced by machines?

146 Huxley, “Vulgarity in Literature,” 45.

147 See Willi Real, “Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as a Parody and Satire of Wells, Ford, Freud and Behaviourism in Advanced Foreign Language Teaching (FLT),” *Aldous Huxley Annual* 8 (2008): 167-206, esp. 197; Jerome Meckier, “Our Ford, Our Freud and the Behaviorist Conspiracy of *Brave New World*,” *Tahlia* 1 (1978): 37, reproduced in Jerome Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: Modern Satirical Novelist of Ideas: A Collection of Essays*, ed. Peter Firchow and Bernfried Nügel (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006): 131-64.

148 See George Wickes and Ray Frazer, “The Art of Fiction XXIV: Aldous Huxley,” *The Paris Review* 23 (Spring 1960), 69, qtd. in Real, “Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* as a Parody,” 197.

149 See Buchanan, “Oedipus in Dystopia,” 77.

Huxley addresses this question in his 1956 essay "Mother," where he again criticises Freudianism and its implementation as the official dogma of the developed world through the evolution of technology. Recounting a time that he found in a drugstore an "immense assortment of cards for Mother," Huxley notes how inside of each of these cards he had discovered printed a poem in "imitation handwriting." After citing some of the poetry, Huxley mocks the industrialisation of motherhood signified by these cards:

In the paradise of commercialized maternity, no Freudian reptile, it is evident, has ever reared its ugly head. The Mother of the greeting cards inhabits a delicious Disneyland, where everything is syrup and technicolour, cuteness and Schmalz. And this, I reflected, as I worked my way up along the fifty-four-foot rack, is all that remains of the cult of the Great Mother, the oldest and, in many ways, the profoundest of all religions.<sup>150</sup>

Huxley's observations accord with what Luce Irigaray will write of the chiasmus: it is a figure that, she argues, is very often inaccessible to women—precisely because of a woman's "nonsublimation of herself." In the psychical space within which women think, work, ambulate, and perform, Irigaray contests that the procedures and powers of repression arise in women's minds; these stem, she posits, from the woman's inability to "capitalize" on the energy that she has expended in developing a "better relationship to the social." This is a relationship that she has prioritised above others, and that she has spent time developing in a far more strenuous way than have her male counterparts.<sup>151</sup>

Preventing women from freely experimenting with their "qualities or aptitudes," women's labour ensures that—as Catherine Waldby and Melinda Cooper argue—these skills in fact, in Irigaray's words, "disappear without leaving any creative achievements."<sup>152</sup> Predestined to disappearance, a woman "always tends *toward* without any return to herself as the place where something positive can be elaborated."<sup>153</sup> Irigaray continues:

150 Huxley, "Mother," in Baker and Sexton, *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays V: 1939-1956* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 339-45, esp. 341.

151 Luce Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, tr. Carolyn Burke and Gillian C. Gill (New York: Cornell University Press, 1993), 8-9.

152 See Catherine Waldby and Melinda Cooper, *Clinical Labour: Tissue Donors and Research Subject in the Global Bioeconomy* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 16-17.

153 Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 9. Elsewhere in the book Irigaray writes the following:

Whereas man must live out the pain and experience the impossibility of being cut off from and in space (being born, leaving the mother), woman lives out the painful or impossible experience of being cut off from or in time. (Is this their empiri-

In terms of contemporary physics, it could be said that she [woman] remains on the side of the electron, with all this implies for her, for man, for their encounter. If there is no double desire, the positive and negative poles divide themselves between the two sexes instead of establishing a *chiasmus* or a double loop in which each can go toward the other and come back to itself.<sup>154</sup>

Irigaray's analysis of sexual difference may be appropriated to the Huxley family history. Indeed, one of the reasons why this formulation *should* be applied to the Huxleys is because Irigaray's ideas resonate particularly strikingly with Paul White's analysis of the relationship between TH and his wife, Henrietta Heathorn, a woman who appears to have, throughout her life, always deferred to the formidable will of her husband.

By "employing a traditional role... of the self-effacing Woman," Heathorn could, White argues, "transform the compromising of her will into an exercise of will." Yet the overall picture of Heathorn remains aligned with Irigaray's portrait of the "nonsublimated woman."<sup>155</sup> Giving not receiving, and expecting nothing more than some affectionate regard, "positive elaboration" seems hardly possible for Heathorn. But the nonsublimated woman is equally apt to describe Huxley's first wife, Maria Nys, whom Huxley would insensitively lampoon in *Point Counter Point*. Here, as the figure of Elinor Bidlake, the woman's intelligence is said to be not apace with that of her husband, Phillip (*PCP*, 122); the scene is no doubt an allusion to the longstanding

co-transcendental chiasmus?" (61)

See also Irigaray's *Speculum of the Other Woman*, tr. Gillian C. Gill (New York: Cornell University Press, 1985). Here, Irigaray makes the following point on the chiasmus:

In a chiasmus of family benefits, the father is given all rights and powers over "his children." Provided that they are not bastards and have sloughed off the hybrid character of their mortal birth, these children resemble only their sire. *An optical chiasmus operates too*. The father denies the conditions of specula(riza)tion. He is unaware, it would seem, of the physical, mathematical and even dialectical coordinates of representation "in a mirror." An optical chiasmus [that] operates too. The father denies the conditions of specula(riza)tion. He is unaware, it would seem, of the physical, mathematical and even dialectical coordinates of representation "in a mirror" (301, emphasis in original).

154 Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 9.

155 Nevertheless, Clark praises Henrietta's writing and illustrations, such as those she had painted for her book *My Wife's Relations*. This is a children's book that recounts the adventures of a homely family of pigs. Clark also notes that the lines inscribed on TH Huxley's headstone, on his wishes, were those of his wife. They ran: "Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep; For still He giveth His beloved sleep, / And if an endless sleep He wills, so best." What is notable about these lines is that they would reappear in H. G. Wells's book, *The New Machiavelli* some sixteen years later. See Clark, *The Huxleys*, 111. Henrietta A. Huxley, *My Wife's Relations: A Story of Pigland* (London: J.S. Virtue & Co., 1884); and Herbert George Wells, *The New Machiavelli* (Toronto: McLeod and Allen, 1911).

discomfort Huxley felt with regard to the appropriateness of his intellectual mismatch with Nys.<sup>156</sup> Figures of many “repressed” women appear elsewhere too, such as in the figure of Mary Bracegirdle in *Crome Yellow*: this woman is stifled in what Irigaray refers to as a “non-place.”<sup>157</sup> Giving voice to her fear of being repressed, Mary—on the subject of what her friend Anne Wimbush calls “Repressions; old maids and all the rest”—confesses the following:

I am afraid of them [repressions]. It's always dangerous to repress one's instincts. I'm beginning to detect in myself symptoms like the ones you read of in the books. I constantly dream that I'm falling down wells; and sometimes I even dream that I'm climbing up ladders. It's most disquieting. The symptoms are only too clear. (CY, 66)

Huxley's fiction is often testament to Irigaray's idea that the chiasmus is pre-gendered. It exhibits an awareness that it is the *masculine* figure who, as Irigaray postulates, remains impenetrable by the woman. And he remains impenetrable precisely because women remain so “cut off from or in time” from him, and the possibility of gratification or chiasmic intercession thus remains forever out of reach.

156 Although few critics other than James Hull seem to have identified *Point Counter Point's* Elinor as Maria Huxley (Nys), it is possible to conclude this is the case on at least two bases. Elinor, firstly, is Phillip's wife, and Phillip is well recognised as a thinly veiled representation of Huxley himself. Secondly, the kinds of feelings that Elinor describes about her intelligence parallel those that Maria had herself expressed in a range of letters that she, while troubled, wrote to Lady Ottoline Morrell. In these letters, Maria asks Morrell why she had ever become involved with Huxley, who she envisages in her letter as more adept in literary matters than she could ever be. *Point Counter Point's* narrator describes a similar situation from the point of view of Molly:

Molly launched into her regular description of Philip. “Whereas his wife,” she concluded, rather painfully aware that Burlap had not smiled as frequently as she should have done, “is quite the opposite of a fairy. Neither elfish, nor learned, nor particularly intelligent.” Molly smiled rather patronizingly. “A man like Philip must find her a little inadequate sometimes, to say the least.” The smile persisted, a smile now of self-satisfaction. Philip had had a foible for her, still had. He wrote such amusing letters, almost as amusing as her own. (“Quand je veux briller dans le monde,” Molly was fond of quoting her husband's compliments, “je cite des phrases de tes lettres.”) Poor Elinor! “A little bit of a bore sometimes,” Molly went on. “But mind you, a most charming creature. I've known her since we were children together. Charming, but not exactly a Hypatia.” Too much of a fool even to realize that Philip was bound to be attracted by a woman of his own mental stature, a woman he could talk to on equal terms (*PCP*, 122).

As Hull notes, offering further evidence for the connection, “aspects of Huxley's character Maria deplored were just the same as those Elinor complains of with regard to Phillip.” Hull, *Representative Man*, 136.

157 Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, 205.

When Mary dreams she is falling down wells and climbing ladders, for instance, she expresses her ontological displacement in space—a position accorded to her, as in Irigaray's theorisation, because she is a woman. This is, writes Irigaray, “the place of the spatial [that] women can occupy.” In this place, and performing “this role,” the figure of the woman is always

assisted... by her relation to the cyclical. But not in the traditional act of love (in which, notably, she has no access to language as temporal scansion). Even if she extends infinitely into space, and thereby risks losing time... this is because her sexuality does not have to obey the imperatives and risks of erection and detumescence.<sup>158</sup>

While Irigaray asks whether being distemporalised and displaced in this way can disqualify the woman from chiasmic relations, she also suggests that this may be a kind of “empirico-transcendental chiasmus” in itself: a place in which woman must relate to herself and “no longer depend on man's return... for her self love.”<sup>159</sup> Yet whether it is conceptualised as political, ontological, biological, or otherwise, the woman's position cannot be thought of *as such*: it is not, for instance, a chiasmus—and it is strictly not a *pathology*. That is, a woman does not, as Irigaray reminds us, experience her spatial cyclicity in the form that Jacques Lacan proposed: as a *jouissance* that is *pathological*.<sup>160</sup> Proposing to short-circuit woman's predestined relegation to a non-place, Irigaray avows an “autotelic” or “autoerotic” love of the self that renounces the other as it also harvests an “innerness, self-intimacy” that is characteristic of the “feminine divine.”<sup>161</sup>

*Crome Yellow* appears to intuit this formation in its depiction of the women characters's collective will to power. When Anne and Mary come together, for instance, their collectivisation determines who, if any, among the men would make an appropriate partner. While at Garsington, women such as Morrell, Maria (Huxley's wife), and Mary Hutchinson—Huxley's lover through the 1920s—discussed their sexual relationships with one another, and exhibited their openness to various conjugations and pairings; in this way, they short-circuited the univocality of male homosocial relations.<sup>162</sup> As David Dun-

158 Irigaray, *Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 64.

159 *Ibid.*, 65.

160 *Ibid.*, 64.

161 *Ibid.*, 68. On love and the chiasmus, and on chiasms generally, see Patricia Lissner, “Chi-thinking: Chiasmus and Cognition,” PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2007, 369-71.

162 For more specific details about Huxley's relationship with Maria, see Nicholas Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 146; Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 5, 6, and 120-21.



away points out, Maria had in fact fallen “under the spell of Ottoline Morrell, Bloomsbury’s flambuoyant (and bisexual) hostess”—and she had once even “attempted suicide when she thought Ottoline had abandoned her.”<sup>163</sup> According to her sister Jeanne Neveux, Maria had been a lesbian and, for Huxley’s nephew, Francis, it often seemed as though Maria’s “taste for beautiful women” was what Huxley enjoyed most about her—for it was through this that he and Maria were able to become more intimate as between themselves. The situation “brought them together,” Francis remarked in an interview.<sup>164</sup>

Irigaray does not explicitly refer to lesbian or homosexual interactions when she describes the “configuration” in which a woman “remains in latency, in abeyance” by fostering “love among women.” However, she does criticise the “nagging calculations” of orientation and sexual preference that “paralyze the fluidity of affect.”<sup>165</sup> Irigaray implores women to fabricate an alternative ecology of the divine through the reestablishment of greater love for one another: a “love of the same, within the same,” which is affirmed by a deep “form of innerness.”<sup>166</sup> When Irigaray turns to biblical stories, noting how “[a] traditional reading of the gospels places very little stress on the good relations between Mary and Anne,” it becomes notable that these are precisely the names of *Crome Yellow*’s principle women characters—a pair whose good relations are made apparent other than by these aptronyms.<sup>167</sup>

For Irigaray, it comes as no surprise that a “love of the same” is already normativised or institutionalised as between father and son, man and man: masculinity, she writes, has always been the “traditional subject of discourse.”<sup>168</sup> But Irigaray’s analysis anticipates the extent to which intellectual

163 David King Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood* (London: Bloomsbury, 1989), 72.

164 *Ibid.*, xvii-xviii.

165 Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 103.

166 In Irigaray’s book, this is of course a reference to Anne, the mother of the Mary, mother of Jesus (according to Christian and Islamic tradition); whether such a reference obtains in Huxley’s work is less clear, although it is certainly possible that this is the case.

167 Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*, 68. Mary was also the name of Huxley’s Aunt Mary, for whom he felt great affection. See Bernard Bergonzi, “Aldous Huxley and Aunt Mary,” in *Aldous Huxley: Between East and West*, ed. C.C. Barfoot (New York: Editions Rodopi B.V. Amsterdam, 2001), 9-18.

168 Irigaray, *An Ethics of Sexual Difference*, 106. A well-known and related conceptualisation of masculine discourse emerges with Jacques Derrida’s neologism “phallogocentrism.” A portmanteau of “phallocentrism” and “logocentrism,” this term denotes the privileged position of the masculine in writing. Derrida employed the locution in a number of his later works, and claimed in an interview of around 2002, that all the “deconstruction of phallogocentrism has been linked to the paternal figure.” Derrida had similarly attested in an earlier interview that, when speaking of “feminist politicalization,” it “is important to recognize this strong phallogocentric underpinning



activity and “men’s business” constitutes an even more significant marker of difference between men and women in Huxley’s time—a notion that is well attested in Huxley’s writing. Huxley’s interlocution with the ideas of Blake, Matthew Arnold, John Donne, Shakespeare and Milton, for instance, function as a chiasmus of ideas, themes, events, and actants. And if they constitute the tissue of Huxley’s thought, then the fact that each of these works is authored by a man seems important. If those ideas that appear in what Meckier calls Huxley’s “poetry of ideas”—or in what are often called his “Novels of Ideas”—are anywhere circumscribed, it is by a periphery of gender specificity, of masculine sexual identity.<sup>169</sup>

Nevertheless, as Bedford suggests, while the origin of these men’s ideas are phallogocentric, these ideas also become entangled in Huxley’s fiction; for there they are destabilised and become less the ideas of any one man than an assemblage of personages of doubtful origin. For, as Bedford writes, Huxley

had a habit of mixing up his starting points—one *man’s* philosophy, another’s sexual tastes, one trait from a member of his family, another from a character in history—and as he did not like to stop and think that any other person might recognize fragments of himself in an otherwise outrageous [literary-fictional] context, he took little trouble to cover up his traces.<sup>170</sup>

To trace Huxley’s mixed up “starting points” is to read his novels as *romans à clef*—or even as knowing self-portraits. When Huxley appears, for instance, in the form of Philip Quarles in *Point Counter Point*—as a novelist and, as Bernard Bergonzi notes, as Huxley’s “mouthpiece”—he advances his view that, when stuck with acedia, a novelist should “put a novelist into the novel” (*PCP*, 409). In this *mise en abyme* of starting points, a particularly congealed or doubled phallogocentric masculinity emerges; this is the scene of mascu-

that conditions just about all of our cultural heritage.” See Derrida’s interview in Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman (dirs.), *Derrida: A Film by Kirby Dick and Amy Ziering Kofman* (USA: Jane Doe Films/Zeitgeist Films, 2002), qtd. in Penelope Deutscher, “Derrida’s Impossible Genealogies,” *Theory and Event* 8, no. 11 (2005): 1. Also see Maria-Daniella Dick and Julian Wolfreys, *The Derrida Wordbook* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 118, 187. In *The Speculum of the Other Woman*, Irigaray herself adopts this term and coins a range of variations, including “phallosensical,” “phallogotropic” “phallogocratic ideology,” “phallogocratism,” and so forth: see 52, 65, 121, 229. Also see Ellen T. Armour, “Questions of Proximity: “Woman’s Place” in Derrida and Irigaray,” *Hypatia* 12, no. 1 (1997): 63-78. Benoît Peeters attests to Derrida’s profound interest in Irigaray’s work: see Peeters, *Derrida: A Biography*, tr. Andrew Brown (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013), 270-1.

169 See, for example, Frederick J. Hoffman, “Aldous Huxley and the Novel of Ideas,” *College English* 8, no. 3 (1946): 129-137.

170 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 123 (my emphasis).

line reproduction, a duplication of power in the male novelist's language and process.<sup>171</sup> But in addition to questions of gender and writing, Huxley's proposition also prompts us to revisit the post-structuralist dilemma that I addressed at the beginning of chapter 2: If an author is now simply reducible to their gender, have we thus at least partially answered that question—"Who is the writer of the work?"—that we began with?

But of course, to know this for certain, we must know more about "the work" itself. In *Point Counter Point*, Quarles promotes a process of itineration and reduplication as a proagonist; and he compares the act of writing to the movement or composition of a musical score. "A novelist," Quarles writes in his notebook,

modulates by reduplicating situations and characters. He shows several people falling in love, dying, or praying in different ways—dissimilars solving the same problem. Or, *vice versa*, similar people confronted with dissimilar problems. In this way you can modulate through all aspects of your theme, you can write variations in any number of different moods (*PCP*, 408).<sup>172</sup>

In Quarles's model of novel writing, precisely where the novelist begins and ends their work is arbitrary; of more importance is reduplication. A seemingly random process of recombination, the habit of exchanging one character or event for another now functions less as a means of *producing* literary work than a heterodox or counter-normative manipulation of a functional system. It is a mode that militates against that injunction imposed on the scrivener by which they merely reproduce either:

- (i) an extant document (as a copyist) or;
- (ii) in Aristotelian terms, an object in its own right, through a process of analogical reproduction: that is, through "mathematical abstraction" (*DOP*, 7).

Through random duplication and recombination, Quarles qua Huxley resists simply reproducing the ready-made knowledge so intrinsic to the process of copying, scribbling, notarising, and other automatised modes of writing. But at the same time as Huxley's writing resists these geometrical processes of mathematical abstraction (*ALONG*, 108)—thus prioritising the ambulant science of recombination—his fiction also fails to develop any singularised entity or identity. Rather, Huxley prefers to recombine, envariate, and recon-

171 Bergonzi, "Aldous Huxley and Aunt Mary," 16.

172 Also see Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 127.

figure the existing, and invariably masculine order of things. Interchangeable and interwoven, characters in Huxley's novels are remorphologised into—and fused with—those on whom they are based; thus, they are at once connected and disconnected from their “starting points.”

Huxley's characteristic resistance to mimetic “reproduction” may be read, as Meckier argues, as a phenomenological by-product of his similar rejection of Enlightenment or Romanticist thought. Moving in a new direction from his forebears, Huxley embraces what he calls a “New Romanticism” in an essay of that name in *Music At Night*.<sup>173</sup> Huxley's “awareness of being deceived” by his poetic and intellectual predecessors—and his ability to wryly satirise his forebears through “adroit ridicule,” both in his poetry as his 1920s novels—led him to adopt what Meckier calls a “contrapuntal frame of mind.”<sup>174</sup> There should be no doubt that this description is analogous to that which I have named Huxley's chiasmic mode of thought in this chapter; although, as Meckier stresses, Huxley's “contrapuntalism” also reflects the wider tendency of Modernists, and even of proto-Modernists: to disavow their relations with men of previous generations: their fathers, grandfathers, or those who acted as their surrogates.

Martin Green argues that this rejection of Victorianism presaged what would become the rise of the “men of feeling”: a group comprising those same men who would later become the peace-loving “Children of the Sun.”<sup>175</sup> And it is probably also of some import that, while Huxley often disavows feminism,<sup>176</sup> the emergence of women's movements also inaugurated at this time a new orientation in many men towards an acceptance of different sexual orientations and identities, one that would influence as much as reflect the revaluation of masculinity of which Huxley was a part in the 1920s and '30s.

173 See Aldous Huxley, “The New Romanticism,” in Baker and Sexton, eds. *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays III: 1930-1935* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 250-4; Baker and Sexton describe this emergent belief system as “A celebration of Enlightenment modernity and an excessive faith in instrumental reason and applied science”: back dust jacket flap. Cf. Robert Baker, “Science and Modernity in Huxley,” in Barfoot, ed., *Aldous Huxley: Between East and West*, 35-58, 38n8.

174 Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: From Poet to Mystic*, 2.

175 Martin Green, *Children of the Sun*, 86-113.

176 For instance, in his 1930 essay “Fatal Ladies,” Huxley writes that he “detest[s]” and “utterly reprobate[s]” what he, in 1930, called the “spiritual vampire.” Defining this creature as a “modern type” that had arisen out of both the “feminist movement” and the Romantic period of the nineteenth century,” Huxley chided the “vampire of the soul” and “spiritual adventuress” who is “only satisfied if she can persuade herself that she had a large soul and a large intellect—not to mention high ideals and a wide culture, and deep thoughts.” See Aldous Huxley, “Fatal Ladies,” in Baker and Sexton, *Huxley: Complete Essays III*, 226-9, esp. 227.

And while Huxley might have even begun to adopt elements of those emergent feminist formulations about Victorianism's male repressiveness—those that had been advanced at the turn of the century by a range of women in his company—Huxley would also reinscribe a liberal form of chauvinism in his writing, one that strikes us today as straightforward sexism. In “The Battle of the Sexes” (1929), for example, Huxley observes how “our ideas about sexual morality are very different from those current fifty years ago”; and he laments that “the modern young person,” through a “course of libertinage” only reproduces the “hatred and fear of sex” that affected the Victorians. Then, after deliberating on the changes in “consciousness” that have arisen as a result of “feminine patriotism,” Huxley tepidly identifies with aspects of proto-feministic thought, musing on the disappearance of the “fallen woman.” In a language whose tone is characteristically difficult to identify as either sincere or parodic, Huxley notes that

the modern young woman gets the best of both worlds... succeeds in being fashionable and rational about sex, without running any risk of being swept off her conscious feet by the physical-instinctive biological forces which a genuine warm, wholehearted abandonment might dangerously let loose.<sup>177</sup>

But even if Huxley cannot be described as a pro-feminist man of the early twentieth century, his views about these slow transformations in gender relations allow him to distinguish his own period from his “fathers’ days,” the “time of our grandfathers” and “our great-great grandparents.”<sup>178</sup>

If Huxley differs from his father Leonard—or from his grandfather TH—though, then this difference partly inheres in his attitude toward women. For if this attitude remains unclear in his prose, his surprising “contempt for the traditional family”<sup>179</sup> can be more readily grasped—especially in light of the revelations and speculations proffered in Nicholas Murray’s biography concerning his many sexual affairs (following Sybille Bedford’s own original disclosures). These liaisons, Murray writes, were by and large facilitated by Maria, Huxley’s bisexual wife.<sup>180</sup> Engaging in affairs with Bedford herself, as well as with Nancy Cunard, Mary Hutchinson, and many other women, Huxley makes for an interesting exemplar of twentieth-century polyamo-

177 Aldous Huxley, “The Battle of the Sexes,” 115.

178 *Ibid.*, 110.

179 Don Lattin, *Distilled Spirits: Getting High, Then Sober, with a Famous Writer, a Forgotten Philosopher, and a Hopeless Drunk* (London: University of California Press, 2012), 37. Lattin identifies Huxley’s contemptuous view on traditional family from his essay “The Decline of the Family” (see *Huxley: Complete Essays III*, 116-20).

180 Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 145-6, esp. 179n21; Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 132-8.

ry. At least one of Huxley's affairs—a dalliance with “Romanian aristocrat” Henrietta Sava-Goiu—is confirmed to have been facilitated by Huxley's wife, who herself writes to Huxley about Sava-Goiu in a 1926 letter, describing the way in which she had herself encouraged Huxley to pursue her.<sup>181</sup>

Huxley's crude description of Sava-Goiu in a letter to Mary Hutchinson, however, indicates his disdain for “thoughtful” women, whom he describes in his “Battle of the Sexes” essay as “spiritual vampires.”<sup>182</sup> He describes Sava-Goiu as “Tom's [T.S. Eliot] Princess Volupine in youth—rather bitch, but with ideals; a philosophising cock-teaser.”<sup>183</sup> As Don Lattin notes, Huxley's view that “the young ladies Maria brought into his chamber were sexually freer than they used to be, but not free enough” indicates his attitude to women, and his quizzical contempt for the apparent liberation of women's sexuality after a long period of Victorian repression.<sup>184</sup> It is clear, however, that Huxley's experiences with “casual intimacy” and the “physical-instinctive life” were to lead him to resent the “modern young woman” who, in his clearly sexist view, sought not only to curb their “abandonment to passion” but also to “refute the old tradition that woman's function is to bear children and be intuitive.”<sup>185</sup>

Huxley's biography and his early satirical novels disclose much about his relationship with his father and the father and the way he imagined fathers and sons to have distinctive relations to women. This thematic functions, like much of Huxley's work, as *roman à clef*.<sup>186</sup> Among the characteristic features of father-son relationships in Huxley's novels we often see an intellectual competition between two industrious and aspiring men with a common goal: a configuration that results in a kind of fraught triangulation.<sup>187</sup> Char-

181 Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 179.

182 Huxley, “The Battle of the Sexes,” 114-5.

183 Huxley to Mary Hutchinson, 22 February 1926, quoted in Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 179 and 179n22.

184 Lattin, *Distilled Spirits*, 36.

185 Huxley, “The Battle of the Sexes,” 114-5.

186 See Melissa Boyde, “The Modernist roman à clef and Cultural Secrets, or, I Know that You Know that I Know that You Know,” *Australian Literary Studies* 24, nos. 3-4 (2009): 155-66. It is significant that Philip K. Dick's works are also largely based on real-life events rather than on “heroes”: see Uwe Anton and Werner Fuchs, eds., “So I don't write about Heroes: An Interview with Philip K. Dick,” *SF Eye* 14 (1996): 37-46 (accessed at <http://2010philipkdickfans.philipkdickfans.com/frank/anton.html>). On Huxley's attitude to the family also see Huxley, “The Decline of the Family,” Baker and Sexton, *Huxley: Complete Essays, Volume III: 1930-35*: 116-9.

187 One commentator observes that “love was routinely triangular” in the “Huxley household.” Adam Mars-Jones, “Review: Aldous Huxley, Nicholas Murray,” *The Guardian* 2000, 8 April 2000, accessed 12 January 2014, <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2002/apr/07/biography.highereducation1>.

acterised by a strained yet liberal contestation, Huxley's relationship with his father Leonard could even be understood as indicating a predisposition in the Huxleys's phenotypic profile toward their maleness: that is, as a kind of "genetic inheritance" of masculinity (as Milton Birnbaum suggests), one that is constituted by what Ronell, exploring the father-son dyad, describes as a particular "repertoire of syndromic habits and idioms."<sup>188</sup>

In the conceptualisations of masculinity threaded across Huxley's works, and those of his father and TH, the residue of what might be described as an intellectual *andreia* (masculine courage) is often legible—and specifically as an association Huxley develops with the spoken and written word: that is, through performance, rhetoric, and writing.<sup>189</sup> Huxley's early biography serves as a crucible of events whose traumatic valences will not only ramify in his literary writing, but also map the twentieth-century shift from a thoroughly masculinised intellectual tradition to a progressively more pluralistic political paradigm of sexual difference.<sup>190</sup>

Of the range of significant events that punctuate Huxley's adolescence, for instance, one of the most remarkable is Huxley's discovery of his grandfather's brilliance. Similarly, the agon in which Huxley often challenges and excoriates his father Leonard, and the untimely death of Julia Huxley, Aldous's mother (when Huxley was only fourteen), illumine the influences that shaped the young Huxley. Moreover, the friendships between Huxley and his brothers Julian and Trevenen (and with his half-brother Andrew), as well as, finally, the suicide of Trevenen when Huxley was only nineteen years old are significant milestones in his psychobiography. As the following chapter will illustrate, each of these events left traces on Huxley's psychological and

188 See Birnbaum, *Huxley's Quest for Values*, 14 (emphasis mine); Avital Ronell, *Loser Sons: Politics and Authority* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2012), 6.

189 On the origin and genealogy of this kind of combination of *andreia* and rhetoric, see Joseph Roisman, "Rhetoric, Manliness and Contest," in Ian Worthington, ed., *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), 393-410, esp. 294. On *andreia* generally, see Ralph Mark Rosen and Ineke Sluiter, eds. *Andreia: Studies in Manliness and Courage in Classical Antiquity* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

190 Ultimately, Huxley's novel *After Many A Summer Dies the Swan* will appear in Tom Ford's adaptation of Christopher Isherwood's *A Single Man* (directed by Tom Ford), where the protagonist, George (Colin Firth) uses the novel's themes to broach the subject of the denigration of homosexuals and homosexuality in history. See *A Single Man*, directed by Tom Ford, Sony Pictures Home Entertainment, 2010, DVD. In Isherwood's novel, George will defend Huxley against being a "dope addict" and an anti-Semite, and "when someone else tries coyly to turn the clef in the roman," suggesting a connection between the plutocratic character of William Randolph Hearst, Jo Stoyte, and a certain "notorious lady," George refutes these claims, calmly offering an extemporaneous speech on the subject of persecution: Christopher Isherwood, *A Single Man* (London: Vintage, 2010 [1964]), 52-4.

political *Weltanschauung*; but it is also notable, of course, that Huxley's body also suffered the trauma of blindness in his early years, leading to his a significant loss of his eyesight.<sup>191</sup>

As I have argued in chapters 1 and 3, fatherhood and paternity serve as important correlates or synecdoches for otherness. Lévinas speaks of paternity, for instance, as a "relationship" in which "the father discovers himself not only in the gestures of the son, but in substance and unicity."<sup>192</sup> Just as one of Philip K. Dick's most alarming and possibly critical 'breaks' arose when he perceived his father's face in the sky (a recurrence or hallucination of a memory of his father from his childhood that I will address in chapter 7<sup>193</sup>), it is possible to identify in Huxley's writing the traces of traumatic episodes with his father and grandfather.

Moreover, much of the material I have discussed in this chapter, including what I have lastly illustrated to have been Huxley's attitude towards sexual identity—namely, his by turns liberal, pro-feminist attitude towards women and his at other times deeply regressive sexism—had also no doubt been the product of his relations with other men—not least his own father, his brothers, and grandfather. And it is toward the effect on Huxley of precisely these patrilineal relations, then, that the following chapters 5 will now turn its attention.

191 I attend to Huxley's partial blindness in detail in the following chapter.

192 Emmanuel Lévinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay on Exteriority*, 268; also see Ronell, *Loser Sons*, 104.

193 See my discussion of Dick's apprehension of this face in chapter 7.



## Reforging “The Law of the Father”: Huxley’s Expurgation and Extrospection

### The Statu(t)e of TH Huxley; or, The Law of the “Grandpater”

IT IS CUSTOMARY FOR Aldous Huxley’s biographers to underscore the great influence that Huxley’s paternal grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley, had on Huxley as a young man. A well-known biologist, TH was widely regarded as the foremost proselytiser and populariser of natural selection, and commonly described as “Darwin’s Bulldog.”<sup>1</sup> A lesser-analysed anecdote, however, involves the scene in which the Huxleys awaited the unveiling by the Prince of Wales of a monument erected in honour of TH. As a nervous-looking six-year-old child, Huxley became ill during the ceremony, prompting his brother Julian to offer him his Eton top-hat, a makeshift receptacle into which Aldous promptly vomited.

At the same time as TH was cast in stone (see figure 5.1, below), a monument to John Tyndall was also erected, only a few feet away. To see these two men as a pair was, as Ronald Clark confirms, to bear witness to the ceremonial preservation of a particularly masculine greatness: the twinned statues stood testament to their particularly masculine prestige and authority, a consecration “like that to Goethe and Schiller at Weimar.”<sup>2</sup> On a later occa-

1 See Adrian Desmond, *Huxley: Evolution’s High Priest*, vol. 2, (London: Michael Joseph, 1999), *passim*; Keith Johnson, “Darwin’s Bulldog and Huxley’s Ape,” *Twentieth Century Literature* 55, no. 4 (2009): 572-96, 585. As Murray notes, Juliette Huxley, in her interview with David Dunaway of 1985, emphasises “the ‘burden’ that was imposed on Huxleys to succeed at all costs” to be worthy of TH. As she exclaimed, “Worthy of Gran-Pater—right! You must be worthy of grand-pater.” See Nicholas Murray, *Aldous Huxley: An English Intellectual* (London: Little Brown, 2002), 18; Huntington Library Oral History Transcripts, Interview between Juliette Huxley and David King Dunaway, 5 July 1985; David King Dunaway, *Aldous Huxley Recollected: An Oral History* (London: SAGE, 1999), 9-10.

2 On Aldous’s vomiting, see Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 17; on the general ceremony of the monument, see Clark, *The Huxleys*, 121-24.



**Figure 5.1** The statute of Thomas Henry Huxley in the London Natural History Museum London. Photography by CherryX (published under Wikimedia commons Licence), [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NHM\\_London,\\_Thomas-Henry-Huxley-Statue.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NHM_London,_Thomas-Henry-Huxley-Statue.jpg)

sion, Huxley would remark that one of his early recollections was of “being taken to church in Godalming and disgracing [himself] by vomiting during the sermon—a precocious expression, no doubt, of anti-clericalism.”<sup>3</sup> Abject instances of vomiting and regurgitation, as well as abstinences from eating, thus become important underlying tropes in Huxley’s satires through the 1920s. Just as Huxley wrote of vomiting humorously as a kind of ideological or anti-clerical expression, so does his fiction adumbrate vomiting as illustrations of “reactions” to political and spiritual ideologies.<sup>4</sup>

This chapter interposes the “biological” and the “biographical” in relation to Huxley by focusing on instances of the kind just described: events in

<sup>3</sup> Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 16.

<sup>4</sup> Vomiting is treated in many of Huxley’s other works: see, for instance, *After Many A Summer Dies The Swan* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1959), 237; *Island* (London: Vintage, 2005), 72; *The Devils of Loudon* (London: Vintage, 2005), 262, 294; and *Grey Eminence* (London: Vintage, 2005), 275.

Huxley's life, or incidents in his fiction, that prompt in him or his characters what may be described as a biological or embodied reaction. Huxley's preoccupation with vomiting and the sense in which he might have felt that a certain pleasure or political cathexis could be accorded to the act, may have led to his unusual employment of the term "vomitorium" in *Antic Hay*. Seemingly using the term to denote a "place designed by the Ancient Romans in which they could purge themselves between feasts," Huxley's usage is what some dictionarians have described as the first erroneous usage of the term in history.<sup>5</sup> Citing Tobias Smollett's *Travels Through France and Italy* as evidence, the *OED* notes, for instance, that the word originally denoted a place "entered by avenues, at the end of which were gates, called vomitoriae."<sup>6</sup> These were the gates out of which those who had attended a show in an amphitheatre would "spew forth" at its denouement. As William Nericcio notes, however, the *OED*, in offering both definitions, "allows herself to have it both ways," since it defines the "vomitorium as theatre portal and *erron*, a Roman space of post-feat purging—a theatre and a *toilet*."<sup>7</sup> Elsewhere in his travel book, Smollett describes the Romans's

delicate custom of taking vomits at each other's houses, when they were invited to dinner, or supper, that they might prepare their stomachs for gormandizing; a beastly proof of their nastiness as well as gluttony.<sup>8</sup>

Smollett's travel note suggests the rashness of dismissing Huxley's usage of "vomitoroium" as altogether *erroneous*. Like many of the ludic and playful usages in Huxley's novels, it may easily be read as a paronomasia or as what Derrida once described as "paleonymy": the repurposing of what may be a term of derogation for a new, politically empowered function.<sup>9</sup> Often seeking to produce biological images that had been otherwise repressed, Huxley refers to vomit in "vomitorium" precisely to denote and denude what has always already been an example of biological repression in language and in thought.

5 As the *OED* states, the erroneous conceives of the word to mean "a room in which Ancient Romans are alleged to have vomited deliberately during feasts." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "vomitorium" accessed December 10, 2013, <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/224638?redirectedFrom=vomitorium&>.

6 Tobias Smollett, *Travels Through France and Italy* (New York: Tauris Parke, 2010 [1776]), 312.

7 William Nericcio, *Tex[t]-Mex: Seductive Hallucinations of the "Mexican" in America* (Texas: University of Texas Press, 2007), 154.

8 Smollett, *Travels Through France and Italy*, 255.

9 See Derrida, *Positions*, tr. Alan Bass (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981), 71.

Understood as a colloquialism, “vomitorium” also reflects what Smollett called the “dirty creatures” within Rome’s filthy streets. This is particularly appropriate in the context of its utterance in *Antic Hay*, where the character to whom the word is attributed, Lypiatt, the artist-Goth, represents the haggardness of an unclean public:

The door of his sacred boudoir was thrown rudely open, and there strode in, like a Goth into the elegant marble vomitorium of Petronius Arbiter, a haggard and disheveled person whom Mr Mercaptan recognized, with a certain sense of discomfort, as Casimir Lypiatt (*AH*, 197).

A word that aptly describes both Huxley and Lypiatt (and, in effect, Smollett as well), Grant Overton alludes to its usage as a metonym for the sickness that comes with the accumulation of travel knowledge:

he has been everywhere and seen everything... He will show them their precedents and quote for them their texts—which they may ponder before passing out to the vomitorium.<sup>10</sup>

In Overton’s allusion, an overinvestment in writing, as in logophilia—or, in Lypiatt’s case, a compulsion to practice artmaking—is capable of producing in the subject an implacable physical reaction: exhaustion and sickness from overconsumption.<sup>11</sup> When Lypiatt visits Mercaptan in his offices (recalling the way in which Melville’s *Bartleby* attends his employer, the attorney’s, office), his response to Mercaptan’s published criticism of his work in *Weekly World* causes him to lose his temper, and to “shake” Mercaptan, threatening to strike him (*AH*, 198).

Here Mercaptan’s outrage remorphologises that which has already been Lypiatt’s abrupt entrance: it constitutes an enraged “spewing forth” of anger, and an expulsion of feeling that is reified by Huxley’s proleptic reference to vomit in “vomitorium.” Further, the fact that Lypiatt has strode into a door that has been “thrown rudely open” suggests Huxley’s awareness of the original meaning of “vomitorium.” It underscores, then, what is in Huxley’s imagistic program a condensation of the Goth-artist, vomit, and performance. Enacting a queasy performativity, Lypiatt induces in his audience (which is to say both the reader and Mercaptan) the negative transfiguration of the “visionary experience” that Huxley so valorised in *Heaven and Hell*. Now a

10 Grant Overton, “The Twentieth Century Gothic of Aldous Huxley” in *Cargoes for Cruises* (New York: Appleton, 1924) (84-97), excerpted in Donald Watt, ed. *Aldous Huxley: The Critical Heritage* (New York: Routledge, 1975), 98-113, 99.

11 I will address logophilia (and logophobia) in detail in chapter 6.

metonym for expurgation, Lypiatt brings into sharp relief the “horror of infinity” (*HAH*, 49-50) represented by the Goetheian or gothic sublime.

In *After The Fireworks* (1930), protagonist Miles Fanning reflects on the connection between Christian ritual and vomiting; he considers the extent to which, after drinking excessively, one may come to feel more pious in having purged. “Christians,” he thinks, paraphrasing Pascal, “ought to live like sick men; conversely, sick men can hardly escape being Christians” (*ATF*, 444). Subtly elevated as a figure for “redemption through expurgation,” vomiting is also understood as capable of *virtualisation*; since in inducing oneself to vomit through biological manipulations (such as by drinking excessively), Christians might be guided to live in a better way: illness begins to prescribe how one “ought to live.” This chiasmic description of the biological and theological leads Fanning to cynically ponder the manner in which vomiting and love are interwoven:

And he remembered sentiments-centimetres that French pun about love, so appallingly cynical, so humiliatingly true. “But only humiliating,” he assured himself, “because we choose to think it so, arbitrarily, only cynical because Beatrice in *suso ed io in lei guardava*; only appalling because we’re creatures who sometimes vomit bile and because, even without vomiting, we sometimes feel ourselves naturally Christians (*ATF*, 444).<sup>12</sup>

Exemplifying one among many of Huxley’s chiasmic clauses, Fanning’s remarks also suggest—in the paronomastic “sentiments-centimeters”—that “Christians” reside in a state of limbo between sickness and piety as a condition of their biology.<sup>13</sup> The phrase functions, sonically at least, as a kind

12 Huxley, *After the Fireworks* in Charles Rolo, ed. *The World of Aldous Huxley: An Omnibus of his Fiction and Non-Fiction Over Three Decades* (New York: Grosset’s Universal Library, 1971), 367-458, esp. 444. It is interesting to think of the chiasmic relation between “sentiments-centimetres” in itself, where two near-homonyms are parallelised in a meditative phrase. “Sentiments-centimetres” also resembles a phrase deployed by Bruno Latour in his analysis of actants in *The Pasteurization of France*. There Latour says of actants that associate with “others”: “Who speaks? Them [the others] or it [the actant]? *Traditore-traduttore* [Translator-traitor]. One equals several. It cannot be determined.” Like Huxley’s centimetres-sentiments, Latour’s “translator-traitor” syntagm functions as a chiasm between opposing forces that, to the cynic-scientist, amount to one and the same operation or agent. See Latour, *The Pasteurization of France*, tr. Alan Sheridan and John Law (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 160.

13 Huxley will redeploy this pun twice in *Brave New World*: firstly, when the Assistant Predestinator will cite a “piece of homely hypnopædic wisdom” by noting that “One cubic centimeter cures ten gloomy sentiments” (*BNW*, 46); and, secondly, when Lenina will remind Bernard not to lose his temper, reminding him of the sentiment-centimeter wisdom, reinforcing the efficacy of the drug Soma by uttering its slogan: “a gramme is



of micro-chiasmus. While “sentiments” becomes a metonym for what is an interiorised sense of illness—a “naturally” apprehended sense of theological virtue—“centimetres” denotes the exteriorised and material world in response to which the physical-instinctive responses seem almost mechanically to function. These are the measurable changes in biology that, such as in the case of vomiting, might take place when one meets the eyes of another (here “Beatrice”).

The overall effect of this succession of images is to generate a *mise en abyme* of impulsivity. As with most biological impulses, to proceed through these images is to be affected by the *nowness* and *suchness* (“isness” or “*Itzigkeit*”) of the events they describe. These are allusions to eternal or “timeless moments”: constituted as *metanoic* instants, these are the kinds of durations expressed in such visionary phrases as Dante’s “*suso ed io in lei guardava*” (“she looked upward, and I at her”).<sup>14</sup> While these images are also reappropriated and universal, they represent Huxley’s attempt to reconfigure them in such a way as to allow them to be experienced by his reader; as he remarks in *Jesting Pilate*, “proverbs are always platitudes until you have personally experienced the truth of them” (*JP*, 324). Prompts to excite the “physical-instinctive biological forces,” these images are, then, as Goethe’s translation of Dante’s phrase (appearing in *Faust*) suggests, also allusions to the sexual and libidinal *triebs*; they suggest, that is, how “the eternal-womanly draws us upward.”<sup>15</sup> Akin to what Freud will observe as a “displacement from below”—or what Huxley would later describe as “upward self transcendence” (*DL*, 375)—what is emphasised here is the incorrigible procession of biological phenomena and its influence on subjectivity.<sup>16</sup>

*Eyeless in Gaza*’s protagonist Anthony Beavis will be advised by his doctor that the displacement of his physical drives and ailments, such as the

always better than a damn” (*BNW*, 77).

- 14 Dante Aligheri, *The Divine Comedy of Dante Aligheri*, tr. Charles Norton (London: William Benton, 1952), Canto II (Paradise), line 22, 108. On “timeless moments”: as well as marking the “intersection” of “England and Nowhere” in T.S. Eliot’s *Little Gidding*, the phrase “Timeless Moment,” is, of course, also the title of Laura Huxley’s biography of Aldous: see T.S. Eliot, “Little Gidding,” in *Four Quartets* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1943), 32; Laura Archer Huxley, *This Timeless Moment: A Personal View of Aldous Huxley* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1969).
- 15 See Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust*, tr. Albert G. Latham (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, 1908), 342 (“Here the Ineffable/Wrought is with love./The Eternal-Womanly/Draws us above.”), qtd. in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, tr. Judith Norman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 126n21 and 126n22.
- 16 See Hull, *Aldous Huxley: Representative Man*, 63, 245, 528.

displacement of toxicity by vomiting, is not always enough to ameliorate illness. A breakthrough or a metanoia should also occur, the doctor suggests, that can trump the material world: “When you pray in the ordinary way,” the doctor remarks,

you’re merely rubbing yourself into yourself, if you see what I mean. Whereas what we’re all looking for is some way of getting beyond our own vomit!” (EG, 553)

Imagining a means of “getting beyond” his own bile, Beavis then reflects on how he himself might attempt to transcend those objects that so appeal to his biological senses; he wonders how he might move

beyond the books, beyond the perfumed and resilient flesh of women, beyond fear and sloth, beyond the painful but secretly flattering vision of the world as menagerie and asylum (EG, 553).

In short, Beavis yearns to move beyond a “physical-instinctive” vision of the world—constituted as it is by the animality of sex and drives—and beyond a maniacally self-interested *Weltanschauung*—constituted by a kind of prayer that is only inward-looking. Resisting dualism, the doctor advises Beavis to “think like a Buddhist” (EG, 555-6)—as well as to eat like one: his diet should comprise only the dependable ingredients of “Vegetables and water,” for “we think as we eat” (EG, 555). In *Eyeless in Gaza*, as in elsewhere in Huxley’s fiction oeuvre, the body’s actions always represent the expurgation of what is false or inspires hate in society, including that which comes in the form of zealous religiosity.

But if, as the doctor advises Beavis, the “greatest enemy of Christianity to-day” is “Frozen meat,” then it is all the more disturbing that such a threat is so widely available: for now “Even the poor can afford to poison themselves into complete scepticism and despair” (EG, 555). While once “only members of the upper classes were thoroughly sceptical, despairing, negative... because they were the only people who could afford to eat too much meat,” now the malaise of scepticism affects all classes in society (EG, 556). Amusingly expressed in the “clinical” vision of the authoritative doctor, Huxley’s biological determinism now transforms into an elaborate genealogy of ideology and belief. Where religion and socio-economics have conditioned a people’s diet, so does it shape those people’s minds. To rupture this deterministic worldline is to vomit; and, in so materially renouncing the prosperity of Victorianism, the baneful oppression of religion, one also reconfigures the epistemological boundaries that underlie both constructions.



In *Island*, vomiting similarly signifies the overconsumption of idealistic zealotry. Employing religion as a means to deceive Dipa's criminal intentions, Mr Bahu is an ally of Colonel Dipa, the ruthless industrialist ruler of Rendang, Pala's companion island. Described by Ranga in a list of "indictments," Mr Bahu is known for going

about giving lectures about the need for religious revival. He's even published a book about it. Complete with preface by someone at the Harvard Divinity School. It's all part of the campaign against Palanese independence. God is Dipa's alibi. Why can't criminals be frank about what they're up to? All this disgusting idealistic hogwash—it makes one vomit (*ISLAND*, 72).<sup>17</sup>

Signalling the overconsumption of a psychic or epistemological toxin (whether it be religious, political, or intellectual), vomiting carries the residue of Huxley's original reaction to the unveiling of TH's statue. Much as Huxley and his brother Julian loved their grandfather, the former's reaction to TH's veneration serves as a prolepsis for the way in which vomiting would symbolise, throughout Huxley's fiction, the torment and expurgation of his grandfather's scepticism and society's religiosity.<sup>18</sup>

## TH Huxley and the Masculinities of Science

THE INFLUENCE OF TH on Huxley and his brothers, however, constituted more than simply a benign reverence commingled with a feeling of intimidation. It was a feeling that might occasion, especially in Huxley, a physical, and an almost certainly fearful response. TH's scientific mind, for instance, had been passed on to all the Huxleys; but it was the young Aldous's thoughts, as Overton remarks, that often seemed

17 My emphasis.

18 On vomiting in Huxley also see, for instance, Peter Bowering, *Aldous Huxley: A Study of the Major Novels* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013 [1968]), 124. Richard Crouse also discusses filmmaker Ken Russell's attention to Huxley's detailed treatment of vomit in *Devils of Loudun*, where, misquoting the novel, Russell notes how the narrator describes how the incompetent inquisitors, Ibert, Adam, and Barre, inspect the bile of Sister Jeanne. In his misremembered analysis, Crouse remarks on the narrative: "They analyzed her vomit." Of this line, Russell, notes that "It's in the book but people don't believe it or can't visualize it." This precise line in fact does not appear in *The Devils of Loudun*, however, the novel does describe how the exorcists sought to examine the vomit of the nuns whom they thought were possessed by the devil (or a black bile). See Richard Crouse, *Raising Hell: Ken Russell and the Unmaking of The Devils* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2012), 50; Aldous Huxley, *The Devils of Loudun* (London: Vintage, 2010), 166-8.

lighted through stained glass, glass that singularly resembles the coloured microscopic slides with which Grandfather Huxley was intently preoccupied.<sup>19</sup>

When TH had engaged in discussion with Bishop Samuel Wilberforce in June 1860 at the Oxford University Museum, about seven months following the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species*, it became, as Keith Thompson notes, "a part of science's mythology."<sup>20</sup> Following his prosleytisation of Darwinism, TH would come to represent in the history of scientific thought not simply "a man of science," but a model for what it means to be politically predisposed to—as well as qualified for—the empiricist's vocation: a "gentleman of science."<sup>21</sup> (Precisely as much had been confirmed in TH's memorialisation and reification as a statue.) But TH was also politically motivated, and was capable of indicating his aversion to the "entrenched privileges of aristocracy" within what was, as Paul White notes,

- 19 Grant Overton, "The Twentieth Century Gothic of Aldous Huxley," in Watt, *The Critical Heritage*, 99.
- 20 That there is considerable uncertainty about whether the so-called "Huxley-Wilberforce debate" ever took place indicates that it probably did not. Jonathan Smith argues that "[t]here was no such thing as the Huxley-Wilberforce debate," and instead that "historians have shown" that the debate "occurred more than twenty years after the event, in the 1880s and 90s." The debate, he continues, is a "construction, almost exclusively, of the Darwinians and their allies." Notably, Smith asserts, it was constructed particularly through "the work of Darwin's son, Francis [...] himself a botanist, and Huxley's son, Leonard, in their respective *Life and Letters* volumes of their fathers..." See Jonathan Smith, "The Huxley-Wilberforce 'Debate' on Evolution," *Branch*, available at: [http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps\\_articles=jonathan-smith-the-huxley-wilberforce-debate-on-evolution-30-june-1860](http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=jonathan-smith-the-huxley-wilberforce-debate-on-evolution-30-june-1860). Also see Keith Stewart, "Huxley, Wilberforce and the Oxford Museum," *American Scientist* 88, no. 3 (May-June, 2000): 210-3; and William Irvine, *Apes, Angels and Victorians: The Story of Darwin, Huxley and Evolution* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1955), 5-8. Contemporaneous reports from 1960, however, record that a discussion involving Huxley and Wilberforce took place on that date. See, for instance, Letter from "Harpocrates," *The Morning Chronicle*, 9 July 1860.
- 21 On scientific vocations in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Robert Kargon, *Science in Victorian Manchester: Enterprise and Expertise* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977); Morris Berman, *Social Change and Scientific Organization: The Royal Institution, 1799-1844* (London: Heinemann Education, 1978); Susan Cannon, *Science in Culture: The Early Victorian Period* (New York: Science History Publications, 1978); Jack Morrell and Arnold Thackray, *Gentlemen of Science: Early Years of the British Association for the Advancement of Science* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981); and Ian Inkster and Jack Morrell (eds.), *Metropolis and Province: Science in British Culture, 1780-1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1983). On the mid- and late-Victorian period, see T.W. Heyck, *The Transformation of Intellectual Life in Victorian England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), James A. Secord, *Controversy in Victorian Geology: The Cambrian-Silurian Dispute* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); and Paul White, *Thomas Huxley: Making the "Man of Science"* (London: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.

a high-culture tradition whose bearers possessed inherent and lofty powers that raised them above other commercial and professional men.<sup>22</sup>

While the task of political advocacy had proved difficult for TH as a young man, his resourcefulness and ambition enabled him, when he married Henrietta, to model his “genius” in what White highlights as a startlingly *literary* manner. Calling upon the Romantic philosophy of a century earlier, TH would assert and develop what would become a particularly *Huxleyan* style of positivism or empiricism.<sup>23</sup>

Having methodically copied lines from Thomas Carlyle’s essay “Characteristics” in his diary while working as a medical apprentice in 1842, TH would later adopt Carlyle’s belief that genius was a divine essence. Like nobility, he thought, genius was innate; and yet it was also—surprisingly enough—to be discovered more commonly in those of humble origins than in elites.<sup>24</sup> Associated with a range of attributes that had been “feminised” by the Victorians, TH felt that to be an ingenious man of science was to adopt a particular mode of masculinity—and even to be *demasculinised*. This meant that one should avoid the mercantilism of public life and develop a private, domestic setting for one’s work.<sup>25</sup>

Inheriting much from Coleridge and the Romantic poets, TH adumbrated a post-Enlightenment, non-Cartesian, and post-mechanistic model of the mind. He felt, just as Coleridge had felt, that the potential for the human to know him- or herself depended on their ability to discern differences between modes of sensibility and sensuality.<sup>26</sup> But TH also departs

22 As White notes, a number of TH’s contemporaries regarded him as a “narrow specialist, lacking the breadth required of the general critic or educational reformer.” See White, *Thomas Huxley*, 68.

23 TH was not able to perform the dissection work that he had sought to perform when he joined the navy and went on a survey voyage, for instance. See White, *Thomas Huxley*, 67-8.

24 *Ibid.*, 7. See Thomas Carlyle, “Characteristics,” *The Edinburgh Review* LIV (December, 1831); T.H. Huxley Papers, Imperial College of Science, Technology, and Medicine Archives, London: 31.169, “Thoughts and Doings,” journal entry for April 1842, cited in White, *Thomas Huxley*, 7n4.

25 For more on the demasculinisation of science in the early eighteenth century, see Rebecca Stott, “Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Science: Huxley, Darwin, Kingsley and The Evolution of the Scientist,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Science* 35 (2004): 199-207; John Tosh, *A Man’s Place: Masculinity and The Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1999); Andrew Dowling, *Manliness and the Male Novelist in Victorian Literature* (London: Ashgate, 2001).

26 See Alan Richardson, *British Romanticism and The Science of the Mind* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 40. As Levere notes of Coleridge, the poet’s view of the “consonance of mind with nature, of the role of imagination in science as in poetry...

from the Romantic tendency to accord human attributes to nature, such as when—even as he opens his lecture, “On Animal Individuality” (1852), with a passage from Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1798)—TH disputes Coleridge’s imputation that the “delicate and peaceful inhabitants of the ocean” were capable of “evil.”<sup>27</sup>

However, many modern biologists, putatively challenging the view of “developmental individuality” that TH develops in this lecture, have argued that it is possible for animals to be individuals. Unlike what TH claims, animals can be individuated because, as I have already myself asserted in chapter 1, animals’s bodies need not be seen as exclusively their own:

Animals cannot be considered individuals by anatomical or physiological criteria because a diversity of symbionts are both present and functional in completing metabolic pathways and serving other physiological functions.<sup>28</sup>

The “symbiotic view of life”—as with Huxley’s chiastic view of life—which involves wandering between two worlds or states (between human and non-human, heaven and hell, ape and essence), remains at least partly consonant with TH’s view of animal individuality. For TH, the “individual animal is the sum of the phenomena presented by a single life... it is all those animal forms which proceed from a single egg, taken together.”<sup>29</sup> While contemporary biologists, then, and even Julian Huxley, argue that TH is “wrong” to fix the “fertilization of the egg” as the beginning of the life cycle, it is actually the forceful principle that “individuality” exists in “dynamic, not merely in static terms” that forms the gravamen of TH’s position.<sup>30</sup>

are the keys to his critical perception.” Trevor H. Levere, “Coleridge, Davy, Science and Poetry,” in John Christie and Sally Shuttleworth, eds., *Nature Transfigured: Science and Literature, 1700-1900* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989), 97. Also see Irving Massey, “Review: British Romanticism and the Science of the Mind,” *Criticism* 44, no. 1 (2002): 78.

27 See Thomas Henry Huxley, “Upon Animal Individuality,” *Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal* 53 (1852): 172-77. On this lecture see notably John Vernon Jenson, *Thomas Henry Huxley: Communicating for Science* (London: Associated University Presses, 1991), 56-7; Eveleen Richards, “The Romantic Gestation of Nature,” in *Romanticism and the Sciences*, ed. Andrew Cunningham and Nicholas Jardine (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 139-40.

28 Scott F. Gilbert, Jan Sapp and Alfred I. Tauber, “The Symbiotic Way of Life: We Have Never Been Individuals,” *The Quarterly Review of Biology* 87, no. 4 (2012): 325-41, esp. 328.

29 T.H. Huxley, “Upon Animal Individuality,” *Proceedings of the Royal Institution* 1 (1851-54): 184-9, esp. 187.

30 Quoted in Jenson, *Thomas Henry Huxley*, 57; see also Alan Boyden, *Perspectives in Zoology* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1973), 51.

While TH had made his views relatively public in his lectures and addresses, he also had maintained a certain moral and incarnate drive to transcend the economic “base reality” of an increasingly commercial society. TH expressed this in his exemplary style of domesticated living: he sought to *domiciliate* and *familiarise* the pursuit of the sciences as much as to oratorically “perform” and proselytise them. And while for TH the newly domesticated “man of science” should be cleaved from the public domain of commerce, he would be unfazed that sexism remained normalised in science’s institutions, where biologists and anthropologists continued to identify the “location of inferiority in women’s bodies [and] minds.”<sup>31</sup>

As I have suggested in chapter 4, Henrietta Heathorn was an important figure in this history—and in contouring TH’s masculinity. Her poems and reminiscences—as well the symbolically “ordered” nature of the Huxleys’s Victorian home (“ruled by sympathy and affection”)—doubtlessly influenced and enabled TH’s career to progress and fructify.<sup>32</sup> Through Heathorn, TH recognised that to be a man of science was to be capable of experiencing the world sensually. Preparation for the fine discriminations that the sciences increasingly required a practitioner to make were developed in the home, where sensual refinement was first nurtured and engendered; these domestic sensibilities, TH felt, were the most useful—both at the theoretical and experimental levels—for those who wished to conduct scientific enquiry.<sup>33</sup>

The “sensual,” literary, and romantic origins of TH’s scientism would transform as he grew older, and as he began ever more seriously to imagine himself as a man of letters. As White notes, literary sensibility had always been among TH’s first intellectual instincts—however much it had been unrecognised in his lifetime.<sup>34</sup> In his 1932 memorial lecture for his grandfather, a piece titled “T. H. Huxley as a Literary Man,” Huxley contends that it is “as evident as a proposition of Euclid” that TH was “much more a literary than a scientific man.”<sup>35</sup> Yet, it was less for poesy’s than for veracity’s

31 White, *Thomas Huxley*, 30n75; on the subordination of women through scientific discourse and practices throughout this period, see Evelleen Richards, “Darwin and the Descent of Woman,” in David Oldroyd and Ian Langham, eds., *The Wider Domain of Evolutionary Thought* (Boston: Hingham, 1983), 57-111 ; Cynthia Russett, *Sexual Science: The Victorian Construction of Womanhood* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

32 On TH’s domestic life, see White’s chapter “Improvement by Domestication” in White, *Thomas Huxley*, 19-22, 28-31.

33 *Ibid.*, 29-30.

34 White, *Thomas Huxley*, 68.

35 Aldous Huxley, “T.H Huxley as a Literary Man,” in *The Olive Tree* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1973), 46-62, esp. 47.

sake that TH railed against certain abuses of language, since, as Huxley explained the attitude of his grandfather,

for all those rhetorical devices by means of which the sophist and the politician seek to make the worse appear the better cause Huxley felt an almost passionate disapproval.<sup>36</sup>

For his biographers, TH represents the very making of the “profession of science”: as Desmond writes, “[w]ith him the ‘scientist was born.’”<sup>37</sup> But if TH emblematises the first scientist, then this scientist must also be a literary man for, as Huxley propounds, if science “were *only* investigation, it would be without fruit, and useless.” Since science is “also, and no less communication,” and because “all communication is literature,” science is truly, for Huxley, also “a branch of literature.”<sup>38</sup>

When he tangled with a contiguous distinction—that between religion and science—TH implored his listeners to abandon the former as though he were a political revolutionary. Petitioning for the liberation of history’s victimised “seekers after truth,” TH condemned the influence of religion on science, railing before an audience at the Royal Institution in 1860:

In this nineteenth century, as at the dawn of modern physical science, the cosmogony of the semi-barbarous Hebrew is the incubus of the philosopher and the opprobrium of the orthodox. Who shall number the patient and earnest seekers after truth, from the days of Galileo until now, whose lives have been embittered and their good name blasted by the mistaken zeal of Bibliolaters?

Praising TH’s engaging speech, Blinderman notes the repetition of the “b” sounds here—such as “in ‘incubus,’ ‘opprobrium,’ ‘embittered,’ ‘blasted,’ and ‘Bibliolaters,’” where the harshness of the diction emphasises TH’s vociferous rectitude. Later reaching a “crescendo in the disdainful ‘old bottles’s of Judaism,’” Blinderman also underscores TH’s apparently earnest desire for intellectual transformation, as well as what may also be considered

36 Ibid.

37 See also Adrian Desmond, *From the Devil’s Disciple to Evolution’s Priest* (London: Penguin, 1998), xviii; qtd. in Rebecca Stott, “Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Science: Huxley, Darwin, Kingsley and the Evolution of the Scientist,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Science* 35 (2004): 199-207, esp. 203-4. Notably, TH was also a social organiser. In the the 1860s, he formed the “X Club”: a group of nine prominent thinkers who met on the first Thursday of every month, enabling “the elite of Victorian science to exchange personal pleasantries.” See Clark, *The Huxleys*, 65. Notably, the X Club also affords another example of the Huxleyan chiasmus.

38 Huxley, “T.H Huxley as a Literary Man,” 54-5.



an example of antisemitism.<sup>39</sup> While TH often seeks to evangelise science through the political reiteration and reinscription of classificatory rules—or else by overbearing his audiences and opponents through the cool application of rationalistic argumentation, he also remains rhetorically dexterous, presenting historical and philosophical knowledge in the refined language of a master orator. As Blinderman confirms, TH's deployment of “rhetorical questions, rhythm, parallelism, and antithesis,” enabled him to persuade his audiences; his voice contributed a great deal to the “potency” of scientific argumentation.<sup>40</sup>

Stemming largely from his intellect, TH's success as a champion of science also derives from his combative interdiction of many of the “rules of gentlemanliness and conduct” that abided in the scientific circles of the mid-nineteenth century.<sup>41</sup> If discriminatory rules excluded women and the poor from the sciences, these rules were also “central to the formation of the idea of the man of science in these decades.”<sup>42</sup> In his controversial disputes with Richard Owen throughout the 1850s and '60s on the subject of what distinguishes the “Man of Logic” from the “Man of Insight,” TH offers ample evidence of his tendency to interdiction.<sup>43</sup> Almost anticipating Huxley's satires of the 1920s, TH makes clear that he eschews the tradition of patronage, and the graceful gestures of deference, that Owen's method of “scientific gentlemanliness” epitomised.

Whether by design or just effect, TH's advocacy would allow for a transition to occur in the closing decades of the nineteenth century; his unique exhibition of a tough and upright masculinity allowed for a more “democratic” scientific class. No longer an elite explorer entitled to his genius by noble birth, the scientist of the future will be less constituted by their status than their sheer ability to explain themselves. Ever aware, like Huxley, of the effect of politics on science, TH “tried to shape the meaning of Darwin's memorial in the cathedral of London's Natural History Museum as a monument to *scientific* character;” it should not be, he felt, a political monument that celebrated the “triumph of Darwinian doctrines.”<sup>44</sup> For Huxley, Darwin rep-

39 Charles Blinderman, “Semantic Aspects of T.H. Huxley's Literary Style,” *The Journal of Communication* 12, no. 3 (1962): 171-8.

40 *Ibid.*, 176-7.

41 White, *Thomas Huxley*, 94.

42 Rebecca Stott, “Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Science: Huxley, Darwin, Kingsley and the evolution of the Scientist,” *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Science* 35 (2004): 199-207, esp. 205.

43 White, *Thomas Huxley*, 94, 57.

44 *Ibid.*, 58, my emphasis.



resented a figure much opposed to Owen's ideas: Darwin possessed, he felt, "a certain intense and almost passionate honesty by which all his thoughts and actions were irradiated."<sup>45</sup> Irrespective of what offence may be caused, to express "passionate honesty," TH felt, was to grasp the *indicium* of science itself.

Advocating for the preeminence of laboratory study over field studies, TH sought to supplant the "traditional allegiances to texts, personalities and social superiors" that affected science's neutrality; he wanted to imbue its praxes with an unmediated and impartial relationship to nature.<sup>46</sup> Combatively steering social convention in the direction of a particular kind of humanist objectivism, TH rebuked the socio-political divisiveness that had been engendered by the conduct of such men as Owen as he sought to install a different relation between men. Combined with his preference for the domestic and laboratorial spheres, TH's domestication of science anticipates what Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick identifies as the "homosocial" relations between men; over time, the process democratised science among men as it also began to invite the "active contributions of women."<sup>47</sup>

What is most crucial in Huxley's epistemological vision of science, however, is his belief that those who classified and organised knowledge should be open to experiment and serendipity. While TH's addresses exhibit a range of embellished literary utterances, his rhetoric does not merely operate to improve the reception of his work. Nor does it seek only to valorise the work of the scientists to whom it refers, as if his own scientific work was somehow without its own merits. After all, TH was a competent, albeit largely

45 Thomas Henry Huxley, "Charles Darwin," *Nature* 25 (27 April, 1882): 597.

46 Stott, "Masculinities in Nineteenth Century Science," 205.

47 White, *Thomas Huxley*, 8n9. The term "homosocial" was coined and defined by Jean Lipman-Blumen in 1976 in the context of her examination of segregation of women in social institutions (of which scientific academies are certainly one). As Lipman-Blumen defined it, homosociality is "the seeking, enjoyment, and/or preference for the company of the same sex. It is distinguished from 'homosexual' in that it does not necessarily involve (although it may under certain circumstances) an explicitly erotic sexual interaction between members of the same sex." See Jean Lipman-Blumen, "Toward a Homosocial Theory of Sex-Roles: An Explanation of Sex Segregation of Social Institutions," *Signs* 1, no. 3 (1976): 15-31, esp. 16. In developing the term, and extending its use to gender, literary, and cultural studies, Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick employs the expression "male homosocial desire" to describe a passage of English culture through the "mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century" constituted by the "emerging pattern of male friendship, mentorship, entitlement, rivalry, and hetero- and homosexuality [that] was in an intimate and shifting relation to class." See Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick, "Between Men," in Julie Rivkin and Michael Ryan, eds., *Literary Theory: An Anthology* (Massachusetts: Blackwell, 1998), 697-712.

undervalued scientist whose work may well have spoken for itself.<sup>48</sup> But TH's motivation for remaining, at least in his own view, a scientist *and* a "man of letters" arose out of the zeal with which he had been persuaded of his own classificatory schemas—as well as those of Darwin, his close friend and colleague. Such was the openness of Huxley's experimental imagination that he often seemed to be open to amplifying and applying almost *any* idea. There should be no fixed means of interrogating questions of natural classification, TH would often argue. Rather, as Blinderman comments, TH subscribed to a view well expressed in Ernst Cassirer's proposition of radical openness: "There is no rigid and pre-established scheme according to which our divisions and subdivisions might for all be made."<sup>49</sup>

In his criticism of the same "mathematical abstractions" that Huxley would himself disparage in *The Doors of Perception*, TH exhibits an awareness that it is almost a kind of madness or *divine theia* of its own: a belief that the scientist courts nature rather than solves it. In 1884, in a response letter to his friend, philosopher Lady Welby, TH wrote that "Most of us are idolators" since we "ascribe divine powers to the abstractions 'Force,' 'Gravity,' and 'Vitality,' which our brains have created."<sup>50</sup> Conscious of the importance of labeling and naming, TH confessed to Welby that

as you get deeper into scientific questions you will find that "Name ist Schall und Rauch" even more emphatically than Faust says it is in Theology.<sup>51</sup>

Just as this forecasts Huxley's own disavowal of institutionalised religion, TH's ludic allusion to theology also anticipates Huxley's invention of a mystical science in his *The Perennial Philosophy*. And if Huxley's philosophy is—much like TH's science—shot through with poetic "smoke and sound," it also shares in TH's affinity for naturalism, privileging the biological above all else. Putting into practice his theory that naming was instinctual and sometimes arbitrary, TH would take it upon himself to revise Linnaeus's classification system; man, for Huxley, was now a primate among three

48 Blinderman, "T.H. Huxley's Literary Style," 172. Also see Edward Clodd, *Thomas Henry Huxley, 1840-1930* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1902), 65-6. Clodd adumbrates the many ways in which Huxley's work has been neglected, and, quoting Chalmers Mitchell, he notes that his work has been "incorporated into the very body of science." See Peter Chalmers Mitchell, *Thomas Henry Huxley: A Sketch of His Life and Work* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1900), 34-5.

49 Blinderman, "T.H. Huxley's Literary Style," 172.

50 *Ibid.*, 173.

51 Thomas Henry Huxley, "Letter to Lady Welby," in Leonard Huxley, *The Life and Letters of Thomas Huxley*, 3 vols. (London: Macmillan and Co., 1900), 2: 67-8. Also see Blinderman, "T.H. Huxley's Literary Style," 173.

groups of mammals. Disavowing Plato “by delving to extensional levels,”<sup>52</sup> His classificatory system exhibited how, as Blinderman thoughtfully notes, TH “functioned as semanticist as well as scientist.” He was, from our modern perspective, clearly cognisant of the semiotic network that underlaid all scientific “communication.”<sup>53</sup>

Reclassifying these classical schemata, TH also practises what Elizabeth Grosz identifies as one of “the most complex and underdiscussed elements of Darwinism.” If this work is partly semiological, she suggests, it also marks “the point where Darwin’s own account uncannily anticipates Derridean *différance*.”<sup>54</sup> As soon as TH turns his mind to Linnaeus’s system, he begins discovering “meaning only in differences, in interstices,” and, far in advance of Derrida’s *différance* and sociologist Bruno Latour’s actor-network theory, similarities between “living bodies” and “whirlpools.” Like actors in a network, the bodies maintain their “individuality... in the constant maintenance of a characteristic form, not in the preservation of material identity.”<sup>55</sup>

And, much like critics have developed a proto-semiological portrait of Darwin—such as one adumbrated by Jonathan Greenberg in his literary study of the evolutionist—TH abandons the search for originary essences as he comes to describe “epiphenomenalism,” and as such anticipates epigenetics.<sup>56</sup> Diverging both from Plato’s originary forms and Descartes’s dualistic (non-biological) model of the mind, TH proposes the mind’s *epiphenomenal* nature. Just as the bell of a clock plays no role in keeping time, he argues, so the mind exercises no will, no real volition. If we do experience a will, TH argues, then it represents no more than a signification of something already having begun—a becoming-conscious of an embodied action that has already, elsewhere, emerged.<sup>57</sup>

52 See Thomas Henry Huxley, *Evidence As To Man’s Place in Nature* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1863), 22; Christopher Ernest Cosans, *Owen’s Ape and Darwin’s Bulldog: Beyond Darwinism and Creationism* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2009), 111-16; Edward Clodd, *Thomas Henry Huxley* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1902), 113.

53 Blinderman, “T.H. Huxley’s Literary Style,” 172; Aldous Huxley, “T.H. Huxley as a Literary Man,” 55.

54 Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 21. I note that Grosz misnames T.H. Huxley “T.E. Huxley,” 98.

55 Thomas Huxley, “Letter to Lady Welby,” in Huxley, *Life and Letters of Thomas Huxley*, 2: 68.

56 Greenberg, “Darwin and Literary Studies,” *Twentieth-Century Literature* 54, no. 4 (2009): 429.

57 There is no evidence to suggest that Huxley, however, coined the term “epiphenomenalism.” As John Greenwood writes,

Epiphenomenalism is historically associated with Thomas Huxley, who promoted a version of the doctrine in his August 24 address to the 1874 meeting of the British

If Grosz is right in asserting that “Darwin seems to produce a quite peculiar, and thoroughly postmodern, account of origin,”<sup>58</sup> then TH shares with Darwin this new scientific sensibility, a new vision in which work is begun to reform normalised conceptions of public and private—and even to apprehend the pluralisation of gender roles. A symptom of the larger epistemological shift promulgated by both these naturalists, Darwin’s work takes the form of a new taxonomical systematisation of nature that identifies not only “natural” observations in discrete identities, but relations between objects within a system. And while TH focuses on the ovum or fertilization of a being in describing its genus, his and Darwin’s studies also both take account, as Greenberg notes, “of flux rather than stability.” They both seek, in other words, to define a being not on “positive terms” but in terms of its “meaningful differences within a system.”<sup>59</sup>

If Huxley and Darwin anticipate post-structural understandings of language, then, they may also be seen as important precursors to what is now described as “speculative materialism,” for often they offer early ripostes to correlationism.<sup>60</sup> In this way, TH should be understood as an *organiser* of

Association for the Advancement of Science [BAAS] in Belfast, entitled “On the Hypotheses That Animals Are Automata, and Its History. [But the] term “epiphenomenal” comes from medicine, where it was originally employed to describe symptoms of a disease that have no causal influence on the development of the disease, without supposing that these symptoms have no physical (or medical) effects.”

Greenwood, “Whistles, Bells and Cogs in Machines: Thomas Huxley and Epiphenomenalism,” *Journal of the History of the Behavioural Sciences* 46, no. 3 (2010): 276-99, 277-8. Also see W. Whately Carington, *Matter, Mind, and Meaning* (London: Methuen and Co, 1949). Carington notes that he believes is “T.H. Huxley” this “blessed word,” 231n2. Cf. William Robinson, who notes that it is unusual that no trace of this word is found in Huxley’s writings. Robinson proposes that this omission was probably because Huxley preferred the term “automata,” and may have uttered “epiphenomenal” or a variant in his lectures: Robinson, “Epiphenomenalism,” *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta, ed., <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/epiphenomenalism/>, accessed 20 July, 2011. Also see Huxley’s original essay, published prior to the 1874 meeting of BAAS: “On the Hypothesis that Animals are Automata, and its History,” *Nature* (September, 1871): 362-6; and Neil Campbell, “What was Huxley’s Epiphenomenalism?” *Biology and Philosophy* 16 (2001): 357-75, esp. 357-8.

58 Grosz, *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely*, 21 and 22; cf. Greenberg, “Darwin and Literary Studies,” 429.

59 As Greenberg argues, “Darwin can be conceived of as a proto-postmodernist.” Greenberg, “Darwin and Literary Studies,” 429-30.

60 See Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How To Follow Scientists and Engineers Through Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 84-86. For an excellent collection of essays by the so-called “continental materialists” or “speculative realists,” see Levi Bryant, et al. eds., *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism* (Melbourne: re-press, 2011). While thinkers such as Quentin Meillassoux critique correlationism as “the idea according to which we only ever have access to the correlation

knowledge, for he recognised more than anything else that the work of any scholar of nature could only ever amount to a work of organisation. This work could then be disseminated in communications between humans, where its systems of information transfer would secure its veracity, and usefulness, as an organising model. Huxley had known this about his grandfather, and had himself emphasised the extent to which even “mathematicians are men of letters—men of algebraic letters, no doubt.” And while some of these letters are more “aesthetically good or bad” than others, they can also, Huxley wrote, be “*litterae humaniores* or inhuman letters.”<sup>61</sup>

But no matter how well organised, the dialectical *frisson* between signifier and signified, science and nature, human and nonhuman, it may never be fixed, frozen, or stabilised. It remains enlivened by the reader who encounter this *frisson* in action: in the words themselves and their correlates in reality. But what is important, Huxley notes—prefiguring Marshall McLuhan’s analysis of the media—is that “some kinds of literature are more widely accessible than others.”<sup>62</sup> To argue that the communication of such popular or “universal” experiences as “love” may be more “accessible” than “observations on, say, deep-sea fish”, TH argues, would be to presuppose that an audience cannot be “moved by their subject.” But then again, it matters less what the subject of discussion is, TH argued, than whether the speaker’s own relation to and treatment of the subject is constructive and edifying:

It has been laid down as a sound rule for rhetorician and poet, that those who desire to stir the minds of others should be themselves moved by their subject; and the maxim has no less force for the man of science who desires to bring before an audience, unskilled in any special department, the leading facts and results of investigations into that department.<sup>63</sup>

between thinking and being, and never to either term considered apart from the other,” it is arguable—in terms of the sensuousness that I have identified that contours TH’s intuition and belief in scientific conduct and masculinity—that TH’s philosophy actually begins to depart from correlationism in placing a post-Kantian emphasis on the Romantic sensuality of language and of thought. See Quentin Meillassoux, *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency* (London: Continuum, 2008), 5.

61 Huxley, “T.H. Huxley as a Man of Letters,” 56.

62 *Ibid.*, 57. On McLuhan’s landmark work in media studies and his description of the “communication sciences” after Descartes, see McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Ca. Massachusetts: MIT University Press, 1994 [1964]), 161.

63 Quoted in Blinderman, “T.H. Huxley’s Literary Style,” 174. Blinderman notes that this quotation is derived “From *The Huxley Papers*, Vol. 221 (of my catalogue), a collection of mostly unpublished letters, lecture notes, essays, in the Haldane Library of The Imperial College of Science and Technology, University of London. Quotations from this collection are made with the permission of the Governors,” 174n1.

Communication and knowledge are thus enmeshed in a semiological chiasm, a coiled, codependent relation in which one cannot advance without the other. And it is in and *as* this configuration, in fact, that science would be introduced to Huxley at the earliest stages of his life.<sup>64</sup>

During Huxley's enculturation, TH's epiphenomenalism functions as a kind of chiasm in its own right: it is a "form of neutral parallelism that holds that there is," as Greenwood observes, "a neurophysiological state or process corresponding to every mental state or process (or every conscious mental state or process)."<sup>65</sup> From out of these presages of post-structuralism then arise Huxley's own scientific instincts. These instincts gestate in him what is an indisputably more Bergsonian than Einsteinian philosophy of nature. And evidence of this appears not only in Huxley's model of the mind as a reducing valve, but in his heterodox—and no less Bergsonian (or Heisenbergian)—understanding of Einsteinian relativity.<sup>66</sup> It is also from out of this philosophical crucible that Huxley's metaphysical view of time will flow, leading him to claim—in a paraphrastic allusion to Eliot's *Little Giddings*—that "Men achieve their Final End in a timeless moment of conscious experience."<sup>67</sup>

As I have suggested in the previous chapter, when Huxley begins to experiment with mescaline, his "rhetorical symptoms" express what is an *ageometrical* ontology. While this pattern of thought had always already been incipient in Huxley's linguistic utterances—and especially in his early poetry—it is while on mescaline that Huxley finally "maps out" this ontology proper. It now becomes, as Doyle notes, "the gem, the fold, and above all the flower," all of which "help" to "make sensory the articulation of [an] *ecodelic* experience."<sup>68</sup> But it is not simply this chiasmatic arrangement of knowledge that is of interest to a consideration of Huxley's "thought processes." This

64 Although I should note that TH Huxley only survived Aldous's birth by "a short year"; he died before Aldous was one year old. The influence was thus through the expectations of Leonard and Julia, rather than from TH directly: see Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 2.

65 Greenwood, "Whistles, Bells and Cogs in Machines: Thomas Huxley and Epiphenomenalism," 278.

66 On Bergson's differences with Einstein, see Jimena Canales, "Einstein, Bergson, and the Experiment that Failed: Intellectual Cooperation at the League of Nations," *Modern Language Notes* 120 (2005): 1168-91; Milič Čapek, "What is Living and What is Dead in the Bergsonian Critique of Relativity," in *The New Aspects of Time*, ed. Robert S. Cohen (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 1991).

67 Quoted in Douglas Wood, *Men Against Time: Nicolas Berdyaev, T. S. Eliot, Aldous Huxley, & C. G. Jung* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1982), 115.

68 Richard Doyle, *Darwin's Pharmacy: Sex, Plants and the Evolution of the Noösphere* (London: University of Washington Press, 2011), 58, emphasis mine.



structure, as I have argued in chapter 4, appears time and again in Huxley's biographical chronology as a chiasmus. Quadrants and triangulations, rather than dyads, will obtain variously between father and mother figures, Freudianism and anti-Freudianism—and later, Eastern and Western religion, all of them made all the more quadrangular because Huxley's works of fiction and non-fiction are themselves interwoven in a chiastic manner. But critics have been loath to equate Huxley's life with his writing, let alone to suggest its importance in the development of his intellect or ontology. In 1963, Harold Watts wrote that

the survey one can make of Huxley's life does not suggest that it will ever be very profitable to use the events and patterns of the writer's life as keys that unlock the man's great mass of writing... [the] most one can predict is that some of the keys would be quite useful; others not at all.<sup>69</sup>

Watts's theory is worth testing, though—if only to identify those keys that might be “useful” among the many that are “not at all.” But what can “useful” mean here? And how is any kind of “unlocking” to be achieved?

While Barthes's postulations about the death of the author, which I have addressed in chapter 2, may seem to vitiate any critical method in which conclusions are to be drawn from studying an author's life, Nicholas Rombes suggests that it may now be time to declare the author's rebirth (“the rebirth of the author”). If to “unlock” an author has been difficult to achieve in previous decades, that is, it may have since become less problematic. As much as we are all authors now, writes Rombes, we are also each of us

[s]tripped of aura, of mystery, of distance... Surveilled, recorded, and marked, we are becoming the function of our components—our decoded genes, the number of hits (hourly, daily, monthly) on our websites, our on-line purchasing histories. It is perhaps ironic that it is in the very forms of authorship that post-humanist critics strove to erase that we find our best chance of theorizing—and resisting our own disappearance.<sup>70</sup>

Inviting all manner of digital-historical scholarship, our post-internet moment means that carefully attending to Huxley's life might have become not simply an operation to which we are better accustomed as increasingly expert surveillance operatives. Nor does it mean simply that we perform our scholarly tasks with less reason to heed Barthes's attempt to erase the author

69 Harold H. Watts, *Aldous Huxley* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969), 17.

70 Nicholas Rombes, “The Rebirth of the Author,” *1000 Days of Theory* (June, 2005, edited by Arthur and Marilouise Kroker), at <http://www.ctheory.net/articles.aspx?id=480>.



as “passé” (although we do that as well).<sup>71</sup> This moment also reenlivens the intimately personal model of literary biography, which involves what is perhaps a strange brew of speculative and forensic examination, one that seeks to do more than is possible with an author’s letters alone.

Attempting to understand or unlock a body of work now requires us to describe what Jean Baudrillard names its “poetic singularity”; we must seek, that is, not simply to develop historical readings, but also metaphysical, mathematical, and diagrammatic accounts of its emergence.<sup>72</sup> And while New Historicists as much as *Rezeptionstheorists* may, as Bernard Knox observes, insist on situating works of literature in their own historical time and place, the timeless particularities of Huxley’s works—not simply because he is a canonic literary figure but also a “public intellectual”—seem to invite us, as Raymond E. Legg Jr. suggests, to examine his life in an even more comprehensive manner than this.<sup>73</sup> Our examination, in other words, needs to be more than historical—and even metahistorical.

## Extrospective Aldous: An Epiphenomenal Man

IN MANY WAYS, HUXLEY’S life and career bear the character of having been predetermined. When historicised, or examined through a prism of historical events and circumstances, Huxley may appear as much an unwilling product of his circumstances as an opportunist who turned his gifts and privileges to his best advantage. As with the lives of Shakespeare’s Hamlet or King Macbeth, Huxley’s life “often seems,” as Legg notes, “driven by the forces of family, ambition, temperament, and the supernatural, all of which were beyond his control.”<sup>74</sup> All this indicates Huxley’s singular and exemplary status as a model for psychobiography, and even as a model for the “epiphenomenalism” that TH implicitly propounded—even if not by that name.

In view of his biological and biographical traumas, it seems that few authors could have felt as biologically predetermined as Huxley. And yet,

71 See Craig Saper, “Artificial Auteurism and the Political Economy of the Allen Smithee Case,” in *Directed by Allen Smithee, Jeremy Braddock and Stephen Hock*, eds. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 33.

72 See Jean Baudrillard, *The Perfect Crime*, tr. Chris Turner (London: Verso, 1996), 103.

73 See Bernard Knox, “Author, Author,” *Philosophy and Literature* 20, no. 1 (1996): 76-88, 81; Raymond E. Legg Jr., “The Son of His Fathers” (Chapter 1) in “The Intellectual Tourist: A Study of Aldous Huxley’s Spirituality,” DA diss., Middle Tennessee State University, 1996, 1-4.

74 Legg, “The Intellectual Tourist,” 1.

as Holmes among many others suggest, it remains difficult to apprehend Huxley's nature.<sup>75</sup> Despite a wealth of letters, including many in which revelations of previously unknown facts have emerged—such as in the range of previously private letters published in Sexton's *Selected Letters* in 2007—Huxley wrote a paucity of personal journal entries, and even fewer personal poems.<sup>76</sup>

As I have already suggested, TH's influence on Huxley is legible in what Huxley wrote encomiastically about his grandfather. Huxley defends TH, for instance, against G.K. Chesterton's claim that TH was "more a literary than a scientific man," asserting the "strange paradox" by which "the older scientists survive mainly as great artists."<sup>77</sup> But if Huxley also accepts that TH might be regarded as a "literary man" in a twentieth-century context, this also indicates Huxley's understanding of the elasticity of these categories—and that TH, among many others, may have been seen as a "man of science" in the nineteenth century.<sup>78</sup> Notwithstanding Huxley's veneration of his grandfather, there is much to indicate Huxley's lesser reverence for his father Leonard. (I will examine their relationship in detail in chapter 6). Huxley's cousin, Laurence Collier, recalls how Huxley as a boy remained "aloof and secretly critical" when he was in Leonard's company. When Leonard "held forth, as he was apt to, on the joys of mountaineering," Huxley would become frustrated. And when Leonard uttered "Per ardua ad astra" ("through adversity to the stars"), Huxley

said nothing, but looked at something else or gazed abstractedly into the distance with a fixed, enigmatic smile, and I began to think that he liked neither Switzerland nor his father.<sup>79</sup>

If TH's different relationship with various men, such as Darwin and Owen, may be explained psychologically—or even in terms of a dynamic of changing homosocial gender relations, as I have suggested—then Huxley's relation to his father may offer even more to such a psychoanalytic reading. It may

75 Holmes point out the scarcity of personal materials kept by Huxley, and the impersonal nature of his poems: "He left no journals as frank as Gide's, few poems so obviously personal as Yeats." Charles Holmes, *Aldous Huxley and The Reality* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1970), 4. Of course, as many critics lament, much of Huxley's personal archive perished in the fire that ravaged their house on 12 May, 1961. See Laura Huxley, *This Timeless Moment*, 69-73; Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood*, 358-9.

76 See James Sexton, *Aldous Huxley: Selected Letters* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2007).

77 Huxley, "T.H. Huxley as a Literary Man," 48-50.

78 *Ibid.*

79 George Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour: A Study of Aldous Huxley* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972), 37; also see Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 10.

highlight, for instance, the role of masculinity and intellectual authoritarianism across three generations of men, and across two centuries.

Charles Holmes characterises Huxley as “anguished,” which is to say burdened by a schism even more violent than that felt by the Romantics:<sup>80</sup>

More than anyone seems to have suspected... [Huxley] projected, addressed, and debated within himself... much of his work shows him plagued by inner conflict, struggling to explore his identity... he was inwardly split for most of his life even more than Keats or Byron or Coleridge.<sup>81</sup>

Perhaps as with all psychological conflicts, Huxley’s “inner conflict” had its origin in a range of idiopathic aetiologies. But many of Huxley’s biographers, including Woodcock, emphasise the role that grief must have played in Huxley’s anguished life:

Three times before he assumed his vocation as a writer [the] realization [of suffering and death] beat upon Aldous Huxley’s mind: when his mother Julia died in 1908; when his eyesight failed him less than three years later; when his favourite brother Trevenen committed suicide in 1914.<sup>82</sup>

But when Huxley begins writing as a young man, it will be—despite or because of these tragedies—in the satirical mode of the cynic; he will become the one who parodies the very nature of the split-personality, even as he himself possesses it.

Apparently familiar with the plight of the schizoid or divided self that Arnold Pick had characterised only as recently as the middle decades of the nineteenth century as *dementia praecox*, Huxley makes light of the affective position of the schizophrenic, lambasting the mental state on which Emile

80 As Adam Sidaway argues, each of these words might serve to “adequately represent the [different] periods” of Huxley’s life. For my own purposes, it suffices to note that Sidaway understands Huxley’s “trauma ridden childhood” to be “constantly threatened by madness.” Sidaway’s argument is here suggestive of the ways in which Huxley is for psychoanalytic—and, to focus on his possible “madness”—even *psychopathological* readings, an exemplary model or candidate, both in his life and fiction. See Adam Sidaway, “Madness, Badness, Sadness: Aldous Huxley and the Shifting Shadow of Psychoanalysis,” MPhil diss., University of Birmingham, 2011, 5, available online at <http://etheses.bham.ac.uk/1639/1/Sidaway11MPhil.pdf>, last accessed 20 September 2013. Sidaway’s thesis title quotes Huxley’s 1956 essay see Aldous Huxley, “Madness, Badness, Sadness.” See *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays*, eds. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton, 6 vols. (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 6:179-187.

81 Holmes, *Aldous Huxley and the Way to Reality*, 4, 8, also qtd. in Legg, “The Intellectual Tourist,” 1.

82 Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 37.

Kraepelin and Eugene Bleuler had already elaborated during the late-1800s.<sup>83</sup> Portraying the paradox of splitness (schizotypy) as a nosological category in its own right, Huxley

satirizes his characters not only for being divided from one another, but for being split within themselves. His painters, poets and scientists... comprise so many dichotomies of mind against the body.<sup>84</sup>

These satirical “split-men” on their “quests for wholeness” range from Richard Greenow in “The Farcical History of Richard Greenow,” to Young Calamy in *Those Barren Leaves*, to Hugh Ledwidge in *Eyeless in Gaza*. Each of these split-men serve to reveal the difficulty, as Meckier notes, of Huxley’s maladjustment to a world increasingly confounded by new empirical truths—ones that could only ever be “perfectly provisional and temporary” (*TBL*, 34-5).<sup>85</sup> The characters’s presences in these texts also underscore the restrictiveness of the “simple faith in nineteenth-century materialism” that had led to the problem of certainty and uncertainty—which is to say to this psychic schism—in the first place. What had been a rift between Cartesians and epiphenomenalists in TH’s day is now transmogrified into an agon between productivity and pathology. No longer a philosophical debate, Descartes’s dualism now divides again; if it were once two, it now is four and, so reduplicated, presents not just a differently structured debate, but a newly complex structural problem—a chiasm—in the mind itself.

As Huxley often suggests, causation and origin can themselves be myths: for every cold, materialist, or univocal explanation of the world that he faced, Huxley had prepared (or extemporaneously would prepare) a relatively more complex and multifaceted theory. Often he would articulate what may be described as his motto—a pithy phrase that expressed his view that nature *accumulated* rather than *reduced* in its causative models: “not only, but also.”<sup>86</sup> And when Huxley’s 1920s satire ridicules men who, at the thought

83 See Eugen Bleuler, “Die Prognose der Dementia Praecox—Schizophreniegruppe,” *Allgemeine Zeitschrift für Psychiatrie* 65 (1908): 436–64. Interestingly, Thomas Huxley had himself been interested in the hereditary aspects of nervous and mental diseases, and in 1860, a lecture was given in his name on the subject; see W. Mott, “(The Huxley Lecture) On Hereditary Aspects of Nervous and Mental Diseases,” *The British Medical Journal* (October 8, 1910): 1013-20. Mott quotes TH at the beginning of his review: 1013.

84 Jerome Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: Satire and Structure* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1971), 26.

85 *Ibid.*, 26-7.

86 In a recorded luncheon with Aldous Huxley of 31 March 1961 in Toronto, Huxley argued that “it is most unfortunate [that] human beings always have this tendency to say ‘either/or,’ ‘either/or,’ well, why [not] ‘not only, but also?’” See Sexton, ed., “Intro-

of chaos, fall into panic, Huxley also begins to mock, at least privately—in his letters—those who engaged in complex introspection, and who thereby fruitlessly sought the truth of their own subjectivity.<sup>87</sup>

In 1929, at thirty-five years of age, Huxley would write a letter to his long-time American correspondent, Mrs Flora Strousse—a woman who wrote to Huxley under the pseudonym “Floyd Starkey.” In his letter, Huxley rails against what he sees as a tendency toward self-introspection. Confessing that he is disinclined to have ideas about himself, Huxley could scarcely make his principled sense of extrospection clearer:

I have almost no ideas about myself and don't like having them—avoid having them—on principle even—and only improvise them, when somebody like you asks to know them. For “know thyself” was probably one of the stupidest pieces of advice ever given—that is to say, if it meant turning the self inside out by introspection. If one spent one's time knowing oneself in that way, one wouldn't have any self to know—for the self only exists in circumstances outside itself and introspection which distracts one from the outside world is a kind of suicide.<sup>88</sup>

Huxley's denouncement of introspection as a “kind of suicide” seems all the more freighted with gravity and trauma when read as the residue of his brother Trevenen's suicide—a tragedy that had taken place some fifteen years earlier. Typical of Huxley's enduring belief in the “wisdom of the body,” his remarks also betray an aversion to paranoiac encounters with the self; they anticipate his later work on the “negatively transfigured” vi-

duction to the Toronto Luncheon Colloquy 1961,” 193. This is comparable with what Huxley writes in “Meditation on the Moon”: “‘Nothing but’ is mean as well as stupid [... ] Enough of ‘Nothing but.’ It is time to say again, with primitive common sense (but for better reasons, ‘not only, but also.’” *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays III: 1930-35*, eds. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), 110. Furthermore, as Bedford notes in the first chapter of her biography: Aldous was “Different; at the same time a young child. “Not only, but also,” as the later Aldous would have said.” Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 3.

87 As Meckier argues, Huxley knew that

In a disintegrated society, the artists, who should see life as steadily and whole, are, Huxley complains, almost incurably split inasmuch as each is either Houyhnhnm or Yahoo, all intellect or all genitals.

Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 26. Of course, while this position appears syntonic with Freudianism, it is, in Meckier's analysis, and evidently throughout Huxley's fiction, a different kind of reduction.

88 Huxley to Flora Strausse, 7 January 1929 (Letter 284) in Smith, *Letters*, 306. For a similar sentiment expressed elsewhere see “The Education of an Amphibian,” 21. Here Huxley discusses Descartes's affirmation *Cogito ergo sum* [I think therefore I am], replacing it with *Cogitor ergo sum* [I am being thought, therefore I am].

sionary experience (*HAH*, 48-9), and they indicate his preference to study the construction of meaning in the “outside world” rather than in terms of the inner world of the mind. As an “intellectual with a mistrust of the mind and language,” Huxley studied the fact *that* one exists, rather than the question of *what* or *how* one exists.

This is a metaphysical preference confirmed by Huxley’s earlier remarks in his letter:<sup>89</sup>

Jehovah’s attitude towards psycho-analysis has always seemed to me entirely satisfying. “I am that I am”—what could be truer? What more profoundly wise?<sup>90</sup>

Huxley would later articulate a similar conception of reality while on mesacaine, describing the “is-ness,” the “Istigkeit, the Allness and Infinity,”<sup>91</sup> and the “archetypal Suchness” of the “flowers or chair or flannels ‘out there’” in the world (*DOP*, 18). Here Huxley would conceive of himself as but one actant within a network of affiliated objects. Each of those other objects, he would think, is external to him, just as he is merely a perceiver who had opened perception’s doors. But as much as Huxley sought to avoid introspection while in his thirties, a decade or so later he would also marvel at the “set of symbols” that constituted his “inscape,” remarking that this vista possessed

89 Meckier’s full description of Huxley’s character is as incisive as instructive, although it is so wide-ranging that only parts of it will be relevant in this thesis. As Meckier writes,

An intellectual with a mistrust of mind and language, an artist who prefers unpopular truth to artistic effect and whose search in art for standards to live by is accompanied by a mistrust of art, a life-worshipper who feels the physical will always let you down, Huxley is an alleged mystic who is always clear and rational, and a knowledgeable scientist who has written century’s severest critiques of science. He supports individuality but opposes egotistic individualism and eccentricity; he advocates centricity but is careful to distinguish this from regimentation.

Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 7; also see Janet Goodrich, “Bringing Order Out of Chaos: Huxley’s *Time Must Have a Stop* and Vedanta,” in Bloom, ed., *Aldous Huxley*, 79-87, esp. 86.

90 Huxley to Flora Strausse, 7 January 1929 (Letter 284) in Smith, *Letters*, 306.

91 Huxley’s uses terms “Istigkeit,” “Suchness,” and other forms of “verbal recklessness,” as Robert Baker names them, as they constituted for him “a form of “linguistic purification” that he “associated with Rimbaud and Mallarmé.” As Baker additionally notes, Huxley

refused to define more narrowly what might constitute such an avant-garde deployment of language, but he linked it to an emphasis on the unique particular and the ramifying images of a highly metaphoric style, and to an idiom of shifting perceptive.

*Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays: Volume VI: 1956-63*, eds. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2001), xvii.

the artificial or virtual attributes of a play-toy: the “suffocating interior of a dime-store ship” (*DOP*, 18, 26).<sup>92</sup>

These were the kinds of symbols that Huxley had so vociferously denounced in his “Hocus Pocus” essay on Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams*, which he had written some twenty years earlier. But even as Huxley now gazes upon the very symbols whose significance he had previously spurned, he remained unimpressed. Little more than epiphenomena, Huxley’s visions serve only as another confirmation of his long-held belief in biological determinism.<sup>93</sup>

92 As the ship now becomes a psychotrope for Huxley’s displeasure, having witnessed those interior images produced by his mind, it also becomes a figure for madness in Foucault’s *History of Madness*. But what is interesting about this is the way in which the so-called ship of fools, a mythical trope or psychotrope for madness, had at least in Foucault’s work become the subject of some controversy. HCE Midelfort makes the crucial point that the image of the “stultifera navis,” or the historical “Ship of Fools” (from which name Foucault takes the title of his opening chapter in *Histoire de la folie*) represents little more than a fanciful rhapsody—a product of Foucault’s “symbol-searching.” There is, Midelfort argues, no evidence that such a ship existed. Nor is there, as Colin Gordon adds, evidence for the practice of “riverborne deportation”: the medieval treatment of the insane. But numerous mistakes appear Midelfort’s reading, and, by and large, in both Huxley’s and Foucault’s divergent appeals to this psychotrope the apocryphal ship becomes an ideal symbol for madness: denoting isolation, the impossibility of escape, and a sense of physical envelopment or “suffocation.” What makes Huxley’s ship even more interesting—and what tethers it to Philip K. Dick’s psychotropic imaginary, is its scale and its “cheapness.” One experiences mescaline

as though one were below decks in a ship... A five-and-ten-cent ship... [whose] gimcrack mobiles of tin and plastic were [his] personal contributions to the universe” (*DOP*, 26).

Organised into colour blocks, this is a visual mode echoed in Dick’s novels *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* and *A Scanner Darkly*, both of which I address in chapter 8. Also see “Madness and Civilization in Early Modern Europe: A Reappraisal of Michel Foucault,” in *After the Reformation: Essays in Honour of J.H. Hexter*, ed. B.C. Malament (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980), 247–65; Colin Gordon, “*Histoire de la folie*: An Unknown Book by Michel Foucault,” in Arthur Still and Irving Velody (eds.), *Rewriting the History of Madness: Studies in Foucault’s Histoire de la folie* (London: Routledge, 1992), 32. John Rittmeister compares the hallucinations of lone travellers at sea to Descartes’s hallucinations: John Rittmeister, “Die Mystische Krise des Jungen Descartes,” *Zeitschrift für Psychosomatische Medizin* 15 (1969): 204–44, qtd. in Laurence Rickels, “Politics and Psychosis,” *The Germanic Review* 83, no. 1 (2008): 25–41.

93 Yet Huxley does suggest the potential for a positive interior symbolic of the self (an “inscape”):

Mescaline had endowed me temporarily with the power to see things with my eyes shut vision; but it could not, or at least on this occasion did not, reveal an inscape remotely comparable to my flowers or chair or flannels “out there” (*DOP*, 26).

While Huxley’s account records no positive account of these interiorised mental images, he leaves the “door” open, as it were, for such a positive experience to arise. His reluctance to examine to study his interiorised mental images while on mescaline, or



When Huxley expresses his resistance to paranoid introspection in general, he anticipates what Paul Ricoeur would later call the “hermeneutic of suspicion.” Ricoeur named it such in a book on Freud published nearly two decades after Huxley’s *The Doors of Perception*. As with Ricoeur’s criticism of the suspiciousness espoused by Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx, Huxley senses Freud’s desire to create or invent a “superb complex” out of a range of “assumptions.” But for Huxley, Freud relies less on evidence—for “no proofs” are “adduced” (*OCHP*, 319)—than on a speculative suspicion and scepticism. Putatively bringing into relief the invisible “culprit” of psychological disease, Freud professes both to expose the “truth” about, and provide a “cure” for the “evil wishes pullulating in the den of the Unconscious,” as well as to haul the “underworld of the mind” into “the light” (*OCHP*, 318-19).

For Ricoeur, the hermeneutical method that we see at work in Freud’s psychoanalytic writing belongs to a “school of suspicion.” Regarding the “whole of consciousness primarily as ‘false’ consciousness,” this school develops their own formations of consciousness to stand in place of the originary lacuna that reflects only a dissimulated falsehood.<sup>94</sup> But where the suspicious hermeneutic, as well as all other “philosophical investigations cut across one another,” becoming harmonised, is in the “area” of language.<sup>95</sup> For Ricoeur as for Huxley, then, language lies at the core of scientific knowledge, for neither the *production* of a science, nor its *expression* in language, more important than the other:

True, facts and theories can be communicated in terms that give the reader no aesthetic satisfaction. So can the passions, But neither passion, nor facts and theories can be communicated rapidly and persuasively in such terms... We have a certain difficulty in taking in anything that is not intrinsically elegant; a certain eagerness to accept anything that moves us aesthetically.<sup>96</sup>

to entertain the notion that positive mental images might be seen by others, perhaps reflects Huxley’s own disposition (what Leary would call one’s “set”) at the time of his mescaline session.

94 See Paul Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, tr. Denis Savage (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), 32-3; Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, “Paranoid Reading and Reparative Reading; or, You’re So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Introduction Is about You,” in *Novel Gazing: Queer Readings in Fiction*, ed. Eve Kosovsky Sedgwick (London: Duke University Press, 1997), 5. Also see Brian Leiter, “The Hermeneutics of Suspicion: Recovering Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud,” in Leiter, ed. *The Future for Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 74-105.

95 Ricoeur, *Freud and Philosophy: An Essay on Interpretation*, 3.

96 Huxley, “T.H. Huxley as a Literary Man,” 54.

Ultimately, Huxley feels that if any science is inelegant—and if it cannot be expressed in a way that is aesthetically moving—then it is ineffective.

Remaining averse to the excesses of paranoid calculation, such as those engendered by such suspicious acts as introspection, Huxley valorises the power of “suggestion” and intuition. For Huxley, hypnotism is a corollary to the excessive calculation of introspection. It induces relief in the absence of systematic analysis. Any “cure” for neurasthenia, Huxley writes,

would probably have been effected much more expeditiously if straightforward suggestion and hypnotism had been employed from the first. Nor, if any other methods had been employed, would the patient have gone away with his mind full of the fantastic and, for anyone with a tendency to neurasthenia, dangerous and disgusting mythology of the psychoanalytic theory (*OCHP*, 320).

While Freud’s “dangerous and disgusting mythology” is mocked throughout *Brave New World*, the novel also offers an epistemological critique of that underlying suspiciousness that, as Ricoeur suggests, drives Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche to invent new phrases for and constructions of the mind.<sup>97</sup> And despite Huxley’s partial blindness as a child, he himself never seems to have held any suspicion about the body’s strength or potential. Rather, he had always maintained, as Kimberly Hewitt describes, “a firm faith in the wisdom of the body, which many scholars have overlooked...”<sup>98</sup>

At one point of *Brave New World*, Bernard Marx discusses with his colleague Helmholtz Watson whether it might be possible to discover “some sort of extra power” in words that may transcend the manipulative “hypnopædic” writing that Watson teaches at the College of Emotional Engineering. This is the “piercingly” phrased discourse that—while it penetrates the mind just as “X-rays” penetrate the body—ultimately amounts only to a lot of “something about nothing” (*BNW*, 60). Confounded by the meaninglessness of his hypnopædic prose, Watson ponders the “queer feeling” he now has that his words might be put to a better use than their present one:

I’ve got something important to say and the power to say it—only I don’t know what it is, and I can’t make any use of the power. If there was some different way

97 For a detailed analysis of some of these satirical elements, see Meckier, “Our Ford, Our Freud and the Behaviorist Conspiracy of Brave New World,” *Tahlia* 1 (1978): 35-9; Buchanan, “Oedipus in Dystopia,” 103-4; Peter Firchow, *The End of Utopia: A Study of Huxley’s Brave New World* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1984), 55.

98 Kimberly Allyn Hewitt, “Psychedelics and Psychosis: LSD and Changing Ideas of Mental Illness, 1943-1966,” PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2002, 100.

of writing. Or else something else to write about.” He was silent; then, “You see,” he went on at last, “I’m pretty good at inventing phrases, you know, the sort of words that suddenly make you jump, almost as though you’d sat on a pin, they seem so new and exciting even though they’re about something hypnopædically obvious. But that doesn’t seem enough. It’s not enough for the phrases to be good; what you make with them ought to be good too” (*BNW*, 59-60).

That these inchoate ideas are ineffable, unavailable to consciousness yet somehow also perceptible, generates in Watson his uncanny and “queer feeling.” But it is what this ponderousness engenders in Huxley’s narrative that is even more curious. Interrupting Watson’s contemplation, Marx announces that “there’s somebody at the door.” But when the doubtful Watson rises to check, he is unsurprised to discover that “of course” nobody is there. Returning to his meditation on language, Marx then begins to explain his suspiciousness in an “uprush of self-pity,” suggesting that the source of his paranoia is in fact Watson’s speculations on hypnopædia: “When people are suspicious with you, you start being suspicious with them” (*BNW*, 60).

Signifying how rapidly and perniciously such contagions of paranoia can progress, Marx’s explanation—a rhetorical chiasmus of its own—communicates the extent to which he is just as helpless as he is defiant. But if Watson’s self-questioning should generate such feelings of suspicion in Marx—a man who Watson feels has “things on his nerves,” and about whom he feels “ashamed”—then perhaps, Watson thinks, his friend ought to feel more secure in his own thoughts. If only he “would show a little more pride”—Watson notes to himself—then he might feel less paranoid (*BNW*, 59). But Marx’s apparently hallucinated mishearing of “somebody at the door” is a delusion that cannot be controlled. A form of neurasthenia, it is specifically triggered by the contagion of suspicion that Watson himself begins. As innocuous as this introspection appears, it is enough to induce in Marx a nervous mental destabilisation. Forming an implicit allegory for the dangers of introspection, identified elsewhere by Huxley, the scene is among a range of episodes in *Brave New World* that express Huxley’s objection to the “hermeneutic of suspicion,” a psychopathological dysfunction that Ricoeur attributes to Freud.

As this episode also suggests, however, it is only with the imprimatur of an authorised heuristic—be it Freud’s psychoanalysis, Marx’s dialectical materialism, or what Henry Staten calls Nietzsche’s “psychodialectic”—that one should initiate a self-analytic.<sup>99</sup> That Watson instigates such an introspective process is, for Bernard Marx, a problem. But the fact that Watson

99 See Henry Staten, *Nietzsche’s Voice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), 6-7.

does so on his own terms, against hypnopædia, amounts to something far worse: a kind of apostasy.<sup>100</sup> But Watson's desire to create a new language derives not simply from his suspicion that the hypnopædist's words inadequately express the mind's tropes; the problem is, rather, that this language is also clearly "obvious," uttered for reasons that are essentially not "good" (*BNW*, 59). Like the language of psychoanalysis, Watson's hypnopædic utterances convert every analytical thought into a "suspicious" idea.

Knowing this, Watson seeks a materialist construction of reality; but he knows neither where to begin, nor why, nor how his native language is inadequate. While there is for Watson no imaginable alternative to the malevolence he vaguely imputes to the hypnopædic voice, then, he is yet also ashamed of Marx's paranoia, which functions as an expression of Watson's transferred guilt. Aroused by a fear of being surveilled or overheard, what Marx feels is a reflection of Watson's heterodox impulse to disavow the language of the state, and to defy the sovereign himself.

Arising because Marx shows too little "pride" in himself, Watson's shame functions as an inversion of Huxley's dismissal of the suspicious analysis of the mind. It is arguable that at the root of Huxley's aversion to paranoiac meditation lies his dismissal of his father: that is, it is a syndrome that fundamentally reacts to his father's lack of pride. To show little faith in the potential of the "psycho-physical" organism is, for Huxley, as fatal as excessive introspection itself. It is a pathology as anathematic to an artist as it is to any other individual. Huxley elaborates this idea in his letter to Strousse:

An artist is bound in any case to detach himself from actual life in favour of the fictitious existence of his creations—is bound to, unless he happens to possess, which I don't, the exuberant vitality and power which suffices for two simultaneous lives: he is therefore the last person who can afford to go about cultivating ideas of himself.<sup>101</sup>

Having less than enough power to live out "two simultaneous lives," Huxley yearns for a unifying synthesis of the "actual" and the "fictional" in what must always remain an ironically double-sided or chiasmic structuration. This is a synthesis whose misbegotten origin as the cultivation of a suturing

100 I describe this performance as a kind of apostasy in view of Huxley's subtle suggestion that Freudianism functions as a religion for many of its followers. Testament to this is Huxley's oft-noted custom of satirically making the sign of the cross at the mention of Freud's name. Huxley was seen to do this while at conferences, and when in casual or formal conversation. See Buchanan, "Oedipus in Dystopia," 118n3.

101 Huxley to Flora Strausse, in Smith, *Letters*, 306.

of fiction and actuality is ineradicable. For Huxley, it will always be possible to trace the artist's originary dehiscences—to detect the breaks and metanoias whose first ruptures now echo and ramify in each of their “fictional” expressions—since they reverberate as so many strategies to displace or conceal their sources.

The figure of the chiasmus thus appears in Huxley's thought again, although in this case Huxley seeks to disconfirm it. Claiming that he, as an artist, cannot live at once in the fictitious and the actual planes, Huxley etiolates his own subjectivity, describing himself as detached, and shorn of vitality. But if Huxley devalues actuality only to elevate the fictional, it is not because through fiction he might thereby escape reality. It is because the artist, a noble agent who feels such shame, must transcode and remorphologise actuality, refabricating it in a highly ritualised manner. A mode of self-effacement—and even a ritual suicide or *seppuku*—the artist's process involves repudiating the presumption that they, as an artist or author, feel an “egotistic assumption” about themselves.

For Huxley, this involves disconfirming whatever notion a reader may have that he thinks himself the “triumphant product of biological evolution.”<sup>102</sup> The creator of a form of consumable decoration derived from his very own “entrails,” Huxley produces what Meckier describes as an “anti-physical satire.” No more or less than this physical offering should be expected, Huxley writes, of an artist:

And anyhow when one's profession is to commit hara-kari every publishing season and wreath one's entrails in elegant festoons—*le style c'est l'homme*—all over the bookstalls... well, really in those circumstances having ideas about oneself in letters or conversation becomes, it seems to me, rather a work of supererogation.<sup>103</sup>

For Huxley, no artist, and especially no *epistelophobic* artist, should be expected to have “ideas about” him- or herself.<sup>104</sup> The artist's primary responsibility, rather, it to maintain an objective distance from their own thoughts so that each event they encounter may be seen “with a multiplicity of eyes and from different viewpoints.”<sup>105</sup> As an elaboration on TH's epiphenomenalistic

102 Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 39.

103 Smith, *Letters*, no. 284, 306.

104 Ibid. Compare “epistelophobia” with my brief discussion of Foucault's identification of “logophobia,” and the way in which I argue that the latter is emblematised in Lady Ottoline Morrell's reaction to Huxley's *Crome Yellow* in the following chapter.

105 Meckier, *Aldous Huxley: From Poet to Mystic*, 45; cf. Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 155.

view of the mind, Huxley's self-detachment echoes his grandfather's positivist dispassion ("passionate honesty"). This resistance to close reflection on the mind is also an adaption of TH's epiphenomenalism for Huxley's (and his fiction's) apparently different purposes. To overcome the self-circularity of narcissism, Huxley shifts focus from the self in order to redirect it to *creation*—towards, that is, a "free and wild creation" of literary concepts.

Fashioning his artistic materials less from the mind than from "actuality," Huxley generates a carnivalesque and dyspeptic "marionette theatre" out of all that orbits him. But in this act the "artist" also commits a kind of ritualised suicide. Seeking less to bury himself beneath his fiction than, as Sean Latham suggests, to exact a kind of revenge on the modern world, Huxley becomes "caught between the demands of art and the demands of profit."<sup>106</sup> A lamentation on the "commercialization of aesthetics," *Those Barren Leaves* (1925) thus presents, as Latham observes, a scathing "critique of the cultural marketplace," offering a piquant illustration of mass culture's effects on the literary spirit. In the novel, the move away from an artistic to a commercial literary culture is emblematised by the success of Mary Thriplow, the best-selling novelist; but the obverse is represented by the contrapuntal failure of Francis Chelifer, a melancholic poet who is now consigned, in relative poverty, to editing *The Rabbit Fancier Gazette*.<sup>107</sup>

But like *Crome Yellow*, *Those Barren Leaves* also presents a thinly-veiled critique of Huxley's own relationship to Lady Ottoline Morrell. Represented in the figure of Mrs Aldwinkle, Huxley's novel lampoons Morrell as the self-deluded "giver of literary parties, and agapes of lions" (*TBL*, 85). And yet, it is Adwinkle who is even more consumed by the preservation of art than Chelifer, the latter of whom represents Huxley. Adwinkle cannot reconcile herself to the belief that an increasingly cynical Chelifer is not an "art-for-arter," and that he could, when Chelifer mocks his own status as an artist, so recklessly "blaspheme like that against [his] own talent" (*TBL*, 86).

Implicit in Huxley's allusion to his own "hara-kari" in his letter to Strausse is Huxley's tendency to self-effacement. This attitude functions not simply as a disavowal of his own "talents," however, but as a refutation of the sovereign master or patron whose reputation demands that he produce a pure, automatised work, one that remains free of any reference to the author's actuality, whether commercial or social. As Latham affirms, "pa-

106 Sean Latham, "The Coterie as Commodity: Huxley, Lawrence, Rhys, and the Business of Revenge," in *The Art of Scandal: Modernism, Libel Law, and the Roman à Clef* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 140.

107 *Ibid.*, 138-9.

tronage offers no refuge from the mass market”—neither for Huxley or for Chelifer. Rather, it “implicates Huxley, his reader, and his critics,” at least as much as his characters, “in a tangled web of capital exchanges” in what is another rearticulation of the scrivener’s disempowerment.<sup>108</sup>

## Thinking the Interstitial Self

THE IDEA OF OCCUPYING two worlds, the fictional and the actual, would return to Huxley in 1942. In a letter to Sybille Bedford and in a phrase borrowed from Matthew Arnold, Huxley expresses his mood after having now spent five years in California:<sup>109</sup>

I was born wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born, and have made, in a curious way, the worst of both. For each requires that one should be whole-heartedly there, at the moment—with *Micawber*, as he is and for his own sake, while he is drinking his punch: with the Clear Light of the Void as it is and for its own sake, in an analogous way. Whereas I have always tended to be somewhere else, in a world of analysis, unfavourable equally to *Micawberish* living, Tolstoyan art and contemplative spirituality. The title of my first book of stories, *Limbo*, was, I now see, oddly prophetic!<sup>110</sup>

Whether one interprets this configuration of “worlds” as a distinction between the “fictional” and the “actual” or, as in Descartes’s terms, a dichotomy between mind and body, subject and organism, it remains crucial that Huxley characterises himself as “always” having felt in between two states, unanchored and all at sea. Few lines express so clearly Huxley’s perception that he had been placed at the centre of a chiasmus as those above; it is clear that he stood in limbo, between two worlds or points. For clarity’s sake, the particular coordinates of Huxley’s description may be mapped in a diagram, as in figure 5.2, below.<sup>111</sup>

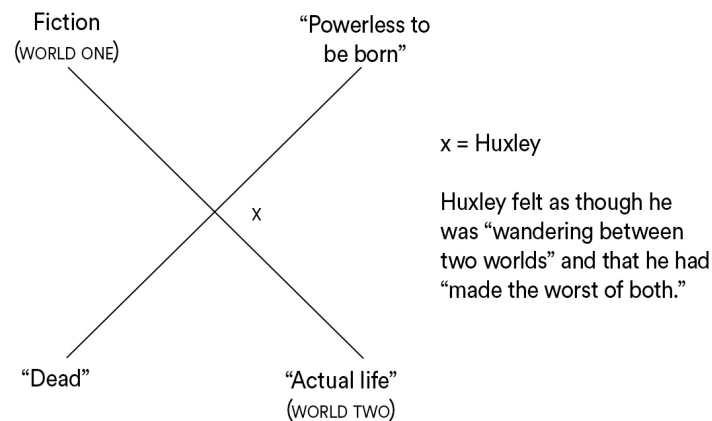
108 *Ibid.*, 140.

109 As Smith points out, “Wandering between two worlds, one dead, the other powerless to be born” is here quoted. from Matthew Arnold’s “Stanzas from the Grand Charteuse.” See Matthew Arnold, *The Poems of Matthew Arnold*, ed. Kenneth Allot (London: Barnes and Noble, 1965), 285–94; Smith, *Letters*, 476n460.

110 Huxley to Sybille Bedford, 10 February, 1942 (Letter 460), in Smith, *Letters*, 476.

111 In relation to the Cartesian subject and psychoanalysis, Justin Clemens offers a thoughtful reading of Lacan and Cartesianism that is relevant here. Lacan finds himself, in both Clemens’s and Gilbert Chaitlin’s view, countenancing transference (*qua* “love” in Clemens’s reading) as an insurmountable paradox for psychoanalysis. For Lacan, Clemens notes, “the paradox of love is central to whatever he could be said to offer to [the philosophical tradition of] ontology.” See Justin Clemens, *Psychoanalysis is an Antiphilosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 56–57. Also see





**Figure 5.2** A diagrammatic representation (a chiasmus) of Huxley's self-conceptualisation.

Marked as “x,” Huxley may be understood not simply to express his feelings of alienation from the fictional world (“WORLD ONE”), or his displacement from the actual world (“WORLD TWO”), between which he was “born wandering.” Rather, Huxley also characterises his interstitiality as a product of his having been stuck in a “world of analysis” that was “somewhere else.”<sup>112</sup> Trapped in this purgatory, Huxley is unable to become “whole-heartedly there” in the world.<sup>113</sup> And while he offers no further clarification in this letter about what he imagines are the natures of these words, that Huxley associated the “fictional world” with a land of the “dead” is at least partially confirmed with his references to the artist’s “hara-kari” in his letter to Strousse. It is also apparent, however, that this “fictional world” does not coextend with “actual life,” since, remaining “powerless to be born,” it can never be brought into the universe of material reality. And yet “actual life” is also connected with death: Huxley’s life is itself “powerless to be born:” it merely wanders (it is “born wandering”) into a world that remains not here, but “somewhere else.”

In *Island*, Huxley begins to advance his own method of placating what had been his lifelong drive to resolve this feeling of major conflict, a split-sub-

G.D. Chaitin, *Rhetoric and Culture in Lacan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 151; cf. Samo Tomšič, “The Invention of New Love in Psychoanalysis,” *Filozofski Vestnik* 31, no. 2 (2010): 189-204. On Huxley being “in love” with Mary Hutchinson, see Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 5, 6, 120-21.

<sup>112</sup> Huxley to Sybille Bedford, in Smith, *Letters*, 476.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

jectivity that had resonated in all his writing. Dr. Andrew MacPhail will seek to overcome the “enormous folly of trying to make a marriage between hell and heaven,” (*ISLAND*, 156) in his effort to establish what Gorman Beauchamp calls a “psychedelic utopia.”<sup>114</sup> At one point, the Scottish Dr MacPhail, a trained physician, joins in with the spiritualist Raja (the Palanese King), to make the best of “all worlds”:

If the king and the doctor were now teaching one another to make the best of both worlds—the Oriental and the European, the ancient and the modern—it was in order to help the whole nation to do the same. To make the best of both worlds—what am I saying? To make the best of all the worlds—the worlds already realized within the various cultures and, beyond them, the worlds of still unrealized potentialities. It was an enormous ambition, an ambition totally impossible of fulfillment; but at least it had the merit of spurring them on, of making them rush in where angels feared to tread— with results that sometimes proved, to everybody’s astonishment, that they had not been quite such fools as they looked. They never succeeded, of course, in making the best of all the worlds; but by dint of boldly trying they made the best of many more worlds than any merely prudent or sensible person would have dreamed of being able to reconcile and combine (*ISLAND*, 129).

Later defending his ambition to convoke these worlds, MacPhail will claim that “there was nothing in that best-of-both-worlds program to offend the susceptibilities of even the touchiest and most ardent of religious patriots” (*ISLAND*, 221). Later still, Dr. Robert MacPhail—Andrew MacPhail’s grandson and a surrogate for Huxley himself—will instruct those who take the moksha-medicine to watch as “Shiva-Nataraja dances the dance of endless becoming and passing away” (*ISLAND*, 167). Dancing “in all the worlds at once,” Shiva-Nataraja attains a state of “infinite and eternal bliss” where “play is an end in itself, everlastingly purposeless” (*ISLAND*, 167-68).

If Huxley envisions a way to overcome the burdensome feeling that he is equally as split as the “split-men” of his satires, then one way of repairing this dehiscence is through what he will call “A Psychophysical Education” (1962). In his essay of that name, Huxley emphasises—as he had also emphasised the “realization of a state of ‘no-mind’” (*TPP*, 86)—the importance of mental and physical “non-attachment.”<sup>115</sup> This non-attachment may be

114 See Gorman Beauchamp, “Island: Aldous Huxley’s Psychedelic Utopia,” *Utopian Studies* 1, no. 1 (1990): 59-72.

115 Aldous Huxley, “A Psychophysical Education,” in *More Talk of Alexander*, ed. Wilfred Barlow (London: Gollancz, 1978), 1. I note that Barlow confirms that Huxley’s essay (chapter 5) is reprinted from the *Alexander Journal*, of which he is the editor. However,

distinguished from the “detachment” that Huxley had, earlier in his life, propounded through his satires, such as through Beavis’s aloofness in *Eyeless in Gaza*.<sup>116</sup> Non-attachment requires more than an attitude of indifference: bodily “modification” must be employed too; and this will ameliorate the problems of a “maladjusted” physique, restoring it to its potential as “the instrument used to establish contact with the outside world.”<sup>117</sup>

It was in the late 1930s, and perhaps by the time that Huxley had finished writing *Ends and Means* (1937), that he, as Woodcock notes, began to feel that his earlier philosophy of cynical or satirical detachment was insufficient. “Words,” Huxley would insist in *Literature and Science*, are only ever so powerful, limited in number and configurable in only so many “conventionally fixed ways” (*LAS*, 99). But even before 1963’s *Literature and Science*, in *The Perennial Philosophy* (1945), Huxley would criticise what he, in Woodcock’s view, regards

as a cardinal omission on his great-grandfather’s part; the ancestral Thomas, in laying a typically Arnoldian stress on the need for all-round moral development, has neglected what for the adherent of the Perennial Philosophy must be the essential consideration—that any form of self-will prevents “recollect- edness and non-attachment” and so closes the heart to “the enlightening and liberating knowledge of Reality.”<sup>118</sup>

A repudiation of the will, Huxley’s transition from “detachment” to “non-attachment” also describes his conversion from Western metaphysics to Eastern philosophy or the *philosophia perennis*—a transformation that takes place about five years before he begins experimenting with mescaline. After his mescaline experiences, Huxley seems to allow for the usefulness of introspection in a way that he had not done earlier.<sup>119</sup>

Huxley’s essay does not appear in the contents pages listed in the Alexander Journal’s online database (see <http://www.mouritz.co.uk/131alexanderjournal.php>). It thus remains unclear on which year this essay was written or first published. However, the essay is likely to have been written in the immediate years before Huxley’s 1963 death—probably around 1962—and perhaps at the same approximate time as his similar essay, “Education on the Nonverbal Level.” See Huxley, “Education on the Nonverbal Level,” *Daedalus* 91, no 2 (1962): 279-93. The latter essay also appears in Aldous Huxley, *Complete Essays, Volume VI: 1956-63*, ed. Robert S. Baker and James Sexton (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 303-20.

116 Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 136.

117 Huxley, “A Psychophysical Education,” 1.

118 Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 34.

119 For an excellent essay from an Eastern perspective written by an Indian scholar on *The Perennial Philosophy*, *The Doors of Perception*, and *Island*, see “The Philosophia Perennis, Synthetic Divine Consciousness and the Buddhist Pala,” in B.L. Chakoo, *Aldous*

Earlier in his life, in 1925, Huxley had addressed the subject of comparative psychology in a letter to John Murry by reference to his essay “Our Contemporary Hocus-Pocus.”<sup>120</sup> Containing one of Huxley’s most direct and forceful critiques of Freud, the letter condemns psychoanalysis as one of “the finest specimens” of “pseudo-science” to have been “designed by the mind of man.”<sup>121</sup> Of course it is true, argues Huxley, that the “individual left to himself, with nothing to support him” may soon be drawn to reflect on his own shortcomings. But in a prolepsis of Derrida’s theorisation of *différance*, as well as of the notion of *espacement* in language, Huxley underscores the destructiveness of analysis; it a process whereby even arriving at a positive meaning is likely to prompt the analyst to consider its merits as against its negative corollary.

As deconstruction emphasises the extent to which the presence of language always differs from, and serves only to momentarily defer a consideration of, what is absent, so does self-analysis, for Huxley, elicit only the negative valency, signaling what is absent:<sup>122</sup>

Habituated to the practice of self analysis on a scale never before attempted—self analysis, which always has the terrible effect of making the analyser conscious of the evil opposite of everything good that he analyses. Analysing love for his fellow being, he discovers hatred; analysing purity, he discovers impurity. That is the penalty we pay for excessive self-consciousness.<sup>123</sup>

Anathematic to the self-world relationship, Huxley again dismisses having “thoughts about oneself.” Introspection now amounts less to an instance of suicide or self-harm than an act that produces hatred where it should exude love. But Huxley’s impersonal detachment from the “he” who allows himself to feel “excessive self-consciousness” only betrays his very personal struggle to cease feeling so self-consciously about himself. It is a repercussion of his disposition “between two worlds”; and Huxley’s resistance to self analysis serves to ameliorate or desubliminate what may well have been, as Blinderman suggests, his own serious neurosis.<sup>124</sup> In Freud’s own terms, Huxley’s attempt

*Huxley and Eastern Wisdom* (Delhi: Atma Ram & Sons, 1981), 213-58.

120 Huxley, “Hocus-Pocus,” 313-20.

121 *Ibid.*, 315.

122 See Derrida, *Speech and Phenomena*, 82-3.

123 Huxley to John Middleton Murry, 5 March, 1925 (Letter 225) in Smith, *Letters*, 243-4. Bentley theorises that Huxley’s dichotomisation of love and hate operates here to express his “Manichean consciousness.” See Bentley, “Anatomical Vision,” 96.

124 That Huxley’s fiction might have served to so desubliminate is the gravamen of Bentley’s argument in “Anatomical Vision,” 171-84.

to fortify his mind against self-consciousness—one that is often achieved by his reinvention of himself as the fictional characters of his novels—functions as a kind of transference or displacement that allows for his neurotic thoughts to be indirectly expressed, allegorised, and circulated.

Focusing on the similarity between Huxley's descriptions of mescaline intoxication and the affective experiences of those with depersonalisation disorders, philosophers of psychiatry affirm that Huxley's commentary is a "compelling" example among those in which subjects have attempted to "make sense of their feelings of 'mind emptiness' and hollowness."<sup>125</sup> Yet it is also possible to conceive of the decades during which Huxley appears to have evaded the process of self-conscious reflection—namely, the 1920s and '30s—as producing in him those "feelings of separateness from oneself and one's actions" that are characteristic of depersonalisation.<sup>126</sup>

Of course, the theory of depersonalisation suggests that the afflicted subject is essentially divorced from their "psychic core." As more detailed assessments of the impact of the World Wars appear, generating historicistic accounts of mental illness in the twentieth century, it seems increasingly "possible," as François Villa notes, "that our idea of the unchangeable psychic core is in reality, too, only a belief, an illusion made possible by an operation of splitting."<sup>127</sup> To subscribe to the idea that a "psychic core" exists would be to accept, then, that

the constitutive elements of psychic life constitute an indestructible and immutable core able to resist both the passing of time and the events of human life, [and] that these elements are invariable, atemporal, and ahistorical.<sup>128</sup>

When Huxley airs his political views about war before the middle decades of the twentieth century, he indicates the extent to which the specter of war might have played a role in shaping his feelings of alienation and depersonalisation.<sup>129</sup>

125 See Daphne Simeon and Jeffrey Abugel's discussion of *Heaven and Hell*'s illustration of depersonalisation in their chapter "Depersonalization in Philosophy and Literature" in *Feeling Unreal: Depersonalization Disorder and The Loss of the Self* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 145-50.

126 See Laurent S. Lehmann, "Depersonalization," *American Journal of Psychiatry* 131, no. 11 (1974): 1221.

127 François Villa, "The Psychoanalytical Method and the Disaster of Totalitarianism: Borderline States as the Psychological Equivalent of the Discontent in Civilization?" *Critical Inquiry* 40, no. 2 (2014): 267-87, esp. 267.

128 Ibid.

129 See Laurence Rickels's series, *Nazi Psychoanalysis*, especially in volume 3 ("Psy Fi"), in which Rickels briefly writes on Huxley's *Brave New World*, and in which, as Bennet notes in the volume's foreword, Rickels "moves at the end from "sci" to "psy" [to give

At the same time as he begins writing his pacifistic novel *Eyeless in Gaza* and a series of essays on society in *Ends and Means*, one of which, “War,” is a thorough refutation of war’s defensibility, Huxley would also zealously express his pacifism in political pamphlets such as *What Are You Going To Do About It? The Case for Constructive Peace* (1936) and *An Encyclopaedia of Pacifism* (1937).<sup>130</sup>

Repudiated and denigrated, the former pamphlet elicited a harsh response from critic C. Day Lewis, who penned his own screed titled *We’re Not Going To Do Nothing* (1936). Huxley will then reconfigure this situation in *Eyeless in Gaza*, where Beavis characterises “negative pacifism” and “scepticism about existing institutions” as so many “holes in the mind,” and an “emptiness waiting to be filled” (*EIG*, 425).<sup>131</sup>

As conduits for excessive self-consciousness, Huxley’s “holes in the mind” resemble the “reducing valves” to which the author would later advert in *The Doors of Perception*. These are the ducts or valves through which paranoiac introspection might enter; once in the brain it infects an individual, planting and programming a suspicious mind with whatever “positive content” may serve as its “fillers” (*EIG*, 425). Transcoding actuality into fiction, *Eyeless in Gaza* and other of Huxley’s *romans à clef* also function as the author’s personal “fillers” for those parts of his own mind—and for those of his readers’s minds—that might otherwise be filled with a deceptive if not “alluring positive doctrine—however criminal or crazy its positiveness may be” (*EIG*, 425). And while “pumping full” the “negative void” of the mind with this “positive pacifism” is precisely what *Eyeless in Gaza*’s Beavis seeks to do, his ability to effectively propagandise is increasingly as uncertain as the potential of Huxley’s pamphlets to persuade: even if we assume that we have “the time,” Beavis asks, “have we the ability?” (*EIG*, 425).

While Huxley’s pamphleteering reflects his negative opinion of the First World War, Huxley’s increasingly disillusioned view about his political influence heavily impacts on him as he realises his limitations as an “artist.”<sup>132</sup>

the volume its title, “Psy Fi”] by a neat transition that uses Huxley’s “Ford/Freud” in *Brave New World*: Laurence A. Rickels, *Nazi Psychoanalysis, Volume Three: Psy Fi* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), xiii, 215-21.

130 See Aldous Huxley, *What Are You Going To Do About It? The Case for Constructive Peace* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1936); Huxley, *An Encyclopaedia of Pacifism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1937).

131 See Anna Deters, “*Eyeless in Gaza*: Mystical Means and Socio-Political Ends,” *Aldous Huxley Annual* 5 (2005): 151-66, esp. 155-6; Valentine Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 70; C. Day-Lewis, *We’re Not Going To Do Nothing* (London: The Left Review, 1936).

132 As Cunningham writes, Huxley’s *Case for Constructive Peace* was “one of the ‘30s’s

When “faced with the ineluctable fact of World War II,” Huxley will outgrow his desire to produce “propaganda”; he realised, as Anna Deters notes, “the naivety of the claim that changes in the individual alone can alter the course of society.”<sup>133</sup> Now turning his back on the question of pacifism and toward a mystical-spiritual outlook, Huxley’s transition also marks a point of return. Here, once again, Huxley will repress and resist those feelings of paranoid introspection and self-attachment, rebranding them as mystical “non-attachment.”<sup>134</sup>

In her essay “On Mental Health,” Melanie Klein describes “a well-integrated personality” as “the foundation for mental health.” But integration also relies, she writes,

on an interplay between the fundamental sources of mental life—the impulses of love and hate—an interplay in which the capacity for love is predominant.<sup>135</sup>

Despite his negative self-feelings, Huxley’s great capacity for love is illustrated throughout the many letters that pass between him and his father, as well as between he and his brother Julian. But Huxley’s belief in love is also evident in what is known about his long marriage to Maria Nys, which begins in 1919 when Huxley is only 25, and which would last until Maria’s tragic death in 1955—in spite of what may have been a number of challenges.<sup>136</sup> A

most persistently denigrated texts.” Cunningham, *British Writers of the Thirties*, 70.

133 Deters, “*Eyeless in Gaza: Mystical Means and Socio-Political Ends*,” 156.

134 *Ibid.*

135 Melanie Klein, “On Mental Health,” in Melanie Klein, *Envy and Gratitude and Other Works 1946-1963*, ed. M. Masud R. Khan (London: The Hogarth Press, 1984), 271.

136 Unfortunately, correspondence between Maria and Huxley (they wrote to each other every day in the years leading to their marriage) remains lost, despite the relatively recent discovery that five letters were preserved by a private collector. It is assumed destroyed, having probably burnt alongside almost all of Huxley’s papers in a house-fire in his and Laura Huxley’s Hollywood home on 12 May 1961. See Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 4n1; Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 84. Nevertheless, the story of Maria and Huxley’s love affair is mostly known. In a letter written in 1952 to Matthew Huxley (son of Aldous and Maria), Maria asks why she had ever allowed Huxley to approach her, permitting herself to become exposed to the “intellectual strain” of a life (at Garsington) for which she was ill-prepared. Huxley had known, she writes, “that he could never teach me to write poetry or remember what I read in a book, or spel [sic] or anything he did set value on.” (Bedford, 1: 94-5). Murray describes her as possibly suffering *anorexia nervosa* and speaks of her suicide attempt in 1915, about which D.H. Lawrence had been outraged. (Lawrence had written a chiding letter concerning this topic to Lady Ottoline Morrell in 1915): Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 69; Bedford, *Huxley*, 1: 80. Ottoline had restored Garsington Manor, near Oxford, and had turned it into an aristocratic refuge for leftists and artists. Maria and Huxley had lived there for a time, and, as I have already addressed, it inspired Huxley to write *Crome Yellow*, in which Lady Otto-



Belgian refugee, Maria does not appear to have objected to their pair's open relationship, and it is possible, as I have suggest of her attraction to women in the previous chapter, that Maria herself had even proposed it. Of course, the precise details of Maria's sexuality, and the nature of her marriage to Huxley, remain only approximately understood.<sup>137</sup>

Nevertheless, one assertion—that D.H. Lawrence had been Huxley's "homosexual lover"—a claim made in book of political history that also claims Huxley's central role in Britain's alleged "Opium War" against the U.S., appears inflammatory and unsubstantiated; especially as it is offset by what Huxley's friend Don Bachardy, in an interview with David Dunaway, says of Huxley's sexuality: "I don't think Aldous had a queer bone in his body."<sup>138</sup>

line is represented as Priscilla Wimbush, and Dora Carrington as Mary Bracegirdle.

<sup>137</sup> Here I refer to Maria's bisexuality. Murray notes that although her sisters knew of it, Maria's bisexuality had remained unacknowledged by the Huxleys until recently. As Murray points out, however, Matthew, son of Aldous and Mary, expressed "bafflement" upon hearing the suggestion. Laura Huxley, Aldous's second wife (whom he remarried after Maria's death), said that she did not know of it: Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 72. Maria's bisexuality is also discussed by David King Dunaway in his *Huxley in Hollywood* (New York: Harper and Row, 1989), but it is more recently given context in Dunaway's more recent book, *Aldous Huxley Recollected: An Oral History* (London: SAGE, 1999). It is here that Ellen Hovde, Aldous and Maria's daughter-in-law (and Matthew Huxley's wife) writes that

Maria, goodness knows, was a bisexual. She was not offended by Aldous's interest in other women. She didn't want to anything to get hot enough to break them up, but they were interested in exploring what everything was all about. I think by the time I knew them that had cooled out and they were interested in exploring psychic phenomena. (92).

See also: Stan Laurysens, *Mijn Heerlijke Nieuwe Wereld: Leven en Liefdes van Maria Nys Huxley* (Leuven: Uitgeverij Van Halewyck, 2001); Chris Hastings, "Huxley's marriage 'no sham': family: Bisexual wife bedded Garbo, Dietrich, new book claims," *The Ottawa Citizen* [Ottawa, Ontario], 8 May 2000: A16; Chris Hastings, "Huxley Family Balks at Sex Claims," *The Vancouver Sun* [Vancouver, B.C.], 9 May, 2000: C6. James Sexton discusses Maria's relationship with Mary Hutchinson, who Sexton described as "another fashionable Bloomsbury hostess and wife of a prominent barrister." Sexton notes that a "three-sided relationship between the Huxleys and Mary... reached its peak in 1925." See Sexton, ed., *Selected Letters*, 5.

<sup>138</sup> See Konstandinos Kalimtgis, David Goldman, and Jeffrey Steinberg, *Dope Inc.: Britain's War Against The U.S.* (New York: New Benjamin Franklin Publishing House, 1978). In this sensationalist book, the authors make a range of bold, unsubstantiated claims about Huxley, including that D.H. Lawrence was Huxley's "homosexual lover" (366), citing Clark's *The Huxleys*, but giving no page reference. There is nothing in Clark's biography of the Huxley family to suggest that Huxley had been a homosexual or bisexual; in fact, Clark notes that Lawrence's feelings for Huxley were nothing more than "mixed." (See Clark, *The Huxleys*, 231). The authors of *Dope Inc.* also claim that the "case officer" for Britain's Opium War was Aldous Huxley," citing Bedford's biography as evidence, but again giving no page reference. Finally, the authors also assert that

Huxley was instrumental in founding a nest of Isis cults in Southern California and in a San Francisco suburb called Ojai—which consisted of several hundred de-

While Bachardy stresses that his claim is only on “instinct” and relies on “no evidence,” Bachardy’s speculations conform to the testimony of others. For Huxley was, as Dunaway writes,

one of those men—there are quite a few of them—who actually find lesbian women attractive or masculine: women who have lesbian tendencies are more attractive to them than just ordinary heterosexual women.<sup>139</sup>

In any case, it is arguable that, following Klein, Huxley’s capacities to love and to fully accept the reality of humans’s biological impulses, including perhaps his own sexual drives and those of his first wife Maria, contributed to his ideas about the body as much as they permitted him to cope during his difficult youth. When Huxley faced what Clark describes as “the bludgeonings” of “his mother’s death, blindness [and] Trev’s suicide,” his capacity for love allowed him to remain mindful of what he would later identify as the virtue in “accepting the horror of life and saying to oneself that in spite of everything, the universe is good.”<sup>140</sup>

“One never loves enough,” is also the “theme song” that Laura, Huxley’s second wife, attributes to him. This was a song that “increased in intensity”

ranged worshippers of Isis and other Gods (367).

What the authors refer to here is unclear, although it is notable that Huxley founded a private coeducational school in Ojai called the Happy Valley School with Annie Besant and J. Krishnamurti, among others. See <http://www.besanthill.org/about/history/founders/index.html>, accessed 20 January, 2014. The authors also claim that Humphry Osmond was the “Huxleys’ private physician” (368). These claims are not supported by the works the authors cite, which include the biographies mentioned above, nor are these claims confirmed by Nicholas Murray’s biography or Dunaway’s books, which the authors do not cite. As Firchow argues, “Huxley’s partial responsibility for the spread of knowledge about psychedelics is undeniable; but that he was the “Daddy of LSD” is not true.” Firchow then quotes from a letter written to Osmond of July 22, 1956, in which Huxley writes

I think the matter [of these drugs] should be discussed, and the investigations described, in the relative privacy of learned journals, the decent obscurity of moderately high-brow books and articles. Whatever one says on the air is bound to be misunderstood...

See Peter Firchow, *Aldous Huxley: Satirist and Novelist* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1972); Huxley to Osmond, 22 July 1956 (Letter 751), in Smith, *Letters*, 802-3. Critics of Huxley have quoted his lines about heroin to discredit him, often not realising that heroin was, at the time of Huxley’s words, a legal drug, often used for colds as well as pain relief during child-birth. In *Antic Hay*, Gumbriel Junior will ask: “Who lives longer? the man who takes heroin for two years and dies, or a man who lives on roast beef, water and potatoes ‘till ninety-five? One passes his twenty-four months in eternity. All the years of the befeater are lived only in time” (*AH*, 227).

139 Dunaway, *Aldous Huxley Recollected*, 89.

140 Clark, *The Huxleys*, 350.

after 1955—the year in which Maria died and, not long after, when Laura first used mescaline with Huxley.<sup>141</sup> In an address before a “prodigious group of people, all doctors, PhDs, [and] probably Nobel Prize winners,” Laura writes, Huxley could only advise his audience to “Try to be a little kinder to each other.” That Huxley was, according to Laura, embarrassed that “after forty-five years of research and study” this was “the best advice” he could “give to people,” is a fact that reflects not Huxley’s intellectual failure but the silliness he felt in realising the greater importance of this piece of wisdom than all else that he had learned.<sup>142</sup> As I have already intimated, Huxley’s reluctance to engage in excessive introspection also serves as an exemplary counterpoint to certain diagnostic descriptions of psychotic mental disorders, such as the following description of schizophrenia advanced by Louis Sass:

In many cases of schizophrenia, it does make sense to interpret the loss of self as involving an exigent introspection [where] the suspicious scrutinizing seems to break beyond the realm of philosophical speculation or aesthetic experience to supplant the ordinary modes of everyday life.<sup>143</sup>

If exigent introspection operates as the radical counterpoint to good mental health, it might also function as the antinomy to the “profession” that demands the “artist” commit what Huxley—as in his letter to Strousse—felt was a ritual suicide. This is the sacrificial rite that Huxley felt was required of him by his readership.<sup>144</sup> While the inflection of Huxley’s reference to suicide had been overlain by a satirical somberness—just as much of Huxley’s 1920s writing had been—his allusion to the honourable, voluntary death ritual remains instructive. Here the death of the Japanese samurai displaces the

141 Laura Huxley, *This Timeless Moment*, 117.

142 Ibid. Also see Ganga White June, “Interview with Laura Huxley” (1998), available at [http://www.whitelotus.org/interviews/with\\_laura.html](http://www.whitelotus.org/interviews/with_laura.html), accessed 21 March 2014; Huston Smith, “Aldous Huxley—A Tribute,” *The Psychedelic Review* 1 no. 3 (1964), repr. in Huxley, *Moksha*, 290-1.

143 Louis A. Sass, “Introspection, Schizophrenia and the Fragmentation of Self,” *Representations* 19 (1987): 1-34, esp. 15.

144 On the subjects of love and suicide, I simply note that, following Justin Clemens, that when discussing love, Lacan went so far as to suggest in response to Jean Hyppolite that “love is a form of suicide.” See Clemens, “Love as Ontology; or Psychoanalysis Against Philosophy,” in *Psychoanalysis is an Antiphilosophy*, 58n38. Also see Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book 1: Freud’s Papers on Technique 1953-1954*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, tr. John Forrester (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991), 149. On love and the “two-world” crossing of *caritas* (charity) and *cupiditas* (desire), which is analogous in my analysis with the chiasmus (and with what might be called the *neurosis* and *psychosis* of love), see Beatrice Marovich, “Thing Called Love: That Old Substantive Relation,” *Speculations* 3 (2012): 43-68.

Christological “sacrifice” narrative of Jesus’s crucifixion; and it prefigures Huxley’s theological turn to Eastern theology some twenty years later—an interest that nonetheless began in his undergraduate years at Oxford’s Balliol college.<sup>145</sup> An allusion that is all the more significant in the aftermath of Huxley’s brother Trevenen’s suicide (an act that took place “while” ‘Trev’ had been, according to the coroner, “temporarily insane”), this reference also registers as a kind of complaint; it signifies Huxley’s deep-seated yearning to be the author of his own destiny, and to resist losing control.<sup>146</sup>

An essay that is illustrative of Huxley’s desire to maintain mental control is his “The History of Tension” of 1956. Exhibiting Huxley’s optimism for the capability of drugs to generate synthetic or enhanced modes of self-control, Huxley argues for the ways in which one must “release tension.” And later, in his related essay, “Drugs that Shape Men’s Minds” (1958), Huxley will quote Bergson in proposing that drugs bring into effect a “psychic disposition” that, while always “there, potentially” lies dormant until it receives “a signal to express itself in action” (*DSMM*, 155).<sup>147</sup> By resisting self-introspection, the individual may release tension and enhance control through “autoconditioning” (*HOT*, 126). This serves to counteract any force that might generate what Louis Sass describes as “the passivization or other fundamental distortions of the normal self-world relationship.” It might also allow for the kinds of psychological alterations that, through “thoughts, actions, feelings, or perceptions,” may have been previously “imposed” on the individual: fashioned, as Sass notes, “under the control of some external being or force.”<sup>148</sup>

At the frontier between psychoanalysis and psychiatry, Huxley navigates the distinction between private control and the fallible history of medicine. Confirming the non-existence of a range of imaginary disorders, such as

145 See Clark, *The Huxleys*, 168; Huxley to Dilip Kumar Roy (date unknown), in Sisirkumar Ghose, *Aldous Huxley: A Cynical Salvationist* (Bombay: Asia Publishing House, 1962), 187. Also see A.A. Mutalki Desay, “India and Aldous Huxley: A Symbiotic Relationship,” in Sumita Roy, Annie Pothen, K.S. Sunita, eds., *Aldous Huxley and Indian Thought* (New Delhi: Sterling, 2003), 26-36, esp. 29.

146 Clark, *The Huxleys*, 164.

147 See Aldous Huxley, “History of Tension,” in *Moksha*, 121-28; Henri Bergson, *Two Sources of Religion and Morality*, tr. R. Ashley Audra and Cloudesley Brereton (London: Macmillan and Co., 1935), 186.

148 Sass offers a helpful discussion of German psychiatrist Kurt Schneider’s list of “First Rank Symptoms” for schizophrenia: “Introspection,” 4. As Huxley notes, he borrows the term “autoconditioning” from Duke University sociology professor Hornell Hart: see Hart, *Autoconditioning: The New Way To a Successful Life* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1956).

“a medieval stomach-ache,” Huxley highlights the very personal and embodied nature of disease:

no such thing as a specifically Neolithic focal infection, a characteristically Victorian neuralgia, or a New Deal epilepsy. So far as the patient is concerned, the symptoms of his illness are a complete personal experience, an experience to which the public life of nations... or events... discussed in scientific journals and literary reviews are totally irrelevant (*HOT*, 117).

Each an immaterial force its own right, every single disease is idiopathic or *sui generis*. And if none is translatable it is precisely because it “tends to narrow the patient’s awareness until, in extreme cases, he is conscious of nothing but himself” (*HOT*, 118). For this reason the history of illness is also incapable of being understood “as experience,” and must instead be understood only “as medicine.” A universal phenomenology of disease is impossible, Huxley argues, just as medicine can be nothing more than the “history of theories about the nature of diseases and of the recipes employed at different times for their treatment” (*HOT*, 118).

But if in refuting the proposition that mental disorders are generalisable Huxley repudiates the possibility of a phenomenological medicine, this appears to be an *inadvertent* consequence of his observations. For Huxley himself valorises William James’s descriptions of alcohol and even religion as keys to the “transcendent to the world of everyday experience” (*HOT*, 121). Arguing that the treatment for “tension” and other “psychosomatic disorder[s]” might involve the education system’s incorporation of “a few simple courses in the art of controlling the autonomic nervous system and the subconscious mind,” Huxley proposes that students “carry [their own] resolutions into practice” (*HOT*, 126). But students should also be made vigilant, Huxley argues, against “herd poison,” having already been exposed to “the absurd and discreditable secrets of propaganda” (*HOT*, 126). And finally, Huxley recommends that young students must embrace the “pharmacological revolution” that will occur, he writes, “whether we like it or not,” and which will allow for the discovery of “scores of new methods for changing the quality of consciousness” (*HOT*, 127).

Much like his brother Julian and his colleague and close friend, the biochemical psychiatrist Humphrey Osmond, Huxley imagines “breaking” the “dominance of psychoanalytic theory in (American) psychiatry.” Conceiving of disease “on the animal level,” and as “exclusively biological,” Huxley notes that “the disease of tension” for instance,

seems to have arisen under all cultural conditions—in shame cultures as in guilt cultures, in primitive cultures no less than developed cultures... (*HOT*, 118).<sup>149</sup>

However, Huxley also accepts that biological distress, such as that caused by a traumatic event, could also affect biology, producing even further mental distress. In *The Doors of Perception*, he rhetorically asks the following: “Is the mental disorder due to a chemical disorder? And is the chemical disorder due, in its turn, to psychological stress affecting the adrenals?” (*DOP*, 3)

Meditating on the relation of psychology and biology, Huxley thus resists dualistic explanations of the subject-object relation and increasingly considers the human as an “amphibian,” that is, as a being who resides between the aquatic and non-aquatic, and the biological and psychological worlds (*EOA*, 9). For all his resistance to self-analysis, then, what else dominates in Huxley’s thought is his recurrent belief in the human as a biologically determined animal.

This chapter has shown how much of this view of the world had been “gifted” to Huxley by his grandfather. However, Huxley arguably went further than his grandfather in expressing and developing this view, nurturing an interest in the metaphysical imagery of the East in his later years—in addition to the scientific and evolutionary classification schemata he had learned from Western science in his young adulthood. And it is to this limb of Huxley’s epistemology that the following chapter shall now turn.

149 I have already cited the paper that Julian Huxley and Humphry Osmond (et. al) published in *Nature* in 1964. It is De Bont, “Schizophrenia, Evolution and the Borders of Biology,” 144-59. For more recent work on the psychobiological basis of schizophrenia, see Takeshi Sakurai, et. al., “Schizophrenia Research in 2013: Are we Making Progress?” *Neurobiology of Disease* 53 (2103): 1-2. On the relatively new attractin, pantonate-kinase2, oxytocin, and arginine-vasopressin hypothesis (linked with what was formerly known as Hallervorden Spatz Syndrome), see Omri Teltsh, et. al., “Oxytocin and Vasopressin genes are significantly associated with schizophrenia in a large Arab-Israeli pedigree,” *International Journal of Neuropsychopharmacology* 15 (2012): 309-19. Also see Katherine E. Burdick, Benjamin Glicksberg, and Gary Donohue, “Genetic Influences on Cognition on Schizophrenia,” (chapter 10) in *Cognitive Impairment in Schizophrenia: Characteristics, Assessment and Treatment*, Phillip D. Harvey, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge, 2013), 161-75, esp. 166-9.

## An “Amphibical” Anthropology<sup>1</sup>

IN THE 1950S, DURING what was perhaps the apotheosis of his biological determinism, Aldous Huxley came to adopt a view of humans as amphibians. To apprehend the human simply as an animal, however, would be to dismiss, he thought, our capacity for language—and to conceive of this diacritical distinction between human and nonhuman simply as anomalous: as an evolutionary nicety. And yet for Huxley, to think of the human as an amphibian is to treat consciousness with jesting indifference. As with Balzac’s *Comédie Humaine*, Huxley’s “amphibical” writing suggests that what we understand as special about humans is the same force that produces what is, for him, the grand comedy of biological life. Replete with predictable and oftentimes apparently automatic gestures, human bodies illustrate in their histrionic vitality the very proof of what TH had argued for all his life: epiphenomenalism.<sup>2</sup>

In the early twentieth century, when William James discovered that laughing gas could produce in humans what Marcus Boon calls an “anesthetic revelation”—enabling him to collapse Hegelian distinctions into the

1 I borrow this title from a chapter title in Peter Sloterdijk’s *Neither Sun Nor Death*, tr. Steve Corcoran (New York: Semiotext(e), 2011), 303.

2 It is perhaps worth noting here that Huxley made continued reference to Balzac’s *Comédie Humaine* throughout his life and, in “Hocus-Pocus,” Huxley observes that it was Balzac’s “serious” interest in the science of “Lavater, Gall and Mesmer,” that led Balzac to offer “pseudo-scientific expositions of the theory of bumps and phizzes and magnetic fluids” (*OCHP*, 313). Further, Lilian McNair’s analysis of Huxley’s engagement with Balzac is instructive—and not only in terms of the general adoption in *Point Counter Point* of Balzac’s methods and philosophy a “materialistic philosophy.” McNair’s essay lends weight to my proposition that Huxley’s writing is overlain with structuring figure of the chiasmus, underscoring Huxley’s tendency to employ counterpoint. “Instead of using complete novels as themes for his work [as Balzac was able to do],” McNair asserts, “Huxley, restricted by the limitations of a single book, developed a more concentrated counterpoint, and secured an effect similar to Balzac’s by astute and sensitive combinations of chapters, paragraphs, even phrases.” Such combinations develop a “construction” of “the *Comédie Humaine*... but in miniature.” See McNair, “Balzac and Huxley: A Short Study of the *Comédie Humaine* on *Point Counterpoint* [sic],” *The French Review* 12, no. 6 (1993): 476-9, esp. 477.



“genus of which the conflicting terms were opposite species”—he also realised that the nitrous oxide could be used as a perceptual instrument. It could, he realised, reveal how it is precisely “the *mechanical* nature of human activity,” apparently “guided by transcendental forces, that is the source of laughing gas’s laughter.”<sup>3</sup> Only two years later, Henri Bergson would make a similar observation when, in an essay on comedy, he would write that the “mechanical interpretation” of human behaviour “ought to be one of the favourite devices of parody.” But while Bergson and James had “reached this result through deduction,” it would also seem, wrote Bergson, that “clowns have long had an intuition of the fact.”<sup>4</sup>

These anecdotes form two suitable analogues for the revelation that Huxley purports to expose in his satirical fiction: the one by which humans are made suddenly visible through a zoological lens, and shown to be guided by transparent social forces.<sup>5</sup> Joseph Bentley describes this optic as Huxley’s “anatomical vision” of human life. To produce his images, Huxley often takes the unrefined or animalistic elements of humans and—through a process of “semantic gravitation” and “satiric reduction”—produces a pantomime show in which the human becomes a mind ineluctably and comedically embedded in an unruly or even *overruling* body.<sup>6</sup> If anything impedes Huxley’s strategy, it appears in the literary mechanics: for, if humans are *simply* animal organisms, which is to say the expressions of bodily drives, then how might we transcend that very fact when we read Huxley’s fiction? And how has just such a simple animal—Huxley the—artist, produced these omniscient words, these zoological observations?

One crucial explanation is that Huxley’s sardonic cynicism typifies what Herbert Marcuse identifies as the “Great Refusal in the language of literature.” Exemplifications of the “rationality of negation,” Huxley’s satires of the 1920s, as with his essays of the 1950s, function like all art in “advanced positions,” which is to say they “protest against that which is.” Among various literary expressions, the

modes in which man and things are made to appear, to sing and sound and speak, are modes of refuting, breaking, and recreating their factual existence.

3 See William James, “On Some Hegelisms,” in *The Will To Believe: Essays in Popular Philosophy* (London: Longmans Green and Co, 1912), 263-98, esp. 296-7, my emphasis; Marcus Boon, *The Road of Excess*, 121.

4 Bentley, “The Anatomical Vision,” 158-176; and Bentley, “Semantic Gravitation: An Essay on Satiric Reduction,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 30 (1969): 3-19.

5 See Marcus Boon, *The Road of Excess*, 121.

6 Bentley, “The Anatomical Vision,” 158.

But these modes of negation pay tribute to the antagonistic society to which they are linked.<sup>7</sup>

Using language to refute his society and its epistemologies, Huxley also deploys what Derrida describes as writing's "arche-violence," or what Foucault similarly describes as language's "implicit" violence.<sup>8</sup> And while for Derrida language is violent only when it is "logocentric"—when the text that this language constitutes is "supposed to correspond to reality"—Foucault regards all language as violent, embracing—or rather acknowledging—"linguistic violence as a necessity." It is imperative that there is, Foucault argues, "a conceptual order." But this is a violent intervention from which Foucault does not resile: "so we will make one, only we will not shy away from it."<sup>9</sup>

Syntonic with what seems to propel Huxley's satirical mode is what leads Foucault to defend this "necessity" of violence in language. As Mark Kelly argues, Foucault's postulations about the establishment of a new order indicate his view that the only "thing to do in response to the objectionable aspects of existing discourse is to establish a new violence, a new way of ordering things, albeit one which understands itself as violent."<sup>10</sup> But Foucault also identifies the trace of "a certain fear" that "hides behind this apparent supremacy accorded, this apparent logophilia" in language. This fear, which I addressed in the previous chapter, is a form of suspicion, one that is aimed at mastering and controlling the speaker or writer. It affects, as Foucault writes,

7 Marcuse rails against the increasingly "one-dimensional" nature of the human, and argues that art, "whether ritualized or not," proceeds by means of "the rationality of negation." Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man* (London: Routledge, and Kegan Paul, 2007), 66.

8 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, tr. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon, 1972), 228-9.

9 Mark Kelly, *The Political Philosophy of Michel Foucault* (London: Routledge, 2009), 24. Kelly goes on to assert that Derrida is aligned with Nietzsche in a way that Foucault, and in my reading Huxley, is not. Arguing that while for Derrida there is "nothing but signs"—that is, "no outside of signification"—Kelly says that for Foucault, contrastingly, there is such an outside: "it is the antagonism inherent in nature that is the basis for the discontinuity of language with previously-existing reality." For the purposes of my argument, it is this discontinuity of language that Huxley seeks to exploit in his early satirical fiction; although, rather than simply the case that "nature" at large is the source of discontinuity, it is for Huxley the human in its totality that is discontinuous, paradoxical, and chiasmic. As Bentley puts it, Huxley sees the human as "a total, or unselective image of an object [that] would include all the known facts about it—high facts as well as low facts..." Bentley, "The Anatomical Vision," 169.

10 *Ibid.*, 25.

the great proliferation of discourse, in such a way as to relieve its richness of its most dangerous elements; to organise its disorder so as to skate round its most uncontrollable aspects.<sup>11</sup>

Just as Huxley's desire to control his own body is evident in his adoption of the Bates Method and the Alexander Technique—about both of which he writes in *The Art of Seeing*—Huxley's desire for psychophysical control will also prompt his drug experimentation in the 1950s. It is precisely to control, through language, the bodies of others—perhaps even as a substitution for a lack of control over his own body—that Huxley produces what Bentley calls his “art of satiric reduction.” In the “tradition of Aristophanes, Rabelais, and Swift,” Bentley writes, Huxley “often evokes the image of man as a totally physiological being, as a grotesque animal, preposterously convinced of his spirituality and refinement.”<sup>12</sup>

Reducing humans to their excretory and other biological functions, Huxley gives us his “most obvious self-projection” in the personage of Philip Quarles in *Point Counter Point*. Quarles is what Norman Carlin describes as a “cosmobiological” novelist; he combines his research on the reproductive processes of animals (in the case of the novel, rare fish) with his observations on the cosmopolitan and “amorous intrigues of the Bloomsbury sophisticates.”<sup>13</sup> In a series of paronomastic references to fish, Molly d'Exergillod calls Philip “The Zoologist of Fiction,” for he is both “learnedly elfish,” and “a scientific Puck” (*PCP*, 114). At a later point, Philip himself will decide to make the fictional novelist who appears in his novel a biologist, generating a triadic mise en abyme of Huxley, Quarles, and Quarles's novelist character:

Since reading Alverdes and Wheeler I have quite decided that my novelist must be an amateur zoologist. Or, better still, a professional zoologist who is writing a novel in his spare time. His approach will be strictly biological, He will be constantly passing from the termitary to the drawing-room and the factory, and back again. He will illustrate human vices by those of ants, which neglect their young for the sake of intoxicating liquor exuded by the parasites that invade their nests (*PCP*, 414).

11 See Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, 227.

12 Bentley, “Semantic Gravitation,” 3. As Bentley notes, Huxley condemns Swift for his intolerance toward such matters as human defecation: 177.

13 See the description of Quarles as “cosmobiological” in “The Ant in Literature” in Norman Carlin, et al., eds., *Notes From The Underground: A Myrmecological Newsletter, Museum of Comparative Zoological Studies* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1990), 2, available at <http://www.notesfromunderground.org/nfu5.pdf>, last accessed December, 2013. Bentley, “Semantic Gravitation,” 6. Incidentally, Bentley quizzically attributes the invention of the title “The Zoologist of Fiction” to Quarles himself, 53.

If the structure that assembles Huxley and these characters into a novel is chiastic or symbiotic, it is so because this assemblage represents another instance in which Huxley's "mixed up starting points" promote psychobiographical investigation, and lead us back to that essential shape or psychotrope, which I introduced in chapter 4 and 5. Thus, having read Alverdes and Wheeler, Quarles will begin to write like them. But does this repetition and imitation—this mimicry—not also suggest that Huxley will have himself previously read Alverdes and Wheeler, and that *he* has also begun to write like them too?<sup>14</sup> But Huxley's decenterings and mix ups are not restricted to substitutions among fictional and non-fictional humans. What is indicated in the novel's observations about its characters is Huxley's view of them *as* animals: Quarles, for Molly, is a fish; and later, Beatrice Gilray will become "ant-like" in her industriousness (*PCP*, 225).

If these zoological and animal metonyms in Huxley's 1920s fiction persist in his essays of the 1950s, they are in these later works less comedic than directly philosophical. In the declarative opening of his 1956 essay "The Education of an Amphibian," for instance, Huxley describes the human in unambiguously direct language, not very different that which TH had once deployed:

Every human being is an amphibian—or, to be more accurate, every human being is five or six amphibians rolled into one. Simultaneously or alternately, we inhabit many different and even incommensurable universes (*EOA*, 9).<sup>15</sup>

Dividing these "incommensurable universes" by means of his figuration of "amphibiousness," Huxley's essay illustrates how in moving between the "world of experience and the world of notions" humans also move between the "world of direct apprehension of Nature, God, and ourselves, and the world of abstract, verbalized knowledge about these primary facts" (*EOA*, 7).

Huxley had expressed his view of humans as amphibians for the first time two years earlier in his foreword to Jiddu Krishnamurti's *The First and Last Freedom*. In a way that reads as resolute and newly vociferous, Huxley crystallises what had been, throughout his life, his chiastic ontology:

14 See Jerome Meckier, "Quarles Among the Monkeys: Huxley's Zoological Novels," in *Aldous Huxley, Bloom's Critical Views: New Edition*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Infobase, 2010), 59-78, 77n13.

15 Also see Peter Firchow, "Aldous and Julian: Men of Letters, Men of Science," *Aldous Huxley Annual* 4 (2004): 205-25, esp. 205.

Man is an amphibian who lives simultaneously in two worlds—the given and the homemade, the world of matter, life and consciousness and the world of symbols (*FLF*, 9).<sup>16</sup>

While Huxley's formulation highlights the adaptability of those who can live between two worlds, it also evinces a certain pessimism; it expresses a kind of bathos about the potential of human thought, and thinks morosely of epistemology. Despite the talents of "logicians and semanticists," Huxley argues, none has reached any answer to the "fundamental problem of the relationship of man in his psycho-physical totality, on the one hand, and his two worlds, of data and symbols, on the other" (*FLF*, 11).

For Huxley, this fundamental problem can only be addressed in terms of the entire "psycho-physical instrument" of the human and its environment (*EOA*, 12). For if ever since Galen it has been the task of medicine to locate the "cause which produces damage" and to identify the "localization of a disease" in the case of any affliction, then Huxley similarly conceives of the human's split-subjectivity as a medical problem; he seeks, therefore, a principal cause (an *aitia proegoumene*) for human illness. Seemingly in agreement with such philosophers of medicine and psychiatry as Georges Canguilhem, Huxley approaches the problem of the twentieth-century human not as a range of discrete problems, but as a singular and uniform condition.<sup>17</sup> It is an approach that Canguilhem describes in detail:

The problem of pathological structures and behaviors in man is enormous. A congenital clubfoot, a sexual inversion, a diabetic, a schizophrenic, pose innumerable questions which, in the end, refer to the whole anatomical, embryological, physiological and psychological research. It is nevertheless our opinion that this problem must not be broken up and that chances for clarifying it are greater if it is considered *en bloc* than if it is broken down into questions of detail.<sup>18</sup>

16 Huxley would also write in this foreword that "It is through self-knowledge, not through belief in somebody else's symbols, that a man comes to the eternal reality, in which his being is grounded" (12). For an insightful discussion of the satirical way in which Huxley viciously portrays Krishnamurti as "the obnoxious Murugan, future ruler of Pala," see Jerome Meckier, "Enemies of Utopia: Young Krishnamurti and Madam Blavatsky in Aldous Huxley's *Island*," *Aldous Huxley Annual* 10/11 (2010/11): 299-316.

17 I rely here on Luis Peset's historical overview of medicine's development. See "On The History of Medical Causality," in Corinna Delkeskamp-Hayes and Mary Ann Gardell Cutter, eds. *Science, Technology, and the Art of Medicine: European-American Dialogues* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), 57-74..

18 Georges Canguilhem, *The Normal and the Pathological* (New York: Zone Books, 1991), 33.

Huxley's discovery that human afflictions are integral or unitary, rather than discrete "unicities" (as in nineteenth-century psychiatry), anticipates the emergence of holistic or integrative medicine in the years after his death.

Precisely this kind of whole-person approach to health is given lucid expression in the "pragmatic holism" practised by the Palanese institutions in *Island*, for instance (*ISLAND*, 78). Imagining a method of "schooling" or "training" in which, as Huxley writes in his "Amphibian" essay, the "debauched kinaesthetic sense may be restored to its pristine integrity" (*EOA*, 13), Huxley mourns the specialisation of medicine at the same time as he commiserates education's specialised efficiencies (see *ISLAND*, 210).<sup>19</sup> "In all the activities of life," Huxley writes,

from the most trivial to the most important, the secret of proficiency lies in an ability to combine two seemingly incompatible states—a state of maximum activity and a state of maximum relaxation. The fact that these incompatibles can actually coexist is due, of course, to the amphibious nature of the human being. That which must be relaxed is the ego and the personal subconscious, that which must be active is the vegetative soul and the not-selves which lie beyond it. The physiological and spiritual not-selves with which we are associated cannot do their work effectively until the ego and the personal subconscious learn to let go (*EOA*, 20).

Huxley's image of the human as an amphibian relies on a complex "seven-fold" division of the mind, including a "schematic" account "of man's double life as a self and associated with a group of not-selves" (*EOA*, 11-12).<sup>20</sup> But the "amphibious nature" of the human being had already been expressed as an important psychotrope by a range of evolutionary scientists in the nineteenth century. It was not until Darwin had taken seriously the power of the amphibian as an important explanation for evolution and metamorphosis in his *A Naturalist's Voyage Around The World*, for example, that he could begin to contemplate those more complex evolutionary theories that enabled him to finish *On The Origin of the Species*. Permitting Darwin to conceive of such evolutionary notions as "development heterochronies" and "evolving convergences," the amphibian is what lies at the basis, as Jean-Sébastien Steyer notes, of Darwin's theory of natural selection.<sup>21</sup>

19 On "holism" in *Island*, see William Curtis, "Rorty's Liberal Utopia and Huxley's *Island*," *Philosophy and Literature* 35 (2011): 91-103, 97-8.

20 For a thoroughgoing analysis of Huxley's man-as-amphibian argument, see Hull, *Aldous Huxley: Representative Man*, 484-6.

21 See Steyer, "Darwin, the Amphibians, and Natural Selection," *Evolutionary History of Life* 8 (April 2009): 233-41, esp. 239; and Darwin, *A Naturalist's Voyage Around The World*

But the example of the amphibian also provides Darwin a means by which distinguish his own evolutionary arguments from those of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck. Calling on Aesop's fable "The Ox and The Frog"—a story in which a frog is shown "to blow itself up from vanity and envy until it burst[s]"—Darwin notes how these amphibious creatures "enlarge themselves when alarmed or angry by inhaling air."<sup>22</sup> Darwin's observation underscores not only the relationship between affective or mental stress and physiognomy that Huxley would describe in *The Doors of Perception*; it also instantiates a productive collision of literary description and scientific discovery.

Huxley had asked the following of butterflies in "Spinoza's Worm": Can they "transform themselves at will into butterflies? Is the miracle within their powers? (SW, 62-3). But now the amphibian, not the butterfly, becomes the exemplary figure—the special creature through which Huxley will even more seriously explore the possibility of biological transformation and metamorphosis.<sup>23</sup>

In 1955, only one year before the publication of Huxley's "Education of the Amphibian," it had been Julian Huxley who coined the term "genetic morphism," a term he had invented in an attempt to describe the non-mutational genetic anomalies that, as he now discovered, co-existed, in equilibrium, with any one organism's genetic norms.<sup>24</sup> But where Julian focuses on the anomalies of the body, Huxley attends to aberrant thoughts—the anomalies of the mind. Axiomatic in "Education" is the crucial notion that language—while it is "the greatest of all our gifts" (EOA, 11)—cannot prevent certain "bad habits" arising in the mind. Disconnected from the body, language produces only a

world of light and air [that] is also a world where the winds of doctrine howl destructively; where delusive mock-suns keep popping up over the horizon; where all kinds of poison come pouring out of the propaganda factories and tripe mills. Living amphibiously, half in fact and half in words, half in imme-

(London: John Murray, 1913), and especially those paragraphs related to the frog's bladder as "necessary for its existence" (408).

22 Charles Darwin, *The Expression of Emotions in Man and Animals* (London: John Murray, 1872). Also see Laura Gibbs, ed., *Aesop's Fables* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 166.

23 Notably, the thyroid hormone, rich in tadpoles and frogs, was as Donald Brown observes, "the first developmental morphogen ever discovered." Brown also notes that the discovery of this morphogen "stimulated the research of generations of anatomists, endocrinologists, physiologists, and biochemists." Donald Brown, "Amphibian Metamorphosis," *Developmental Biology* 306, no. 1 (2007): 20-33.

24 See Raf De Bont, "Schizophrenia, Evolution and the Borders of Biology," *History of Psychiatry* 21, no. 2 (2010): 144-59, esp. 145 and 145n1.



diate experience and half in abstract notions, we contrive most of the time to make the worst of both worlds (*EOA*, 11).

Here Huxley is as critical of language as Plato is critical of it in his *Phaedrus*; but where the Egyptian King Theuth identifies language as a *pharmakon*, Huxley proposes that, not only is language toxic, but it is also a poison that is increasingly produced and consumed en masse.<sup>25</sup>

And while language can infect and dissolve the body and mind in ways that are detrimental to the whole organism, it can also, as Huxley attests, be used to ameliorate and to heal. In his “Hocus Pocus” essay, Huxley’s criticism of Freud dovetails with his concession that psychoanalysis may in fact assist its subjects through its inadvertent deployment of the power of “suggestion,” a power that is always incipient in language:

The possibility that psycho-analytic cures are really due to suggestion must be considered. Psycho-analysts, of course, indignantly repudiate the notion and declare that suggestion is entirely foreign to their system and is, as a matter of fact, never practised by them (*OCHP*, 319).<sup>26</sup>

What is paradoxical about Huxley’s observation here—a recognition that linguistic suggestion can influence one’s mental health—is that Huxley had also disavowed language’s potency when he had used it to satirise his acquaintances in his early fiction. While critics such as James Sexton dispute Huxley’s claim that he was not unaware that his *romans à clef* might have offended, Huxley does appear to have been—perhaps incredulously to those in his circle—at least partially naïve as to the full effects of language’s violence.<sup>27</sup>

Yet, when Huxley describes *Crome Yellow* as his “Peacockian novel,” he indicates not only the work’s ostentation and bravura but its imitation of Thomas Love Peacock’s poetic satires.<sup>28</sup> Despite this, when Lady Morrell was offended by *Crome Yellow*, the result was a breach that, as Bedford narrates,

25 See Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, tr. Barbara Johnson (New York: Continuum, 1981 [1972]), 95-116, esp. 112.

26 Justin Clemens’s comments about the “paradoxical situation that renders the psycho-analytic cure very fraught” are relevant here See Clemens, *Psychoanalysis is an Antiphilosophy*, 53.

27 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 122-3.

28 Peacock’s satirical ballad *Sir Proeteus*, appeared under the pseudonym P.M. O’Donovan, Esq. See Howard Mills, *Peacock: His Circle and his Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), 48.

ensued that lasted many years. Aldous and Maria were distressed, and Aldous genuinely surprised. If the setting of the novel, the country house party, was very much based on Garsington, was this not a rather elegant house to its hosts?<sup>29</sup>

As Bedford continues, if anyone had been offended by the archetypal characters of the text,

surely then people must see that all these were conceived in a spirit of light-hearted comedy and that their absurdities did not belong to life and dreary *Realismus*, but to a summer's masque?<sup>30</sup>

Lasting a period of about six years (from 1921 until 1927), the social breach between Huxley and Morrell may be understood to have been a symptom of what Foucault describes as a Manichean struggle between “logophilia” and “logophobia” in his essay “The Discourse on Language.”<sup>31</sup>

Behind the aggrandisement of discourse in Western civilisation—or what Foucault calls “this apparent logophilia”—there lies a “certain fear” of the “irruption” of language’s most “dangerous elements” and “uncontrollable aspects.” These may and will explode, Foucault notes, “into the activity of our thoughts and language.”<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this “profound logophobia” constitutes nothing less than the

dumb fear of these events, of this mass of spoken things, of everything that could possibly be violent, discontinuous, querulous, disordered even and perilous in it, of the incessant disorderly, buzzing of discourse.<sup>33</sup>

Offering a number of radical postulates, Foucault names the “three decisions that our current thinking rather tends to resist”: namely, the “will to truth,” the will to “restore the discourse its character as an event,” and the will “to abolish the sovereignty of the signifier.”<sup>34</sup>

Consonant with Huxley’s view of language as a device that is often no more than the ventilated “winds of doctrine,” Foucault’s proposal indicates a willingness to dissolve the extent to which individuals may have personal responsibility for their words. Proposing “a principle of reversal,” Foucault seeks to devalue the privileged position accorded to “the author discipline,”

29 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 123.

30 *Ibid.*

31 Foucault, “The Discourse on Language,” in *Archaeology of Knowledge*, 215-237. Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 5.

32 *Ibid.*, 228-9.

33 *Ibid.*, 229.

34 *Ibid.*

a position that, “according to tradition,” allows us to apprehend the “source of discourse [and] the principles behind its flourishing and creative action.” But this allowance is a dissimulation and, as Foucault then argues, “we must rather recognise the negative activity of the cutting-out and rarefaction of discourse.”<sup>35</sup> Focusing less on individual authors than on those institutional forces giving rise to discourse as an “event” (see chapter 2), Foucault’s criticism may be superimposed or transplanted onto Huxley’s own mode of “speaking truth to power.” In Huxley’s satirisation of Morrell, his patron, and of those others he parodied in the Garsington Manor, it might be said that Huxley most directly critiques the rarefaction of language; he does not, that is, focus on parodying these individuals, so much as the language they use. Nevertheless, it is also possible that Huxley chose his battles poorly: as Quentin Bell suggests, it remains highly questionable why Huxley, like Gilbert Cannan and D.H. Lawrence, might have “set out to deliberately wound” Morrell and her friends.<sup>36</sup>

That the six-year-long “breach” between Huxley and Morrell had been violent and traumatic is evidenced by the fact that it could not be remedied—not even by the “tactful” and heartfelt letter that Huxley’s wife Maria had written to the Garsington host in 1923. This was a letter, Sexton notes, in which Maria would herself acknowledge her own “logophobia,” casting hers as the more neutral and dispassionate voice between the logophilic violence of Huxley’s tongue and the rarefaction of Morrell’s even more public vocalisations. Writing pleadingly to the host, Maria refers favourably to Huxley’s new book, *Antic Hay*, which had only just been published that year:

I hope you will like Aldous’ latest book... it is very good, and also much better—you know what I mean by this unpleasantly clumsy way of expressing my thoughts.”<sup>37</sup>

While Maria’s subtle, self-conscious remarks betray the degree to which Morrell had been invested in Huxley’s work, other passages—such as those that appear in a series of letters exchanged between Huxley and Morrell, published for the first time in 2007—even more clearly divulge the traces of Morrell’s disapproval of *Crome Yellow*. Repeatedly sharing his intimate and personal troubles with Morrell, Huxley’s letters to the Garsington host from 1916 to 1920 reveal the two principal issues that preoccupied him at

35 Ibid.

36 Quentin Bell, *Bloomsbury Recalled* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 163-4.

37 Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 5.

this time: first, the availability of money; and second, his being “absurdly miserable” for having not received a letter from his then girlfriend, Maria.<sup>38</sup>

But these letters also indicate Huxley’s propensity to develop his witty and satirical observations about others, and about the situations in which he found himself. One of these amusing narratives within these letters detail Huxley’s observations of Alix Strachey, for instance, the “sadly red-nosed and wind-pinched” woman whose features “spoil her statuesque appearance.” One of these stories also tell of the time that Huxley visited the “strangely Conradesque” lodgings he had intended on adopting as his home. In what became a “most amusing experience,” Huxley—apprehending the sight of the room and its occupants as a scene “pregnant with nightmares”—is led to promptly “decline in haste” and “take care not to be done in.”<sup>39</sup> That there have appeared no extant copies of Morrell’s original letters to Huxley, however—including no copy of the specific letter in which Morrell expresses her anguish to Huxley over *Crome Yellow*—is a fact that makes it difficult to analyse the full extent of Morrell’s feelings of betrayal. As much as Morrell’s unhappiness may be gleaned from the apology and response that Huxley writes to her, it is likely that even Huxley had understated his wrongs, and that Morrell had been far more offended than even Huxley’s letters even make out.<sup>40</sup>

Huxley’s surprise and bewilderment that Morrell “could suppose that this little marionette performance... was the picture of a real milieu” offers to him only “another proof” that “we are all parallel straight lines destined to meet only at infinity.” Demonstrating that “real understanding” between humans is in fact “an impossibility,” Huxley remains firmly of his view that humans are unable, or simply unwilling, to distinguish between “the two worlds” that are constituted by, on the one hand, “real living people” and on the other, “puppets, devoid of all emotion, devoid indeed of most of the attributes of living humanity.”<sup>41</sup> It is evident from Huxley’s defence of his novel—a defence mounted in the face of Morrell’s disdain—that he had been accused by her of treating his “friends with contempt.”<sup>42</sup> Denying this and, in Sexton’s view, “feign[ing] shock at Lady Ottoline’s outrage,” Huxley asserts that *Crome Yellow* merely imbues “perfectly fantastic marionettes with generalized qualities and a capacity for talking.”<sup>43</sup>

38 Maria Huxley to Ottoline Morrell, 1 March 1917 in *ibid.*, 48.

39 *Ibid.*, 48 and 56, Huxley to Morrell, c. July 1917, in *Selected Letters*, ed. Sexton, 56.

40 Huxley to Morrell, 3 December 1921, in *ibid.*, 107.

41 *Ibid.*, 108.

42 *Ibid.*, 107-8.

43 *Ibid.*, 5, 108.

And while, in the strict terms of Huxley's apologia, his fantastic work of fiction constitutes only a ludic "puppet-comedy of ideas," it is also true that *Crome Yellow* had satirised not simply elements of Morrell's persona— in the character of astrology enthusiast and patroness Priscilla Wimbush— nor even simply the folly of other members of Bloomsbury.<sup>44</sup> Rather, *Crome Yellow* paints a satirical portrait of Huxley himself in the character of Mr Barbecue-Smith, even as Huxley asserts that he "deliberately and studiedly" avoided making this character like "any whole or complete human being."<sup>45</sup> In the meditative title of his book *Pipe-Lines to the Infinite*, Barbecue-Smith offers a tantalising augury of the Bergsonian "Mind-at-Large" that Huxley would incorporate into his 1940s studies of the mind. Intimating Huxley's crumbling belief in the possibility of the "faithful representation of a general logos," Huxley's philosophical defence of *Crome Yellow* suggests its success not only as a "comedy of ideas" but as a comedy of the precarity and volatility of language.<sup>46</sup>

Just as Foucault's comes to visualise Western thought as a kind of "permanent anthropologism," which is to say a succession of modulated *epistemes* that are nevertheless always already inadequate, so Huxley now comes to view language as the hopeless expression of what is ultimately, in the words of Claire Colebrook, an "anthropological sleep." As adumbrated in *Crome Yellow*, Huxley understands the ephemerality of the logos as its fatal element; it is precisely his own authorial specificity—his own experience at Garsington—that, as it turns out, is untranslatable. In a letter to Morell, Huxley underscores the limits of linguistic morphology: "I write something which seems to me immediately and obviously comprehensible for what it is."<sup>47</sup> But in a way that is antithetical to Foucault's understanding of the logophilic—in which the writer no longer distinguishes between words and the world—Huxley is logophobic: he understands that literature is a kind of writing that is "separated... from all other language with a deep scission," and "can never" represent the same thing as "that which must be thought" by the writer.<sup>48</sup>

44 Ibid., 108.

45 Ibid.

46 See Foucault, *Archaeology*, 229. Cf. Claire Colebrook, "Foucault: Anti-Representationalism and Logophobia," in *Philosophy and Post-structuralist Theory: From Kant to Deleuze* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), 162-201, esp. 172 and 191.

47 Sexton, *Selected Letters*, 108.

48 Foucault, *Archaeology*, 43-4.

In Bentley's view, Huxley's satirical *romans à clef* enable him to "desubliminate" his psychotic feelings, ventilating and dissipating them through an act of "unrepression." Writing becomes a remedy for the range of events that Brian Aldiss has described as Huxley's "fatal breaks."<sup>49</sup> Thus, if body and mind are related, then their relation parallels that which distinguishes, for Freud, the psychotic and the neurotic. As Bentley argues, the crucial difference between these syndromes is that while the neurotic does "not deny the existence of reality," the psychotic "denies it and tries to substitute something for it," bringing about a kind of wilful blindness or "até."<sup>50</sup> Constitutive of the subject's "wilful ignorance of certain low valued components," this substitution then allows the psychotic to express their "dissatisfaction with some aspects of reality."<sup>51</sup> In both tragedy and satire, Bentley asserts, "the work of repression" is reversed; what has already been repressed in a "displacement from below upwards"—a move to which I referred in chapter 5—is now brought back to its origin, which is to say it is "buried below." Taking aim at "all culture and all highly valued or superorganic elements of experience," Huxley's satires reveal these rarefied moments as "either displacements of organic functions or alembications of physiological motives."<sup>52</sup>

49 Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 172. Aldiss notes that "the fatal break is the sign of a writer who has suffered a severe discontinuity in his or her private life, and generally early on, in the formative years, The discontinuity in life is echoed in their fiction." See Brian Aldiss, "Fatal Breaks," in Michele Langford (ed.), *Contours of the Fantastic: Selected Essays from the Eighth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1990), 4-5. Of course, mescaline and LSD would later serve to generate a similar "break" for Huxley, acting like a salve and showing him "in the old Zen way of a kick in the ass or a blow on the head... what he didn't know before." Hull, *Aldous Huxley: Representative Man*, 505n11.

50 Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 172.

51 Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, J. Strachey, ed., vol. 2 (Basic Books, New York, 1959), 279-80, qtd. in Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 172-4.

52 Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 174. Also see Sandor Ferenczi, *Further Contributions to the Theory and Technique of Psycho-Analysis* (London: Karnac, 2002), 85; Monique Cournot-Janin, "Dora: Fragment of an Analysis of Hysteria," in *Freud: A Modern Reader*, ed. Rosine Perelberg (London: Whurr Publishers Ltd, 2005), 47-60, esp. 57. While Bentley and others attribute this displacement mechanism to Freud, the psychoanalyst's words are relatively indirect. The notion of this mechanism appears in his case study of Dora, where Freud describes how the fourteen-year-old girl "[who] coughed a great deal" was asked about her symptoms. In response,

all the girl could think of was that her grandmother, who was said to have catarrh, coughed like that. Then it was clear that she too had "catarrh", and did not want to have any witness to her careful cleansing of herself in the evening. The discharge of mucus, *thus shifted from lower to higher in the body* by the use of the word catarrh, was even of unusual intensity.

Emphasis mine. Freud, *A Case of Hysteria (Dora)*, tr. Anthea Bell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 70n1. In addition to Bentley, it is notable that in a discussion of Oe-

As with Bentley's analysis, Peter Sloterdijk's detailed description of Diogenes's vaunted revolution in Ancient Greece aptly describes the tradition in whose shadow Huxley strides:

Whereas "high theory" from Plato on irrevocably cuts off the threads to material embodiment in order instead to draw the threads of argumentation all the more tightly into a logical fabric, there emerges a subversive variant of low theory that pantomimically and grotesquely carries practical embodiment to an extreme. The process of truth splits into a discursive phalanx of grand theory and satirical-literary troupe of skirmishers.<sup>53</sup>

If *Crome Yellow* is a "puppet-show" of satirical figures and their skirmishes, it is itself supplemented by a brutal cynicism that, as Julian Huxley writes in *Memories*, is likely to have been triggered or catalysed by the grief Huxley felt after his mother died. Throwing light on Huxley's tendency to mock those around him, Julian laments that it was this "meaningless catastrophe"—a tragedy that befell Julia Huxley when she was only forty-six years old—that "was the main cause of the protective cynical skin in which [Huxley] clothed himself and his novels in the twenties."<sup>54</sup>

Simply to understand Huxley's cynical phase as a reverberation of this trauma, however, would be to discount Huxley's own admission that, in writing the novel, he had desired to amuse not only himself but also those "first rate people" who inhabited the "best circles." Huxley would have been among only a few who "dared to laugh at"—and knew how to make fun of—those bourgeois estates, filled as they were with wealthy and educated people, "especially in Bloomsbury."<sup>55</sup> And while Huxley's mother's death

dipalism and self-enucleation—the stabbing of the eyes—the authors note the prevalence since Freud of "The theory" in which "self-enucleation was an expression of the patient's wish to punish themselves by castration, after 'upward projection' from the testicles to the eyes." See Matthew Large and Olav Nielssen, "Self-enucleation: Forget Freud and Oedipus, it's all about untreated psychosis," *British Journal of Ophthalmology* 96 (2012): 1056-7.

53 Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1988), 102.

54 *Sunday [London] Times Weekly Review*, 12 April, 1970, 25, quoted in Birnbaum, *Aldous Huxley's Quest for Values*, 131; also see Dunaway, *Aldous Huxley Recollected*, 6n8.

55 Robert Kirsch, in Lawrence Powell, et al., *Aldous Huxley, 1894-1963: Addresses at a Memorial Meeting Held in the School of the Library Service*, February 27, 1964 (Los Angeles, 1964), 4, qtd. in Birnbaum, *Aldous Huxley's Quest for Values*, 5. Also see the relation that Eli Zaretsky describes as between the Bloomsbury set and psychoanalysis in the 1930s: as Zaretsky asserts,

The integration of psychoanalysis into the welfare state began in England during the 1930s, and culminated during World War II. At the centre of analytic thought during this period was the idea of ruptured connection. Along with the emphasis on the mother, British analysis developed a new view of "the ego," as ethically re-



doubtless had a significant impact on Huxley, the origin of his cynical drives are as diverse and as general as those that had also driven the ancient cynics. As with the Greek practitioners of Cynicism, of whom Diogenes is emblematic, Huxley cast a sceptical eye over the world only to affirm the view that, as David Mazella notes, “human conduct is directed... wholly by self-interest or self-indulgence, and that appearances to the contrary are superficial and untrustworthy.”<sup>56</sup> Inasmuch as Huxley’s cynicism is of a political kind, then—and precisely as much is amply confirmed in *Brave New World*—it also derives from his philosophical meditation on the possibility of a “mental mechanism” that seeks to make, as Bentley argues, “high values descend... toward concomitant low values.”

Huxley sensed the modernist paradox in which low and high values would be forever engaged in a play of appearances. What Quentin Bell describes as the contradiction between Morrell’s “stupendous dramatic possibilities,” and her reality—the one in which she was “decidedly dull”—is a contradiction that Huxley seeks to reverse in his novels. And this an impulse driven by a desire to reveal to his readers the way in which the “unfavourable aspects of the image” of reality “are suppressed or filtered out,” bringing the “previously excluded reality back into the picture.”<sup>57</sup>

As I have already noted, Bentley calls on Freud to propose that Huxley’s “satire is a desublimation.” Analysing an exemplary scene in *Crome Yellow*, Bentley observes how Denis Stone, a young man, narrates how his amorous relation to the word “carminative”—a word he has long associated with such features as warmth, passion, and spirit—leads only to a tragically embodied bathos. Stone’s high regard for the word, he relates, is what has prompted him to compose a poem upon it: a work he entitles “And passion carminative

sponsible, i.e., not reflecting upon universal considerations, but rather involved in concrete obligations to others. This ethic expressed a new attitude towards personal life and represented, in effect, a “feminine” alternative to Freud—an ethic of care instead of an ethic of justice.

Notwithstanding Huxley’s cynical attitude toward the Bloomsbury set and toward Freud, is it not precisely this kind of relation to the mother and to new “feminine Freudianism” that Huxley enacts, both in his fiction, and, later, through the 1940s and ‘50s, in his works on pacification? See Eli Zaretsky, “Melanie Klein and the Emergence of Modern Personal Life,” in Lyndsey Stonebridge and Joan Phillips (eds.), *Reading Melanie Klein* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 34.

56 David Mazella, “Cynicism and Dandyism,” in *The Making of Modern Cynicism* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007), 176. I note that Mazella’s description is taken from a 1913 dictionary definition of cynicism.

57 Bell, *Bloomsbury Recalled*, 162; Bentley, “Aldous Huxley and the Anatomical Vision,” 175.

as wine... ”<sup>58</sup> As Stone explains the word to his companion, Mr. Scogan—an older man, and a cynic himself—“carminative” is

A word I’ve treasured from my earliest infancy [...] treasured and loved. They used to give me cinnamon when I had a cold—quite useless, but not disagreeable. One poured it drop by drop out of narrow bottles, a golden liquor, fierce and fiery. On the label was a list of its virtues, and among other things it was described as being in the highest degree carminative. I adored the word. “Isn’t it carminative?” I used to say to myself when I’d taken my dose. It seemed so wonderfully to describe that sensation of internal warmth, that glow, that—what shall I call it—physical self-satisfaction which followed the drinking of cinnamon. Later, when I discovered alcohol, “carminative” described for me that similar, but noble, more spiritual glow which wine evokes not only in the body but in the soul as well (CY, 221).

Praising the power of what we shall soon discover is an entirely misused word, Stone’s description of how defective usages of words can yet produce such a feeling of “self-satisfaction” allegorises the similarly misapprehending or defective vision of reality that Huxley imputes to *Crome Yellow*’s personae.

Inhabiting the “ripe and rich” manor named “Crome,” the characters live in this eponymous house, which is daily “basked in full sunlight” (CY, 6). Much like Stone and his friends at Crome, Morrell and the others with whom Huxley had been acquainted at Garsington also misapprehend their world. For Huxley, these elites’s misreadings and failures are typified in their inappropriate turns of phrase or—if we are to read Stone’s narrative at its most extreme: as an allegory for misconduct—in their outbursts of flatulence. In any case, if Huxley was intent on humiliating someone, then what best would allow him to achieve this goal, he thought, was an exposure of these characters’s underlying biologies; for behind each manicured appearance, felt Huxley, lay an embarrassing, vulgar, and mundane body, forever exceeding its owner’s control.

While Huxley’s satire tirelessly alludes to the unworthiness of those in high social and political positions, it is the scatological humour evoked in Stone’s misappropriation of the word “carminative” that most forcefully suggests the power and nature of Huxley’s cynical mode. When Stone explains his recent “realization” to Mr. Scogan, the explanation becomes a kind of metanoic moment: a clarification of the point that language’s aural sensuousness is an *embodied* sensuousness. The episode also intimates what may

58 Bentley seems to misquote the poem, giving it the title “And Love Carminative as Wine!” See Bentley, “Aldous Huxley and the Anatomical Vision,” 175.

be an aetiology for logophilia; with a libidinal and even coprophilic instinct for words, the logophile's pleasure precedes and defies any and all intellectual rationalisations. "It was the first time I had ever committed the word to writing," Stone says,

and all at once I felt I would like lexicographical authority for it. A small English-German dictionary was all I had at hand. I turned up C, ca, car, carm. There it was: "Carminative: *windtreibend*." "*Windtreibend!*" he repeated. Mr. Scogan laughed. Denis shook his head. "Ah," he said, "for me it was no laughing matter. For me it marked the end of a chapter, the death of something young and precious, There were the years—years of childhood and innocence—when I had believed that carminative meant—well, carminative. And now, before me lies the rest of a life—a day, perhaps, ten years, half a century, when I shall know that carminative means *windtreibend*."

"Plus ne suis ce que j'ai été.  
Et plus ne saurai jamais l'être."

It is a realization that makes one rather melancholy (CY, 223-24).

If a word so pleasurably expressive *and* "admirable" as "carminative" can also denote a strange biochemical compound, one that is "capable of inducing gas"—and liable to make the speaker, as Stone suggests, quoting Clément Marot, "more than he was"—then how are these sensual associations of morphemes to be explained?<sup>59</sup> And when, if ever, should such solecisms be purposefully or even pleasurably employed?

Huxley considers exactly these questions when he denounces the utterance that "Swift thought so much of" in his satirical poem "The Lady's Dressing Room." This is an utterance in which the poet confirms that the beautiful young woman, Celia, does in fact defecate—just like all other humans: "Celia... shits!" Contemplating the kinds of readers and writers who might, like Swift, take pleasure in such "unclean and unsavoury" intimations of the body's waste systems (SWIFT, 25-6), Huxley can only think of "certain idiots" or "blunted or hardened... insensitives": those who delight in the "pursuit of horrors and disgustfulness long after the majority of their fellows have begun to shrink from a pleasure" (SWIFT, 25-6).<sup>60</sup>

And yet, despite Huxley's apparent disapproval of this kind of biological humour, there is also a mystical coterie, he writes, which even includes mem-

59 See Clément Marot, "De soy-même," in *Œuvres de Clément Marot: Revûes sur plusieurs manuscrits*, vol. 1 (La Haye : P. Gosse et J. Neaulne, 1731), 71.

60 See Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 177.

bers as august as “the mystical Mme. Guyon... [and] St. Francis of Assisi.” This group, Huxley notes, seeks the “glow of satisfaction which follows the accomplishment of some act in the teeth of an instinctive resistance” (*SWIFT*, 25-6). If Swift’s “hatred of bowels” may be read as the “rationalization of an intense disgust,” Huxley wonders, then why would Swift “pore so lingeringly over what revolted him?” (*SWIFT*, 26) To answer this question, Huxley then assembles in a few clauses a string of axiomatics that are characteristic of his ontological perspective on art. And, in his conclusion, he charts his view of the Derridean arche-violence of language, invoking a familiar geometrical analogy:

Swift’s greatness lies in the intensity, the almost insane violence of that “hatred of bowels” which is the essence of his misanthropy and which underlies the whole of his work... Like Shelley’s apocalyptic philanthropy, it is a protest against reality, childish (for it is only the child whose refuses to accept the order of things), like all such protests, from the fairy story to the socialist’s Utopia. Regarded as a political pamphlet or the expression of a worldview [these stories] are preposterous... Regarded as works of art, as independent universes of discourse existing on their own authority, like geometries harmoniously developed from a set of arbitrarily chosen axioms, they are almost equally admirable (*SWIFT*, 27).

At play in Swift’s misanthropic relation to the external world is a puerile and childish playfulness against which Huxley ostensibly militates. But Huxley also mounts many of his own “childish” protests against reality; these appear in so many variations of childish and sincere humour in his fiction, essay works and, of course, his own “political pamphlets.” Neither a simplistic “insensitive” nor a complex mystic himself, Huxley nurtures what is ultimately a cynicism about the human’s relation to their own biology. And, however much Huxley’s own fictions constitute a kind of Swiftian grotesquery, they also function as a fanciful mistake. Like Denis Stone’s inadvertent allusion to those organic functions produced by a “carminative,” Huxley’s fiction constitutes only a “puppet-comedy of ideas.”<sup>61</sup>

But if Huxley or Swift are childish, then their immaturity need not have anything to do with a stymied or stunted sexual or even intellectual development. Dismissing Freud’s “assumption” that “young children have sexual feelings and desires,” Huxley mercilessly repudiates the notion that an infant’s mind might be capable of complex thought. His “Hocus-Pocus” essay,

61 Huxley to Morrell, 3 December 1921, in *Selected Letters*, ed. Sexton, 107.

for instance, produces a comical image of the infant theologian or child epistemologist precisely to reveal it as an incredulous one:

Infants at the breast, Freud assures us, experience a genuine sexual pleasure; and to prove this, he bids us look at their faces which wear, while sucking, that perfectly contented expression which, in adult life, only follows the accomplishment of the sexual act. We might as well say that the expression of profound wisdom and rapt contemplation which we often see on the faces of babies lying contentedly in their cradles is a proof that they are great philosophers and are thinking about the problems of free will and predestination and the theory of knowledge (*OCHP*, 318).

But if the existence of an infant philosopher is to be “gravely doubted,” it is only because the epithet “childish” functions as a pejorative in Huxley’s lexicon.<sup>62</sup> After all, Huxley would playfully imagine just such an image in his essay “The Critic in the Crib” in 1929. While ostensibly mocking Freud’s perception of infants as intelligent, Huxley rejects what has since become a mainstream psychological view of children: that they are so much more “thoughtful” and “philosophical” than adults are even capable of understanding.<sup>63</sup>

Nevertheless, Huxley’s remarks bring into relief one of the most persistent problems in the Freudian oeuvre: the impasse that divides and extricates the infant from adult. This is what is, in Lacan’s terminology, a distinction between the fragmented, presubjective self—the one to whom the “total form of the body” appears only ever as “Gestalt,” unable to uttered in language—and the fully constituted subject for whom the body provides “the symbolic matrix in which the I is precipitated in a primordial form” and to whom language “restores” their “function as a subject.”<sup>64</sup>

62 Notably, however, Huxley, in “The Critic in the Crib,” writes of the “profoundly philosophical eyes of the child.” See Baker and Sexton, eds., *Huxley: Complete Essays III*, 10-14, esp. 14.

63 See, for instance, Alison Gopnik, *The Philosophical Baby* (London: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009); Alison Gopnik and Joshua B. Tenenbaum, “Bayesian Networks, Bayesian Learning and Cognitive Development,” *Developmental Science* 10, no. 3 (2007): 281-7; Susan Carey, *Conceptual Change in Childhood* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1985); Alison Gopnik, Andrew Meltzoff and Patricia Kuhl, *How Babies Think: The Science of Childhood* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1999); Henry Wellman and Susan Gelman, “Knowledge Acquisition in Foundational Domains,” in *Handbook of Child Psychology, Volume 2: Cognition, Perception and Language*, ed. William Damon (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 1998), 523-573. For a broader discussion of children in British Literature, see Adrienne E. Gavin, ed., *The Child in British Literature: Literary Constructions of Childhood, Medieval to Contemporary* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), esp. 205-6, in which reference is made to Huxley’s *Point Counter Point* in a discussion of child deaths and the inaccessibility of children’s minds.

64 Lacan, “The Mirror Stage as Formative of the I Function,” in *Écrits: A Selection*, tr.

As Meckier observes, *Antic Hay* and other of Huxley's novels continually reinforce the extrication of adult and child, generating "perverse contrasts between childishness and maturity." These juxtapositions everywhere "testify to Huxley's interest in the theme of age." Persisting even in *Island*, Huxley's interest in mixing up ages also explains "the bildungsroman element in many of his novels."<sup>65</sup> But what is most perverse in these contrasts is perhaps their tendency to reverse upon and fold into themselves, so that each collapses as many category distinctions as it reaffirms or reinforces. In *Time Must Have A Stop* (1944), for instance, grown men are imagined as Oedipal babies: Eustace Barnack gorges with his "unweaned" lips at the "wet brown teat" of the cigar that is "incarnate where he sucks"; meanwhile, Sebastian becomes the "gigolo-baby" of Mrs. Ockham (*TMHAS*, 51, 214). But what Huxley no doubt intends here as a satirisation of Freud also becomes a denigration of men as children; and if this "juvenilisation" denigrates Freud's conceptualisation of children as having "profound wisdom," it also reaffirms the obverse: that adults can be childish, lacking the wisdom enough to even mature beyond their infancy.

What is undoubtedly Huxley's low estimation of the abilities and maturity of grown adults, however, is a theme playfully radicalised in Huxley's depiction of children in *Brave New World*; here the children become animals, "made to scream at the sight of a rose" within the dark corners of the state's "Neo-Pavlovian Conditioning Rooms" (*BNW*, 15, 18). Not every adult is prone to childishness, however—just as not every child is vulnerable to behavioural conditioning. And if Huxley remains disinclined to undertake introspection, he also remains unlikely to feel egotistical about his position as a "visionary" in the 1950s. That is, he remains indifferent to his position as an artist; for instance, he is never prepared to think excessively about his status as the "marionette" puppet-master in his letters to Morrell. And yet Huxley's feelings about himself as a kind of authority or singular exception among the swarthy masses also seems to be channelled—as well as emblematised—in *Brave New World* through the character of John the Savage.

It is notable that a range of critics have interpreted the Savage's obsessive consumption of Shakespeare as an indication of Huxley's "cultural arrogance"—a situation that has even led some to suggest, as Nicolas Brown observes, that *Brave New World* is "insufferably elitist." To these critics, the novel proposes no less than a proposal that "the savages" (*BNW*, 33, 90)

Bruce Fink (London: W.W. Norton and Co., 2002), 4.

<sup>65</sup> Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 32.

should be so liberated as to experience the “free play of the imagination,” only when so induced by the authority of the European literary canon.<sup>66</sup> It is difficult, however, to reconcile these claims with the narratological bathos that is constituted by the tragic death of John the Savage when he hangs himself at the end of the novel.

It is just as easy to assert, moreover, that such a denouement expresses, at least tacitly, Huxley’s pessimism toward that which Bobby Newman characterises as the “corrupting culture” devised by the behaviourists. And it is perhaps no less reflective of Huxley’s concession that such an act—suicide, that is—might be completely necessary if one wishes to sustain the illusion of a “pure existence.”<sup>67</sup>

The Savage’s suicide also echoes that incident of seventeen years earlier in which Huxley’s brother, “Trev,” had hanged himself—the outcome, in Huxley’s words, of his sad inability to act consistently with the “ideals” he had “the courage” with which to “face life.” In this way the Savage’s story functions as a counterpoint to those “thousands” of humans to whom Huxley had adverted immediately after Trev’s death, himself no doubt among them: “who shelter their weakness from the same fate by a cynical, unidealistic outlook on life.”<sup>68</sup>

*The Tempest* and other of Shakespeare’s plays, however, are not the only literary works on which John the Savage focuses his efforts and autodidacticism. When he is given a book by his mother, Linda, the Savage attempts as a child to comprehend embryonic engineering, poring over the many pages of a book titled *The Chemical and Bacteriological Conditioning of The Embryo: Practical Instructions for Beta Embryo-Store Workers*. But John’s initial enthusiasm for the task soon disappears, and almost as quickly as it had arisen: it is a “beastly, beastly book,” he laments, one whose “title alone” had taken him “a quarter of an hour to read” (*BNW*, 112).

One part *L’enfant terrible*, another part the all-too-candid child, John thus represents the childish and defiant spirit that is everywhere disavowed and

66 Brown, *Aldous Huxley*, 259.

67 Bobby Newman, “*Brave New World Revisited* Revisited: Huxley’s Evolving View of Behaviorism,” *The Behavior Analyst* 15, no. 1 (1991): 61-9, esp. 63.

68 Huxley to Gervas Huxley, late August, 1914 in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 61-2. As Woodcock notes,

The third and arguably most thunderous blow to the young Huxley, in 1914, was the suicide of his closest brother “Trev,” whose presence and devotion enabled his younger brother, still half sightless and walking with the deliberate lifting tread of the near-blind, to find his place in the unfamiliar world of Oxford.

Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 46, 146.



erased by the novel's biopolitical economy. In one scene, when the Director of Conditioning and Hatcheries castigates Bernard Marx, dismissing him from "the Bloomsbury Centre" (*BNW*, 127), the Director characterises Marx's defiance as the psychopathological residue of a poor and disobedient childhood. Now a *persona non grata*—and an enemy of the state—Marx's public shaming highlights his troublesome infancy:

"... even as a little infant," (here the Director made the sign of the T), "he has proved himself an enemy of Society, a subverter, ladies and gentlemen, of all Order and Stability, a conspirator against Civilization itself" (*BNW*, 129).

As a critique of the biopolitical implications of Freudianism, behaviourism, and the bureaucratisation of all the sciences, Huxley's novel adumbrates an epistemology in which industrial science, medicine and health remain as fiercely disempowering as they are ameliorative. Thus, if *Brave New World* gives literary expression to what Hull describes as the "intellectual atmosphere of the time," then this is an atmosphere that still persists—whether in spite or because of Huxley's prescient vision of a technologised Gehenna.<sup>69</sup>

The works produced in Huxley's time and milieu—including such American contributions as Harold Lasswell's classic *Psychopathology and Politics* (1930)—were nonetheless representative of the birth of critical science studies, a discipline typified at this time by the works of Max Weber, H.G. Wells and Bertrand Russell. Of course, Huxley and Russell had met at Garsington, and it is notable that the latter's *The Scientific Outlook* (1931) was published in the same year as *Brave New World*.<sup>70</sup> But unlike Weber's and Russell's tempered projections, Huxley's image of science's new world encounters the malevolent nature of the moralistic and humanistic experiments that arose as science advanced in the context of modernist shock. Proud to have produced a series of scenarios in which "biological inventions" would ensure the "abolition of the family," Huxley wrote in a letter to his father Leonard of *Brave New World's* imaginary scope: it captured the "appalingness... of [a] Utopia" in which the wrong means were used to erase "all the Freudian 'complexes' for which family relationships are responsible."<sup>71</sup>

69 See Hull, *Aldous Huxley: Representative Man*, 227.

70 Ibid., Also see Newman, "Brave New World Revisited Revisited," 63; Robert Baker, "Science and Utopia: Bertrand Russell, Max Weber, and Huxley's Technocratic Dystopia," in *Brave New World: History Science and Dystopia* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1990); Bertrand Russell, *The Scientific Outlook* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1931); Harold D. Lasswell, *Psychopathology and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930).

71 Huxley to Leonard Huxley, 24 August, 1931, in *Letters*, ed. Smith 351-2.

One such scenario arises in the novel when it is revealed that John the Savage is in fact the “delicious creature,” which is to say *the son*, of the hatchery Director. Upon learning that John is indeed his son, the Director makes a scene before all of London’s “upper-caste,” resigning “immediately” and swearing “never [to] set foot inside the Centre again” (*BNW*, 133). Meckier identifies the way in which this “terrifying” episode may be distinguished from the “Swiftian ironies and Dickensian zaniness” that typify much of the novel’s action. Confirming the sincerity of Huxley’s disapprobation of state-sanctioned social engineering, he argues for the novel’s dreadful illustration of a dystopian future riven by familial discord.

But this scene is also a singularly sincere derision of the biopolitical control, a regulation whose vicious social critique is now all the more suggestively amplified by the gravitas of its articulation as an Oedipal, father-son conflict. Anticipating what would be taken up by Foucault in his lectures on biopolitics some forty years later (in 1973-4), Huxley’s novel thus lays the groundwork for what Foucault will explicitly theorise as the torqued dialectic between the administration by the state of psychological and psychiatric apparatuses, and the role or institution of marriage or the family.<sup>72</sup>

More than simply a history of diagnosis and institutionalisation, however, Foucault’s lectures identify, much like *Brave New World*, what is the less apparent, but more insidious function of psychiatric power. Naming this function the “Psy function,” Foucault characterises psychiatry as a discipline that will occupy any and all of those interstices of power left unfilled and open by the family:

What I will call the Psy function, that is to say, the psychiatric, psychopathological, psycho sociological, psycho-criminological, and psychoanalytic function, makes its appearance in this organization of disciplinary substitutes for the family with a familial reference. And when I say “function,” I mean not only the discourse, but the institution, and the psychological individual himself. And I think this really is the function of these psychologists, psychotherapists, criminologists, psychoanalysts, and the rest. What is their function if not to be agents of the organization of a disciplinary apparatus that will plug in, rush in, where an opening gapes in familial sovereignty?<sup>73</sup>

If Huxley’s attention to the importance of infancy puts both his *Brave New World* and anti-Freud essay into dialogue with psychoanalysis and be-

<sup>72</sup> Meckier, *Satire and Structure*, 7.

<sup>73</sup> Michel Foucault, *Psychiatric Power, Lectures at the College De France 1973-73*, ed. J. Arnold Davidson and tr. Graham Burchell (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 85.

haviourism, it also allows him to envision that which he apprehends as the violence of the Psy function at its most extreme. Rendering what is a proto-Foucauldian vision of the family as “criminological,” Huxley’s “Hocus-Pocus” essay detects the amusing image of the infant philosopher, only to lambast the Freudian baby—the quizzical figure who is now vulnerable but radically perceptive.

Despite this, the prodigious infant will also be the heuristic through which Huxley will envision the potential of political subversion in *Brave New World*. Substituting the personage of John the Savage for Freud’s baby, the novel envisions a sanguine image of the child “genius”—albeit that in Huxley’s work, genius appears only in rare cases, such as in this case of John the Savage. At the same time as Huxley mocks the idea that a baby’s face might reflect an underlying wisdom, he also leaves ambiguous the question of what constitutes the infant John’s exasperation with the “beastly” embryology textbook: Is it his illiteracy or his disagreement with the book’s moral tenets that dissuades him from reading it? That Huxley himself is often characterised in terms that reflect his precocity as an infant (D. H. Lawrence described Huxley, even as an adult, as a “talented adolescent”) helps to account for what appears to be his personal reluctance to altogether disavow the possibility of infant precocity—even as he mocks the idea as it arises in Freud’s work.<sup>74</sup>

When in his considerations of Freudianism Huxley is led to contemplate the infant philosopher, he elucidates a number of questions, many of which remain among those that are most intractable in psychoanalytic theorisations of childhood trauma and repression (*OCHP*, 318). The dubiety of the procedure in which a psychoanalyst can attribute wisdom to a child based on their expression, for instance, is no more, Huxley argues, than a pantomimed version of the ordinary psychoanalytic procedure, the one in which values are “read” and “accorded” to individuals based on their expressions and verbalisations.

That is, where the analyst imputes to the analysand any among the skein of dubious traumas, affects, and experiences that they do, such imputations are based solely on symptoms that are detected in just as arbitrary a manner, as those which are imputed to “child”. For psychoanalysts can provide no

<sup>74</sup> See, for instance, the narrative in which a four-year-old Huxley is asked what he is thinking about while sitting at a window, to which he replies “Skin.” Julian Huxley, *Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume*, 21. Also see descriptions of Huxley’s huge head and often pensive expression in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 1; D.H. Lawrence, *The Letters of D.H. Lawrence*, ed. Aldous Huxley (New York: Viking, 1932), 765.

better “proofs” than those that are subjectively observed or in other discreditable ways “adduced” by lay persons (*OCHP*, 319).

From Huxley’s perspective, Freud’s inability to provide evidence of a nexus between affect and past trauma is axiomatic. It brings into view not only the question of the *existence* of the analysand’s symptoms, but also the question of the *importance* of the trauma to which the putatively symptomatic affect is attributed. Nonetheless, it is difficult to take Huxley’s rejection of Freudianism completely seriously; for Huxley’s attention to Freud’s writing appears, at best, cursory and scant. Even among the few quotations and summations of Freud advanced by Huxley in his “Hocus Pocus” essay, none appears to be anything more than a random, scattershot line from the air; it is as though Huxley has read the neurologist at second hand.

And while Huxley is certainly justified in detecting that it was under the influence of “Charcot’s view of the traumatic origins of hysteria” that Freud had initially considered “aetiologically significant the statements of patients in which they ascribed their symptoms to passive sexual experiences,” Huxley makes nothing of the fact that Freud soon abandoned an attendant notion: that the aetiological origin of a patient’s complexes could lie in *any* particular physical or biological trauma.<sup>75</sup>

For when Freud realised that, as M. Guy Thompson notes, “children are capable of repressing virtually anything that is too painful to bear,” Freud moderated his theory to permit this very discovery. “Fictionalisations” of trauma, Freud argued, could also engender neurosis. He thus accepted that the precipitation of negative affect or the emergence of a negative syndrome could no more reflect the violence of a particular *physical event* than the impact of an *imaginary one*. And around this time, Freud also proposed that fictionalisations of trauma might substitute for, and aid in the repression of, an actually-experienced traumatic event; through a kind of self-deception, then, one might be enabled to overcome the neurosis.<sup>76</sup>

What Lacan would later call a “méconnaissance,” then, is first proposed by Freud. For Freud now realises that patients are prone to misconstrue, misidentify, or displace the origin of their own traumas, to trace “their symptoms to traumas that are fictitious . . .” If this be true, Freud speculated,

75 Sigmund Freud, “The History of the Psychoanalytic Movement,” in James Strachey, ed., *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 volumes (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-1974), 14: 3-66, 17.

76 See M. Guy Thompson, “Deception, Mystification, Trauma: Laing and Freud,” *The Psychoanalytic Review* 83 (1996): 827-47, esp. 828-9.

then the new fact which emerges is precisely that they create such scenes in *phantasy*, and this *psychical* reality has to be taken into account alongside *practical* reality.<sup>77</sup>

Having undergone an almost incomparable triad of impactful traumas as an adolescent, Huxley ostensibly represents, as Philip Thody forcefully argues, a peerless candidate for psychoanalytic examination.<sup>78</sup> But if Huxley expresses a wild aversion to Freud's method, he seems only to become so much the more vulnerable to this analysis, leading to the claim that—just as had been the case for Vladimir Nabokov's disdain for Freud—Huxley's anti-Freudianism functions as a smokescreen, as a protest against the very method that might most reliably betray or denude the subject's own neuroses.

Regarded in this way, Huxley's derision might be seen as little more than the narcissistic dismissal of one writer by another—or of one man by another. Huxley's spiteful attitude towards Freud is thus visible as a kind of homosocial agon, one of the kind that Freud had well encapsulated himself when he, after Ernest Crawley, called it the "narcissism of minor differences" (*der Narzißmus der kleinen Differenzen*), or the "taboo of personal isolation."<sup>79</sup>

Naming an anxiety that "situates envy as the decisive element" in any action, and focusing on this syndrome as it appears "in issues that involve narcissistic image," Freud identifies what is—if not the only provocation to Huxley's spite—then one of the primary forces that leads Huxley to fight against any and all "feelings of fellowship" with the psychoanalyst. But all of this is also a strategy—or a "smokescreen," as I have argued—that inoculates Huxley from Freud's form of analysis. It functions as a "self-protective bombardment of critics and criticism," one that tends to forestall (just as it may have worked for Nabokov) the torrent of Freudian criticism that may otherwise have swamped Huxley's novels.<sup>80</sup> At the same time as Huxley satirises Freud, however, his literary fiction—much like many of Nabokov's novels—offers what may be seen either as a straightforward reproduction of psychoanalytic themes, or an alternative model of human experience, one which differs from Freud's model only in its minor particulars: in degree rather than in kind.<sup>81</sup>

77 Ibid., 17-18; Lacan, *Écrits: A Selection*, 5-6; also see notably Leni Marshall, "Through (with) the Looking Glass: Revisiting Lacan and Woodward in "Méconnaissance," The Mirror Stage, and Old Age," *Feminist Formations* 24, no. 2 (2012): 52-76, 54n2.

78 Philip Thody, *Aldous Huxley: A Biographical Introduction* (London: Studio Vista, 1973), 16-7.

79 Sigmund Freud, "The Taboo of Virginity," *Standard Edition*, vol. 11 (London: Hogarth Press, 1953), 191-208.

80 Ibid.

81 This claim seems to have affinity with a variety of the "reversality" conjectures of Sla-

Distinguishing Huxley from Freud, Bentley suggests that Huxley tends to embark less on a systematic study of individual cases of trauma or psychopathology than examine the means by which images of “high values” may be denigrated, may be made “low” by the act of writing. Like a medieval guilare, Huxley sets out to reveal the extent to which certain “cultural objects have been overvalued” in the past.<sup>82</sup> Describing this method as a process that moves by force of “semantic gravity,” Bentley illustrates how in Huxley’s work “low images are inserted into a cluster, a configuration, of high images,” such as when Denis Stone’s rarefied utterances of “carminative” descend into his gormless embarrassment, his humiliation at having even used as base a word as this.<sup>83</sup>

But if Huxley’s diminution or devaluation of high images distinguishes his mode of affronting human sensibility from psychoanalysis’s attempt to explain it, this is not because Huxley lacks interest in specific nodal symptoms. Nor is it because Huxley renounces the importance of particular traumatic incidents. Rather, Huxley does these things for the same reason that I indicated earlier: Huxley is less persuaded that specific ailments are curable at the micro-level than he is interested in the entire “Gestalt” that constitutes the original image. Thus by drawing this larger image to our attention, in defiling and “lowering” it in so many biological banalities, Huxley provides a more plausible theory of the curative amelioration of pain than any specialist can do. Bentley explains Huxley’s procedure in this way:

Previously excluded facts with pejorative overtones cause the *Gestaltqualität* of a perceptual image to decline in value. We may know these excluded facts, but for some psychic reason they do not generally appear in the pattern of our perception.<sup>84</sup>

Huxley thus applies what Bentley calls an “inbred frame of mind” to express his “rejection” of what is socially or even linguistically excluded from the socio-cultural imaginary. Influenced by Wolfgang Köhler, Bentley’s analysis characterises Huxley’s “dancing attitude” of “rejection” as a kind of Gestalt

voj Žižek: for instance, that it is “precisely” because one wants not to suffer the consequences of utilising or imbibing a particular product (coffee), that one then drinks the decaffeinated product. With Huxley’s writing, it seems that the author sometimes offers us “Freudian material without the Freudianism.” See, for instance, Žižek, *Welcome to The Desert of the Real! Five Essays on September 11 and Related Dates* (London: Verso, 2002), 10-11.

82 Bentley, “Aldous Huxley’s Anatomical Vision,” 176.

83 Ibid., 95.

84 Ibid., 167.

in its own right: “the given fact, [and] the mathematical constant in the equation of his artistic personality.”<sup>85</sup>

But Bentley also attributes to Huxley a particular perspicacity, a visionary ability through which, as he argues, Huxley can see important elements where we, as readers, cannot. If Huxley sees neither the minutiae nor even the omissions of our lived experiences, then he perceives the more general “*Gestalten* of reality,” but he denigrates this *Gestalten* in his fiction in the same instant in which he reveals it.<sup>86</sup> When the romantic Mr Staithes takes Mary’s hand in *Eyeless in Gaza*, for instance, this image—this “Gestalt of refined female eroticism”—is reduced to the “excrement of polecats,” for this is what Staithes suddenly detects in Mary’s perfume (*EIG*, 182).<sup>87</sup> Similarly in *Point Counter Point*, Lord Edward Tantamount devalues the “Mozartian Gestalt” by illustrating to his listeners the way in which “musicians” can be seen, at least in evolutionary terms, as no more valuable than the “hind legs” of “sheep” (*PCP*, 34).<sup>88</sup>

While Bentley does not address it, Huxley would come to see Gestalt therapists as the revivers of “procedures which were current in various systems of Oriental philosophy and psychology one or two thousand years ago.”<sup>89</sup> As the adopters of theories that had languished largely in obscurity for centuries, Gestalt psychologists were, Huxley observes, the first to see the potential in this wisdom, which had been “allowed to remain as some sort of vague Oriental superstition which we haven’t bothered about.”<sup>90</sup> In *The Doors of Perception*, Huxley laments that teachers had not already embraced Gestalt psychology:

Gestalt psychologists, such as Samuel Renshaw, have devised methods identifying the range and increasing the acuity of human perceptions. But do our educators apply them? The answer is, No. (*DOP*, 47)

And while Renshaw’s methods for enhancing vision had been part of the institutional program in the American Army during the Second World War, they had not been employed much since that time. Then, navy sailors had been given “tachistoscopic training” based on Renshaw’s principles, and

85 Ibid., 183.

86 Ibid., 168.

87 Ibid., 152.

88 Ibid., 121-22.

89 Aldous Huxley, “Latent Human Potentialities” in *The Human Situation: Lectures at Santa Barbara, 1959*, ed. Piero Ferrucci (London: Harper and Row, 1977), 247.

90 Ibid.



this had enabled them to identify airplanes at a rapid speed and from great distances, enhancing their military skills.<sup>91</sup> Huxley, of course, as an avid researcher into methods of improving eyesight, is familiar with this history; and it is in these Gestalt methods that Huxley sees potential to improve the psychophysical human.

And yet ironically, it is this same optimistic attitude toward reforming and improving the body that motivates Huxley to displace and devalue what is already valorised in society as civilisation's Gestalt imagery. If Huxley is justified to propose that, "in our urban-industrial civilization," the "kinaesthetic sense" and the "autonomic nervous system" are prone to become "debauched," the problem must relate to what this society prioritises above these senses, to what this socio-political milieu prizes more than them. Compelled by these Gestalts, the "individual develops a habit of using his psycho-physical instrument improperly," Huxley writes; the human thus "loses his sense of what we may call muscular morality, his basic standard of physical right and wrong" (*EOA*, 19-20).

It is a problem for the whole body that, "insofar as physical events condition mental events," also precipitates a situation in which "everything [can] go wrong... in the mind" as well as in the body (*EOA*, 19-20). Irreducible to discrete symptoms, the kinaesthetic degradation that Huxley describes is aptly described by the contemporary psychiatric definition of Gestalt:

A Gestalt is a salient unity or organization of phenomenal aspects [that] emerges from the relations between component features (part-part-whole) relations, but cannot be reduced to their simple aggregate (whole is more than sum of its parts). The Gestalt's elements are interdependent in a mutually constitutive and implicative manner and the whole of the Gestalt codetermines the nature and specificity of its particular aspects while, at the same time, the whole receives from the single aspects its concrete clinical rootedness.<sup>92</sup>

Just as Huxley laments the increasing debauchery of the "kinaesthetic sense," so Parnas mourns the fact that "clinicians are not taught and therefore not aware of the characteristic Gestalt of schizophrenia, of its 'whatness.'"<sup>93</sup> Par-

91 Sailors would be exposed to images in a tachistoscope so that the rate at which their visual perceptions were grasped by them increased. See Edwin G. Boring, ed. *Psychology for the Armed Services* (Washington: The Infantry Journal, 1945), 297-8.

92 Parnas, "A Disappearing Heritage," 6. On this definition, also see Sass and Parnas, "Explaining Schizophrenia: The Relevance of Phenomenology," in Man Cheung, Bill Fulford and George Graham, eds., *Reconceiving Schizophrenia* (London: Oxford University press, 2006), 63-95.

93 See, for example, the range of articles in Cheung, Fulford and Graham, eds. *Reconceiv-*

nas's view is representative of one that many contemporary philosophers of psychiatry hold; they have, like him, discovered that it is precisely the deficient Gestalt "prototype"—a signifier "especially salient in hebephrenic"—that "eludes the diagnostic radar."<sup>94</sup> Eschewing what Alfred Kraus describes as the "symptomatological-criteriological" markers of physical and mental disorder, Parnas employs the term "whatness" as a deixis for what Huxley had already described in *The Doors of Perception* as the "suchness" or "Is-ness" of objects (*DOP*, 7).

Huxley's interest in the denigration and valorisation of Gestalts is a growth from his interest in William Bates's method for improving eyesight, and from his adoption of the muscle-improvement techniques espoused by F.M. Alexander (and featured throughout *Eyeless in Gaza*). It is also an interest that reflects Huxley's more general aversion to specificity, his tendency to holism, repudiation of dualism, and ambition to engender a totalising vision of reality, which is rooted in the human organism.<sup>95</sup> But if Huxley's biological determinism arose, as I argued in chapter 5, through the influence of his grandfather, TH, then it is a view just as crucially shaped by Huxley's relationship with his father, Leonard. In the following sections of this chapter, then, I will address the impact that Leonard's ideas had on Huxley. And, as I will propose, this may be seen as a history inextricably linked with Huxley's problematic eyesight.

*ing Schizophrenia*, or in K.W.M Fulford, Martin Davies, Richard Gipps, George Graham, John Sadler, Giovanni Stanghellini, and Tim Thornton, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Psychiatry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

94 Parnas, "A Disappearing Heritage," 8.

95 On Huxley's incorporation of F.M. Alexander's methods into *Eyeless in Gaza*, see A. Guin Nance, "Psyche and Soma: Huxley and the Mind-Body Connection," in *The Perennial Satirist: Essays in Honour of Bernfried Nudel* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2005), 278-90.

## The Enucleating Family: Aldous as Oedipus

*The whole of philosophy is based on two things  
alone: a curious mind and bad eyesight.*

—de Fontenelle<sup>96</sup>

*In order to understand the history of modern humanity and its technical constitution,  
it is necessary to go through a sort of death by exposure. It is necessary to look from  
the absolute outside into the inner world, with eyes of death or schizo-eyes...*

—Peter Sloterdijk<sup>97</sup>

IN 1911, DURING THE “Easter Half at Eton,” Huxley awoke with swollen and red eyes.<sup>98</sup> Apparently the inflammation had been the result of a contamination of his eyes by airborne dust or allergens; and shortly thereafter, a stye materialised in Huxley’s right eye. It had appeared after Huxley, a member of the Officer Training Corps, had stood guard at Edward VII’s funeral procession to Windsor. Writing in a 1911 letter of how he had struggled to keep “the rabble back with the butt end of [his] rifle,” Huxley details an unfortunate incident that recalls the misfortune of those earlier episodes—at the ceremony honouring TH, or on his first visit to a Church—in which the young Huxley had also been biologically injured or affected.<sup>99</sup>

96 This is how the line is translated in the Henry Hargreaves’s translation of 1990: Bernard le Boiver de Fontenelle, *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, tr. H.A. Hargreaves (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990), 11. In an older translation, it is written thus:

Madam, says I, all philosophy is founded upon these two propositions, I. “That our minds are ‘curious;’” and, 2. “That our eyes are bad;” for if our eyes were better than they are, we could not discover whether the stars were suns that enlighten other worlds, or not; and if, on the other hand, we were less curious, we should not care whether it were so or otherwise; which, I think, is much to the same purpose.

See M. De Fontenelle, *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds*, tr. unknown (Dublin: Peter Wilson, 1761), 6, available at <http://archive.org/details/conversationson00font/>, last accessed 28 August 2013.

97 Sloterdijk, *Neither Sun Nor Death*, 216.

98 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 33.

99 As summarised at the beginning of chapter 6, Huxley had also experienced a biologically-affecting incident when he first visited a Church. Ironically, in this letter to Gervas, Aldous blames Gervas’s eyes for his “unintelligible” letter: “I could only read about half of it. Damn your bloody eyes.” Huxley to Gervas Huxley, 24 May 1910 (Letter 18), in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 36. It is perhaps also remotely possible, assuming that Ernest Clarke’s diagnosis of *staphylococcus aureus* was correct, that the infection had been contagiously or infectiously passed between Gervas and Huxley. It is most coincidental that Gervas’s eyes should have been agitated at the same time that Huxley’s had been. As Huxley wrote in an earlier letter to Gervas, “I’m sorry your optics have purpured [sic]. It must be rotten in the sun now.” Huxley to Gervas, 29 June, 1908

Huxley, to be sure, was a vulnerable child. While no one had been particularly anxious about Huxley's eye, which had been diagnosed by a medically naïve Matron as conjunctivitis or "pink eye," the persistence of the injury, and the increasingly severe inflammation of Huxley's cornea, led Dr Henry Huxley and others, some time later, to attempt to treat it.<sup>100</sup> Unsuccessful, the Huxleys then consulted Ernest Clarke, the leading eye surgeon in London, who diagnosed the condition in that year as *staphylococcus aureus*. Persisting long after this diagnosis, however, the infection was rediagnosed no less than two years later as *keratitis punctate*: a condition characterised by alterations in the corneal tissues—such as the appearance of diffuse edemae: plaques that which make the cornea more opaque.<sup>101</sup>

The greasy, white-coloured deposit that appeared on Huxley's right eye, visible in almost any picture of him, would become an important feature of the writer's personality. Throughout his life, it was a feature that was highlighted in myriad portraits of the young man, including in the photographs produced by Cecil Beaton, which portray Huxley as a figure of obscurity and occlusion, a man who was ever peering through a veil (see figures 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4, below). The extremely painful inflammation would leave Huxley virtually blind for eighteen months, permanently impairing his vision.<sup>102</sup> Irreparably weakened, Huxley presented as a tragic child on whom great

damage had been done and there he was. The boy with the immense curiosity about the world, the boy who wanted to read all the books, was nearly blind... He could not read.<sup>103</sup>

Far from forlorn and self-sympathising, however—Huxley when struck with his affliction—began to teach himself Braille. When he peered, as Joan Buz-

(Letter 10) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 28; also see Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 30. Pathogenesis of certain keratitis strains, notably, has often been considered "infectious in origin, specially viral, although not proven so." Savitri Sharma, "Keratatis," *Bioscience Reports* 21, no. 4. (2001): 422.

100 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 33.

101 As Phillips Thygeson notes in his 1950 article,

The term superficial punctate keratitis was introduced by Fuchs in 1889 to describe superficial keratitis secondary to acute conjunctivitis. This disease is not generally known under the more descriptive name of epidemic keratoconjunctivitis.

Whether this diagnosis was accurate in Aldous's case remains indeterminable. See Phillips Thygeson, "Superficial Punctate Keratitis," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 144, no. 18 (1950): 1544; Ernst Fuchs, "Keratitis punctate superficialis," *Wiener klinische Wochenschrift* [*The Central European Journal of Medicine*] 2 (1889): 837.

102 Thody, *Aldous Huxley*, 7.

103 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 33.



**Figure 6.1** A portrait of Huxley, by Cecil Beaton, reproduced from *Cecil Beaton's Scrapbook* (London: B.T. Batsford, 1937), 130. In this portrait, Huxley tears "aside the veil of bourgeois respectability." Opening a part in a sheet that has been torn through its middle, Huxley reveals himself to the viewer. The visual metaphor in which Huxley 'tears the veil' also indicates Huxley's potential acuity: while partially blind, Huxley yet sees more than others. The image also infantilises Huxley, who appears to be peer through the maternal genital tract. See Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 246-7.

zard observes, “at his eyes with interest in the looking-glass,” it might have been a particularly difficult *stade du miroir* through which to pass. As much as blindness may have forced Huxley to mature, then, it had also made a deep and enduring impact on his self-image.<sup>104</sup>

To look deeply into one’s own eyes is, as Sloterdijk suggests, to incite a monumental catalysis, and to provoke philosophical speculation. Inviting consideration about the body’s organic processes and their relation to the experience of subjectivity, the practice prompts a process of examination that is as personal as it is medical. As the “organic prototype of philosophy,” then, the eyes’s

enigma is not only that they can see but are also able to see themselves seeing. This gives them a prominence among the body’s cognitive organs. A good part of philosophical thinking is actually only eye reflex, eye dialectic, seeing-oneself-see.<sup>105</sup>

To simply look at oneself as a human-being-seeing-a-human-being, however, is not enough to engender a philosophical disposition. Rather, reading, as Sloterdijk affirms, is of equal importance. (This is of course relevant to the young Huxley, who would initially have great difficulty reading after the infection.) But if reading psychosomatically enables philosophical thought, it also leaves its own biological traces on the reader:

With intellectuals, an astounding dullness in the eyes is often evident that comes not least from the continual violence done to the eyes by having read things the eyes would not accept if they had their own way. They must serve merely as tools for reading; and it is no wonder when the perspective of such people, being used to black lines, glides right off from reality. Master cynical knowledge, as it collects in intellectual heads, betrays itself through the rigid eye blinkers and a cloudiness and coldness of the gaze... The cynical gaze lets things know that they do not exist as real objects for it, but only as phenomena and information.<sup>106</sup>

Blindness, then—while it presents a compelling evidentiary basis for what would become Huxley’s biological-deterministic outlook (as well as, if we accept Sloterdijk’s line of argument, Huxley’s cynicism as a young man)—also presented an arduous challenge for Huxley. It called on the young man to overcome an impediment not faced by his peers.

104 Hull, *Representative Man*, 7; Buzzard is quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 32, 32n2.

105 Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, 146.

106 *Ibid.*, 146-7.





**Figure 6.2** Portrait of Huxley in 1934 by Howard Coster, from the archives of *Time* magazine, and subsequently donated to the National Portrait Gallery. Source: © The National Portrait Gallery, London. Source: Terence Pepper and Arthur Strong, *Howard Coster's Celebrity Portraits* (London: Dover Publications, 1985), 10.



Huxley's cousin and close childhood companion, Gervas, put the disturbing situation clearly:

We were all appalled. The shock of it. I was shattered, but not Aldous. He faced it with fantastic courage; and a complete absence of self-pity.<sup>107</sup>

If Huxley's drive to overcome the obstacle of sightlessness engendered in him his tendency toward satirical cynicism—or, as Bentley puts it, toward his Gestalt of “rejection”—then Huxley's experience of blindness also shook his epistemological infrastructure. Anticipating that he would have great trouble visualising and examining materials through a microscope, Huxley jettisoned his plan to study biology and medicine after school (subjects which he had already begun studying at Eton), and took up the cause of writing literature.<sup>108</sup> Having already expressed his desire to study the sciences in a letter to Julian—one that was written on the very “eve of his blindness”—Huxley's change of course represents less his “endogenous” inclination toward cynical philosophy than the pragmatic adoption of a new, albeit less optimistic perspective on the world.

Visual dysfunction and blindness has long been of intense critical interest to an array of French thinkers throughout the twentieth century, including Bergson, Bataille, Merleau-Ponty, Foucault, and Derrida.<sup>109</sup> At issue for all of these philosophers is, as Kate E. Tunstall argues, the primacy of visual metaphors in the pre-modern history of Western thought.<sup>110</sup> Seeking to re-

107 Quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 33.

108 Huxley to Julian Huxley, 11 December 1910 (Letter 22) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 38 and 38n22. Of course, TH's influence did not simply have ramifications for Aldous among the Huxley family. Julian, a preeminent evolutionary biologist and eugenicist, was perhaps even more directly influenced by TH than Huxley, especially in relation to his views on evolution. See, for instance, Julian Huxley, “Natural Selection and Evolutionary Progress,” *Report of The British Association for the Advancement of Science* 106 (1936): 81-100; Julian Huxley, *Evolution: The Modern Synthesis* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1942); “Eugenics and Society,” *Eugenics Review* 28 (1936): 11-31; “Eugenics in Evolutionary Perspective,” *Eugenics Review* 54 (1962): 123-41.

109 Kate E. Tunstall, *Blindness and Enlightenment: An Essay* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 13. My particular interest in Huxley's blindness, is unlike, for example, the question asked by Christopher Isherwood (and quoted by Nicolas Murray), which seems to be a variation of the “purely biological” question: “*How much did he actually see and how much did he cognize, by some kind of built-in radar?*” My own question might be phrased thus: How did Huxley's partial blindness *enhance* his philosophical vision, and in what philosophies or philosophical histories, if any, is such a vision-despite-blindness featured or even valorised? See Julian Huxley, ed., *Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume*, 156 (emphasis in original).

110 See Kate E. Tunstall, *Blindness and Enlightenment*, 13 (on which much of my argument and historical view here is based).



**Figure 6.3** Aldous Huxley in 1956. Portrait by Richard Avedon, New York. © Richard Avedon. Source: Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Accession no. 2002.379.55, see <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection/the-collection-online/search/284313>.

puddiate the hegemony of vision, the appearance of many of these French scholars's works of philosophy coincides with the development of constructionist sociologies of illness and madness—many of which similarly propose a challenge to the functionality of the biological mechanisms alone.

In Levin's words, these works seek to "challenge the hegemony of vision [and] the ocularcentrism of our culture" so that we may finally "see" and grasp the primacy so accorded to vision. This allows us, he argues, to intuit how automatically we understand "ourselves as visionary beings." But among these French philosophers of ocular ontology, Merleau-Ponty in particular calls attention to the "total way" in which the eyes allow us to sense an object "with [our] whole being."<sup>111</sup> Reassessing what Martin Jay describes as the "ancien scopie régime"—and thus approaching afresh the pre-modern development in Western thought of *scepticism*—ocular readings of epistemology demonstrate how a cynical distrustfulness arose at this time, one that was motivated by a suspicion of knowledge that itself had been developed "on the basis of the evidence of the senses."<sup>112</sup>

By dint of what may be understood as the unhappy coincidence of his sightlessness and intellect, Huxley's writing anticipates and intersects with the philosophical concerns of these ocular epistemologists. For Sloterdijk, the proposition that so much of our "thinking structure" is "located in the eyes" is evidenced by his observation that "those who are born cross-eyed appear to be somatically predisposed toward a double vision of things, of essence and illusion, of the concealed and the naked." So essential is the organic nature of vision, Sloterdijk argues, that "the organ dialectic of their eyes drives them on in this." It leads these cross-eyed individuals, he writes, to emphasise "the dialectic of right and left, of the masculine and the feminine, of the straight and the crooked."<sup>113</sup> If this is true, then the chiasmic ontology that I have attributed to Huxley in chapters 5 and 6—as well as in the present chapter—may be explained quite simply, following Sloterdijk, by Huxley's own particular "damaged" eyes.<sup>114</sup>

111 David Michael Levin, ed. *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision* (California: University of California Press, 1993), 205; Merleau-Ponty, "The Film and the new Psychology," in *Sense and Non-Sense* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 48. Also see Juhani Palassmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture of the Senses* (West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 18-9.

112 Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 149-435; also see William Paulson, *Enlightenment, Romanticism and the Blind in France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Tunstall, *Blindness and Enlightenment*, 14.

113 Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason*, 146.

114 "Damage" is the name of Murray chapter on Huxley's blinding accident: see Murray,

Nonetheless, it is important that Huxley's impairment had also been foregrounded by an important family scenario. If Huxley developed his scepticism only after his experience of blindness, then Huxley had also been predisposed to this sceptical attitude before he was blinded. It was TH, for instance, who had maintained, and promoted to Huxley, a strong "scepticism for anything that smacked of religious faith" throughout his life.<sup>115</sup> The impact of Huxley's blindness perhaps only triggered what had always already been instinctive and incipient in him as a "sceptical" outlook. Perhaps it was a result of this perspective that Huxley refused to take his father Leonard "au sérieux," admiring nothing about his father except, if anything, his literary endeavours—and even then only those that recalled "grandpater."<sup>116</sup>

But in keeping with the general "erosion of European patriarchal structures," which Blackwell notes had "accelerated through the late nineteenth century," Huxley resisted his father's humorous charms.<sup>117</sup> One of a number of "sons of literary families who had seen their fathers and uncles living out those values in ignoble domesticity," Huxley became, as Martin Green notes, resentful of his apparently impassive father. And while, as Green argued, "fathers of these [literary] men were articulate, humorous, kindly men of culture," there remained a significant and implacable "gap, and... hostility between them and their sons."<sup>118</sup> Including Huxley in this coterie of resentful literary sons—a group that includes Evelyn Waugh, H. G. Wells, and Lytton Strachey—Green posits that "in all these cases there was an older child, who in significant ways stood between father and son."

Green draws attention to the importance of the presences of Julian and Trev in the Huxley family's configuration, highlighting Huxley's position as the youngest among three perceptive young boys.<sup>119</sup> Bedford's biography

*Aldous Huxley*, 25-40. Cf. Bedford's chapters on Huxley mother's death, and Huxley's blindness, respectively titled "First Damage" and "Second Impairment." Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 24-27, 32-6.

115 Legg, "The Intellectual Tourist," 3.

116 Sybille Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 124. The Leonard Huxley who is Aldous Huxley's father should not be confused with his relative and namesake Professor Leonard George Holden Huxley, the Australian physicist (the latter is a second-cousin once removed from Thomas Huxley, Leonard's father and Aldous Grandfather). This is not to discount the fact that some of Aldous's earliest comments in respect of his father were exultant and as acknowledging of his paternal figure's notable achievements in literature: "Have you read *Life and Letters* by my father?" asked Huxley in his adolescent years. "It's a good book." See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 124.

117 Marilyn Blackwell, "Strindberg's early Dramas and Lacan's 'Law of the Father,'" *Scandinavian Studies* 71, no. 3 (1999): 311-24, esp. 311.

118 Martin Green, *Children of the Sun*, 87-8.

119 Ibid.

adds to this portrait by illuminating the peculiar competitiveness that ran between Huxley and his father, a contest that appears to derive from Huxley's advanced maturity, or his self-image of serious maturity—even in his adolescent years. Later, Julian would observe that Huxley maintained an “innate superiority, which called for respect even in the nursery jungle.”<sup>120</sup>

When Leonard invented and named words that were not in the dictionary during the family's regular games of charades, Huxley issued correctives to his father, excoriating Leonard as “silly” and accusing him of wrongdoing: “Father—cheating again?”<sup>121</sup> While “invariably kind” and loving, Leonard, Gervas confirms, was not exactly “the kind of father that one looked up to; or went to when one was in trouble.” He remained, at least from the perspectives of Gervas and Huxley, aloof and unaware that “grown-ups were supposed to act like grown-ups and not like fellow school-boys.”<sup>122</sup>

It was in the face of Leonard's avuncular wordplay and jocular moods that Huxley became increasingly obsessed by the “hard facts of scientific discovery and the new clarity of understanding which they provided.” Increasingly at this time, he also began to dismiss his apparently inexacting father as immature. As Gervas notes, “it was this lack of respect that troubled Aldous and marred his relationship with his father.”<sup>123</sup>

Serving as a model for Huxley's novelistic representations of father-son dyads, Huxley's relationship with Leonard had a significant impact on his fiction.<sup>124</sup> For Sidaway, Huxley's relations with his parents exhibit a “great deal in common with [another] famous blind man from antiquity; Oedipus, the tragic victim of fate, to whom it dealt the worst possible hand.”<sup>125</sup> Identifying the extent to which “the blind, disgusted Oedipus is rampant” in Huxley's debut short story “The Farcical History of Richard Greenow” (1920), Sidaway also observes how it is in a character developed slightly later than Greenow—the figure of Mr Wimbush from *Crome Yellow*—that we encounter the “pseudo-father for whom utopia” is a life lived “entirely secure from any human intrusion.”<sup>126</sup>

120 Quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 3.

121 Gervas Huxley, quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 14 (emphasis in original).

122 Ibid.

123 Julian Huxley, *Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume*, 21; Gervas Huxley, quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 14.

124 In fact in Huxley's fiction, we see the development of a variety of homosocial pairings arise between father and son, such as between the Gumbrils in *Antic Hay*, which are then just as rapidly destroyed.

125 Sidaway, “Madness, Badness, Sadness,” 9-14.

126 Ibid., 10; see also Aldous Huxley, “The Farcical History of Richard Greenow,” in *Limbo* (London: Chatto & Windus), 1-115.

But as much as these father-son dyads are instructive, it is in *Antic Hay* that the patrilineal vector will most vehemently explode into a simulacrum of Huxley and Leonard's relationship. Defending himself against the accusation of laziness leveled at him by his father, Gumbriel Junior will admonish his father, Gumbriel Senior:

"What else was there for me to do?" Asked Gumbriel Junior [...] "You gave me a pedagogue's education and washed your hands of me. No opportunities, no openings. I had no alternative. And now you reproach me."

Mr Gumbriel made an impatient gesture. "You're talking nonsense," he said. "The only point of the kind of education you had is this, it gives a young man leisure to find out what he's interested in. You apparently weren't sufficiently interested in anything—"

"I am interested in everything," interrupted Gumbriel Junior.

"Which comes to the same thing," said his father parenthetically, "as being interested in nothing" (*AH*, 17).

While the tense hostility between the Gumbriel men already alludes to the novel's imbrication with the myth of Oedipus, it is also true, as Deborah Modellmog suggests, that readers of Sophocles's myth may be tempted to identify traces of the narrative in almost all literary depictions of father and son.<sup>127</sup>

Yet, it is nonetheless apparent that it is in the agon between the Gumbriels—an implicit tournament for the hand of Myra Viveash—that the Oedipal configuration more explicitly appears. Modelled on Nancy Cunard, a woman with whom Huxley had himself been intimate, Viveash is the "archetype of the promiscuous post-war flapper."<sup>128</sup> Breaking Gumbriel Junior's heart, Viveash prompts the son to attempt to improve his prowess in his "conquest of the fair sex" (*AH*, 95).

Inspired by his Lothario friend Coleman, whose recently grown "beard" enables him to seduce any number women, Gumbriel Junior buys a false or artificial beard, one that, at least in his mind, makes him appear not only more virile, but presumably older too—as though he were, in fact, his fa-

127 On the identification of the Oedipal myth in a wide range of literature, see Deborah Modellmog, *Readers and Mythic Signs: The Oedipal Myth in Twentieth Century Literature* (Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1993), xii-xiii.

128 See Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 146. Murray's descriptions of Cunard are particularly insightful in terms of Huxley's portrait of Myra Viveash. As Murray attests, Cunard "was strong-willed, certain of herself...the Giaconda of the Age." Green notes that "Huxley had an affair with her [Cunard] in 1922 and was very badly treated, so in his portraits she is quite viciously cruel": Martin Green, *Children of The Sun*, 290.



ther.<sup>129</sup> While the Oedipal triangle between Gumbri Senior, Gumbri Junior, and Viveash partly betrays Huxley's own contest with Leonard, it also satirises the very *notion* of competition between father and son, providing what Meckier describes as the "most amusing episode of *Antic Hay*."<sup>130</sup>

Deeply symbolic, Gumbri Junior's beard becomes a "mournful appendage" and an "amorous arm," one that enables its wearer to transform from "The Mild and Melancholy Man" who has "suffered all too frequently," into the "Complete Man" (AH, 95). This transformed man is now imbued with the confidence of a patriarch such as Gumbri Senior, who himself clutches at his beard when angered or ponderous (AH, 19, 27). In this transposition of son and father, the two Gumbri are condensed into one being; the son becomes that "complete and Rabelasian man" who, when faced with the right "opportunities... could know how to take them" (AH, 94). The transposition of the beard from father to son is also an implicit affront to—or deauthorisation of—Gumbri Senior, one that metonymises a parricidal event, instantiating the paternal equivalent to what Kristeva calls a "psychical matricide."<sup>131</sup>

Paraphrasing Kenneth Burke, Bentley notes that satirists like Huxley appear to overcome and exceed paternal authority by acting out their desire to resist, mute, transmute, or to otherwise overpower the progenitor's law. They seek to "demolish," he writes, "the gods held sacred by the satirist's father."<sup>132</sup> Gumbri Junior's transposition or erasure of his father's authority is enacted in more than simply this way, however. As Ronald Sion observes, the

129 Bentley characterises this character as a kind of living-dead woman: "Myra Viveash (does [her] name mean "living death"?) seems always to be speaking from a death bed, expiringly and with a perpetual death-rattle in her pronunciation." While Viveash is generally at odds with descriptions of Huxley's mother, the sense of death that follows her in the novel refracts Huxley's mourning for his own dead mother. In this way, Gumbri Senior and Junior compete for the affections of a "living-dead" woman, the ghost of Huxley's mother, Leonard's wife. Bentley, "Aldous Huxley and the Anatomical Vision," 61-2.

130 Meckier, *Structure and Satire*, 35. As Murray attests, Nancy Cunard had lost her lover, Peter Broughton-Adderley, in the War and, as such, it is possible that Huxley may also be expressing here, through Gumbri Junior, something like his sense of disaffiliation from the figure of the grieving woman. This figure expresses her devotion to another man, and in this way becomes consubstantial, symbolically, with the maternal or mother figure. See Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 146.

131 As Kristeva declares, "[f]or man and for woman the loss of the mother is a biological and psychic necessity, the first step on the way to autonomy. Matricide is our vital necessity, the *sine qua non* of our individuation." Julia Kristeva, *Depression and Melancholia*, tr. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 38, qtd. in Alison Stone, "Against Matricide: Rethinking Subjectivity and the Maternal Body," *Hypatia* 27, no. 1 (2012): 118.

132 Bentley, "Aldous Huxley and The Anatomical Vision," 182.



many “aimless conversations” between the two Gumbriels—not to mention their matching names—soon becomes “so undifferentiated that it is difficult for the reader to identify who is speaking” at various points throughout the novel.<sup>133</sup> Univocal and identically embearded, the Gumbriels’s assimilation into one another mirrors the imbrication and intertwining of Huxley’s and Leonard’s writing careers, an occurrence attested to by Huxley’s 1920s letters to his father.<sup>134</sup>

The rumblings of tension between Huxley and Leonard were detectable even before Huxley wrote these 1920s novels, however. At an early age, Donald Watts notes, Huxley had “dropped the second name, which, it might be noted, was his father’s name.”<sup>135</sup> And when Huxley’s “proportionately enormous” head had been compared to his father’s head—leading Julian to exclaim “We put father’s hat on him and it fitted!”—the condensation or homogenisation of Huxley and his adult father became intrinsic in the family’s imaginary.<sup>136</sup> In 1916, prior to the publication of Huxley’s first book, *The Burning Wheel* (1916), three of Huxley’s poems were published in *The Nation*, erroneously under Leonard’s name. Ludically rebarbative in response to this misattribution, Huxley condemned the “folly” and “criminal silliness of *The Nation*,” which he said sarcastically, had “been good enough to sign them with my father’s name.”

Huxley later went on to suggest the fraudulence of his father’s literary career, explaining that in the first time he had

heard of their publication was [in] a letter from A. C. Benson to my father congratulating him on the extreme beauty of the verses and quoting Coleridge, aptly and with charm, to prove the fact. And now wherever my father goes, showers of felicitations fall upon him and he live haloed with a reputation entirely fictitious.<sup>137</sup>

Originally seeking to work in the law and read for the bar, Leonard found only moderate success in his writing career; he published his biography on TH in 1900 before joining the publishing firm Smith, Elder & Co. There Leonard found some success as a reader; and he went on to become assistant editor of a literary journal titled *Cornhill* in 1901.<sup>138</sup> But it was less Leonard’s

133 Ronald T. Sion, *Aldous Huxley and The Search for Meaning: A Study of The Eleven Novels* (London: McFarland and Company, 2010), 35.

134 See Smith, *Letters*, passim.

135 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 2.

136 Ibid.

137 Ibid., 1: 66; and Huxley to Frances Peterson, 23 August 1916 (Letter 98) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 110.

138 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 4.

lack of talent than his humility, as his assistant John Murray writes, that “denied him the public recognition” he deserved. For “so firm was his basis of literary scholarship that he could afford to be gentle and humble in dealing with authors of every age or degree of experience or conceit.” Leonard’s kindness as a critic was so unusual, in fact, that it had once led one contributor to remark that they “preferred a letter of rejection from Leonard Huxley to one of acceptance from any other editor.”<sup>139</sup>

Equivalents of these courteous letters of rejection were exchanged between Huxley and his father throughout the course of their lives. When Leonard announced that he would be remarrying in February 1912, becoming the husband of Rosalind Bruce, Huxley would write what Bedford describes, referring primarily to its brevity, as a “pathetic” letter to Leonard. If it is evidence of Huxley’s implicit disavowal of his father’s second marriage, the letter is also testament to Huxley’s difficulty in writing at this time, when his eyes remained severely impaired:<sup>140</sup>

Dearest Father

Many thanks for your letter, which, I regret to say was rather too small for me to read with any comfort. In fact I was only able to take the cream off each sentence by picking out one word in every four or so. Typewriter would be all right but a lot would be rather trying, I think.<sup>141</sup>

Taking only “the cream off” his father’s words by “picking out” only a quarter of them, Huxley’s letter narrates an exercise in selective reading as it also functions as a synecdoche for Oedipus’s self-enucleation in *Oedipus The King*. Stabbing himself in the eyes with the aid of his mother Jocasta’s “beaten golden brooches,” Oedipus would become similarly impaired, the trauma of his desires too great to bear.<sup>142</sup>

By not acknowledging his father’s news of his second marriage in the wake of his mother Julia’s death, Huxley remains as “blind” to this event as he is unseeing of Leonard’s other clauses—or *spouses*. A psychoanalytic reading of the short letter might detect in it Huxley’s own drive to self-enucleation: it may be seen, that is, as an expression of Huxley’s “wish to punish [himself],” or even his father, “by castration, after ‘upward projection’ from

139 Ibid., 125.

140 Aldous had by this time been diagnosed as partially blind: more on this later.

141 Quoted in Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 37; Smith, *Letters*, 41-2.

142 See Sophocles, *Oedipus The King*, li. 1268 in Ruth Fainlight and Robert J. Littman, eds. and trs., *Sophocles: The Theban Plays* (Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 55.

the testicles to the eyes.”<sup>143</sup> And of course while Huxley’s blindness cannot itself be understood as self-inflicted or as “Oedipal” in any causative sense, the confluence of these oedipal coordinates in Huxley’s early life would seem remarkable for their resemblance to the myth—if these elements were not also so woefully tragic.

Huxley’s Oedipal perspective is not lost on Philip Thody, for one, who writes on Huxley’s letters to his father with as much acuity as any other critic of the writer:

There may also, of course, have been subconscious motives at work in determining the hostility which Huxley reveals, throughout his fiction, towards the man he always addressed in his letters as “Dearest father.” To a Freudian, it would be quite obvious that Huxley’s adoration of his mother implied feelings of intense jealousy for his father, and that these were translated into the subconscious notion that Leonard Huxley was at least partly guilty for his wife’s death.<sup>144</sup>

The situation in which Huxley mourned for his mother was not helped by the fact that, as Bedford observes, “the ground seems not to have been well enough prepared” for Leonard’s announcement of his second marriage. This is a point confirmed by George Clark’s observation that the marriage had been only very “casually announced to the boys.”<sup>145</sup>

In the following years, Huxley would recall that the announcement had been impersonal, suggesting that he carried the imprint of the event at least until the 1920s. As Peter Firchow notes, while Huxley writes *Point Counter Point*, he “seems not to have forgiven [Leonard’s] marriage to the much younger Rosalind Bruce not long after his mother Julia’s death”

If the portraits of the older Quarles in *Point Counter Point* or the older Beavis in *Eyeless in Gaza* are anything at all like Huxley’s own father (and the latter definitely resembles him, at least in part) then it’s clear that Huxley considered his father to be something of a pompous ass and a pious hypocrite.<sup>146</sup>

143 Large, “Self-enucleation,” 1056. Also see Karl Meninger, “A Scientific Study of Self-Mutilations,” *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 4 (1935): 408-66; Lowell Edmunds, “The Body of Oedipus,” *Psychoanalytic Review* 75, no. 1 (1988): 51-56; Lowell Edmunds, *Oedipus: The Ancient Legend and Its Later Analogues* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), esp. 50-2.

144 Philip Thody, *Aldous Huxley: A Biographical Introduction* (London: Studio Vista, 1973), 16-7.

145 Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 37-8.

146 Peter Firchow, “Aldous and Julian: Men of Letters, Men of Science,” 207.

Formality, nevertheless, may have partially disguised Huxley's feelings of anger, or had at least kept the relationship between he and Leonard ostensibly civil. But no formality could displace the longstanding unease. Thus while Huxley persists in signing off at "the end of his letters to his father with the phrase "your loving son," his attitude," Firchow remarks, "is usually not loving but distant and even aloof."<sup>147</sup>

Since Leonard had been employed as a critical reader, it is perhaps unsurprising that he was critical of Huxley's *Antic Hay*. But Leonard's criticism of that book had deeply affected Huxley's spirits, prompting him to write an uncharacteristically emotive letter to his father in November 1923. Defending the novel, Huxley here expresses great sorrow that his father had so brutally characterised the book as "distasteful."<sup>148</sup>

In a defensive apologia that recalls the letter in which, two years earlier, Huxley had attempted to explain his intentions in writing *Crome Yellow* to Ottoline Morrell, Huxley now insists that, while *Antic Hay*'s "unfamiliar character makes it appear at first sight rather repulsive," it is nonetheless, and "without fatuity, a good book."<sup>149</sup> Conceived as Huxley's "serious" attempt at "novelty," the novel, Huxley argues, had sought to unify "all the ordinarily separated categories—tragic, comic, fantastic, realistic," combining them "so to say chemically into a single entity."<sup>150</sup>

Expressing his unwillingness to quarrel with his father, Huxley, in a show of paternalistic omniscience, conveys his foreknowledge of the fact that Leonard would be as disinclined to argue as he had been: "Like you," Huxley writes, "I have no desire to enter into an argument about it: argument, indeed, would be useless, as we should start from completely different premises."<sup>151</sup> But the matter most in contention for this intergenerational pair was not what Leonard thought of *Antic Hay*'s most "repulsive" elements—such as its fabrication of a pastiche or bricolage of genres, which detracted, Leonard felt, from the novel's literary merit. Nor was it the particular disappointing for Leonard that the novel had come under public scrutiny, having "acquired an undeserved reputation for 'obscenity'" among London's critics and booksellers, leading "several of the more respectable libraries" to refuse "to stock

147 Ibid., 207.

148 While it is unclear whether Leonard offered his disapprobation in person or in a letter, the latter seems more likely based on the fact that Huxley and his father had often communicated at this time by letter. See Huxley to Leonard Huxley, 26 November 1923 (Letter 210), in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 224.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

151 Ibid.

it.”<sup>152</sup> More crucial than these elements for Leonard’s and Huxley’s dispute was *Antic Hay*’s representation of the protagonist Gumbriel Junior’s mother’s death. This is what had, apparently, invoked Leonard’s fulmination.

In *Antic Hay*, Gumbriel Junior’s mother—who is Gumbriel Senior’s wife—dies of “malignant diseases,” suffering “creeping and devouring pain” while Gumbriel Junior is “still a boy” (*AH*, 3). The scene is unequivocally a transposition of the early circumstances in which Julia Huxley, Aldous’s mother and Leonard’s wife had died. The scene even echoes what had been Julia’s tortuous cries while on her deathbed: “Why do I have to die, and die so young?” she had asked.<sup>153</sup> When the distraught Gumbriel Junior bawls, “crying, still crying” at his mother’s bedside (*AH*, 3), he reaches a deeply inspiring cathexis of the kind that Huxley—who had “stood ‘in stony misery,’” at his mother’s funeral—had perhaps himself never realised.<sup>154</sup>

Huxley’s unquestionable “adoration” of his mother, to use Thody’s words, underlay his having been astonished at his father’s imputation that he had in the novel, appropriated his mother’s death merely for the purposes of his fictional experiment. Admitting that he did not expect his father to “enjoy the book,” but only that he hoped and imagined his “contemporaries would,” Huxley abruptly ended the disagreement:

And there, I think, I had better leave it, only pausing long enough to express my surprise that you should accuse me, when I speak of a young man’s tender recollections of his dead mother, of botanizing my mother’s grave.<sup>155</sup>

That Huxley deploys the odd expression “botanizing” here seems crucial, especially when it is placed in the context of this word’s prior utterances. Not having Leonard’s letter as evidence, however, makes it impossible to know whether the adjective had first been employed by Leonard—and merely rearticulated by Huxley—or had been employed by Huxley only. But the word ineluctably invokes the early years of Huxley’s early education in Surrey

152 Joceyln Brooke, *Aldous Huxley: Supplements to British Book News on ‘Writers and Their Work’ 55* (London: Longmans, 1954), 15. Also see Watt’s summary of the range of criticisms levelled at the novel, including a report that “two American readers” who had reportedly “burnt the book,” and another New York critic who regarded the novel as “highly immoral.” Watt, *Aldous Huxley: The Critical Heritage*, 9. Furthermore, David Bradshaw writes that *Antic Hay* was so blasphemous that it had been “burned in Cairo.” See Bradshaw, “Aldous Huxley (1894-1963),” in *Brave New World* (London: Vintage Books, 2007), xxxi.

153 Julian Huxley, *Memories*, 1: 64.

154 Huxley had, however, initially sobbed in the wake of his mother’s death. See Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 37; Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 26.

155 Huxley to Leonard Huxley in Smith, *Letters*, 224.

where, alongside Julian and Trevenen, Huxley had collected flowers to study in Leonard's botany laboratory. There Huxley had sought to identify particular species of birds and to study plants, and so for Huxley to "botanize" an object is to connote this image of Huxley as a child, and to revitalise this moment long before his mother's death, and before the Huxleys had moved from those hills.<sup>156</sup>

Of course, forms of botanising also appear in *Brave New World*, such as when Huxley satirises the apparent dangerousness of raising a child on merely "books and botany" (*BNW*, 16-17). When in the "Infant Nurseries" the Director begins to "rub in the lesson with a mild electric shock," guaranteeing "what the psychologists used to call an "instinctive" hatred of books and flowers," he ensures that they would "be safe from books and botany all their lives" (*BNW*, 17). Associated with childhood throughout Huxley's oeuvre, the word "botanize" thus marks a site of trauma; it indicates—and even more so if it is one of Leonard's words—precisely that which may have been Huxley's apparently aloof and scientific response to his mother's death.

And it is, of course, a word whose offensive meaning is only now exacerbated, at least in Leonard's eyes, by its literary reappropriation by his son. Expressing yet another of Huxley's "mixed up starting points," the term also names the agon into which Huxley imaginatively placed his mother and father, pitting them one against the other. While Leonard the patriarch encouraged Huxley to work with botanical specimens, Julia is the woman who uttered, as Gumbriel Junior narrates, a "few words only," but with "all the wisdom he needed to live by" (*AH*, 3).<sup>157</sup> Inscribed on a letter that Julia had given the young Huxley while on her deathbed, her kind words would echo in Huxley's ears for the rest of his life, inspiring him to "Judge not too much and love more."<sup>158</sup>

If Leonard cannot reconcile himself to what are clearly *Antic Hay*'s thinly-veiled autobiographical or *clef* elements, then it is perhaps because the novel is such a "farce." It operates, as James Mulvihill writes, "along the lines of one of the 'painful jokes'" that Huxley had already attributed to Ben Jonson's plays in an essay of 1920. "There is," Huxley had written on Jonson's plays, three years before writing *Antic Hay*,

156 For a detailed discussion of these early "naturalizing expeditions" see Woodcock, *Dawn and the Darkest Hour*, 37.

157 Ibid. Bedford notes that it was Leonard who took Aldous, Gervas, Julian, and Trevenen on mountain climbs, such as on their climb of Saddleback mountain in Blasenthwaite, near Keswick, in 1905. See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 14.

158 Quoted by Sybille Bedford addressing the P.E.N. meeting "In Honour of Aldous Huxley," 15 November 1978. Tape in National Sound Archive, cited in Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 27n9.

a certain hardness and brutality about them all—due, of course, ultimately to the fact that the characters are not human, but rather marionettes of wood and metal that collide and belabour one another, like the ferocious puppets of the Punch and Judy show, without feeling the painfulness of the proceeding.<sup>159</sup>

Far from the “orgies of quaint pathos and sentimental comedy”—which Huxley eschewed—Jonson’s plays remind their audiences of the “enormous, painful jokes which fate sometimes plays on humanity.”<sup>160</sup> But this painful mode—the one in which Huxley had already brought into clear view so many of the humiliating and tragic traits he perceived in Morrell and other of the Bloomsbury sophisticates in *Crome Yellow*—is a mode that is revitalised in *Antic Hay*, where Huxley uses the same optic in relation to the Gumbrils, as father and son.

In Huxley’s own rendering of a “painful joke” of fate, Gumbril Senior is not simply a clownish archetype but, “beneath his absurd appearance,” as Mulvihill notes, a “pathetic” and helpless creature.<sup>161</sup> An unsentimental symbol for the impotence of all paternal figures, Gumbril Senior enables *Antic Hay*’s “diatribe against fathers” to become, as Sidaway asserts, “fully mobilised.”<sup>162</sup> It is thus as much Huxley’s pathological response to Leonard as his small rebellion against all fathers of Leonard’s generation that characterises Gumbril Senior, who may now be read as a direct parody of Huxley’s father, one that features saliently within the novel’s unforgiving portrait of Huxley’s London milieu:

In the 1920s London of the novel, stewing in its disillusionment and cynicism, is the prevailing legacy of an older, more specifically Victorian generation that has clearly failed to come to terms with the trauma of war. Huxley depicts a younger generation so disillusioned as if to be terminally ill.<sup>163</sup>

A representative of London’s “younger generation,” Gumbril Junior is left to tend to the cooking and domestic duties around the house while his father

159 The essay was first published in *The London Mercury* in 1920. See J.C. Squire, ed. *The London Mercury* 1, nos. 1-6 (November 1919-April 1920), published as an eBook in 2014, 184-191, available at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/45116/45116-h/45116-h.htm>, accessed 30 June 2014. Also published in Aldous Huxley, “Ben Jonson,” *On The Margin* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1923), 202; and Baker and Sexton, eds. *Aldous Huxley: Complete Essays I: 1920-25*, 119-126. Also see James Dalton Mulvihill, “*Antic Hay*: A Study in Post-war Disillusionment” MA diss., McMaster University, 1978, 16.

160 Ibid. Also see Mulvihill, “*Antic Hay*,” 16.

161 Ibid., 4.

162 Sidaway, “Madness, Badness, Sadness,” 2.

163 Ibid., 2.



indulges in “suspended” philosophical speculation about the possibility of telepathy. It is a ruse seemingly designed to charm Myra Viveash, the object of Gumbriel Senior’s attention. Telepathy, Gumbriel Senior excitedly proclaims, would enable humans to “go to sleep at once, wake at once, say the same thing at once... Without a leader, without a command, they do everything together, in complete unison” (*AH*, 284-5).

A subtle parody of the disconnection between son and father, the conversation that then follows leads Gumbriel Junior to inadvertently embarrass his father in front of the seductive Viveash. Suggesting that his father should exhibit the architectural model that Gumbriel Senior had recently built for one his clients, Gumbriel Junior exposes the fact that Gumbriel Senior had in fact already sold the work (*AH*, 286). But, astonished to learn that his father has sold the model, Gumbriel Junior is led to wonder why he sold it—especially since his father seems to cherish such things even more than him, his own son:

He knew with what a paternal affection—no, more than paternal; for he was sure that his father was more whole-heartedly attached to his models than his son—with what pride he regarded these children of his spirit (*AH*, 287).

But Gumbriel Junior’s seemingly unconcerned and indifferent description of his father’s inattention—one that remains undergirded by his sensitivity to and envy about these nonhuman “children of his spirit,” about Gumbriel Senior’s cherished models—depicts the father as a man who both underestimates and scorns his son’s diligence and thoughtfulness.

Then ironising his father’s speculation about his having the capacity to use telepathy, Gumbriel Junior highlights the way in which his father fails to detect precisely the thoughts of those around him—those whose minds he would profess to read. While Viveash and son have become bored by the father’s abstract musings, Gumbriel Senior himself unknowingly laments his own impotence, describing those few telepaths whose talents prevent them from communicating in the normal way, those “few, no doubt, who could never communicate directly” (*AH*, 245).<sup>164</sup> Articulating what has already become sorely clear, Gumbriel Senior thus describes his ability to communicate

164 As Nicholas Murray notes, Huxley travelled to India in 1925, only two years after *Antic Hay*’s publication. There Huxley noted the uniquely provident conditions under which philosophical activity of this kind was available to the upper-classes: “Born an Indian or brought up in the slums of London,” he writes, “I should hardly be able to achieve so philosophical a suspense of judgement” (*JP*, 137); also qtd. in Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 13.

with other humans as though he were the first to be endowed with such a capacity: “I let my telepathic faculty lie idle,” he comments, “preferring to employ an elaborate and cumbrous arrangement of symbols in order to make my thoughts known to you through your senses” (*AH*, 244). This description of his capacities functions as an excuse for the failure of the capacity that he had earlier adverted to: his ability to telepathically communicate.

Initially positing that his reluctance to develop telepathic skills is simply a matter of preference, Gumbriel Senior soon reveals his foolishness when—indulging in a “fancy”—he tests his presentiment that his “faculty” of telepathy could be as sharp as that of those “well-developed” mind-readers who, “by the twenty-first century,” will be capable of “direct communication with other minds, whether they want to or not” (*AH*, 244-5). Predicting that the birds will “wake-up and begin their half-minute of chatter in the dark” at the very instant in which he ceases to speak, Gumbriel Senior, now having finished his speech, commands Viveash to “Wait! And “Hush,” before placing “his hand over his mouth, as though by commanding silence on himself he could command it on the whole world” (*AH*, 245).

After a full minute of silence has passed, Gumbriel Junior, realising now that no chirping will occur, narrates how “the old gentleman burst out happily laughing” in an echo of the “fit of esoteric laughter” into which the father had erupted at an earlier point of the novel (*AH*, 53).

In these scenes, the father becomes what Gumbriel Junior had earlier described as the “non compos [and] not entirely there” figure of the “clown”—a figure into which Gumbriel Junior had feared he himself would transform while in the presence of Myra Viveash (*AH*, 183-84). But it is now Gumbriel Senior who is exposed to Viveash as an impotent and unsuccessful seducer; it is the father, that is, who is revealed to be the alienated, lonely man among the two, the one whose most “affectionately cherished friends” have departed so rapidly (*AH*, 18-19).

But this father lacks not only human company; or rather, his quickly disappearing companions are not only human: now they also take the form of those starlings that, when Gumbriel Senior searches for them, cause him continually to be “gazing up, round-spectacled and rapt” (*AH*, 19). Cauterising the figure of the lonely, stargazing father who looks for answers in the sky—only to be refused them—Huxley’s novel is an unforgiving depiction of the erring father, a searing portrait of paternal impotence (*AH*, 19).

If these allusions to Leonard’s impotence are too obscure, then the more explicit allusions to Huxley’s father that appear at an earlier stage of the *Antic Hay* confirms its biographical verisimilitude. As he begins to work on his

history homework, Gumbriel Junior undertakes a formal consideration of his own psychobiography:

“Give a brief account of the character and career of Pope Pius IX, with dates wherever possible.” Gumbriel leaned back in his chair and thought of his own character, with dates. 1896: the first serious and conscious and deliberate lie. Did you break that vase, Theodore? No, mother. It lay on his conscience for nearly a month, eating deeper and deeper. Then he had confessed the truth. Or rather he had not confessed; that was too difficult. He led the conversation, very subtly, as he thought, round through the non-malleability of glass, through breakages in general, to this particular broken vase; he practically forced his mother to repeat her question. And then, with a burst of tears, he had answered, yes. It had always been difficult for him to say things directly, point-blank. His mother had told him, when she was dying... No, no; not that (*AH*, 9).

This oblique adumbration not only implies the indirect manner in which Huxley could not himself “say things directly.” It also exemplifies the mode of provocation that constitutes both Gumbriel Junior’s and Huxley’s methods. In other words, this is a “conversation” that “very subtly” addresses a number of related or orthogonal subjects until, as with Huxley’s allusions to Leonard Huxley or Ottoline Morrell, the reader is “practically forced” to recognise the narrative’s true meaning, its real-world imputation. And, while this provocative method appears programmatic, it also recalls the instinctive and ambulative manner in which Huxley—as I argued in chapters 4 and 5—tends to illustrate and deduce particular ideas.

Denis Stone’s misuse of the word “carminative,” for instance, in a scene in which Stone and Mr. Scogan serve as surrogate father and son, is an apt illustration of the way in which words’s meaning can be ambiguous—equally as much for the speaker as for the listener. Allusions that are sensitive or proscribed are equally as likely to be misspoken accidentally as prone are likely to be uttered strategically and provocatively.

But irrespective of whether Huxley’s illustrations are intentionally allusive or merely the product of his subconscious, they lead only and ultimately to Huxley’s melancholia. And even if he is not disappointed that Leonard and Morrell dislike his narratives, he certainly feels “melancholy” when he discovers that his words, such as the word “carminative,” mean something other than he had originally thought; for Huxley’s misspoken allusions, such as they are seem to, signal the “death of something young and precious” (*CY*, 223-24).

Thus, when read at its most radical, Derrida's claim that "the origin of logos is its father" allows us to identify Denis Stone, the surrogate son to Mr. Scogan, as a metonym for the Stone's dual misapprehension. That is, Stone does not only misconstrue the meaning of "carminative," but he also misattributes the sympathetic qualities of the father to an indifferent and non-filial elder man. And just as what initially appears a rich and noble word is later revealed as only an ignoble and unpleasant one, so is the man who initially appears fatherly exposed only as an aloof and distant stranger—"not a literary mind" but a man who might in fact require, as Denis concludes, a "mental carminative" (CY, 224).

Huxley's fiction, in short, produces a configuration of paternal symbols and linguistic associations that is just as subtly imbricated as that which Derrida unpacks (or "deconstructs") in his essay on language:

One could say anachronously that the "speaking subject" is the *father* of his speech. And one would quickly realise that this is no metaphor, at least not in the sense of any common, conventional effect of rhetoric. Logos is a son, then, a son that would be destroyed in his very presence without the present attendance of his father. His father who answers. His father who speaks for him and answers for him. Without his father, he would be nothing but, in fact, writing without his father, he would be nothing but, in fact, writing. At least that is what is said by the one who says: it is the father's thesis. The specificity of writing would thus be intimately bound to the absence of the father... The reader will have noticed Socrates' insistence on misery, whether pitiful or arrogant, of a logos committed to writing: "... It always needs its father to attend to it, being quite unable to defend itself or attend its own needs."<sup>165</sup>

It is out of just such a "pitiless and arrogant" misery that Huxley's fatherless cynicism, and his "agonistic" satires, as Bentley suggests, seem to arise.<sup>166</sup> Confronted with the chiasmic relation of the father and son, the son-cynic luxuriates in the spoils of his father's authority while he furtively disguises his implacable dependence on him; he also hides the fact that the value of his words is determined by the qualifying imprimatur of the father: that is, by that fatherly procedure in which value is accorded to the son's words, and authority transferred to the son's speech.

This procedure is often given vital expression in Huxley's life and work; in almost all allusions to the father-son dyad, for instance, Huxley denies Leonard the opportunity to bear witness to his own means of endowing his

165 Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 82.

166 Bentley, "Anatomical Vision," 182.

son with such authority. Accepting none of Leonard's utterances, Huxley evacuates them of their power, mystifying their "own safe transmission and the establishment of a worthy legacy." Breaking the patrilineal transmission of the word, then, Huxley prevents the scene in which, as Seán Burke describes it, the father endows his son with the "signature" of his own speech. In a typical scenario, Burke notes, the signature is written on the son, as a genealogical inscription. But this "signature," Burke continues,

may then erase itself, [and] the master may depart, in the assurance of autonomous truth; a truth which will carry the signature forward in itself, in its sons and brothers, who bear the name and the name's genius under names of their own.<sup>167</sup>

Like Diogenes's "kynical mode"—an apparently privileged speaking position that Hegel called "a rude product of luxury"—Huxley's cynicism expresses his distaste for his countrymen—the Victorians—just as it does for its legatees, which is to say, for the generation of men to which Huxley's father belonged.<sup>168</sup>

But Huxley's Oedipal resistance to his father also reflects the discomfort Huxley would have felt, begrudging Leonard as he did while also apparently unable to explicitly *express* these hostilities. Huxley appears to have preferred—ironically in a fashion like that of the Victorians he deplored—to deny or defer these matters rather than to address them directly. As Thody suggests, it is tempting to explain Huxley's evasion of such matters as a frail man's denial of the truth:

A thorough-going Freudian would also see the hostility which Huxley always shows for Freud's ideas as an indication of the fear which he had that such a diagnosis might be true, and the fact that almost all fathers in Huxley's fiction are caricatures would lend weight to this view.<sup>169</sup>

But if Huxley's fiction can provide any trace of an answer for his position—any way to explain his repressed hostility—then his historical writing is at least equally as instructive as his fiction.

167 Seán Burke, *The Ethics of Writing: Authorship and Legacy in Plato and Nietzsche* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008), 120.

168 Quoted in Andreas Huyssen, "Foreword: The Return of Diogenes as Postmodern Intellectual," Peter Sloterdijk, *Critique of Cynical Reason* (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1988), ix. For an alternative translation, see G.W.F. Hegel, *Elements of the Philosophy of Right*, ed. Allen Wood, tr. H. B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), see section 195, 231.

169 Philip Thody, *Aldous Huxley*, 17.

An exemplary instance of transference, for instance, occurs in *Grey Eminence*, Huxley's 1941 biography of François Leclerc du Tremblay. Recounting the death of du Tremblay's father—a tragedy that occurred when François was only ten years old—Huxley observes how the young man had “loved his father with all the repressed violence of which his inward-turning nature was capable” (*GE*, 22). In these lines Huxley expresses the inexorable fading away of human happiness that, as a range of interpretations have noted, the loss of Huxley's own mother had produced in *him*.<sup>170</sup> Reflecting on his predicament, the young François realises, in Huxley's psychobiographical study, that

There remained with him, latent at ordinary times but always ready to come to the surface, a haunting sense of the vanity, the transience, the hopeless precariousness of all merely human happiness (*GE*, 22).

More than what has been simply understood as an instance of chiasmic inversion—as Huxley's transference of his own feelings onto the French monk who has now lost his father—it is also possible to see this passage as Huxley's commission of the symbolic parricide to which he had, some twenty years earlier, only ever coyly alluded.

Now this malaise is all the more defensible, albeit invisible: here, in a non-fiction work, one written nearly ten years after Leonard's death, and published on the cusp of Huxley's mystical turn, the artist finally comes to grips with his history of “repressed violence.” Executing the symbolic parricide that he had for so long deferred, Huxley now composes a work of truth, confessing, through the figure of François, the “love” that had always been deeply resident in him—even despite his own “inward-turning nature” (*GE*, 22).

This chapter began by examining the way in which Huxley, in much of his post-1940s fiction and essays, represents the human as an amphibian. It then went on to scrutinise Huxley's depictions of sons and fathers in his wider oeuvre. Just as chapters 4 and 5 before this concluded that Huxley's complex psychological profile is representable—even soluble—as a kind of structure that I have nominated as the chiasmus in this and previous chapters, this chapter will now conclude by reinforcing the notion. Huxley, torn between love and hate, anxiety and affection, expressed a complex mixture of feelings towards his father. This was a chiasmic combination of affects that

<sup>170</sup> Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 25. Also see Hewitt, “Psychedelics and Psychosis,” 2; Brian Aldiss, “Fatal Breaks,” 4-5; Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 27n6.

is as much a testament to his uniquely self-propelled intellectual development as it is emblematic of his melancholic, and sometimes loveless sense of alienation. In the final chapter of this thesis—in chapter 7, the chapter that follows—I will turn to a very different author to Huxley: Philip K. Dick. But if Huxley's psychobiography is difficulty to disentangle, as I have argued, then Dick is equally as enigmatic.

Much like Huxley, Dick sought to enable his readers to see the world of technology and biological enhancement in a new way. However, whereas Huxley often self-consciously parodies the increasing paranoia of his characters in these dystopian milieux, Dick adopts the role of one of these characters himself. Dick, as I will argue, shows us not simply that the human is biologically determined, then, but that the human's control of their own bodies—as well as their brains—is predetermined too, making largely redundant—and shockingly helpless—the question or character of one's biological choices. More than this, though, Dick shows us that one can wildly misread one's brain, making for a range of less stable, and altogether more unreliable worlds, than anything Huxley had imagined.



## “The Shock of Dysrecognition”: The Disorienting Biopolitical Visions of Philip K. Dick<sup>1</sup>

THAT PHILIP K. DICK’S reputation has been expressed in such phrasal epithets as “drug-addled nut,” “acid-crazed visionary,” and his work described as “stimulant literature,” indicates the way in which Dick is often promoted as a *hyper-accelerated* author—the composer of an ontologically weird and transcendental fiction. For many critics and readers, Dick is a fiendish hop-head from whose shaking hands spills a range of intractable gnostic images and narratives.<sup>2</sup> Such an image, however, has become all too familiar within circles of Dick’s readership; it is a stereotype so popular in fact that, in adopting this view, Dick’s readers risk not only uncritically accepting a false image of the writer, but automatically and even “fashionably” rearticulating it. If there is a reason that Dick is still described in this way, though, it is perhaps because in so attributing to any author the quality of an automatic madness—or, what I have previously described in this thesis as their “*automation*”—we, whether as nonspecialist readers or critics, can affirm just how impressively such beings resemble kinds of machines or calculators. These authors, we think, are strange machines—beings in the order of a Deleuzoguattarian “schizo” or, as I have alternatively called this kind of figure, a model of the “psychoactive scrivener.”

In addition to the “schizo,” however, Deleuze and Guattari also envisage another kind of author: an agent they name an “organ-machine.” This is that being who inexorably materialises in the late twentieth century, the predictable result of the “production, distribution, consumption” model of

- 1 This chapter is a revised and extended version of my “‘The Shock of Dysrecognition’: Biopolitical Subjects and Drugs in Dick’s Science Fiction,” in *The World According to Philip K. Dick*, ed. Alexander Dunst and Stephen Schlensag (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 30-47.
- 2 Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Carroll & Graf, 2005 [1989]), 9; Andrew M. Butler, “LSD, Lying Ink, and *Lies, Inc.*,” *Science Fiction Studies* 32, no. 2 (2005): 265-80, esp. 265; and Marcus Boon, *The Road of Excess*, 189.

capitalism's "formal developed structures." However, this figure—as with the figure of Huxley in the 1920s—is also often inclined to criticise this very structure's alienating effects: namely, the estrangement or "*entfremdung*" of which Karl Marx had once written.<sup>3</sup> Diagnosing the "late capitalist anomie" that was the natural consequence of the "post production" regime of consumer capitalism, Dick—as Andrew P. Hobernek suggests—becomes not simply a machine, but a professional working author; he is "driven, like any technician or executive or secretary or salesperson, to sell his mental labor to the highest bidder."<sup>4</sup>

Throughout the 1960s, Dick would function as an exceptionally productive writer—notwithstanding his increasingly frenetic life, one that had been marked by the emotional trauma of three divorces in less than two decades. Dick's implacable drive to produce written material was so great, in fact, that even he sometimes seems incredulous: "In five years," he once remarked, "I wrote sixteen novels, which is incredible. I mean, nobody, I don't think anybody's done that before."<sup>5</sup> As Dick suggests, it is this kind of superhuman productivity that might have enabled him to produce what may well be a record of a kind in the history of literary production.

But if Dick is the model of a productive writer, he is also, as I have already indicated, a model of the "schizo": this is the figure who, as Deleuze and Guattari argue, constitutes both the "conclusion" and "exterior limit" of capitalism. The "schizo," they argue, expresses in their every action the "deepest tendency" of a system that compels the subject to perform a range of repetitive, intermittent functions.<sup>6</sup> Moving in fits and starts—in "hiatuses and failure, breakdowns and ruptures"—the schizo is also a "desiring-machine," one who works only to "withdraw a part of the whole, to detach, to

3 See Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, tr. Martin Milligan, (New York: Prometheus Books, 1988), 10.

4 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 4.

5 Uwe Anton and Werner Fuchs, "So I don't write about Heroes: An Interview with Philip K. Dick," *SF Eye* 14 (1996): 37-46. Accessed 12 February 2014, <http://2010philipkdickfans.philipkdickfans.com/frank/anton.html>, transcribed by Frank Bertrand.

6 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus*, 246. Dick divorced from his first wife, Jeanette Marlin in 1949, from his second wife, Kleo Apostolides, in 1959, and then from his third wife, Anne Rubenstein, in 1964. Dick would marry twice more: firstly, to Nancy Hackett in 1966, and then finally, to Leslie "Tessa" Busby, in 1973. See "Chronology," in Philip K. Dick, *Philip K. Dick: Valis and the Later Novels*, ed. Jonathan Lethem (United States: The Library of America, 2007), 823-38. Also see Jonah Peretti, "Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Contemporary Visual Culture and the Acceleration of Identity Formation/Dissolution," *Negations* (Winter 1996), accessed at [http://www.datawranglers.com/negations/issues/96w/96w\\_peretti.html](http://www.datawranglers.com/negations/issues/96w/96w_peretti.html).

'have something left over,' [and] to *produce*."<sup>7</sup> Constituting "not the identity of capitalism, but, on the contrary its difference, its divergence, and its death," the schizo is a rogue whose "real operations of desire in the material world" constitute only so much as the outgrowth or expression of their far more particular and intensive desires.

The schizo is a far cry from Freud's Oedipal subject who—as for the portrait I have sketched of Huxley in chapters 4 to 6—remains blinded to reality's contours. Where Freud's subject is conditioned by a polymorphous perversity that is endlessly and statically repeated, the desiring-machine apprehends their "libidinal assemblage" with a much different—and in fact an unassailable—acuity. Giving themselves over to the pulses of the ego and the schizzes of desire, the desiring-machine becomes a new kind of human, one who is fully integrated into and consubstantial with their every psychological pulse, their every embodied stratagem, and their every calculated machination.<sup>8</sup> Constituted less (if at all) by infantile sexualisation (like the psychotic or neurotic)—and less still by some ground of an "originary" syndrome—the schizo is a dynamic, decentering knot in which the "desire and the social" efficiently and seamlessly thrust, torque, and tangle. And, in view of these procedures, schizos are also exemplary operators within their fields; they are masters, that is, within the very same context that Huxley had mournfully anticipated in his critique of "total efficiency" (*UD*, 209).

But if for the schizo "There is," as Deleuze and Guattari write in *Anti-Oedipus*, "only desire and the social, and nothing else," then this reality can only ever be reimagined or reconfigured in or as other equivalents of this principal binary. Schizos are thus reduced always to an inside and outside; they are constituted by a social matrix whose values, codes, and norms appear only incidental to—or perhaps even invisible within—the autonomous and "automatising" field of desire that propels and accelerates their social existence. They are always, then, *outside* of the social, exiled and alienated. So excluded, the desiring-machine or schizo must *peregrinate*—which is to say ambulate or itinerate—even as they do no fit, do not *work*, within the *socius*. And while they remain near this locus—or nearby it—they remain there only in the spirit of realising or satiating their own desire's needs. And

7 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 41-2 (my emphasis). On what Jeery Aline Flieger argues is probably a much more facile distinction than Deleuze and Guattari's themselves suggest, between their own model of the subject and Freud's model, see Jeery Aline Flieger, "Overdetermined Oedipus: Mommy, Daddy and Me as Desiring Machine," *The South Atlantic Quarterly* 96, no. 3 (1997): 599-620, esp. 605-6.

8 Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 37, 38.

mournfully, these are inexorably *social* needs—even if *they themselves* are not social beings. Thus, in Deleuze and Guattari’s “broad outlines of the parallelism [or chiasmus] between social production and desiring production,” the former is always subordinate to the latter: the social, that is, determines the individual. The “truth of the matter,” they argue, is that the social is only another, if not the primary, expression of desire, expressed as it is in its particular and “determinate conditions.”<sup>9</sup>

As the producer of so many confounding alternative worlds (including *romans à clef* whose marionette-show qualities at times resemble the features of Huxley’s satirical novels), Dick may be understood to produce or generate an exemplary instance of the kind of “residue” that, as Jerry Aline Fleiger suggests, is to be expected of an exemplary desiring-machine.<sup>10</sup> But if Dick’s narratives offer images of the final and inevitable “death” of capitalist power, producing what have become—in science fiction’s history as much as literary fiction’s history—the most singular and matchless examples of capitalism’s most radically augmented, reduplicated, and totalising alternatives, then his fiction is also an imagining of capitalism’s most intoxicating, and most *intoxicated*, apotheosis.

These are the futures, for instance, in which those technologies that undergird desire, production, and consumption have become as deliriously alienating as they are defrauding of one’s identity and beliefs. And, in the varied milieux in which the social systems regulating these adjuvants appear, these technologies—often drugs—are treated at once as medicines, intoxicants, foods and—as I will elaborate in this chapter—even as substitute for *thought itself*; they are thus metaphysical potions, talismans of unimaginable power and destructiveness.

To propose that Dick’s tendency to produce these fictions is simply an artifact of his own drug use, however—and not, for instance, also Dick’s response to that parallelism of social forms and desire so thrillingly described by Deleuze and Guattari—would be far too reductive. Indeed, such an approach can offer only the most flimsy of footholds amid the many question marks engendered by Dick’s tumultuous personal biography.<sup>11</sup> To ascribe these frenzied stories to their author’s drug use, in other words, is simply to recapitulate to the difficulty that obtains in any work of historical and authorial biography. And yet it is an approach that seems all the more tempt-

9 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 29-30.

10 Jerry Aline Fleiger, “Overdetermined Oedipus,” 6.

11 Also see Phillip Purser-Hallard, “The Drugs Did Work,” *The Guardian* (London, UK), 12 August 2006, 8.

ing here; for Dick's mental state—described in so many instances as pathological—seems so much more difficult to comprehend than that of other authors.

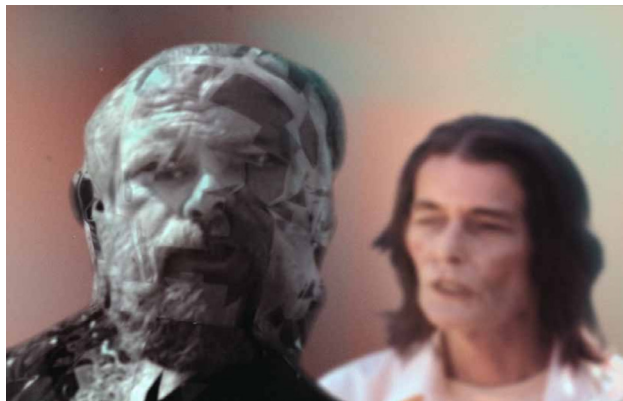
But then again, to attribute Dick's ideas and fiction to drugs is wrong-headed for other reasons. It would be to leave unacknowledged, for instance, the way in which the rapid popularisation of Dick—himself now a kind of recognisable brand name or franchise—has also led to a crucial literary-critical situation in which his work has become all the more enigmatic. It is increasingly decentered and unwieldy for theoretical or historical criticism not only because of *its* strange perspicacity, but also because of the strangeness of its many companion texts—its many “intertexts.” Straddling the intractable threshold between art and consumer product, the range of re-appropriations of Dick's fiction, for instance—or the repeatedly appearing reconfiguration of Dickian worlds in the science fiction literature and media that has appeared after his death—may represent, as Francis Mason notes, an instance, of the very “deadening of consciousness” about which Dick's books themselves forewarn.<sup>12</sup>

And yet, if one looks to the number of textual simulations and simulacra of Dick's works, one sees nothing if not a diverse, or polymorphous response to Dick's variable oeuvre; it is a moveable feast, and testament to Dick's own habitually mottled, and capricious conceptualisations of reality. Beginning with as admirable a cinematic adaptation as Ridley Scott's 1982 film *Blade Runner* (an adaptation of *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*), Dick's cinematic afterlife has nonetheless led to a range of less admirable films, such as Paul Verhoeven's 1990 *Total Recall* or Lee Tamahori's 2007 *Next*.

Of course, myriad artistic homages to Dick's ideas have appeared outside of cinema too. A particularly notable example is the video installation exhibited in 2011 at the Art Gallery of NSW by collaborative duo Ms&Mr (see figures 7.1–7.3, below). Remixing Dick's 1977 address to the Metz Science Fiction Convention (an event that took place in Metz, France), the installation intersperses slow-moving images of Dick's convention speech with images of the author's fifth wife, Tessa.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, such appropriations and reverberations of Dick's novels and biography appear so regularly in the cinema and art worlds that the difference between what is a “genuine” Philip K. Dick

12 Francis Mason, “Nostalgia for the Future: The End of History and Postmodern “Pop” T.V.” *Journal of Popular Culture* 29, no. 4 (1996): 27-40, esp. 28.

13 Thus putting Phil and Tessa into dialogue, the work fabricates what the artists describe as an “implausible exchange” across time and space. Also see the artist's press release: <http://www.novamilne.net/news.php?news=20111214215601>.



Figures 7.1-7.3 Stills from the video installation work entitled *XEROX MIS-SIVE 1977/2011* by Mr&Mrs. Notably, this work's title makes reference to what Dick, in the *Exegesis*, describes as the "Xerox missive": a letter he claims to have received from the FBI, seeking his cooperation in reporting communist sympathisers to them. In a letter of 2 September 1974, Dick, adhering to these orders, wrote a letter to the FBI warning them of science fiction (and literary) critic Darko Suvin as well as "three other Marxists": Frederic Jameson, and Petter Fitting. See Dick, *The Exegesis*, 900n80; Philip K. Dick, *The Selected Letters of Philip K. Dick, 1974*, ed. Paul Williams (California: Underwood-Miller, 1991), 235-6.



narrative and only a “Dickian” narrative has often seemed an arbitrary and confusing distinction.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, whether because of or in spite of this profusion of paratexts, Dick’s fiction has become difficult to particularise, to examine or apprehend directly; its totality is all too readily reducible in the popular idiom to the imaginative scrivenings of a “drug-addled nut.” And if Dick’s writing now seems difficult to apprehend in other ways, it is perhaps because contemporary admirers of Dick’s fiction encounter his works almost always through their *cinematic* paratexts. Many new readers in particular are familiar with Dick’s works only through what are in effect poor substitutes for them—and by this I mean not only the cinematic adaptations of his novels and short stories. Rather, the increasing number of articles that seek to confirm Dick’s oft-vaunted “prescience”—which is to say the accuracy of his social and material prognostications and his “prophecy”<sup>15</sup>—are also often of critical interest to erstwhile readers of his fiction.

It is precisely this state of affairs that perhaps led Jonathan Lethem, editor of Dick’s 2009 Library of America editions and co-editor of Dick’s *Exegesis*, to title his 2002 article in *Bookforum* “You Don’t Know Dick.”<sup>16</sup> While Lethem’s acerbic title suggestively foregrounds his yearning to “get on paper” what “that special condition known as Dickheadedness meant in the

14 There have been a significant number of direct adaptations of Dick’s fiction, and perhaps more than any other science fiction writer’s work. These include, in order of release: Hampton Fancher, et al., *Blade Runner*, dir. Ridley Scott (California: The Ladd Company, 1982); Nikos Nikolaidis, *Morning Patrol*, dir. Nikos Nikolaidis (Greek Film Center, 1987); Ronald Shushett, et al., *Total Recall*, dir. Paul Verhoeven (United States: Carolco Pictures, 1990); Jacques Audiard, et al., *Confessions d’un Barjo*, dir. Jérôme Boivin (Levallois-Perret: Alicéleo, 1992); Dan O’Bannon, et al., *Screamers*, dir. Christian Duguay (Los Angeles: Columbia, 1995); Caroline Case, et al., *Impostor*, dir. Gary Fleder (New York: Dimension Films, 2001); Richard Linklater, *A Scanner Darkly*, dir. Richard Linklater (Burbank, California: Warner Independent Pictures, 2001); Scott Frank and Jon Cohen, *Minority Report*, dir. Steven Spielberg (California: Amblin Entertainment, 2002); Gary Goldman, et al., *Next*, dir. Lee Tamahori (California: Paramount Pictures, 2007); John Alan Simon, *Radio Free Albermuth*, dir. John Alan Simon (2008, independent release); George Nolfi, *The Adjustment Bureau*, dir. George Nolfi (California: Universal Pictures, 2011); and Kurt Wimmer, et al., *Total Recall*, dir. Len Wiseman (California: Columbia Pictures, 2012).

15 As an example of the kinds of articles that regularly appear promoting Dick’s prescience or prophesy, see Brent Staples, “Philip K. Dick: A Sage of the Future Whose Time has Finally Come,” *New York Times*, 8 June 2007, [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/08/opinion/08fri4.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/08/opinion/08fri4.html?_r=0). Also see the documentary *The Prophetic Vision of Philip K. Dick*, directed by Mark Steensland and Andy Massagli (New York: First Run/Icarus Films, 2000), VHS; and Steven Best and Douglas Kellner, “The Apocalyptic Vision of Philip K. Dick,” *Cultural Studies & Critical Methodologies* 3, no. 2 (2003): 186, 202n6.

16 Jonathan Lethem, “You Don’t Know Dick,” *Bookforum* 9, no. 2 (2002): 22-3.



lost years after [the author's] death and before his recent and ongoing canonization," it also uses the kind of language that signifies Lethem's hybrid identity: equal part fan and archivist. Such a hybrid position is common in "Dickhead" circles; fans qua specialist independent researchers such as Perry Kinman, for instance, have begun extremely small-runs of newsletters on Dick, documenting in them such obscure facts as how many real and fictional drug references appear in each of his novels (see figures 7.4 and 7.5, below). The censorious side-effect of Lethem's title, of course, is that it emphasises the extent to which Dick's authorial status—whether he is understood as an "acid-crazed visionary," an exemplar for Deleuze and Guattari's model of the "schizo," or as a preeminent critic and theorist of late-capitalism—remains now, as in those "lost years," unresolved—especially in relation to what might now be understood as the "postmodern literary canon."<sup>17</sup>

Even during his lifetime, however, Dick had been primed to anticipate the likelihood of his canonisation as a drug user—although he had also already contested the extent to which his works should be considered the direct products of his drug use. Dick felt that his experimentation with d-lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) in particular—a drug that he had ingested on fewer occasions than Aldous Huxley had used it—had been overplayed, especially in the promotional tactics and ploys designed to popularise certain of his novels. Such a motivation prompted the publication of a German version of Dick's 1965 novel *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* under the new and radically different title *LSD-Astronauten*, that is, *LSD-Astronauts* (see figure 7.6, below).<sup>18</sup> According to Dick, in an interview given during his visit to Metz, France in 1977, it was the literary critic Franz Rottensteiner, an agent of science fiction writer Stanislaw Lem, who had been responsible for

17 An example of Dick's characterisation as a drug-dependent author appears in Philip Purser-Hallard's article "The Drugs Did Work," *The Guardian* (London, UK), 12 August 2006, 8.

18 Dick used LSD on at least three occasions, but probably, at most, only on as many as a handful of times between 1963 and 1967. On Dick's use of LSD throughout this period, see Lawrence Sutin, *Divine Invasions: A Life of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Carroll and Graf, 2005), 127, 141-2; Gregg Rickman, *To The High Castle: Philip K. Dick: A Life 1928-1962* (Long Beach: Fragments West/Valentine Press, 1989), 138; and also see Dick's claim that he "took LSD only two or three times" in Gregg Rickman, *Philip K. Dick: In His Own Words* (Long Beach: Fragments West/Valentine Press, 1988), 5. Also see Perry Kinman's obscure fanzine *Rouzeleweave*, which provides an exhaustive list of the drugs Dick used according to various biographies between 1933 until 1980: see Kinman, ed. *Rouzeleweave* 5 (unpublished), 2008. Two relevant pages from this fanzine are reproduced in figures 7.4 and 7.5. I reproduce the cover of *LSD-Astronauten* (Frankfurt: Insel, 1971) in figure 7.6.

DRUGS PHIL USED : 1960's

year	drug	ref	page
'60 Feb	Semoxydrene, fuel for writing	DIS	107
early '60s	uppers (prescription), diet pills	PKBS13	8
'63	taking too many amphetamines	THC	51
'63-'64	amphetamines in increasing amounts	DIS	123
'63-'64	consuming large amounts of amphetamines	THC	49
'63-'64	speed, Phil preferred	DIS	123
"	antidepressants, prescriptions for	DIS	123
'63-'64	amphetamine abuse period	THC	51
"	Stelazine (Phenothiazine) on occasion	DIS	124
'63	psychedelic drugs	DIS	127
'60s	phenothiazine, prescribed for schizophrenia	THC	55
"	phenothiazines		
"	tri-cyclics = Elavil, Norpramin		
"	Lithium	THC	413
'64	amphetamine, fueled writing streak	DIS	128
'64 Con	had lots of drugs on him	DIS	140
'64 sometime	acid, first hit (took it 4 times)	DIS	140
'64	on an LSD trip, he heard and understood Latin	THC	138
'65 late	acid, dropped 75 mg	DIS	149
not till about '67	took LSD only 2 or 3 times	IHOW	5
'68-'69	Stelazine	DIS	158
"	Librium (tranq)	DIS	158
"	Valium (tranq)	DIS	158
"	Dexamil (amphet)	DIS	158
"	white crosses (amphet)	DIS	158
'67-'70	Speed, got from street dealers	DIS	159
'67 July	phenothiazine, took a big dose	DIS	160
'67-'68	Ritalin (upper), for mild depression	DIS	162
"	Ritalin, saved up 1 month worth, took all at one time	DIS	162
'68	salvaged pills from Miriam Lloyd	DIS	162
'68 Sept	PCP, at SF Bay Con	DIS	162
"	duck tranquilizers at SF convention	PKBS13	8
"	PCP, in a hotel room at a convention	OAP	18
'68-'69	speed, mounting intake	DIS	164
after '68	took up with "counter culture" drug users	IHOW	5

year	drug	ref	page
Aug. '64	bad street speed, hospitalized for	DIS	164
'69-'70	amphetamine, Nancy tried to hide it	DIS	164

5-14

Figure 7.4 A page from Perry Kinman's obscure fanzine *Rouzeleweave*. This page provides an exhaustive list of the drugs that Dick is known to have used between 1933 until 1980 by reference to various biographies: see Kinman, ed. *Rouzeleweave 5* (Tokyo: self-published), 2008.

the title—a title of which Dick apparently disapproved.<sup>19</sup> Following the German publication of *LSD-Astronauten*, Dick would also specify Rottensteiner's name among those who he identified as the “dedicated outlets in a chain of command from Stanislaw Lem in Krakow, Poland.”<sup>20</sup>

When Dick wrote a letter to William C. Sullivan, then head of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, he described Rottensteiner as one among a collec-

19 This is what Dick reports in his interview with Anton and Werner, “So I don’t write about Heroes: An Interview with Philip K. Dick.”

20 See Philip K. Dick, *The Selected Letters of Philip K. Dick, 1974*, ed. Paul Williams (California: Underwood-Miller, 1991), 235-6. I note that William C. Sullivan is, in this edited collection of letters, misnamed William A. Sullivan; also see Philip K. Dick, *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick*, ed. Pamela Jackson and Jonathan Lethem (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 908n80.

# Rouzeleweave

# 5  
Nov. '08

"God knew how many pills he himself had swallowed during the last decade, enough to pave a road from his home to this hotel and possibly back." MARTIAN 7-5

Who is Judy Hume? The other day I read the back cover of CRAP, maybe for the first time ever. I was mildly surprised to find Jack Isidore's brother-in-law's name was Charlie. Throughout the book it's spelled Charley. So what. It's only a spelling mistake. So what. Well, next I came to find out, via the back cover again that Charley, or Charlie, whoever, is married to Judy Hume. Who Hume? Judy Hume. I know a Fay Hume but not a Judy Hume. A quick read through the book netted not a single Judy. Nor did it hint that Fay may have a middle name like Judy. Nothing. So I ask again: Who is Judy Hume? My book is a July 1992 Vintage paperback edition. First edition. That's sixteen years ago this was printed up. I've never heard anyone say anything about this. Judy Hume has been with us for sixteen years now. I googled Vintage books and quickly found out that on the Random House site Judy is Juddy. Juddy Hume. I assume it's just a spelling mistake and by Juddy they mean Judy. And by Judy they mean Fay. But Judy is not a spelling mistake for Fay. That's way too far a stretch. And there is no other person in CRAP with the name Judy to maybe might have been confused with. Nope. None. So I ask once again: Who the hell is Judy Hume?

You may have noticed a few years have passed since our last issue. I myself have noticed the same thing, and as I notice, another year slips by, and then another and another. Like time in an hourglass, or more

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| A | appropriately, time in a yearglass, it slips swiftly away. Hey, look on the bright side. We've been around the sun five more times. Gone way over to the other side and back again in a long circular route. A little solar system sightseeing. Whatever, it's good to be back. I'll try not to burn out like a nova this time.   |
| U | You all are familiar with the newsclown in the flaming red hairpiece who went on in later years to become the president. The one and only Jim Briskin with his handlebar moustache. (CRACK 7-2) A certain Obama may be the muse of this resurgence of memories, and you may be scrambling to find if Obama himself did not do any news work anytime in the past decked out in a vermilion rug of brilliant sheen.   |
| N | While you google or yahoo or peruse or however you go after this information, you might take some time to search after the word 'Brozo'. If you do you'll immediately be transported south of the border to Mexico and its very own news commentator Brozo the Clown. He's decked out in a faded circus topcoat and grubby sweatpants and he sports a chartreuse wig with a bald spot. His voice is rough. For a long time he had a morning show 'El Ma Inanero' (slang for 'quick morning sex') where he berated everything that crossed his path. Political commentary with bathroom humor. After his wife died he took time off. But, is a clown again on 'El NotiFiero.' Passing on the news. It's hard to imagine this newsclown going on to being El presidente but not all green curly-haired newsclowns have the same destiny. Oh, Brozo is Victor Trujillo. A crusty fellow. |
| S |   |



In this issue:  
P.2 Drugs in Novels –  
SIMULACRA – TRUTH  
P.12 Drugs Phil Used as Noted in  
Biographies, by year.

Figure 7.5 The front cover of Issue 5 of Perry Kinman's obscure fanzine *Rouzeleweave*. Kinman, ed. *Rouzeleweave 5* (Tokyo: self-published), 2008.

tive of American literary critics including Darko Suvin, Fredric Jameson, and Peter Fitting who were operatives of the "Iron Curtain Party group." Identifying Stanislaw Lem as the "total [communist] Party functionary" and the man behind the publication of a "great deal of Party-controlled science fiction," Dick expressed a great suspicion for those in his science fiction circle.<sup>21</sup> While Rottensteiner went on to exhibit a special interest in visionary and drug-related fantasy literature—or what may be called "psychotropic literature"—it was perhaps the influence of Harlan Ellison's *Dangerous Visions* collection, first published in 1967, that led Rottensteiner to retitle Dick's 1964 novel.<sup>22</sup>

21 Ibid.

22 Rottensteiner is notably one of a paucity of scholars to have investigated the literary works of Leo Perutz, the author who wrote what appears to be a prediction of LSD's 1937 (or, as psychoactive, 1943) discovery in his 1933 novel *Saint Peter's Snow*, tr. Eric

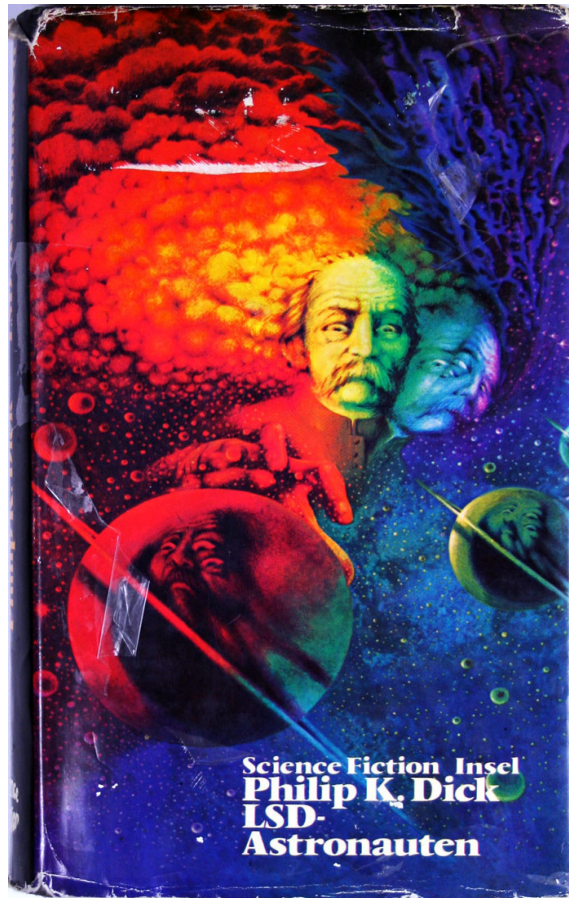


Figure 7.6 The German publication of *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch*, published as *LSD-Astronauten* (*LSD-Astronauts*) in 1971 (Frankfurt: Insel, 1971).

When Ellison had asked Dick to write a story about or “under the influence of (if possible) LSD,” it was perhaps less to elicit an interesting story than to allow him to write a marketable introduction to “The Faith of Our Fathers”—the short story that Dick ultimately contributed to Ellison’s collection. As Ellison would write, both this story and *The Three Stigmata of Palmer Eldritch* (henceforth “*Stigmata*”) had been the product of an LSD

Mosbacher (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1990). On Rottensteiner’s commentary on Perutz’s work, see *The Fantasy Book: The Ghostly, The Gothic, The Imaginary, The Unreal* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1978), 144. On recent scholarship on Perutz’s novel, see my “Making Madness Before America: Saint Peter’s Snow, Psychotomimetics, and the German Experimental Imaginary” (2012), available at <http://www.rudge.tv/blog/psychoactivesubstances/>; and Alan Piper, “Leo Perutz and the Mystery of Saint Peter’s Snow,” *Time and Mind* 6, no. 2 (2013): 175-98.

trip—"the result of just such a hallucinogenic journey."<sup>23</sup> Despite Dick's "Afterword" to the short story—the work of a few pages in which Dick, echoing Huxley, wonders whether "through psychedelic drugs, the religious experience" could become "commonplace in the life of intellectuals"—Dick generally downplays the extent of his experience with visionary experience, both in general terms and concerning any such experience as it may have been engendered by means of LSD or its analogues. In "my own experiences with psychedelic drugs," he writes, "I have had previous tiny illumination compared with [John Scotus] Erigena."<sup>24</sup>

Causing a "furor" between Dick and Ellison, a pair who had maintained a healthy friendship since the mid-1950s, the incident emblematises Dick's defensiveness about being characterised as an author who writes under the influence of drugs. In fact, so intense and continuous was Dick's "fury" over Ellison's introduction that it would, as Sutin suggests, later prompt him to withdraw his promise to contribute to a forthcoming issue of *Fantasy and Science Fiction*—an honorary issue dedicated to Ellison himself.<sup>25</sup> In view of these and many other of the presages of Dick's soon-to-be-pervasive reputation as a drug-inspired author, many of which were visible at this time, it is no surprise that he often ironised this kind of pigeonholing *avant la lettre*. Dick predicted in a 1980 letter, for instance, his future critical reception; writing just before the publication of *VALIS*, Dick articulated his own eulogy in a deadpan bathos typical of his fiction: "took drugs. Saw God. BFD."<sup>26</sup>

Here Dick's biloquistic dismissal of his own work—articulated only two years before his untimely death—belies his far from resolute attitude toward, and relationship with, licit and illicit drugs. And if these paratactic phrases obscure Dick's earnest and complex critical views on drugs, they also wrongly suggest his ignorance about the orbiting fields of psychiatry and psychosis—and hence the irony. Thus, to accept the overdetermined and reductive formulation in which Dick is simply a "writer on drugs," and to do so without examining the conditions of his drug use, is to neglect evidence of the complexity of this relationship, evidence which appears perhaps most revealingly, however fugitively, in both Dick's fiction and personal letters.

23 Harlan Ellison, "Introduction to 'Faith of Our Fathers,'" in *Dangerous Visions 2* (London: Sphere Books, 1974), 31.

24 *Ibid.*, 68-9.

25 Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 161, 236.

26 Philip K. Dick, *The Selected Letters of Philip K. Dick, 1980-82*, ed. Don Heron (Novato: Underwood Miller, 2010), 27; also see Umberto Rossi, *The Twisted Worlds of Philip K. Dick: A Reading of Twenty Ontologically Uncertain Novels* (London: McFarland & Company, 2011), 288n12.



While it is true that Dick experimented with and wrote about a variety of drugs throughout his life—amphetamines, psychedelics, anti-psychotics and “heroic dosages” of orthomolecular vitamins, to name only a few—to propose that Dick understood these kinds of drugs as tools that offered only, or even offered *any*, strictly positive benefits to himself or others, would be to miss the point. It would also be to ignore the gloomy, even alarmist tenor of most of his writing on the subject.<sup>27</sup>

The roles that drugs play in Dick’s fiction are as so many tropes and psychotropes; they are variously symbols of terror, malevolence, disillusionment, and shrewd parody. And Dick’s readiness to accept a variety of medical explanations for drugs’s actions and inactions—even despite the fact that his own experiential accounts contradicted this evidence—suggests Dick’s pointed distrust for the predictability and value of biochemical alteration in general. Ever apprehensive of the economic structures that scaffold drug-controlled societies, Dick’s fiction and biography signal his materialist suspicion of the political, economic and cultural structures through which both legal and illegal drugs are developed, regulated, prescribed, proscribed, and sold.

In this chapter, I want to elaborate on Dick as a writer on drugs. I will consider his fiction as an example of what Sadie Plant calls “writing on drugs,” and examine the relation of the historical questions of Dick’s drug use contemporaneous developments in medical and economic psychiatry. But why should it be important for literary scholars to examine Dick’s personal drug use in this way, and not simply the *representations* of drugs in his works?<sup>28</sup> Building on the initial concerns of this thesis with the status of authorship in part 1—and conceiving of a writer’s drug use as part of a larger pursuit in literary studies to develop novel images or models of what Huxley calls the “psychophysical organism”—this chapter proposes that the material circumstances of textual production, including those related to the author’s biography, are always in some way available to the analyst.

27 On Dick’s use of LSD and psychedelics see Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 127, 141-2; on amphetamines, including “speed” and the methamphetamine compound Semoxydrine, see Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 107, 123, 164-5, 169-70, and Rickman, *To The High Castle*, 49-52; on the anti-psychotic Stelazine, see Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 124, and Anne R. Dick, *The Search for Philip K. Dick*, 188-89; and on Dick’s drug use generally, see Kinman Rouzlewave, (unpublished, 2008). Also see David Lenson, *On Drugs* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2002); Boon, *The Road of Excess*, 189.

28 That this might constitute a scholarly-critical transgression is indicated by the remarks of critics such as Andrew M. Butler. In his 2005 essay, Butler argues that we should “try to keep his life and his work separate and not overplay Dick’s use of drugs.” Butler, “LSD, Lying Ink, and *Lies, Inc.*,” *Science Fiction Studies* 32, no. 2 (2005): 265-80, esp. 265.

I argue that these extratextual details, moreover, should always be critically welcomed in literary scholarship. As I suggested in earlier chapters (and in particular chapters 2 and 6), if the emergence of new technologies—the printing press, the typewriter, the computer, and various other means by which a shift toward electric formats took place—can be understood as having been essential in reshaping literary ideas throughout modern history (as much scholarship has postulated), then a historicisation of the modalities opened up by developments in psychopharmacology and drugs in the late twentieth century may also be—as David Boothroyd proposes—“readily acknowledged as a matter of legitimate contention.”<sup>29</sup>

Yet, only a handful of excellent volumes have been dedicated to this subject, appearing sporadically throughout the last two decades. Of course, it is notable, too, that most of these works refer explicitly to Dick’s work.<sup>30</sup> One explanation for this is that there exists a growing interest in the history of drug use and its effects on literary production, albeit a nascent one. If this be so, then this development serves as a rallying call for the continuation of this work. The range of socio-legal changes that have occurred over the last two to three years—the legalisation of cannabis under two US state law regimes, for instance—speak further to the emergence of a new epistemic moment in which the development of a cultural studies of drugs and a corresponding “narcoliterary” studies of texts may be crucial to our understanding of the nature of authorship and textual production.<sup>31</sup>

Almost singularly prodigious in his interlocution with the psychiatric developments of his time, Dick turns his acerbic, even Huxleyan, wit to the biopolitical and psychopolitical pressures of American life after the Second

29 On the printing press, see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 4-6. On electronic and digital writing, see notably N. Katherine Hayles, *Writing Machines* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002) and *My Mother Was a Computer: Digital Subjects and Literary Texts* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005). And see David Boothroyd, *Culture on Drugs: Narco-Cultural Studies of High Modernity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press), 9.

30 I refer here to works I have previously cited including Boothroyd’s edited volume *Culture on Drugs*, Lenson’s *On Drugs*; Boon’s *Road of Excess*; as well as Avital Ronell’s *Crack Wars: Literature, Addiction, Mania* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992); Sadie Plant’s *Writing On Drugs* (London: Faber and Faber, 1999), see 114 and 169; and Richard Doyle’s *Darwin’s Pharmacy: Sex, Plants, and the Evolution of the Noösphere* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2011), 49.

31 For a summary of these changes, see for instance, D. Mark Anderson, et al., “The Legalization of Recreational Marijuana: How Likely is the Worst Case Scenario?” *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 33, no. 2 (2014): 221-31.



World War. As Lethem observes of Dick's 1964 novel *Clans of the Alphane Moon*, it is an "antic psychiatric farce, written as if cribbed from the DSM-IV."<sup>32</sup> Dick's familiarity not only with psychiatric drugs, however, but the epistemology of psychiatric diagnosis and classification, is not only redolent in his fiction but also central to a number of his prose essays, letters, transcribed interviews, book forewords and, of course, his own seemingly endless torrent of theoretical philosophy: *The Exegesis*. While this archive cannot be fully addressed in this chapter, the companion essays that Dick wrote on the subjects of drugs and schizophrenia during a time of unprecedented personal anxiety and prescription drug use were scribbled by him during the same period that forms this chapter's focal point: the years 1963 to '65. Dick's concern particularly with the relation of hallucination, schizophrenia, and drugs during this period indicates the significance of these years in Dick's writing life, as well as their difficulty for him.<sup>33</sup>

Influenced by the philosophy of psychiatry expressed in Rollo May's edited collection *Existence*, Dick's theorisations on hallucinations and psychotic illnesses readily entangle themselves with a range of more detailed elaborations on the politics of psychiatry, enunciated at this time by the likes of Thomas Szasz, Foucault, Laing, Franco Basaglia, and Guattari.<sup>34</sup> In his earnest and scholarly engagement with the phenomenology of consciousness—and his implicit concern to locate the origin of what Foucault understood simply as "madness"—Dick distinguishes himself from other drug-oriented literary figures of the time. He is in many ways unlike those who formed "the Beats," for example, for as a group they were less persistently concerned with "epistemologising" than with "experientialising" their interiorities.<sup>35</sup>

32 Lethem, "You Don't Know Dick."

33 Anne Dick's history of her and Phil's marriage in *The Search For Philip K. Dick* (California: Tachyon, 2010) details this tumultuous period of Dick's life in the mid-1960s, culminating in Dick's perception of a face towering over him in the sky—what Sutin calls a "visage of perfect evil." See Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 126-7. Dick's essays of this period are reproduced in Lawrence Sutin, ed. *The Shifting Realities of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Pantheon, 1995), 167-82.

34 Anne Dick writes that Dick became "overly involved with the case histories" of those featured in Rollo May's co-edited volume *Existence: A New Dimension in Psychiatry and Psychology* (London: Basic Books, 1958); *The Search*, 79; and see Christopher Palmer, *Philip K. Dick: Exhilaration and the Postmodern* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003), 147; Rossi, *Twisted Worlds*, 111, 117, 281n15.

35 Of course, writers like Burroughs also penned essays on drugs, although these are characteristically less philosophical than Dick's. See, for instance: "Points of Distinction Between Sedative and Consciousness-Expanding Drugs," in David Solomon, ed. *LSD: The Consciousness-Expanding Drug* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1964), 168-73.

Descending from a lineage of literary figures that includes Huxley, Stanislaw Witkiewicz, and Antonin Artaud, then, Dick's fictional drug narratives function not simply as fictions, nor even as political fictions, but as—like these other writers's oeuvres—a corpus of writing that narrativises philosophical problems. In other words, Dick belongs to that range of practitioners whose role and status is ably articulated in an epithet that Dick once used to describe himself—they are “fictionalizing philosopher[s].”<sup>36</sup>

While Dick's fiction serves at once as philosophical satire and technopolitical critique, it also bears the influence of what had been a range of commonly held views about drugs throughout the 1960s and '70s. In particular, his novels *Clans of the Alphane Moon* and *Stigmata* respond to the political conditions in which psychiatry began to escalate in 1960s America; these novels thus map the rapid transformation of the pharmaceutical industry throughout this decade.<sup>37</sup> Later in this chapter, I will propose how Dick's prose and fiction respond to the question of drug addiction (and even to the question of *his own* drug addiction). These responses, I argue, reflect Dick's increasingly self-assured perspective on the *uncertainty* of the human body (a perspective that is quite distinct from that which Huxley holds), and the *untenability* of positivistic conceptualisations of nature more generally.

Dick's fiction, then, reflects the manner in which psychiatric and biochemical knowledge had itself drawn the author's attention to the way in which bodies can suddenly and unpredictably respond to psychoactive and other substances. And, as the diegetic realities of his works become progressively more unrecognisable, and his speculative views about the potential for the human body more wild, Dick's views are increasingly typified by a belief in the notion that reality may invert, transform, and break down. This belief is especially well emblematised in such instances as when no biochemical aetiology or potentiality is to be found in respect of an embodied affect. And when an inert or non-psychoactive substance causes unpredicted and unpredictable effects, for instance, what does this mean? For Dick, such discoveries offer nothing more than moments of truth; they are revelations of things that had before been, for one or another reason, occulted or hidden previously.

36 Philip K. Dick, *The Exegesis of Philip K. Dick*, ed. Pamela Jackson and Jonathan Lethem (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011), 693; also see Steve Erickson's and Simon Critchley's separate notes on this expression.

37 On the massive increases in amphetamine production and sales in the United States between the late 1950s and 1970 see Richard DeGrandpre, *The Cult Of Pharmacology* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 146-8.

Following what is at least a very close encounter with mental illness in the mid-1960s, Dick, by the early '70s, had come to feel that drugs in fact could not be readily repurposed for any specific or reliable use in society. Having concluded as much, he redirected the focus of his science fiction to machines—and later, he would attend to immaterial forces like VALIS or UBIK. But if illicit drugs *had* made any impact on society, Dick mused, then they had been only a malignant pestilence; they punished, as Dick would write in the Afterword to *A Scanner Darkly*, those who “wanted to keep on having a good time forever” (*SD*, 276-78). But despite his changing views on “good time” drugs like hallucinogens and opiates, mind-changing substances of all kinds remain consistent topological figures within Dick’s fiction; but at almost all times, these drugs are pernicious. They represent the colonisation of desire—and they are the material form of that power, wielded by those who would seek to assert and enforce biopower, in contemporary and future societies.

## Unworking the Socius: Drugs and Writing

AS I HAVE ALREADY discussed in previous chapters, the nexus of drugs and literature is perhaps most carefully scrutinised in Jacques Derrida’s reading of Plato’s *Phaedrus*. Here Derrida retells and analyses the story in which Sophocles, as I mentioned in chapter 6, compares *Phaedrus*’s written texts to a drug or *pharmakon*: to that which is “alternately or simultaneously... beneficent or maleficent.”<sup>38</sup> Emphasising the inherent instability of writing—and highlighting its unstable duality—Derrida conceives of inscription not only as originating as “logos” *in*, or *as* a kind of father, but also as a *drug*—as a compound that has its origins in nature.<sup>39</sup>

But Plato, Derrida argues, also does much more than this. He is “bent on presenting writing as an occult, and therefore suspect, power,”<sup>40</sup> and he remains intent to ensure that all those prone to misprision—those malicious abusers of words—shall know that they will, like sorcerers and conjurers, be the first among those exiled from the *polis* for their misdeeds. After all, it is precisely this point that Plato would more explicitly confirm in his *Laws*.<sup>41</sup>

38 Derrida, “Plato’s Pharmacy,” 75.

39 *Ibid.*, 82.

40 *Ibid.*, 99.

41 See Plato, *The Dialogues of Plato*, tr. Ben Jowett, 4 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1871), 4: 92.

Telling at once the history of writing's invention and prohibition, here a chiasmus consisting of "doing drugs" and "doing texts"—be it through the reading or producing of them—is what propels writing's potentiality, even at and from the very moment of its birth in Western history. And since both are now known to be dangerous powers, the acts of writing and drug use will equally be subject to interdiction by the father-king or ruling sovereign; doing one or the other, it seems, will lead to the perpetrator's banishment or exclusion.

In other books, this nexus of drugs and writing is configured differently: it becomes a relation of social communion (drugs) and rhetoric in Dale Pendell's *Pharmako* book series, and a relation of alterity (drugs), rhetoric, ecology in Richard Doyle's *Darwin's Pharmacy*. However, in all these texts, the nexus is not *simply* pernicious, but rather representative of the myriad ways in which communicating, remembering, and problem-solving involves many methods and materials, all of them deeply implicated in one another's operations, and none of them simply reducible to writing or drugs alone.<sup>42</sup> For instance, since, as Doyle notes, "psychedelic compounds have already been vectors of technoscientific change" throughout history—eliciting the kinds of insights apprehended by the likes of Nobel Prize winning biochemist Kary Mullis, who discovered polymerase chain reaction or PCR—drugs are not simply atrophic agents of disorder, but sources of growth that aid to "increase the overall dissipation of energy in any given ecology."<sup>43</sup> Others literary scholars—David Lenson, Sadie Plant, Marcus Boon, Avital Ronell, and David Boothroyd—focus on the relation of literature's production and drug use. And meanwhile, Anthony Enns, Andrew M. Butler, and Paul Youngquist have variously contributed to the scholarly discourse specifically on the relation of *Dick's* writing and drug use.<sup>44</sup>

But among these scholarly efforts, Ronell's work is perhaps the most instructive—or at least the most evocative. Employing a rich terminology that ricochets off of what Deleuze and Guattari variously call "schizoanalysis"

42 Each book in Dale Pendell's 'Pharmako' series is published by North Atlantic Books, California: *Pharmako/Poeia: Plant Powers, Poisons and Herbcraft* (1995); *Pharmako/Dynamis: Stimulating Plants, Potions and Herbcraft* (2002), see esp. 151; and *Pharmako/Gnosis: Plant Teachers and the Poison Path* (2005). Also see Doyle, *Darwin's Pharmacy*, *passim*.

43 Doyle, *Darwin's Pharmacy*, 33, 121.

44 See Youngquist, "Score, Scan, Schiz: Dick on Drugs," *Cultural Critique* 44 (2000): 84-110; Anthony Enns, "Media, Drugs and Schizophrenia in the Works of Philip K. Dick," *Science Fiction Studies* 33, no. 1 (2006): 68-88; and Butler, "Lying Ink, and *Lies, Inc.*," *passim*.

and “pharmacoanalysis,” Ronell prepares the ground for a “narcoanalysis” of literature, enabling the act of writing now to become visible as a revelatory procedure, one that denudes this graphemic technic of political, juridical, and philosophical obfuscations.<sup>45</sup> While examples of “writing on drugs” may serve to promote certain political ends—such as to promote drug decriminalisation, regulation, or even to allow for these molecular compounds and their variously specific subjective effects to escape interdiction altogether—this mode of writing also enables a new kind of knowledge. This is an exceptional category of knowledge that permits drugs at once to be known as material objects, as well as to be seen as the ciphers of new syntagmatically representable affects, ones that are pre-given to procedures of cognitive distortion and mimesis.

That “literature,” Ronell argues, is in a sense always and ever “on drugs and about drugs,” can be seen in the history of its censorship—in the many proceedings in which literature has itself been “treated juridically as a drug” because its “menace... consists in its pointing to what is not there in any ordinary sense of ontological unveiling.”<sup>46</sup> Literature, in other words, can be understood as a technology for transcribing molecular and ontological possibility; it is a sieve through which thoughts ordinarily interdicted may become more easily grasped, and thus more readily *thinkable*.

Just as drugs gesture at molecular difference, so does literature point to what is not ordinarily possible; but where the latter converts molecular operations into what is an apparently material form of comprehension and comprehensibility, the former only modify those originary differences. Thus, while literature is only a symbolic, or second-order technic in this configuration, it is nonetheless an ally of the molecular real; it expresses and articulates these neuromolecular processes, even as it obscures them. Citing Philip K. Dick himself, Ronell’s study of drug literature detects the chiasmus that consists in the twin cultures of drugs and electronics:

If the literature of electronic culture can be located in the works of Philip K. Dick or William Gibson, in the imaginings of cyberpunk projection, or a re-

45 See Avital Ronell, “Toward a Narcoanalysis,” in *Crack Wars*, 47-64; Gilles Deleuze, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 248. See also Anna Powell, “Pharmacoanalysis” (ch. 2) in *Deleuze, Altered States and Film* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), 54-9; and John Fitzgerald, “Pharmacoanalysis: Discourses of Hidden Drug Use,” PhD diss., Monash University, Melbourne, 2001 [unpublished].

46 Strangely enough, in Michael Bishop’s science fiction book *The Secret Ascension* (New York: Tor Books, 1987) the “second printing” of Dick’s novel *VALIS* is censored by the censorship board: 33. Also see Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 50, 55-6.

serve of virtual reality, then it is probable that electronic culture shares a crucial project with drug culture.<sup>47</sup>

If the “crucial project” in which electronic and drug cultures share is a literary one—and if it is discernible in both formal and material objects, such as those that lie outside Dick’s or Gibson’s identities or oeuvres—then this project is also an axiom around which each of their works orbits. This project is a tendency or drive to reproduce and redeploy material technics, but now in a syntagmatic or textual shape. Equally trussed to electrical forces as it is sutured to molecular operations, this literary project, moreover, arranges its modes of formal expression around the incidental or itinerant movements of a stimulus that is anterior to and yet propulsive of it. And given that drugs and electronic technologies routinely feature in Dick’s novels as what Jameson calls “adjuvants”—as adjuncts or aids to the protagonists’s mental lives—it is notable that these related cultures must also orbit around the practice of what was once called the *tekhne iatrike*: the mechanical arts.

Where one adopts the outlook in which the medical and mechanical arts may be productively brought together, the techniques (*tekhne*) of physical medicine (*iatros*) begin to consist in those practices by which subjects variously experiment with nothing less than the power to heal themselves.<sup>48</sup> Remedying one’s ills—such as by satiating one’s desires, investing in the material consumption of a substance, or performing an apparently therapeutic procedure by “self-medicating”—becomes a procedure that is presumed to further the subject’s own ends, no matter the net result.

For its part, the text itself, at least in literary studies, serves to allow for a similar restorative and restitutorial work; like a drug, or a drug-use procedure, a book points to those lacunae that are, as Ronell suggests, “not there in any ordinary sense.”<sup>49</sup> In doing so, books—like drugs—allow us to access particular kinds of thoughts—or even “images of thoughts,” or “psychotropes”—which are not easily accessed in other ways.

If drugs make legible a wider spectrum of ontological experience, though, they can also be used in another way: namely, in the way in which

47 Ibid., 68.

48 Consider in *Stigmata*, for instance, the interrelation of the drug Can-D, the E Therapy that is used by Dr. Denkmal, and the computer psychiatrist, Dr. Smile. I employ the term *tekhne iatrikes* as it was used in ancient Greek to refer to medicine as a “mechanical art.” On this, see Robert Araya’s essay “The outlook of the Tekhne Iatrike and the Medical Act to the Third Millennium,” *Theoretical Medicine* 17, no. 2 (1996): 163-73.

49 See William S. Haubrich, *Medical Meanings: A Glossary of Word Origins* (New York: American College of Physicians, 2003), 115.



they are deployed by the figures of Dick's novels. Almost invariably, characters in Dick's fiction use drugs to mitigate their human suffering—to vitiate what they have come to experience as a depressed or hyper-routinised (*automatised*) economic milieu. In other words, drugs, as I have already made clear in chapter 3, can allow for the “deautomatisation” of what might have become all too automatic or “automatised.”

Almost all of Dick's future worlds constitute outlines, for instance, of disturbing future conditions. They are dystopias, then, that invariably depict the mere fact of “being alive” as reason enough to imbibe something, or to make oneself subject to some invasive or otherwise subjugating intervention through some device or drug. These disturbing diegeses are thus Dick's own visionary illustrations of the same state that Giorgio Agamben describes as “biological modernity”: the period characterised by the “politicisation of bare life as such.”<sup>50</sup>

It is also in Dick's fictionalisations of future narcoeconomies and technopolises that we can identify the “unworking” that Ronell—calling on Jean-Luc Nancy and Maurice Blanchot's word, “*désœuvrement*”—describes as the *disoperationalisation* of the cultural, political, and social forces that abide in a collective, governmental state. Representing such societies—dystopic as they are—is Dick's own way of offering a digressive corrosion of the sovereign; it is his means of adumbrating those forces “whose contours we can begin to read,” as Ronell notes, in the literature on drugs.<sup>51</sup> In Dick's science fiction, moreover, such an unworking of these forces plays out within the very “reserve of virtual reality” that is itself opened up by the disorienting and heterogeneous *psychoscape* of the novel. These are those diegetic settings—already characterised by chaos and an endlessly hallucinating drug culture—in which the apocalyptic vision is no longer monumental, but rather mundane and banal. It is a vision that is emblematised, for instance, by the “tract area of cheap but durable houses, long ago vacated by the straights” that appears in *A Scanner Darkly* (*SD*, 4).

50 See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, tr. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 4.

51 Ronell, *Crack Wars*, 68; Maurice Blanchot, *The Infinite Conversation*, tr. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 424. Also see Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 156n40; Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 57-8; Scott Shershow, *The Work and The Gift* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 165-83, 193-205.



While this narrative strategy makes it possible to read Dick's narratives as critiques of the *aftermath* of biopolitical power—as illustrations of post-apocalyptic worlds that are hardly distinguishable from our present-day societies—it is the promise and experience of a crucial reorientation within these worlds that enables his novels to generate such striking psychotropes. And, since Dick's fiction so often prompts its readers to recognise the ways in which this quotidian disorientation has become so pervasive—so normative that it ceases to be real, and thus must only be chimerical—it is a strategy that allows Dick to redouble the *shockingness* of the dystopia itself. No longer an obviously or explicitly degraded locus, the dystopian world, we discover, is just like our own.

This is precisely what Dick defines as the purpose of his writing—but not only of *his* science fiction, but of science fiction (“sf”) more generally. In fact, he would make exactly this point when relaying his thoughts to the upcoming sf author John Betancourt in a 1981 letter. In addition to explaining the less obvious typological distinction designated by his “value term” of “good science fiction,”<sup>52</sup> Dick's letter seeks to remind Betancourt of the importance of conjoining the “fictitious world” with our own. Thus, while the world of sf might be essentially different or “orthogonal” to the author's current one, it must also remain a world that is recognisable to the reader :

There must be a coherent idea involved in this dislocation; that is, the dislocation must be a conceptual one, not merely a trivial or bizarre one—this is the essence of science fiction, the conceptual dislocation within the society so that as a result a new society is generated in the author's mind, transferred to paper, and from paper it occurs as a convulsive shock in the reader's mind, the shock of *dysrecognition*.<sup>53</sup>

To create a society riven by drug use—or a society whose participants and subjects seem to have lost or acceded control in the face of a drug scourge—thus constitutes a prototypical *dislocation* of the world for the purposes of Dick's science fiction. The pervasiveness of drugs in many of Dick's future societies represents an exemplary “deterritorialization of the socius,” as Deleuze and Guattari similarly describe the phenomenon that Dick aspires to bring about.<sup>54</sup> Enabling the author to generate the all-important “convul-

52 This letter is reproduced as the preface to *Beyond Lies the Wub: The Collected Stories of Philip K. Dick*, 6 vols. (London: Gollancz, 1988), 1: 9-10. This is from a letter to John Betancourt dated 14 May, 1981.

53 Dick, preface to *Beyond Lies the Wub*, 1: 9-10.

54 The word “socius” is Latin word for a kind of social gathering. I use it throughout this

sive shock” they seek to inflict on their readership, producing drug-dependent societies also yields a new “ontological unveiling” that is connected to the real world. After all, at the time that most of Dick’s anti-psychiatry fiction was published—the mid-1960s—these narratives appeared relatively plausible. For it was at this time that drugs had secured a special purchase on America’s paranoiac imaginary.

In the 1960s, a new fear had recently arisen: many felt that even those prescription drugs that had undergone rigorous clinical trials might beget fatal, and tragic, ends. There was thus a suspicion of biochemical science. It was a fear that had already been expressed in 1960, for instance, when newspaper headlines across North America panicked readers by reporting the news that one over-the-counter medication, thalidomide—a sedative drug marketed as “remarkably safe” in the previous decade—had been discovered to cause severe birth defects and malformations in unborn children.<sup>55</sup> The thalidomide story called into question the expertise avowed by the medical authorities, the pharmaceutical industry, and the FDA—which regulated and oversaw the distribution of these drugs—and a pharmacological panic quickly arose that seemed to propel the republication of this and many other related stories. This panic served only to exacerbate what had already appeared as an incipient hysteria over the trialling and application of more experimental drugs; and it is precisely this panic that Dick elaborates on in his novels of the time.

While the clinical trials and applications of these experimental drugs had remained only investigational before the 1960s, the fear that spread across the American populous at the time soon meant that drugs—and compounds like LSD—were to themselves face a ban in most US states.<sup>56</sup> But while this specter of drug fear ensured that the experimental use of psychopharmacological therapies waned, the general use and prescription of commercial psychopharmacological treatments—for a variety of illnesses, including depression—dramatically rose in this period. As early as 1963, for instance, around 15 per cent of Americans—or some thirty million people—were using prescription drugs for psychiatric complaints.<sup>57</sup> An ardent consumer of

chapter (and have done in previous chapters) in place of society (which Dick uses) in order to more fully denote what Deleuze and Guattari call a “social machine”: *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, tr. Robert Hurley, et al. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983), 33, 141.

55 Erika Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry: LSD from Clinic to Campus* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 2008), 119.

56 Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry*, 121.

57 See Rasmussen, *On Speed*, 163.

prescription drugs himself at this time—as well as of illicit ones—Dick had been well aware of what was to become a new regime of psychopharmacological treatment in the United States.<sup>58</sup>

## Sf-ing the Acid Nightmare

IT WAS WITHIN THIS early 1960s context—a period of pharmacological panic—that LSD and “homemade versions” of the drug known as “acid” (whose sale had begun on the black market) first emerged in high numbers. Inevitably, this appearance and popularisation of LSD generated, as Erika Dyck notes, a torrent of fear among the US public. But this was a fear that inaugurated not simply a feeling of anxiety among the general population—which was increasingly prone to associate the LSD with the revolutionaries of the counterculture. Rather, this sense of panic and fear also affected some of the drug scene’s most credible and honest commentators.<sup>59</sup>

By 1964, for example, even Beat author William S. Burroughs—suspecting that malevolent biopolitical forces may be at play in the distribution of hallucinogens—urged readers of his novel *Nova Express* to respond acrimoniously to their dealers’s latest offerings:

Throw back their ersatz Immortality... Flush their drug kicks down the drain—*They are poisoning and monopolizing the hallucinogenic drugs*—learn to make it without any chemical corn—All that they offer is a screen to cover retreat from the colony they have so disgracefully mismanaged. To cover travel arrangements so they will never have to pay constituents they have betrayed and sold out.<sup>60</sup>

Published less than a year after the publication of *Nova Express*, Dick’s *Stigmata* proves a companion text to Burroughs’s cautionary tale regarding the newly drug-controlled society. For Dick as for Burroughs, the world had increasingly become a place at whose center of gravity laid the vision and promise of “ersatz Immortality.” It was a place that did little more than elaborate on the “acid nightmare” that had been dreamed up by, or had been visited upon, a mainstream media already predisposed to drug hysteria.

58 Dick’s most notable prescription drugs were Semoxydrine, a prescription methamphetamine, and Stelazine, a prescription anti-psychotic.

59 Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry*, 101.

60 William Burroughs, *Nova Express* (New York: Grove Press, 1992 [1964]) 6; also see Martin A. Lee and Bruce Shlain, *Acid Dreams* (New York: Grove Press, 1985), 82.

And while *Stigmata* follows a brief lineage of Dick's anti-psychiatric novels—one that begins with *Martian Time-Slip* (1964) and continues with *Clans of the Alphane Moon* (1964), published only months before *Stigmata*—this novel further refines this triad's thematic preoccupation with psychiatric and molecular politics. *Stigmata*, that is, intersects with the fuzziness of the molar legal structures that, in Dick's eyes, at one and the same time proscribe *and* tolerate a range of questionable biomedical and psychiatric practices.<sup>61</sup> Like so many of Dick's novels, *Stigmata* also transcodes the violence of what might be called “neoliberal” or late-capitalist economic constructions—including the insidiousness of a “duopoly,” for instance—into memorable stories, thus bringing into relief a number of the ways in which the force that Foucault named bio-power had been redeployed through and by these economic regimes.<sup>62</sup>

But, more than any force in *Stigmata*, it is the illegal drug “Can-D” that serves to most viciously structure the economic and biopolitical societies that the novel will describe. These societies include those on Earth, but also those on Mars. The drug, in fact, pervades the entirety of the known universe, and in so doing engenders a “shock of dysrecognition” both in the novel's characters and in a contemporaneous American sf readership, one already experiencing the symptoms of an “acid panic,” increasingly familiar as they had become with the malignancy and ubiquity of LSD.<sup>63</sup>

As I have noted, the name of the malevolent drug in *Stigmata* is “Can-D”—an aptronym whose meaning inheres in its homonymous relation to the word “candy.” This name, however, is also a brand name—one that connotes the manner in which the drug induces in its users a childish fantasy. It serves, at least putatively, to relieve and therapise those who have been deported to any one of the hundreds of dirt-farm colonies on Mars. Having now risen to dangerously high temperatures, the Earth's climate has made most of its continental zones uninhabitable; and this climate has required its remaining inhabitants to travel in “thermosealed interbuilding commute car[s]” (*TSPE*, 10). And while Can-D is by no means an official medicament for those who live in Mars's “hovels,” the drug ensures the continued exclusion of those who live there: those who were formerly Earthlings, and whose subsistence in their “bare lives” as dirt-farmers also enables those still on Earth to prosper.

61 This thematic is also explored in *The Simulacra* (New York: Ace Books, 1964), where psychotherapy has been outlawed under pressures from A.G. Chemie, a Berlin based pharmaceutical company.

62 See notably Brett Levinson, “Biopolitics and Duopolies,” *Diacritics* 35, no. 2 (2005): 65-5.

63 Dyck, *Psychedelic Psychiatry*, 101-118.

In fact, those on Earth largely remain in professions associated with the production of Can-D and its related materials. All characters in the novel, for instance, work in jobs related to the manufacture of accessories and enhancements for the drug's ritual use. Among the myriad accessories produced for the purposes of the Can-D "translation," the most important include the doll known as "Perky Pat" and the so-called layout boards—manufactured by P.P. Layouts—on which this doll lives out her imaginary life. But even the many other various "units of her miniature world" (*TSPE*, 10)—objects of furniture, including vases, and all of which are named "mins," as in "miniatures"—are critical to the ritualised procedure in which the Can-D experience is inaugurated, and through which its users enter, or "translate," into this doll-house world.

While "translation" is an apparently casual and self-directed practice, the Martian hovelists's use of Can-D is nonetheless institutionalised, and virtually mandatory. In what is quite literally a drug "trip," Can-D's users share in a hallucinated consensus-reality. In the virtual world of the drug, that is, they return to Earth—and specifically to San Francisco—there becoming one of only two characters in what appears to be a kind of 1950s melodrama, or an idealised Hollywood romance film. Translating into the now-living physical form of either one of the figurine dolls of the layout boards—either Walt Essex or ("Perky") Pat Christensen—the drugs's users become ontologically consubstantial with the dolls's bodies and minds. In this ersatz San-Francisco, they explore the virtual landscape, which to them appears to be a fully realised, if not an overtly cinematic, world. Users become "ghosts in the machine" in an operation comparable to—and we might say recently allegorised in—Spike Jonze's *Being John Malkovich* (1999). In this film, the subject, by undertaking the right procedure, can enter into the body of John Malkovich for an apparently finite period of time, seeing the world through his eyes. But the "Perky Pat world" is even more totalising than the Malkovich one; in Dick's virtualisation, characters seem to forget their original identities: men become women, and vice versa, such that neither gender—nor presumably any other aspect of their original identity—remains important.

When the layout boards and dolls are not in use, the husks of these figures—which is to say the very figures into whose bodies the Can-D participants enter—are strewn across the floor. There they lie, unmoving on these dormant and inactive boards, much like a child's playset that has long gone unused. Among the various mins that might appear on the board, certain of the hovelists in the novel aim to own an actual "psychoanalyst" figurine; for

even in the Perky Pat world—and perhaps *especially* in this world as Dick’s novel suggests—a need or desire is felt for therapy, a psychological consultation of the kind that the users “had back on Earth” (*TSPE*, 37-8).

Dick, of course, had been influenced by the materials and devices that appeared around him at various times in his various homes, which included his own children’s toys. As he reported in a 1975 interview in *Rolling Stone* with Paul Williams—an interview that would be widely read, escalating Dick to relative notoriety—Dick “got to where” he would “literally look up” while typing to generate his ideas for narrative action: “I was literally looking up, type type type and look up...” he noted. “With one character I deduced he had a child because I could see a tricycle in the driveway.”<sup>64</sup>

As with the invention of the man with a child—an idea engendered by a tricycle—the idea for Perky Pat arose when Dick had witnessed his daughters playing with their Barbie and Ken dolls. Dick rapidly became fascinated with these posthuman bodies—these strange figurines—which could not be real: “They couldn’t exist in the real world,” he remarked, “Their heads are much too small for their bodies.”<sup>65</sup> But Dick had also been fascinated by the ritual itself: How, if they could not exist in the real world, might one be led to bridge this schism between irreality and the real?

Deported and deterritorialized, those who live in the hovels of Mars find that while Can-D facilitates a subjective distantiation from their immediate world—offering them a brief respite from their miserable reality—the drug also ensures the continuation of their “gloomy quasi-life of involuntary expatriation in an unnatural environment” (*TSPE*, 51). And that the malaise of these hovels is specifically *biological* is signaled by the viral inflection of the name given to its central Martian milieu: “Chicken Pox Prospects.” As a chewable elixir, Can-D is derived from a lichen fungus; and this fact telegraphs its relation to such similarly fungus-based drugs as the psychedelic mushrooms, *psilocybe cubensis*, as well as to LSD itself, which is crucially synthesised from a number of ergot fungi, and most commonly the *Claviceps purpurea* fungus.<sup>66</sup>

64 Paul Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick,” *Rolling Stone* (6 November 1975): 47.

65 Quoted in Anne Dick, *The Search for Philip K. Dick*, 217. Also see Patricia S. Warrick, *Mind in Motion: The Fiction of Philip K. Dick* (Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), 95; Emmanuelle Carrère, *I am Alive and You are Dead: A Journey into the Mind of Philip K. Dick*, tr. Timothy Bent (New York: Picador, 1993), 105; Laurence A. Rickels, *I Think I Am Philip K. Dick* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 425n1.

66 See Vladimír Křen, et al., ed., *Ergot: The Genus Claviceps* (Amsterdam: Harwood, 2005),

But Can-D, in its operations, simulates not only an experience of interplanetary travel; it also allows for travel through time. That is, its symbolic or virtualising operations allow users to achieve “an actual translation from Mars to Earth-as-it-was” (*TSPE*, 48). In their attempts to account for their seemingly unique experiences of “translation” (a belief that is largely false, since each user’s experience is much the same), Can-D users produce a series of spiritual theologies, dogmas, and anti-mythologies; with these, they seek to explain how it is that they have now accessed what they know is politically interdicted. How, they ask, have we managed to “gain something... to which [we are] normally not entitled?” (*TSPE*, 49)

But at every turn, the novel underscores the redundancy and delusion of these users’s theological explanations. For instance, when Dr. Denkmal—a glorified shock therapist, and a man who is clearly modeled on psychiatrist-theologian Albert Schweitzer—dismisses the historical debates between Erasmus and Luther as so much time-wasting in the face of advanced technological devices like his E-Therapy, he dismisses theology in general. The subsumption of theological mystery into drugs and mind-expanding devices such as Denkmal’s E-Therapy machine now serves to allegorise and perpetuate the subjugation of these individual subjects within the biopolitical and economic logics of *Stigmata*’s new world—a place in which these devices are built into the entrenched and implicitly legitimised drug market.

Structuring their lives around the Can-D ritual, the Martian colonists subsist in what Foucault calls a “political double bind.” They live under a great disciplinary force, and even as they do so, they expedite and comply with the “simultaneous individualization and totalization” that allows the sovereign to sustain its biopower over them.<sup>67</sup> They are, in short, addicted to their own incarceration. But it is not enough that the colonists have been deported and must putter about “in a small land.”<sup>68</sup>

In Dick’s vision of an incarcerating biopolitical future, rather, intrinsic restrictions on freedom of movement also confirm the biopolitical regime

94-104.

67 Foucault defines biopower as “the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power”: Foucault, *Security, Territory, Population*, ed. Michael Senellart, tr. Graham Burchell (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 1. Cf. Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 785; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 9; cf. Hung-chiung Li, “Out of the Biopolitical Double Bind: Universal Singularity, Singular Inversion, and Subtractive Unworking,” *Concentric* 37, no. 2 (2011): 111.

68 *Puttering About in a Small Land* is the name of one of Dick’s non-science fiction novels; it was written in 1957, but not published until 1985, three years after Dick’s death: see Dick, *Puttering About in a Small Land* (Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1985).



from which this citizenry cannot escape. While Can-D guarantees that the colonists will *think* they are generating uniquely bespoke and individualized “trip reports” in their use of the drug—that they are becoming more intimately connected with *themselves*—what underscores the narrative more broadly is the extent to which the users striated and stratified accounts of the drug experience are increasingly characterised by anxiety. This is an anxiety that the users feel not simply about their situations, however, but about their own use and insight into Can-D. Does the drug, they begin to ask, have any real significance or meaning?

Increasingly contending with one another, the various contentions of users about the drugs’s operations and metaphysical ramifications serve only to obscure what is their collective inculcation into a state of political disenfranchisement. The narrative functions as an allegory of Spinoza’s worm—the philosophical thought experiment reviewed by Huxley. In this experiment, which I addressed in chapter 5, Huxley compares the worm’s myopic, circumscribed view of their world to the “reality” of the substance that we, as humans, see and know as blood. Similarly, Dick portrays a contingent of humans whose “bare lives” remain invisible to those who live them; only the reader, watching from afar, can identify that the substance to which they are so addicted has the pernicious and unworthy origins it does.

Constituted by a subsistence exclusively on Can-D and its fantasies, users cannot see beyond their next translation; they thus remain oblivious to the regime of dependency and deportation that defines and sustains their entire living environment.<sup>69</sup> The structure of this biopolitical economy is also obscured by the Burroughsian “screen” under which Leo Bulero—chairman of P. P. Layouts—disguises his geopolitical and international business interests. Using a “hidden subsidiary” to cooperate with what Bulero calls a “dark-skinned [and] sneaky little unevolved politician” (*TSPE*, 19)—namely, the General Secretary of the UN Narcotics Bureau, Hepburn-Gilbert—Bulero’s operation not only manufactures the accessories for Can-D’s ritualised “translations,” but also processes and distributes the drug itself. It has, in short, monopolised that which has now become a public health (or public illness) regime, one that crucially shapes the lives of an entire off-world population (*TSPE*, 17-18).

69 On the increasing usefulness of internet trip reports to medicine, instance, Paul Dargan, ed. et al., *Novel Psychoactive Substances: Classification, Pharmacology, Toxicology* (Oxford: Elsevier, 2013), 61.

Generating what Deleuze and Guattari identify as a “materialist psychiatry”—a psychiatric system that is responsible for introducing “desire into the mechanism, and introducing production into desire”—*Stigmata* thus illustrates the way in which “political techniques of power” can overlap with “technologies of the self.” In so doing, the novel offers a striking narrativisation of what Agamben calls a “zone of irreducible indistinction.” Since the novel is written from a number of perspectives, and from two points of origin (Earth and Mars), readers can easily intuit what has been rendered invisible to the Martian hovelists: namely, the pernicious and degrading effects that unchecked sovereignty and biopower has on human life.<sup>70</sup>

Despite Can-D’s disempowering effects, it is also possible to understand the hovelists’s responses to the drug as a *reclamation* of Leo Bulero’s biopower. By developing their liberal interpretation systems, for instance, the hovelists generate a collective rejoinder to Can-D, one that facilitates its own kind of “unworking.” In this way, the hovelists might be thought to reappropriate the very materials that the regime imposes on them, finding meaning in a place, or in an object, where none had been thought to exist. It is not only the collective exposure to Can-D’s alternative, and relatively depoliticised, ontological world, however—the world that is “psychoactivated” by Can-D’s biochemical operations—that leads the drug’s users to reconceptualise the political structures that disempower them. As much as their debates stymie the development of their knowledge of the regime that disempowers them from above, their various contentions also allow the hovelists to remain at least partially inoculated from Can-D’s neurochemical snare as well. For in their discrete theorisations of the Can-D experience—those that the users themselves, in their diversity, develop *out* of the biochemical experience—many find a kind of truth or *alethia* that is otherwise inaccessible—even in a free society.

Allowing for the constitution of new subject positions—a possibility fortified by an instinctive and embodied knowledge of their dependence on Can-D—the act of “translation” thus enables the users to conceive of a “perennial philosophy,” a philosophy that at once recognises and authorises that mystical Truth underlying Can-D’s “miracle.” This philosophy, as with Huxley’s own perennial philosophy, is a psychophysical mysticism that recognises the unassailable nature of the human’s status as a being who is, ultimately, biologically-determined. Momentarily sidestepping the unjust

70 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 22; Agamben, *Homo Sacer*, 12, 17; cf. Li, “Out of the Biopolitical Double Bind,” 111.

and arbitrary malevolence of their socio-political context, users gain access to “the most solemn moment of which they [are] capable”—they arrive, that is, at a state of meditative peacefulness (*TSPE*, 43).

But for all this, protagonist Sam Regan’s experience, as well as that of the other hovelists, is less the “miracle” he yearns for than a repudiation of the entire “translation” process. When Regan uses the drug, the effects of Can-D are revealed, in fact, to be irremediable; that is, they will never fade away or wear off. It is a narrative event that possibly reflects Dick’s own sceptical views about LSD and biochemical alteration—views that he espoused between 1963 and 1965 during what is possibly the most tumultuous period of his life.<sup>71</sup> So completely persuasive and irrefutable is the process of translation—and so totalising and unified is the route by which these users physically and mentally enter into the trip to become either Walt or Pat—that, ultimately, no subjective intervention is possible within the hovels. But nor is such an intervention even desired: characters such as Anne, for instance, express a desire to continue using the drug forever, even in the face of evidence that it is politically, socially, and in other ways disempowering.

But the drug is not only inescapable because it is addictive; it is inescapable, rather, on a more *technical* level. When Sam Regan “translates” into the persona of Walt Essex, for instance, his attempt to remediate the totalising experience of the drug produces an unpromising and dispiriting outcome. Having translated into the body and mind of the handsome Walt Essex, Regan finds a note—one that has clearly been written “in his own hand.” Faced with this “ocular proof,” Regan can only presume that he has penned the note, perhaps at some point prior to his translation.

But the note is interesting: encouraging Regan to “make use of his time of translation,” and to enjoy what will be his shortlived respite from the colony, the note instructs Sam (not Walt) to call up his girlfriend while he still can: “Call up Pat pronto!” it urges (*TSPE*, 51). In Regan’s hapless plan to remediate the operations of Can-D—in his attempt, that is, to understand the origin of the note—he is prompted at the same time as he is prevented from doing what it asks of him. He is entirely prevented, in other words, from recognising the *virtuality* or *fictionality* of his present habitus in the “layout world”—and the way in which the novel illustrates this impasse means that

71 Anne Dick asserts that in 1963 Phil has such a “bad trip he never tried LSD again.” See Dick, *The Search*, 124. In contrast, Sutin describes Dick’s 75 microgram acid trip two years later, in 1965: Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 149. Of course, Dick’s initial castigation of hallucinogens is moderated in his introduction to “Faith of Our Fathers,” in *Dangerous Visions*, vol. 2, ed. Harlan Ellison (London: Sphere Books, 1974 [1969]), 68-9.

it may also be seen to offer a useful working study of Foucault's conception of the "[bio]political double-bind."

As this scene suggests, it impossible (and perhaps for good reason) for Regan to "break through" and disrupt Can-D's simulation simply by apprehending it *as such*. Even if he were to discover its irreality, he would be unable to renounce it merely as a simulated world of artificial "illusion," or, as Dick once said, as a world that is "only apparently real."<sup>72</sup> This is because Regan simply cannot see the other world, and because this world is *actually* to him, at least in this moment, real; he cannot suture the two worlds together conceptually, nor in any other way. Not even the phantasmatic trace of Regan's "own hand," for example, offers proof enough to persuade or permit Regan to suspect or controvert the layout world. Rather, the only remediation imaginable in this context is that which is permitted by Regan's awareness of the *drug's* transience and irreality, signaled by the note. While he is somewhat aware of the fact that something is different, and that he may be on drugs, then, nothing more than this may be confirmed.

If Spinoza's worm might, even for a fleeting moment, come to know the fictionality of its myopic perception of blood, this would not mean that the same worm could immediately then deny to itself his earlier *experience* of blood altogether. It could not, in other words, as a result of this realisation alone, transform into a higher species—into an enlightened creature that can access both the "worm world" and the higher world in which a worm knows its own previously ignorant perspective. To do as much would be to evolve—or to transmutate—from a worm to another species: for what had defined the worm was its ignorance of the blood as such. It is, then, a question of evolutionary taxonomy, and the potential of the human (or worm). And, as we see in *Stigmata*, it is in the knowledge of the possibility of the layout world's artifice—its illusoriness—that Regan elects to *increase* the drug's valency. That is, it is at the precise moment that Regan discovers that he may be more than Walt that he then desires to even more fully experience the *jouissance* of his split subjectivity.

Regan, that is, begins to take pleasure in the very dehiscence that splices him in two; when he realises that he is at once both Sam Regan and Walt Essex, he momentarily dwells on the insight, perhaps recognising it as an hallucination. But what prevents Regan from truly understanding the nature of this schism is the bind in which—just as Huxley feels in limbo and "be-

72 See Paul Williams, *Only Apparently Real: The World of Philip K. Dick* (New York: Arbor House Publishing Company, 1986), 4-5, 66-71.

tween two worlds”—he is also neither of these identities completely, but both of them at once and forevermore. Rather than realising, for instance, that he is in fact Sam Regan and not Walt Essex, Regan is permitted here only to realise that he is a singular figure who is yet split: he discovers that in reality he is not Sam Regan at all, but *Walt-and-Sam* at once.

What *Stigmata* reveals, then, is the chimerical procession of what Jacques Alain-Miller, after Lacan, famously called “the suture.” As Alain-Miller indicates, this word “names the relation of the subject to the chain of its discourse,” and describes “the element which is lacking” in the economy between subject and language. In the diegesis of *Stigmata*, the suture functions as a “stand-in” for what otherwise should appear as an obvious lacuna in Can-D’s “translation” narrative.<sup>73</sup> Even having seen the handwritten note, for instance, Regan is precluded from appreciating the illusion of the layout world. This is because he is still unable to grasp the *illusoriness* of the apparent proposition that he is Walt Essex, that he lives in 1950s San Francisco, and that “his shirts come from Italy, and his shoes were made in England” (*TSPE*, 50). Regan, moreover, is prevented from remembering the “other world” in which he is *only* Sam Regan.

If the “dreary colonists’s hovel” exists at all, then, it is only ever “remote and vitiated and not convincing” in Regan’s mind (*TSPE*, 51). Increasingly perplexed and even “a little depressed” at the sight of the note—an object whose irreducible excess and “pure presence” threatens to wreck his trip—Sam hastily disposes of it, dropping it in a bathroom disposal chute, a hole or gap that now is metonymic of a portal or threshold between the two worlds.

Having disposed of this trace of the “other world,” Regan will nonetheless obey it. In a way, Regan must now erase the memory and existence of the note; he must hastily supplement it, that is, by means of another technic—the vidphone. But to do so is also to authorise and confirm the note’s legitimacy. The vidphone is thus the “superior” device on which Sam, following the note’s instructions, he contacts Pat “pronto.” Substituting this new memory for the note, and for the note’s disappearance—even as he follows the note’s instructions—the vidphone conversation enables Regan to play his role as Walt convincingly, whose realness he expresses in a “tone as firm and full of conviction as possible” (*TSPE*, 52). But what operates as the crucible in which the Can-D narrative is sustained—while the Martian hovel, meanwhile, is

73 Jacques-Alain Miller, “Suture (elements of the logic of the signifier),” tr. Jacqueline Rose, *Screen* 18, no. 4 (1977): 26. As Slavoj Žižek observes, this is what Deleuze alternatively calls the “floating signifier which is the disability of all finite thought.” See Žižek, *Less Than Nothing* (London: Verso, 2013), 585.

screened out—is more than simply this substitution and repression of the note. Rather, in these operations—and throughout all of these affirmatory procedures—it is not Can-D itself but the “suture” that allows Sam to recognise the schismatic rupture that has dissected his identity, the schism that distinguishes Walt from Sam.

Of course, the suture allows for this rupture to reappear as a unity a “unicity”—even as it also enables Regan to screen this rupture out, to “mask over” the very same dehiscence that underpins it in reality. The procedure, interestingly, resembles that which I addressed in chapters 2 and 3 when I historicised the developments in the theory of psychosis. There, it may be recalled, the polar affects of melancholy and hyperexcitability were joined together in a unitary diagnosis—at first as circular madness, then as psychosis, and finally as and bipolar disorder. Here, Regan enters into a kind of bipolar ontology: he has two identities, the one (Sam, in reality) asleep and slothful, the other (Walt) now hyper-excited. For Regan to recognise that both of these figures exists at once may thus represent his insight into his own disorder—albeit that this disorder is a chemically-induced one.

In his mobilisation of Lacanian theory, Slavoj Žižek argues that the suture is responsible for “producing the effect of self-enclosure with no need for exterior.” In *Stigmata*, Can-D offers the grammar in which Regan comes to guarantee that his particular self-enclosure remains consistent and unimpeachable. As a supplement, the suture also ensures that the virtualising layout, or the “biosociality” of this Perky Pat world, can remain intact; meanwhile, of course, the reality of the hovel—or what Žižek might call the “exterior”—can ever remain ablated, repressed, and forgotten.<sup>74</sup>

But if *Stigmata* seeks to separate the Can-D experience from everyday life, then the indistinct vector that distinguishes the layout world from the hovel zone remains only marginally more fuzzy than that which divides Mars from Earth. After all, Earth is not entirely excluded or cordoned off from the delusional order of simulacrum that is engendered by the process of translation; rather, this originary planet seems at times even less inured to the forces of biopolitical incursion predominant on Mars. Indeed, integral to the novel’s progression is the restructuration of Can-D’s biopolitical monopoly, which begins at about the novel’s halfway point—its volta. What has occurred on Mars now begins to infect the entire universe, including on Earth; for another

74 Žižek, *Less Than Nothing*, 844. Paul Rabinow coined the term biosociality in reference to the formation of social identity through geneticised knowledges and practices: “Artificiality and Enlightenment: From Sociobiology to Biosociality,” in *Essays on the Anthropology of Politics* (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 1996), 91-111.

er drug—an alternative to Can-D—now begins to affect everyone, including the proprietor of Can-D himself, Leo Bulero

Dick's novel thus comes to imagine an interplanetary drug regime, but not one that is simply divided between a first and second world. Rather, this regime is *universalized* and inescapable, a drug culture that pervades any and all possible worlds. With the emergence of another drug, the pervasiveness of what Philip Mirowski calls "pharma's market"<sup>75</sup> will now become all the more totalising and unavoidable in this brave new Sol system of bio-power. As I have suggested, this new regime arises from what emerges as a competing product to Can-D: a new drug named "Chew-Z."

Chew-Z is "discovered" by the novel's eponymous character, Palmer Eldritch. Having travelled to the edges of deep space—to the outer-regions of Proxima Centauri—Eldritch returns with a new deliriant compound, one that is derived from a new, hitherto unknown kind of "Titanian lichen." And while it is a dangerous journey, Eldritch's gambit has seemingly paid off. His drug inaugurates a market war with Bulero's outfit, which is dismayed to discover that Eldritch's organisation has begun to promote its more powerful preparation using a slogan that metonymically devalorises the religious and theological attributes of Can-D. This is the catchy phrase that euphemises Chew-Z's disturbing effects, falsely representing them as the miracle of immortality: "God promises eternal life. We Deliver It!"

But Chew-Z will only deliver "eternal life" to its choosers in the form of terminal hallucinations; it will set in train, that is, only the continuous re-appearance of three disturbingly robotic symbols, which together become the signifiers of Eldritch's power to eternally haunt and torment the "chooser": that is, Chew-Z's user. These features in fact will appear in and on the chooser's own body, as well as on the bodies of those around these choosers. So, whereas once Regan could not tell himself apart from Walt Essex, now choosers like Leo Bulero cannot tell themselves—or anyone—apart from Palmer Eldritch: Eldritch is everywhere, pervading and haunting all things in a collective hauntology. Constituted by his mechanical eyes, his robotic hand, and his steel jaw, Eldritch's "three stigmata"—these recurring, hallucinal symbols—perpetually reappear and resurface in this new psychoscape, the one that immerses the user in a nightmare of dissimulation. And if they were not already tragic enough, the effects of this nightmare now seem unerasable; they shall stretch into the future far as can possibly be foreseen.

75 This is what Philip Mirowski nicknames the "Modern Globalized Regime" of Big Pharma in *Science Mart* (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2011), chapter 5.



These are the effects that are brought about by just one dose of Chew-Z; and, of course, the everlasting effects of the drug signal Dick's prescient vision of the so-called "acid flashback" phenomenon—only eleven cases of which had been clinically reported in 1967, three years after *Stigmata's* publication. But Dick's illustration of Chew-Z's effects also suggest Dick's recognition of a darker and more phantasmatic semiotics of illusion, the basis of which had been gleaned from industrial history.<sup>76</sup> Unlike the seemingly unified and atavistic images of 1950s American life that are engendered by Can-D and the "synthetic P.P. Layouts," Chew-Z's imaginal realms feature a human—and a landscape—that is fully rebuilt, totally novel. Less a prelapsarian fantasy than a sublime, futurological apparition, Chew-Z's hallucinations thus thematise a world of increased mechanisation and phantasm. But it also thematises randomness, featuring the strange products of Palmer Eldritch's mind: creatures named "glucks" (*TSPE*, 107), for instance. These creatures, as Eldritch explains to Leo Bulero,

showed you with absolute clarity that this is not a fantasy. They could actually have killed you. And if you died here that would be it. Not like Can-D is it? (*TSPE*, 102)

Appearing and disappearing at random, both the glucks and Eldritch's stigmata serve only to mark the starting point of what will later become, at least from the chooser's perspective, the criss-crossing and coalescence of Eldritch's reality and their own.

As Chew-Z's effects wear on, seem to wear off, and then return again, choosers, who now appear only as "phantasms" to non-users—as ghosts of humans that were once alive—witness the entire socius corrode. They watch, dismayed, as the social world collectively transforms into a singular and mechanised identity (*TSPE*, 142). It is an affective and notably visual experience that recalls what Deleuze and Guattari described as the schizo's position: they are exiled from the social world, and yet dependent on it at the same time, perhaps most of all to affirm their own sentience.

As it turns out, then, there is no "path back" (*TSPE*, 233) from the delusional world of Chew-Z. For once its choosers have crossed over into its

76 This is now diagnostically described as HPPD or hallucinogen persisting perception disorder in the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-5*, 5th ed. (Washington: APP, 2013), 531 [292.89]. See Edward M. Brecher, *Consumer Union Report on Licit and Illicit Drugs* (Boston: Little Brown, 1972), 288. As Dick himself suggested in a 1974 interview, "nobody at the time knew that LSD was going to produce flashbacks." Arthur Byron Cover, "Interview with Philip K. Dick," *Vertex* 1, no. 6 (1974): 96.

psychoscopic borderlands, it is in this environment that they shall forever more remain. As Leo Bulero explains to Barney Mayerson,

“Where Eldritch has the advantage over everyone and anyone who’s consumed Chew-Z is that recovery from the drug is excessively retarded and gradual; it’s a series of levels, each progressively less an induced illusion and more compounded of authentic reality. Sometimes the process takes years. This is why the UN belatedly banned it and turned against Eldritch; Hepburn Gilbert initially approved it because he honestly believed that it aided the user to penetrate to concrete reality, and then it became obvious to everyone who used it or witnessed it being used that it did exactly the—”

“Then I never recovered from my first dose.”

“Right; you never got back to clear-cut reality” (*TSPE*, 235).

Chew-Z facilitates not simply the totalisation of biopower, however; but rather, before it is banned, it inaugurates a new, duopolistic economic regime. In this way it leverages and then supplements Can-D’s popularity, trading on the existing brand. And it is in fact in this way that the drug prompts the emergence of the Can-D/Chew-Z duopoly—the economic precondition or valency that presages the end of any hope in the novel for a “civilized... deployment of biotechnology.”<sup>77</sup> Building on Baudrillard’s formulation of the duopoly and the symbolic exchange—a structure popularly emblematised in twentieth-century economic history by Coca-Cola and Pepsi’s apparent duopoly in the soft drink market—Brett Levinson observes how “biomedicine and bioterrorism” are wont to converge under the load of such a doubling. As Levinson argues, “the terrorist enemy or the enemy of the terrorist materialize as competitors for the same space of the *bios*,” initiating a “simulation of war” that is only ever a rendering of private economic and political capital for “both sides... a means to sustain [their] duopoly.”<sup>78</sup>

In *Stigmata*, the very *proliferation* of Chew-Z metonymises the ubiquitous nature of such a totalising desire, especially as this desire proliferates in a poorly regulated neoliberal marketplace—one that is undergirded in this case by a ruthless competition for biopower. To consider such a thematic requires Dick, however, to imagine a product that is universally desirable, to develop as a convincing metonym for the market forces themselves. And while Chew-Z is a remarkable tropism, such a universally desirable object will reach even dizzier heights in Dick’s 1969 novel *Ubik*. In this novel, what

77 Levinson, “Biopolitics and Duopolies,” 74. Cf. Jean Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, tr. Iain Hamilton Grant (London: SAGE, 1993).

78 Levinson, “Duopolies,” 74-5.

is uncategorically desired takes the form of an aerosol spray that—as the novel’s characters discover—functions to preserve those who are in “cold-pac” life suspension. The purpose of this strange product, which is aptly named “Ubik” from “ubiquitous,” had until this point in history been largely unknown.

In Marx’s idiom, Chew-Z and Ubik are thus *universal equivalents*: these are commodities that have the ability to represent or symbolise *any* other product and to represent *any* value.<sup>79</sup> Advertised in various ways and in a kaleidoscope of forms and solutions, Ubik is not just famous for its ability, as Rickels notes, to “contain or defer entropy.” Rather, it can also act like an anti-psychotic, suppressing the hallucinatory or compulsive fears of its consumer:

One invisible puff-puff whisk of economically priced Ubik banishes compulsive obsessive fears that the entire world is turning into clotted milk, worn-out tape recorders and obsolete iron-cage elevators, plus other, further, as-yet-unglimpsed manifestations of decay (*UBIK*, 127).

Enhancing or supplementing the once preeminent human body—the body that already “suffers,” as Deleuze and Guattari note, “from being organized [and] from not having some other sort of organization”—Ubik, just as much as Can-D and Chew-Z, offers a virtualisation of a “pure fluid in a free state, flowing without interruption, streaming over the surface of a full body.” These drugs or adjuvants, in their variously disturbing and exciting ways, thus reorganise and replace life with new abilities; and in doing so, they at once instantiate, and defer the satisfaction of, the death-instinct, promoting an endless life of social exclusion and political oppression.<sup>80</sup>

## The Transmolecularisation of Philip K. Dick

IF *STIGMATA*’S ILLUSTRATION OF an increasingly pharmacocentric could be historicised, so as to be located in modern history, then the novel’s milieu might be seen against the emergence of a spate of new pharmaceutical drugs in America in the 1960s. This is the period in which what Nikolas Rose describes as the “molecularization” of life comes to a head; for it is in this second half of the twentieth century that, as I have already argued in previous chapters, an

79 Peter Fitting, “‘Ubik’: The Deconstruction of Bourgeois SF,” *Science Fiction Studies* 2, no. 1 (1975): 50.

80 Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 6.

increasingly medicalised and pharmacologised existence comes to be lived commonly throughout North America. The historical side-effects of this transition appear in such social infections as the “iatrogenic amphetamine epidemic” of the 1950s and ‘60s, among in a range of other forms.<sup>81</sup>

This period’s pharmaceutical revolution forms a recurrent topos in Dick’s novels—just as this escalating presence of molecular technologies also structure Dick’s life and career as a writer. Amphetamine in particular will become an intensely vital component of Dick’s life between 1963 and 1965—a period that has been variously dubbed his “Masterpiece Years” or “family man period.”<sup>82</sup> Reflecting on these years more than ten years later, Dick would classify his writing career as having consisted at any time as one of either two kinds of writing; evincing in this description the all-encompassing logic of drugs—a logic that scaffolds and sutures the binary of drugged-up and drugless excursus—he reflected: “Ah, well my writing falls into two degrees, the writing done under the influence of drugs, and the writing done when not under the influence of drugs.”<sup>83</sup>

Yet even this distinction, which functions something like the binarism between Can-D and Chew-Z in *Stigmata*, is brittle and illusory, for when psychoactive substances do not transfuse Dick’s blood and brain, the breach is then sutured by a symbolic supplement: “But when I’m not under the influence of drugs I [then] write about drugs.”<sup>84</sup> The irremediable presence of drugs, then—be they in Dick’s body or his books—is predicated, he says, on the market demands that cramp his career as an sf author: since the “pay rates were so low,” he would remark in an interview, a prolixity of writing had to be scrivened. And when Dick was using stimulants, he reflected, he could “write so much.” A simple if not paranoid algorithm, Dick’s authorial logic limns less a careerist than a survivalist motto—one that also structures scholarly life: “publish or perish.” “Without amphetamines,” Dick reasoned, “I couldn’t have written so much.”<sup>85</sup>

But Dick’s economic or utilitarian account of his drug use only barely alludes to the immense personal pressure that the careworn author felt at

81 See, for instance, Nicholas Rasmussen, “America’s First Amphetamine Epidemic 1929-71: A Qualitative and Quantitative Retrospective with Implications for the Present,” *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no. 6 (2008): 974-85.

82 Nikolas Rose, “The Politics of Life Itself,” *Theory, Culture, and Society* 18, no. 6 (2001): 1-30; and see Scott Timberg, “Philip K. Dick’s Masterpiece Years,” *The New York Times* (23 November, 2010).

83 Anton and Fuchs, “So I don’t write about Heroes,” 37-46.

84 Ibid. Emphasis mine.

85 Ibid.

this time. Dick felt a deep, abiding obligation to provide for and honour his new family—an onus that was all the more difficult to discharge in the wake of Dick’s own traumatic childhood, which had been punctuated by the death of his twin sister Jane. Jane’s death, caused by malnutrition, had taken place just over a month after her birth.<sup>86</sup> While rarely expressed in his interviews or prose writing, Dick’s familial anxiety symptomatises in various events both in his life and fiction.<sup>87</sup> As a new father, Dick struggled to meet the demands of responsibly breadwinning enough money for his and Anne’s daughter Laura; but Dick also felt pressured to provide for the three children to whom he had become a surrogate father when he took the place of Anne’s deceased former husband, the respectable literary poet Richard Rubenstein. Suffering from what Anne describes as a “major inner conflict,” Dick fell into a general clinical depression in the 1963-5 period, a disorder for which he was prescribed a range of drugs, including “Sparene, Stelazine, Preludin, and amphetamine, and others.”<sup>88</sup>

But given that, of these numerous drugs, it was amphetamine that had been, as Nicolas Rasmussen notes, the “antidepressant of choice” for family doctors in the mid-1960s, Dick’s personal circumstances made him what would have been the typically invisible or unaccounted-for “drug-dependent” subject of this period. After all, Dick’s circumstances involved a confluence of two difficult elements: first, his apparently anxiety-laden and neurotic desire to use stimulants in order to write as much as he could, and second, his increasingly depressed mood, one whose pathological legitimacy authorised his ingestion of more of these compounds. And this was Dick’s position precisely at a time when “amphetamines were still widely accepted as innocuous medications” by the medical establishment.<sup>89</sup>

Even as evidence began to demonstrate that amphetamines were, unlike caffeine, “truly addictive” drugs—and almost certain to produce psychosis if taken in high dosages—it was precisely because amphetamine improved

86 On Jane’s death, see, for instance, Dick, *The Exegesis*, 520, asterisked note; Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 11-13.

87 As Dick would remark in his *SF Eye* interview,

I was supporting, at one time, four children and a wife with very expensive tastes. Like she bought a jaguar and so forth. I just had to write and that is the only way I could do it. And, you know, I’d like to be able to say I could have done it without the amphetamines, but I’m not sure I could have done it without the amphetamines, to turn out that volume of writing.

Anton and Fuchs, “So I don’t write about Heroes,” 37-46.

88 Anne Dick, *The Search*, 104. Preludin, or “phenmetrazine,” is a stimulant.

89 Rasmussen, “America’s First Amphetamine Epidemic,” 977.

compliance in mild depression that, as one University of California psychiatrist attested in 1965, many “Physicians often go back to the old stand-bys, amphetamine and amphetamine-barbiturate combinations.”<sup>90</sup> In a context in which many family doctors had been “afraid of using psychotherapy because they [did] not know how it works,” Dick was prescribed up to six 7.5 milligram “pills” of methamphetamine (“semoxydrine hydrochloride”) per day—the “strongest dose” available.<sup>91</sup>

Dick himself had trusted the orders of a presumed physician at “East Oakland care” while he took this methamphetamine compound for a period of more than “seven years (or is it nine? My mind seem oddly fuzzy, somehow).” But Dick’s trust for the prescribing doctor quickly dissipated when he realised just what it was that he had been taking. Dick had been amazed to discover “after all these years,” as he remarked, the “accompanying brochure” that detailed the “side effects, etc. of the pill.” This was a brochure that had, on all previous occasions, been “snatched loose” by the druggist, but outlined the drug’s effects in a clearer way than Dick had ever before been advised:

One sentence under the subtitle HUMAN TOXICITY particularly made my decade. It reads like this, gang: Overdoses, may, in addition, cause hallucinations, delirium, peripheral vascular collapse and death. (Eeg, gak, wach, fug, gugh, whuh!)<sup>92</sup>

Operating as the indirect confession of Dick’s own “overdoses,” here Dick’s great realisation explains at least as much about Dick’s “oddly fuzzy” mind as it accounts for *Stigmata*’s biopolitical imaginary. If Chew-Z’s “HUMAN TOXICITY” remains unknown to its naïve “choosers”—at least until its ef-

90 Ronald R. Koegler, “Drugs, Neurosis and the Family Physician,” *California Medicine* 102, no. 1 (1965): 5-8, 7. Also see Nicolas Rasmussen, *On Speed: The Many Lives of Amphetamine* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 162; Rasmussen, “America’s First Amphetamine Epidemic,” 977; Young D. and W.B. Scoville, “Paranoid Psychoses in Narcolepsy and Possible Danger of Benzedrine Treatment,” *Medical Clinics of North America* 22 (1938): 637-46; J. Norman and J. Shea, “Acute Hallucinations as a Complication of Addiction to Amphetamine Sulfate,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 233 (1945): 270-1; F.A. Freyhan, “Craving for Benzedrine,” *Delaware State Medical Journal* 21 (1949): 151-6; P. Knapp, “Amphetamine and Addiction,” *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 115 (1952): 406-32; A.H. Chapman, “Paranoid Psychosis Associated With Amphetamine Usage,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 111 (1954): 43-5; Connell P.H., *Amphetamine Psychosis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958).

91 Koegler, “Drugs, Neurosis and the Family Physician,” 7; Philip K. Dick to Terry and Carol Carr, , October 1964, quoted in Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 119.

92 Philip K. Dick, October 1964 letter to Terry and Carol Carr, qtd. in Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 119.

fects take hold—then the intoxicating upshot of Dick’s nearly decade-long Semoxydrine treatment had been even more covertly veiled and occulted than this, the effects of the drug remaining just as obscure to Dick as the effects of Chew-Z had been unknown to Bulero and the novel’s other choosers.

By the mid-1960s, the correlation between the use of stimulants and increased levels of subjective energy and euphoria had become common knowledge. But this amphetaminergic energy was of a kind that predisposed patients to an assiduous writing practice; it enabled those who wrote for a living, such as Dick, for instance, to enhance and improve their entire work lives. Dick, of course, had already known this much to be true: “I believed there was a direct connection between the amphetamines and the writing,” he had once explained.<sup>93</sup> Giving credence to the link between amphetamines and literary productivity, 1950s pharmaceutical advertisements had even encouraged potential users to “[r]elease the story for analysis,” promising—through the use of injected methedrine (methamphetamine)—a “spontaneous free flow of speech” that would have appealed to any aspiring and resourceful author seeking a competitive advantage (see figure 7.7, below).<sup>94</sup>

While it is now obvious that drugs like methamphetamine are prone to abuse, the medical understanding of physiological or behavioural addiction during this period had been far less sophisticated. It was, in fact, only slightly more advanced in its day than the knowledge that the medical profession had of psychosis’s origins. It was not until the 1960s drew to a close that the serotonergic theory of psychosis’s origin—originally postulated by psychiatrist Humphry Osmond in the 1950s during his LSD experiments—was abandoned in favour of the new dopaminergic theories.

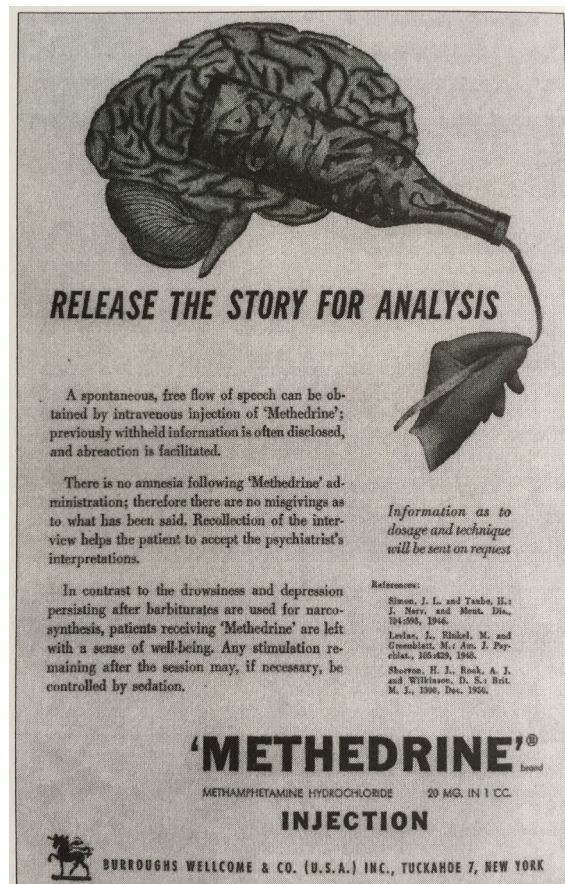
Arguing that an overdose of dopamine better presented as a “model psychosis”—at least for the purposes of psychiatric study—than the serotonin model, psychiatrists realised that this model was clearly superior to those earlier models that found LSD to be a validated “psychotomimetic” (a psychosis-mimicking substance). It was in this context that psychiatrists increasingly postulated that, more than any other neurotransmitter, dopamine lay at the origin of psychotic symptoms.<sup>95</sup> And relevantly, it is also pre-

93 Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick,” 46-7.

94 Ibid.

95 See, for instance, Humphry Osmond, “A Review of the Clinical Effects of the Psychotomimetic Agents,” *Annals of the New York Academy of Science* 66, no. 3 (1957): 418-34; Rasmussen, *On Speed*, 202-3; and Daria Peleg-Raibstein et al., “The Amphetamine Sensitization Model of Schizophrenia: Relevance Beyond Psychotic Symptoms?” *Psychopharmacology* 206 (2009): 603-21.





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**References:**  
 Stone, J. L. and Taube, H.: *J. Nerv. and Ment. Dis.*, 134:255, 1946.  
 Lofae, L., Eichel, M. and Greenblatt, M.: *Am. J. Psychiat.*, 105:429, 1949.  
 Sherron, H. J., Rank, A. J. and Wilkison, D. S.: *Brit. M. J.*, 1956, Dec. 1956.

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**Figure 7.7** Both methamphetamine and amphetamine were marketed for depression, including as a supplement to psychoanalysis. See Nicholas Rasmussen, *On Speed*, Figure 24, 148-9; *American Journal of Psychiatry* (June, 1952).

cisely just such an amphetamine psychosis that, as Sutin suggests, may have produced the "visage of perfect evil" that Dick, just before writing *Stigmata*, would apprehend in the sky in 1963.<sup>96</sup>

Echoing the incident in which Dick's father, Edgar, had donned a gas-mask and caused terrific "anxiety" in his four-year-old son, the omnipotent Palmer Eldritch would always function as a reverberation of Dick's father's

96 While it is difficult to know how to read them, Dick's interview remarks of 1978 suggest that neither *Stigmata* nor this Eldritch vision was catalysed, as some critics have suggested, by LSD. As Dick asserts, he had at that time only read of the visions caused by LSD in Aldous Huxley's *Doors Of Perception*. See Joe Vitale, "An Interview with America's Most Brilliant Science-Fiction Writer," *The Aquarian* (11 October 1978), reproduced in *PKD Otaku 4* (2002): 7-11, available at [www.philipkdickfans.com/resources/journals/pkd-otaku/](http://www.philipkdickfans.com/resources/journals/pkd-otaku/).

presence; he is, in this way, an all-seeing and all-knowing face—one that had already been augured in Dick’s 1957 novel, *Eye in the Sky*.<sup>97</sup> As Dick later noted of the incident with his father: “His face would disappear,” and would turn him into something that was “not a human being at all.”<sup>98</sup> Having apparently not used LSD at the time that he experienced this vision of his father’s gas-masked face—a vision that overcame Dick as he walked en route to his writing hovel—it remains possible that the horrifying psychotrope, already inscribed on Dick’s memory, functioned for him both as a delusion and abreaction, at once the repressed vestige of the past and a new artifact of Dick’s increasingly amphetaminergic consciousness.<sup>99</sup>

By 1971, Dick was able to recognise his dependence on amphetamines; and, when he called his mother, Dorothy, he finally confessed that he had become a drug addict.<sup>100</sup> The following day, Dick was admitted to Stanford University’s Hoover Pavilion Psychiatric Hospital; and it was here that he decided—or realised—that he no longer needed amphetamines to write prolifically. In 1977, Dick recalled feeling greatly relieved, being no longer subject to those desperate “economic pressures” that had led to his deep depression of the previous decade.<sup>101</sup> It had been a decade of deep and sustained acedia within a monastic writing workshop and even when he, like Melville’s Bartleby, had “preferred not to” write, he continued writing nonetheless, ameliorating the strain of this work with the aid of amphetamine.

But Dick’s account of his time at the psychiatric hospital is also at least partly inexplicable. He was surprised, for instance, to hear the results of the medical exam that had been performed by Dr. Harry Bryan, the doctor who Dick would later describe as “the best psychiatrist [he] ever saw.”<sup>102</sup> Dr. Bryan had, according to Dick,

discovered something odd about me... that when I took amphetamines... they never reached my brain!... The consensus, signed by the four doctors who’d ad-

97 See Dick, *Eye in The Sky* (New York: Ace Books, 1957).

98 Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 14, 126-7.

99 Dick did, however, often express his excitement at LSD’s uses. In “Schizophrenia and The Book of Changes,” for instance, Dick notes that “LSD has made the discovery of [temporal distortion] available to everyone.” Sutin, ed. *The Shifting Realities*, 177. Dick had also been effusive at the prospect of “religious experience” being “scientifically studied” through LSD. See “Faith of Our Fathers,” 68-9. Also see Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 127, 141-42; Gregg Rickman, *Philip K. Dick: The Last Testament* (Long Island: The Valentine Press, 1985), 12, 58.

100 Sutin, *Divine Invasions*, 175.

101 Anton and Werner, “So I don’t write about Heroes: An Interview with Philip K. Dick.”

102 Dick, *The Exegesis*, 21.

ministered the physical and psychological tests, was that the amphetamines were not affecting me physically, they were not reaching the neural tissue, but they were being excreted through the detoxifying process of the liver.<sup>103</sup>

Demonstrating that there was “nothing wrong with [him],” the physical and psychological exam brought Dick a long-awaited sense of relief and reassurance: he was not, as it turned out, a drug addict—at least not neurologically. Yet this exam also generated more questions than answers. If the amphetamines had never been psychoactive—and had, in fact, never crossed the blood-brain barrier—then how and why had Dick been so compelled to use the amphetamines, and so habitually? How had he been apparently experiencing their effects for almost a decade? And what, now, could account for his visions, paranoia, and, most stunningly, his singularly prolific output?

Suggesting no clear explanation to improve on the hypothesis that he had been “taking [the amphetamine pill] for a placebo effect of some kind,”<sup>104</sup> Dick fills in the gaps by postulating his own theory, his own suture. He attributes his drug use to his desire to apparel himself in a “protective coloration” that disguised him amid California’s drug subcultures: “Everybody else was taking some form of drugs,” he said, “and I wouldn’t have known how to behave if I didn’t have something to take.”<sup>105</sup> Following his physical exam in 1971, Dick’s newfound belief in the indeterminacy of drugs would be reworked and revamped in his later novels as their total unpredictability.

In *A Scanner Darkly*, for instance, protagonist Bob Arctor faces a psychiatric exam not unlike Dick’s own—only to discover a similar, although inverted, biomedical revelation. Informed that Substance D—the toxic drug that Arctor has used to infiltrate and surveil a group of suspects—has now done things to his brain that should “never happen” and “may be permanent,” Arctor ponders his biological intervention as the cause of an “abnormal condition the body isn’t prepared for” (*ASD*, 218-19).

In both his science fiction and life, then, Dick’s drugs become agents of dysrecognition whose value lies in their shocking signification of precisely that which is unknown and unknowable. By virtue of the kind of pharmakonity that Derrida imputes both to speech-acts and to writing, the drug as a literary psychotrope becomes as “seductive” for Dick in the 1960s as it is had been terrifying at that time for the general public, and had been revelatory to

103 Paul Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick,” 46-7. Cf. Daniel DePerez, “An Interview with Philip K. Dick,” *Science Fiction Review* 19, no. 5 (1976): 6-15.

104 De Perez, “An Interview with Philip K. Dick,” 8-9.

105 Williams, “The True Stories of Philip K. Dick,” 47.

his readers. Both then as now, Dick's drugs provide exemplary allegories for Derrida's interminably "undecidable" phenomenology; the drug produces both real and literary disorientations through its myriad "detours of a signifier *foreign* to it."<sup>106</sup>

Perpetually standing in for institutional operations or signifiers that are extrinsic to its own effects—religion, market capital, and even the community or socius in which drug use is normalised, proscribed or enforced—drugs like Can-D and Chew-Z enigmatically disappear into their contexts so that, as Ronnell notes, simply "being-on-drugs indicates that a structure is already in place, [even] prior to the production of the materiality we call drugs."<sup>107</sup>

If the precise contours of the structure that scaffolds the invisible neurological operations of drugs could be made visible, then they might be more clearly understood; they might be revealed, in fact, to have had their own indeterminacy or unknowability exploited by others—by those who know not all, but something more, than the population about them. Drugs would be shown to have been colonised and co-opted by those who produce and purvey them, now deployed by a governmentality for purposes unknowable to the end user, and by a government that depends on its biopower for its continued control. Regulated, reappropriated, and revalued, drugs in Dick's novels are revealed to be distributed by just such a force. They are no more controlled by the state as agents of a late-capitalist economic power than they are enshrouded by private actors in the enigma of their indeterminate and invisible production. Highly controlled lest any drug should be used as an end in and of itself—or discovered to be something other than what their purveyors suggest they are—drugs, like those in the biopolitical state in *Stigmata*, and as in other of Dick's science fictions, bring into incisive relief the shocking reality of psychopharmacological experimentation in the globalised twentieth-century.

Unlike any of the chapters before this one, this final chapter has examined the way in which literary science fiction may serve as a grand allegorisation for biopolitical control and power—especially in relation to drugs. And while it has extended on the work of the first part of the thesis, it has also, much like the psychobiographical chapters on Huxley, examined Dick's biographical history in order to better explain the author's relation to amphetamines, psychosis, and the human body.

106 Derrida, "Plato's Pharmacy," 76.

107 Ronnell, *Crack Wars*, 33.

## Conclusion

# Aldous's Atropine Eyedrops and *The (St)Art of Seeing*

SOME TWENTY YEARS BEFORE the publication of Norman Yoder's fabricated story of the six LSD-using students who were blinded by sun-gazing—a story recounted in this thesis's introduction—Huxley himself would experiment with what he called “sunning the eyes.”<sup>1</sup> In 1939, Huxley, who was now forty-five years of age and recently settled in America, adopted this practice after having sought assistance for what he, dismayed, had discovered was his “steadily and quite rapidly failing” eyesight. Desperate, Huxley met with Margaret Corbett, a teacher at the School of Eye Education in Los Angeles. This was a school that Corbett had founded herself, and which lay not too far from Aldous and Laura's Hollywood home.<sup>2</sup>

It was at this school that Huxley learned the “Bates Method”: a relatively controversial alternative therapy proposed by William A. Bates in his study of vision, *The Cure of Imperfect Sight By Treatment Without Glasses* (1920). As one of Bates's most faithful disciples, Corbett demonstrated to Huxley the various ways in which Bates's techniques could be used to treat visual dysfunction through the “reeducation” of the mental and visual senses.<sup>3</sup> It would be from among this range of sensorimotor techniques that Huxley would learn to do precisely what Yoder later sought to caution about: to expose one's eyes directly to sunlight.<sup>4</sup> Having experienced significant improvement immediately upon adopting this and other of Bates's techniques, Huxley promptly disposed of his eyeglasses. Within two years, when he wrote his *Art of Seeing* (1942), Huxley would promote the technique to his readers: “Those who have

1 Aldous Huxley, *The Art of Seeing* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1974), 1.

2 See Bedford, *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 373-5; Dunaway, *Huxley in Hollywood*, 133; Murray, *Aldous Huxley*, 319.

3 See William Bates, *The Cure of Imperfect Sight By Treatment Without Glasses* (New York: Central Fixation Publishing Company, 1920).

4 In addition to his 1920 book, William Bates also published a magazine, *Better Eyesight*, between 1919—1930. The theory that imagining “blackness” was therapeutic was, according to Huxley, modified by Bates toward the end of his life, when he instead instructed his followers to remember “pleasant scenes and incidents out of [their] own personal history.” See *AOS*, 23.



the sense to sun their eyes wisely,” he claimed, perform a ritual that will “certainly do them good” (AOS, 65).<sup>56</sup>

Like his experiments with hypnotism and his subscription to the Alexander Technique, Huxley’s adoption of Bates’s methods speaks not only to his serious interest in alternative medicine, but of what would become his increasingly mystical intuition and faith in the “psycho-physical instrument.” For Huxley, these methods represented, as he wrote in a letter of 1942, no less than the

possibility, on the physiological plane, of a complete reconditioning analogous to that which takes place through the techniques of mysticism on the psychological and mystical planes.<sup>7</sup>

But it is also possible that even these methods had an antecedent: a practice whose description is neither quite as mystical nor as instinctive as these “complete reconditioning[s].” This was an altogether more *molecular* than physiological technique that, while discussed in detail in Bates’s book, had been known to Huxley long before he had encountered either Bates’s or Alexander’s names. And while none of Huxley’s biographies appears to provide a source for Huxley’s knowledge of this method, it is certain that Huxley, at least by 1914, had begun using it.<sup>8</sup>

The method consisted of Huxley’s application of an atropine solution to his eyes, which, as it bathed and diluted them, enabled the eye muscles to relax. This allowed Huxley to “see round,” as he writes in *The Art of Seeing*, “a heavy patch of opacity at the centre of the cornea” (AOS, 8). What is fascinating, however, is that Huxley’s atropine eye solution—at least if administered in a high enough dosage—is also an extremely powerful psychoactive alkaloid, a substance that is known to produce “profound mental changes” in those who are exposed to it.<sup>9</sup> A naturally occurring tropane alkaloid found

5 Valentine Basnayake, “Fifty per cent terrific! Fifty per cent non-existent’: Aldous Huxley and Medicine,” *Ceylon Medical Journal* 49, no. 4 (2004): 142-4, esp. 142.

6 A more recent assessments of Bates’ “refractive” method appears in a report of the American Academy of Ophthalmology: Jennifer K. Harris et al., “Complementary Therapy Assessment Visual Training for Refractive Errors,” August 2013, accessed 13 November 2013, <http://one.aao.org/Assets/9ddadf62-c784-4a58-9193-bc404272fe2c/635121685199770000/visual-training-for-refractive-errors-2013-pdf>. Also see H.R. Hildreth, W.H. Meinberg, et al., “The Effect of Visual Training on Existing Myopia,” *American Journal of Ophthalmology* 30 (1947): 1563-76.

7 Huxley to Miss Hepworth and Mr. Green (Letter 458) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 473-4.

8 Bedford offers the most detailed account: *Aldous Huxley*, 1: 43.

9 See for instance, E.K. Perry, R.H. Perry, “Acetylcholine and Hallucinations: Disease-Related Compared to Drug-Induced Alterations in Human Consciousness,” *Brain and*

in plants in the Solanacea family (including the *atropa belladonna* or deadly nightshade, the *Datura stramonium*, the mandrake, and others, all of which are extremely toxic), atropine is generally classified as a hallucinogen in the “deliriant” or anticholinergic class. Just as much as any plants that contains the alkaloid, atropine liquid is generally known to be capable of causing incredibly powerful hallucinations and delusions, as well as “confusion and hallucinosis without recall.”<sup>10</sup> Long of interest to historians of ancient folkloric practices and mythology, atropine and other deliriants has often associated with the apocryphal “flying ointments,” which—along with opium—enabled witches to “fly,” or rather to induce a sensation of flight.<sup>11</sup> In small quantities, and when delivered to the eye, the drug acts as antimuscarinic, blocking the pulsation or transmission of certain receptors in the muscles of the eye that serve to constrict pupil size, and allowing the muscles to relax and lay dormant rather than strain.<sup>12</sup>

The question of whether Huxley had ever himself sensed the hallucinal effects of the drug—or whether he had known of the possibility of these effects—must remain a speculative and an unanswered one. Of course, this is not idle speculation, for there have been a number of cases in which ophthalmological use of atropine as eyedrops has caused serious hallucinosis, such as in one case where “13 children who (presumably in error) received 13 mg of atropine in the form of eyedrops, all became delirious but... survived.”<sup>13</sup>

*Cognition* 28, (1995): 240-258. Even in the foreword to Albert Schweitzer’s book on the possibility of diagnosing the historical Jesus Christ with psychopathy (an elaboration on Schweitzer’s PhD thesis), the author underscores the possibility of developing “hallucinations from relatively small dosages of therapeutic drugs, such as atropine.” See Schweitzer, *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus*, tr. Charles R. Joy (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1948), 14.

- 10 See, for instance, Peter Brawley and James C. Duffield, “The Pharmacology of Hallucinogens,” *Pharmacological Reviews* 24, no. 1 (1972): 31-66, esp. 33,
- 11 On witches’ “flying ointments,” see Michael J. Harner, “The Role of Hallucinogenic Plants in European Witchcraft,” in *Hallucinogens and Shamanism*, ed. Michael J. Harner (London: Oxford University Press, 1973); Francis King, *Sexuality, Magic, and Perversion* (London: Neville Spearman, 1971), 63, 68. For another discussion of atropine induced flight, also see Carlos Castaneda, *The Teachings of Don Juan: A Yaqui Way of Knowledge* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 131-6, 203-4.
- 12 See, for instance, Albert Hofmann, Richard Evans Schultes, *Plants of the Gods: Origins of Hallucinogenic Use* (New York: Van der Marck Editions, 1987), 88.
- 13 James S. Ketchum, *Chemical Warfare Secrets Almost Forgotten: A Personal Story of Medical Testing of Army Volunteers with Incapacitating Chemical Agents During the Cold War (1955-1975)* (California: Chem Books, 2006), 322. Also see Henry G. Mortona, “Atropine intoxication: Its Manifestations in Infants and Children,” *Journal of Pediatrics* 14, no. 6 (1939): 755-760; Burçin Sanlıdağ, Okşan Derinöz, and Nagehan A. Yıldız, “A Case of Pediatric Age Anticholinergic Intoxication due to Accidental *Datura Stramonium* Ingestion Admitting with Visual Hallucination,” *The Turkish Journal of Pediatrics* 56, no.



In a more recent and better documented emergency case, the authors noted that, while uncommon, the patient's "anticholinergic toxicity" had been caused by "ophthalmologic atropine." And while here the patient's symptoms consisted of acute "visual hallucinosis," the emergency staff concluded that these hallucinations were "likely to resolve within days of discontinuing the offending agent."<sup>14</sup> When in 1916, Huxley had requested, by letter, that his father Leonard forward him his package of atropine, he would—by asking his father to help him heal his eyes—figuratively invert the scenario in which Oedipus wrests the golden brooches from his mother's gown, and dares to perform that vicious self-enucleation.<sup>15</sup> However, Huxley's request would also form a prefiguration of the scene in which, on his deathbed, he would also seek his final dosage of "moksha-medicine" from Laura, his adoring wife.<sup>16</sup>

And yet, despite these figurations and prefigurations, none of Huxley's remarks indicates that he had been aware of atropine's potential to induce hallucinations. Indeed, to pose such a question is to speculate—as this thesis has done throughout its pages—on the possibility that Huxley had, without even having realised it, already communicated with an other, alterity, or psychotogen within the body or brain—even at an early age. It is to suggest that Huxley would have already developed an instinctive or intuitive understanding of the "otherness" and the potential of psychoactive scrivening in his adolescent years. And if the worst that such a speculation as this can do is to generate propositions of the kind just articulated—postulations whose truth, at least at this point in history, can be neither confirmed nor entirely dismissed—then it is toward such a work of speculation that pharmacography aspires, and in pursuit of such a truth that studies of narcoliterature, such as this one, will proceed.

Huxley would never have been one to dismiss such a speculation, anyway. His experiments at the borderlines of medicine testify to his radical openness to just such possibilities as these. For in addition to hypnosis, the Bates Method and other unorthodox techniques, Huxley also adopted, at least for a short time, and often for specific ailments—the practices of dianetics, acupuncture, and "E-medicine" (a variety of meditation treatment).<sup>17</sup> But the

3 (2014): 313-15.

14 Andrew G. Bishop and John M. Tallon, "Anticholinergic Visual Hallucinosis from Atropine Eye Drops: Case Report A," *Canadian Journal of Emergency Medicine* 1, no. 2 (1999): 115-6.

15 See my chapter 6.

16 See Huxley to Leonard Huxley (Letters 100 and 102) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 113-6.

17 Basnayake, "Fifty per cent terrific! Fifty per cent non-existent," 142.

ubiquity and authority of orthodox medicine often attenuated Huxley's public influence. When, for instance, Julian Huxley, having been impressed at Huxley's success using the Bates Method, mentioned the practice in a public address of 1941, it prompted one listener, Dr. Parness, to write to the *British Journal of Medicine* with his concerns.<sup>18</sup> Apparently scant on detail and perhaps too suggestive for its orthodox audience, Huxley's speech had led Parness to ask whether Bates's method had been "approved by the leading ophthalmologists."<sup>19</sup> In a substantial annotation, the editor of the journal offered a measured response to Parness's concerns, suggesting that "before condemning [the] practice, it would be as well to examine the evidence in support of it."<sup>20</sup> But what is most interesting is the annotator's discussion of Bates's claim about atropine:

... it should be added that this is only an incidental observation; but that pharmacologists err in believing that atropine acts only on unstriated muscle is part of [Bates'] general argument, for Bates found that this drug will paralyse the extrinsic muscles which produce accommodation. One experiment... appears to show that the dead fish still has a living mind; its brain is pithed to induce relaxation. The treatment based on these revolutionary observations aims at mental relaxation, and the pithed fish appears to be its prototype.<sup>21</sup>

While it was not until Huxley had already finished his *The Art of Seeing* that he had seen this annotation (at which he point he included it in the book as an appendix), there can be no doubt that Huxley had read of the experiment in Bates's *Cure of Imperfect Sight* himself.<sup>22</sup> Huxley had already suggested, for instance, that the production of mental relaxation through such techniques as "sunning," could be "propitious... not only for memory, but also for vision" (AOS, 104). But nowhere in *The Art of Seeing* does Huxley describe atropine or its beneficial effects—other than in the book's preface, where he indicates not its benefits, but only notes that he had used it as a child (AOS, 8).

18 Huxley had conveyed to Julian a detailed summary of the "empirical facts" of his own case of improvement in a letter of 30 July 1939: Huxley to Julian Huxley (Letter 431) in *Letters*, ed. Smith, 441-3.

19 J. Parness, "Remedy for Defective Sight," *British Medical Journal* 2, no. 4210 (September 13, 1941): 389.

20 "Perfect Sight Without Glasses," *British Medical Journal* 2, no. 4210 (September 13, 1941): 383.

21 Ibid.

22 This appendix ("Appendix I") is not reproduced in the Creative Arts Book Company's 1982 publication, which this thesis cites. It appears, however, in seemingly all the versions published by Chatto & Windus, including the first edition of 1942, 74-6.

Given that Huxley—a candid and, like TH, “passionately honest” thinker—did not, neither in his correspondence, nor in essays or fiction, describe anything other than his ordinary usage of atropine, it perhaps seems likely that, had Huxley ever experienced an altered state of consciousness while using the drug, he had himself remained unaware of it. But this conclusion, as with this thesis more generally, is less concerned with proving that Huxley had already encountered an altered state in his youth (or during his Cambridge year), than with proposing the means by which Huxley, like Dick, came to view medicine and the body as two sites that are as much liable to philosophical expression and literary speculation as they are the “proper studies” of positivistic and scientific inquiry.

Huxley’s complete indifference to the “correctness” of his adoption of the Bates Method, for instance, suggests the gravamen of his epistemology of openness:

Whether Dr. Bates was right or wrong in his rejection of the Helmholtz theory of accommodation, I am entirely unqualified to say. My own guess, after reading the evidence, would be that both the extrinsic muscles and the lens play their part in accommodation. This guess may be correct; or it may be incorrect. I do not greatly care. For my concern is not with the anatomical mechanism of accommodation, but with the art of seeing—and the art of seeing does not stand or fall with any particular physio-logical hypothesis...<sup>23</sup>

For Huxley as for Dick, then, pathology and the art of medicine (the *tekhne iatrike*) function as trustworthy indices of truth only when they may also be artfully and flexibly apprehended or reappropriated by their students and patients. To reflect upon and conceive of the body and the brain’s physical condition is not simply to reflect upon one’s health, then, which is to diagnose or pathologise the body. It is rather to infinitely conceive of the very possibility of the body and brain’s infinite potential to be interpreted either as good or bad, positive or negative, well or ill, right or wrong.

That is, the art of medicine for both these writers involves a recursive, continuous, and endless adaptation to the body and brain’s every movement in a “following” that represents a lifelong manipulation and refinement of the manner in which this very process proceeds. It is in precisely this artfully chiasmic and pharmakonic mode that Huxley and Dick conceive of their psychotropes, producing in their compositions, and scrivening in their narratives, the very potentiality of their having intuited a sovereign power—an

23 Ibid. 7-8.

external or internal agent, a commanding other—whose presence cannot simply be rejected or accepted, nor even mimicked, but must *methectically* be adopted as an interlocutor. Their writing serves as a grand allegorisation of this ontological inquiry, this quest in which a “being” is found, one with whom a the writer must henceforth participate in what may be either perilous experiment or joint discovery.

There are, of course, ample allegories for this formulation of psychopolitical and psychotropic reappropriation that this thesis has not addressed, including many that have not been written by Huxley and Dick. Then again, there are many works *by* Huxley and Dick, also of interest in this respect, that this thesis has not studied. Dick’s well-known 2-3-74 experience, for instance, allows us to recognise the way in which the methectic incorporation of an “other”—of some molecular alterity or different form of external agent—can usher in overwhelming and life-changing effects.

In précis, Dick’s story is as follows: while undergoing dental surgery on an impacted wisdom tooth, the author had been given sodium pentothol to relieve the pain. Some hours later, once he had arrived at his home, Dick answered the front door to a “pharmacy delivery-girl bearing a painkiller and wearing a gold necklace depicting a fish” (*EX*, xiv). Suddenly apprehending a pink beam in the sky—one that seemed to emanate from the young woman’s fish necklace—Dick experienced what he called an “anamnesis”: a “discorporating slippage into a vast and total knowledge that he would spend the rest of his life explicating, or *exegeting*” (*EX*, xiv). While this event represents the quizzical moment in which Dick’s medicine—his sorely yearned-for drug—finally arrives, much to his excitement, it is notable that Dick’s glee was perhaps only amplified by the psychoactive effects of the sodium pentothal that had already been cascading throughout his brain receptors. and yet, this excitement also does something else to Dick. This vision, that is, also brings to ahead a particularly kairotic instant for him, producing a new, gnostic vision of the world. In this way, the vision echoes the many instants of metanoia that had also so struck Huxley, such as that he experience when he first used mescaline.

In these moments, both authors, for the first time, are able to conceptualise of the history of symbols and “psychotropes” in a new way. Whether for good and bad, such experiences produce new ways of seeing—not simply of seeing the physical world, however, but the literary and symbolic world within which so many mythical and political figurations of the self already exist—within which, that is, so many psychotropes already tussle and vie for dominance.

It is thus a “molecular awareness” that these authors nurture, attend to, and scriven. Artfully and contemplatively seeing their organism’s every atomistic modulation, Huxley and Dick’s narcoliteratures constitute so many symphonic elaborations of what today remains enigmatic and unelaborated in the mental, biological, and physical sciences. To suggest that the psychotropes produced not only by these authors but by those others to which this thesis has referred—Leary, Michaux, Artaud, and even Deleuze and Guattari—might profit from further investigation, then, is to express only the most obvious point.

What is perhaps a less apparent point than this—but a notion that this thesis has sought to propound, time and again—is that these speculative and molecular narratives form a narcoliterature so enigmatic—and yet so proximate to and apparent in our human world—that its importance to literary scholarship is only the beginning of its value. For, as I have argued throughout this thesis’s pages, this genre’s value as literature is at the very least matched by its centrality in our future political and genealogical world. It is essential for further developing, that is—and perhaps even for achieving—a new, and truer science of the nonhuman; and it will be indispensable for apprehending a truer—and perhaps even a truly nonhuman—form of science.

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