KENOSIS, KATHARSIS, KAIROSIS:
A THEORY OF LITERARY AFFECTS
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A THEORY OF LITERARY AFFECTS

By

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The University of Newcastle
I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

Signed............................................................
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SYNOPSIS

This thesis explores theoretical aspects of the affective dimension of literature. Beginning with Aristotle's tying of katharsis to the drama, the pattern of affective relations is completed through the establishing of terms for each of the three broad traditional genres. These relations can be expressed in the ratio:

as katharsis is to the genre of the dramatic
so kenosis is to the genre of the lyric
so kairosis is to the genre of the epic.

Within each of these affective relations, further relations are determined for the identity structures within each genre. In defining these identity structures, the philosophical, theological, psychological and literary aspects of katharsis, kenosis and kairosis are explored. Of particular use in mapping these identity structures and literary affects were the philosophical theories of Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Heidegger, Sartre, and Wittgenstein; the theological views of D.G. Dawe, John Macquarrie, Charles Pickstone, and Ernest F. Scott; the psychological theories of C.J. Jung, Jacques Lacan and Julia Kristeva; the literary theories of Mikel Dufrenne, Stanley Fish, Toshihiko and Toyo Izutsu, Hans Robert Jauss, W.R. Johnson, Frank Kermode, William Elford Rogers, and D.T. Suzuki; and the literary works of Homer, Shakespeare, George Herbert, S.T. Coleridge, Charles Baudelaire, Wallace Stevens, and James K. Baxter.

Taking up Aristotle's project to grant cognitive value to the experience of art, this thesis argues for the centrality of identity structures within the dimension of the affective. The thesis further determines that
literature's affective dimension is the domain within which aesthetic identity is established. Such imaginative identity structures amount to a cultural catalogue of identity possibilities. As the keepers of this catalogue, the three interpretive genres amount to a body of affective knowledge that is its own dimension.
INTRODUCTION

The original working title for this thesis was “Kenosis: the self-emptying personality in the poetry of James K. Baxter”. As work progressed, the thesis shifted its primary attention from the poetry of Baxter to the theoretical issues surrounding kenosis. Pursuing these theoretical concerns, the thesis became a study of the affective categories of literature.

Beginning with an investigation of the known, the growth of this thesis has followed a path of discovery. It was not anticipated that a concern for the lyric would lead to the wider concern for the affective categories of each genre. Starting with kenosis, it became apparent that, if it was possible to add one further category to Aristotle's determination of katharsis, then it was a requirement to determine a further category to account for the affective in the epic genre. The pattern of discovery remains integral to the argument. This history makes apparent why, in the finished thesis, an interest in the affect of lyric remains central. The study of the poetry of Baxter has been reduced to a small treatment in Chapter Six.
While the affective categories for each genre are seen as independent experiences, katharsis, through its familiarity and long history, has been taken as a model for establishing the other two affective categories. Because katharsis has been used for so long as the only general affective term applying to literature, it has been used historically to account for aspects of the other affective categories. Comparison of historical usage of kenosis with katharsis has established the parameters of the affective categories in literature. Based on this structural model, operating parameters are determined for the third broad genre, the epic. With these parameters in place, it is possible to name and describe the third term, kairosis.

In talking of genres, it needs to be said at the outset that the broad traditional genres treated here are to be seen as interpretive genres. Following the work of William Elford Rogers, this thesis treats genres as “modes of relation”. These modes “are constitutive of the understanding” of a text.¹ Building from Rogers' model, the modes of relation are seen to operate within the affective categories as identity relations. For each affective category there is established an identity relation that defines the interpretation of each genre. Each of these identity relations is grounded

in a model of matter. These models of matter are seen as constitutive of our understanding of each genre.²

Because genre is here treated as being about interpretation and not about the cataloguing of works, no effort is made to define what historical works would or might fit within the model of each genre. Indeed, examples are given of various interpretations of the same passage from a particular text as examples of all three of the broad genres. It is anticipated that the reader will bring an understanding of genre that is already based on the interpretation of genre. The thesis does not aim to offer new ways of defining individual works, but rather new ways of accounting for the existing experience of interpreting genre.

Traditionally each genre has been seen to have its particular field of interest. The epic is seen to concentrate on character, the dramatic to concentrate on action and the lyric to concentrate on the thematic. In establishing fields of concern that arise within the affective categories, this thesis argues that the epic can be seen in interpretation to amount to a discourse of time, the dramatic to a discourse of space and the lyric to a discourse of identity.

While there is an identity relation for each genre, identity itself is seen as the field of concern that constitutes our understanding of the

² A table of these relations is provided at the end of Chapter Four.
lyric. Because of this concentration on identity, aspects of lyric identity are treated in great detail in the final three chapters. The experience of kenosis, by its very definition, establishes identity as the focus of its operation. This lyric identity is defined as a constellation. Within this constellated identity, as found in the lyric, the positions of the reading and speaking subjects are determined within the pattern of self-object, self-Self, and self-other relations.

In the dramatic genre, identity is a readily apparent (if slightly alien) aspect of the affective category of katharsis: we see the hero transformed through a series of actions. This aspect of identity is treated as bodily identity and is defined in terms of causal relations.

In the epic, it is not so obvious that the affective experience of kairosis involves questions of identity. What is clear is that the epic involves characters and that such characters have identities that persist through time. Our experience of these characters as identities gives rise to the question, can kairosis be seen as an affective experience in line with kenosis and katharsis? Since our general assumptions about personal identity so very closely match the identity structures of the epic genre, it is not surprising that the experience of kairosis remains, for many readers, an obscure one. The very fact that there has, until now, been no term to describe this relationship is a clear indication of the density of assumptions of “naturalness" that readers make in interpreting the
identity relations within the epic genre. This aspect of identity is treated within the generally recognized area of memory-based identity.

Aristotle, it is argued, attempts to give to the affective experience the status that philosophy has for Plato, that of wisdom. His debate with Plato continues to haunt aesthetic experience within Western culture. Is the artistic experience, as an affect, the vehicle of knowledge? Do we learn through the series of emotions that we experience aesthetically, or do we simply experience these emotions for the duration? Through the determining of modes of identity relation as constitutive of our understanding of each genre, and through determining that such modes are aspects of the affective relations which hold in the interpretation of each genre, it becomes possible to argue for the cognitive gain from aesthetic experience. It is only through its affects that literature engages the questions of identity. When questions of identity are experienced within the affective dimension they arise in an aesthetic way that engages the reader's participation in these identity structures.

Further, in the final chapters of this thesis, it is argued that these very identity structures, as found in language and literature, constitute and catalogue our experiences of identity. While other modes that constitute and explore identity are examined (various forms of psychotherapy and religious contemplation), it is argued that the aesthetic experience of identity as found in the affective experience of literature is not only
constitutive of our understanding of literature as literature, but is also constitutive of our understanding of aesthetic identity as a mode of being.

The “message” of literature is borne by the affect. It is from our experience of kenosis, katharsis and kairosis that we know identity as the series of imaginative possibilities that are physically, culturally and psychically available. Such identities, while they impinge on our understanding of identity in everyday life, remain, nonetheless, residents of the affective dimension of literature. Such identities, while they are open to ideological manipulation, remain marked with the freedom of distance. Any appropriation of the affective dimension of literature comes complete with the inherent irony of reference: because I am Hamlet, I am not. It is because we are moved” by literature that the affective retains its own power; we remain subjects.
CHAPTER ONE

KENOSIS: THE SELF EMPTYING

Since the time of Plato, literary theory has been troubled with questions about the affects of the literary experience. In Book X of the Republic, Plato challenges poets to defend themselves from his charge that they appeal to the lower and less rational parts of human nature. For Plato, the artistic experience involves “an element in us . . . far removed from reality” (603).¹ He opposes this aesthetic element to the rational. In the example given by Plato it is the rational element that enables man to overcome the deceptions of appearance that occur when we see a stick apparently bent by the refraction of water. The effects of art play on our ability to be deceived by appearance.

This elementary epistemological inadequacy of art, while it is significant, is not Plato’s real target. Because we can be deceived by our senses, art can play its tricks; because reason can overcome the deceptions of appearance, we can arrive at rational knowledge. What concerns Plato, in the case of literature, is the “terrible power” it has “to corrupt even the best characters, with very few exceptions” (605, p. 383). This power to be affected by literature is not the result of a failure in the audience to perceive correctly; rather it is the result of the artistic experience:

When we hear Homer or one of the tragic poets representing the sufferings of a great man and making him bewail them at length with every expression of tragic grief, you know how even the best of us enjoy it and let ourselves be carried away by our feelings; and are full of praises for the merits of the poet who can most powerfully affect us in this way. (605, p. 383)

While Plato appears to be over-stating both sides of the case, and while it is possible to see a certain amount of irony in this excessiveness, Plato here announces the terms of an argument that persists into the present. In acknowledging the power of Homer and the pleasure in the experience, Plato is seeking to deny the moral, rational and educational value of the experience:

when we meet people who admire Homer as the educator of Greece, and who say that in social and educational matters we should study him and model our lives on his advice, you must feel kindly towards them as good men within their limits, and you may agree with them that Homer is the best of poets and first of tragedians. But you will know that the only poetry that should be allowed in a state is hymns to the gods and paeans in praise of good men; once you go beyond that and admit the sweet lyric or epic muse, pleasure and pain become your rulers instead of law and the principles commonly accepted as best. (607, p. 384)

In such a state, where law rules, the individual would be governed by self-control rather than by any sympathy or communal interest. One startling
implication of Plato's rebuke, especially for the lyric, is his assertion that, through identification with the feelings of others, we lose self-control:

very few people are capable of realizing that our feelings for other people must influence ourselves, and that if we let ourselves feel excessively for the misfortunes of others it will be difficult to restrain our feelings in our own. (606, p. 384)

For Plato, any affect that art produces, because it is an affect, is excessive. Although in our everyday life we may be able to restrain our emotions, we have the liberty of experiencing to the full in art the aesthetic affects it produces.

In Plato's rational dimension “We must learn not to hold our hurts and waste our time crying, like children who've bumped themselves, but to train our minds to banish grief by curing our hurts and rectifying our mistakes as soon as we can”. In his other affective dimension we remember our sufferings and bemoan them. In this dimension we are “irrational and lazy and cowardly” (604, p. 382). To make matters worse, according to Plato, artists play on our inclinations. Because, suggests Plato, the rational is difficult to present on stage, and because the popular audience is interested in “character that is unstable and irritable”, the dramatic poet is attracted to the lesser dimension.

Much subsequent literary theory has fallen within the parameters Plato sets out in this moral and polarised argument about the affects of literature.
While large claims have been made for the moral and educational value of art, most have relied on the duality proposed by Plato. Attention has been drawn away from the affects and towards the contents of literature; the contents, it seems, are more readily open to defence on the grounds of inherent value. Such defenses amount to restatements of Plato's argument: art is good if its affects support morally justified contents; art is not good if, through its affects, it draws attention to affects as things in their own right.

The structures and the values of literary affects are the twin themes of this thesis. During the course of argument, in which affective categories will be established for each of the three traditional genres, the implications of Plato's argument will be ever present. Socrates' companion, Glaucon, readily accepts that his passion for the affects of literature should be renounced if the poets fail to “make their case” that poetry “brings lasting benefit to human life and human society” (607, p. 385). No such promise is given here.

In redirecting attention towards the affective nature of literary experience, this thesis will be required to explore notions of the affective as they have been established in other related fields of study. Katharsis, because of its long history as the central affective category of literature, requires little introduction. In Chapter Two it will be investigated as a model for developing a prototype for our other two terms. Kairosis, because of its novelty, might seem to require a lengthy account. Since much of the work of transposing this term from its theological dimensions to aesthetics has already been performed
by Frank Kermode, kairosis will be introduced later. Kenosis, because of its extensive theological history, and because of its structural features, will be looked at first.

Many terms that have their origins in biblical and theological study have, in the last century, been imported into literary theory and criticism. These terms are frequently employed as little more than buzz words, words that convey an atmosphere and hope by association to gain additional meaning. “Hermeneutics”, for example, as distinct from “exegesis”, is significantly different from “interpretation”. When employed in literary theory with these distinctions being observed, “hermeneutics” carries with it some of the significance of the theological usage. When employed simply as a synonym for “interpretation” it hopes to gain, by association, some of the particular meanings of the modern hermeneutical philosophies and literary theories, such as the philosophy of Heidegger and the literary theories of E.D. Hirsch. In the case of Heidegger the theological background to hermeneutics is of major significance: history has to have the validity of being the history of Being before there can be a hermeneutics of Being; biblical texts have to have the validity of sacred writings before there can be a hermeneutics of God's word.

This thesis runs a similar risk of assumptive association. “Kenosis”, as a word of biblical origin and a term of theological disputation, too readily allows
itself to be taken over: it is a term begging to be both used and abused.\(^2\) But, as Northrop Frye says in “Yeats and the Language of Symbol”, “The axioms and postulates of criticism cannot be taken over ready-made from theology, philosophy, or science”.\(^3\) Before “kenosis” can become of value to criticism it must be made over. In this “making-over” many of the aspects of “kenosis” as employed in other fields of study will be reclaimed and preserved; some will be discarded; none will be entirely lost. The connotations will remain in spite of attempts at redefinition; associations will not dissociate. By exposing these associations and by outlining the various territories that “kenosis” has claimed for itself, this chapter will establish the existing operative parameters of “kenosis” as a theological, philosophical and literary term.\(^4\)

Within the political struggles of recent literary theory, “kenosis” has found its way into the argument, not as a buzz word, but as a term of derision. Terry Eagleton charges parts of what he sees as the new orthodoxy with converting literary criticism into a religious game:

Such deconstruction is a power-game, a mirror-image of orthodox academic competition. It is just that now, in a religious twist to the old ideology, victory is achieved by kenosis or self-emptying:

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\(^2\) "Kairosis" is equally a term of theological debate. Its background will be looked at in Chapter Three, “Kenosis and the Lyric”.


\(^4\) Harold Bloom's employment of kenosis will be dealt with in Chapter Six. Stanley Fish's treatments of the "self-consuming artifact" and the kenotic poetry of George Herbert are dealt with in Chapters Five and Eight.
the winner is the one who has managed to get rid of all his cards and sit with hands empty.⁵

In dealing with the complex shifts of emphasis that have gone on between New Criticism's view of reality and the views espoused by critics of the various Post-Structuralist schools, Eagleton here resorts to what appears a flippant usage of "kenosis" in order to taint the "new" with the sins of the "old". Coloured though his usage is, his arguments deserve close attention. The kenotic practice he is describing reveals the importance of the intentionality of the critic in all criticism. It also discloses the ironies that may lie at the heart of any conscious activity that assumes it has countered all possible counter-claims: to practise self-reflexivity is not to avoid the reflexive, just as to empty texts is not to avoid the surrounding ironies of self-emptying: the emptied text has a habit of returning.

This shift from an old power-game to the game of emptying is typified, at the level of theory, by the shift from treating literature as "content" to treating literature as "undecidable 'text' ". This shift is equated by Eagleton with the shift from treating experience as "elusive, evanescent, richly ambiguous" to treating language as having these qualities. These qualities, once disclosed in language, are then further extended into the area of the undecidable by the Post-Structuralists because, for them, language is to be viewed "contemplatively, as a chain of signifiers on a page" (Eagleton, pp. 146-47)

Eagleton suggests that this situation could be reversed if we consider language as “something we do, as indissociably interwoven with our practical forms of life”. Eagleton, far from seeing such a treatment as a fixing of language, sees it as extending the fraught and conflictive domains of language study. Because “Anglo-American deconstruction largely ignores this real sphere of struggle, and continues to churn out its closed critical texts”, it too, like New Criticism, fails to do justice to language as part of the socio-economic world (Eagleton, p. 147).

A more substantial criticism is offered by Julia Kristeva in her essay “The Speaking Subject”. Kristeva attacks philosophy in France for “abandoning, in large part, any metalanguage [a metalanguage being one that `preserves the coherence of both sign and the syntax’] and replacing it with a discourse which calls itself fictional, and which is considered to be the only possible way to witness, if not to render, an accounting of the trial of sense and significance”. She also attacks idealist philosophy “with its neglect of the historical socializing role of the symbolic”, and “the various sociological dogmatisms, which suppress the specificity of the symbolic and its logic in their anxiety to reduce them to an `external' determinant”.6 Eagleton's views appear to be susceptible to this last charge unless, in his determination of language as “something we do”, he takes account of Kristeva's critique.7

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7 Kristeva's views are treated in greater detail in Chapters Six and Seven.
Closed criticism, a feature of New Criticism, has gone perhaps one stage further in the case of some of the Post-Structuralists in that they engage in a more pernicious form of enclosing. Eagleton writes: “Such texts are closed precisely because they are empty: there is little to be done with them beyond admiring the relentlessness with which all positive particles of textual meaning have been dissolved away.” It is this closing that aligns the new orthodoxy with the old; the new method has the further advantage (beyond re-securing the closure) of exposing to ridicule those who practise this kind of kenotic deconstruction. The victor has secured his criticism; he “has managed to get rid of all his cards and sit with empty hands” (Eagleton, p. 147).

The critic with the empty hands is presumably also the one with the smug face. Having failed to deal with the text as the result of something we do, the critic achieves dominance through no great personal achievement (i.e. the emptying is not a moral or psychological or social exercise) but through the structured evacuation of the work of literature. Here kenosis has reached its secular, and materialist pinnacle: the products of the self are to be emptied in place of the self-emptying required by religion.8

The products of the self, the works of literature, acquire a special status in the ludic kenosis practised in this form of criticism. Irrespective of the

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8 Kenosis as self-deception or other-deception is not all that different in that it evacuates fabrications, i.e. the self covers itself with spurious attributes (sins) in order to remove these attributes (sins) and thus maintain, through a gesture of taking off, the self as it was before the taking on.
outcome, this method can be seen as an example of Schiller's view that “man only plays when he is in the fullest sense of the word a human being, and he is only fully a human being when he plays”. 9 Faced with a dissolving reality, the reality of experience that is “elusive, evanescent, richly ambiguous”, the critic can dissolve the self-produced evidence of dissolution, in this case, works of literature. In his dissolving, the critic is playing; through playing, a freedom is won. However, this freedom is momentary. Secure in his method, the Post-Structuralist is as distant from the “content” or the “text” as any of the previous orthodox New Critics. The seat is the same; the face has changed.

Eagleton marks the birth of Post-Structuralism with the failure of the student movements in France in 1968: “Unable to break the structures of state power, post-structuralism found it possible instead to subvert the structures of language” (p. 142). To continue the analogy to a card game, this shift in kenotic criticism is from the desire to hold the maximum possible winning hand to the desire to destroy the deck. As opposed to the decadence of “art for art's sake”, what this implies is “cognition for cognition's sake”. The fact that cognition “builds” is its own undoing: emptied, it all looks the same.

And yet, emptied, the text opens up new possibilities. Such an opening amounts to a shift away from systematic thought towards the “libidinal gesture”. As Eagleton points out, “Reading for the later Barthes is not cognition but

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erotic play” (Eagleton, p. 142). When the text is emptied, in Plato's terms, the irrational dimension invades the rational: the affect supplants the rational. When cognition is denied its value within a system of thought it takes itself as its own value; here “erotic” should also be read as “aesthetic”. What rightly concerns Eagleton, in this increase in the available aesthetic experience, is the surrounding reality of the experience. Such concerns are also obvious to Barthes, who writes:

Denouncing manipulation itself becomes part of a manipulation system: recuperated, such would be the definition of the contemporary subject. The only thing left to do would be to make heard a voice to one side, an oblique voice: a voice unrelated.10

The difficulty of such a project was acutely apparent to Herbert Marcuse following the failure of the student movement of 1968. In his essay the “Affirmative Character of Culture”, Marcuse argues: “In affirmative culture, renunciation is linked to the external vitiation of the individual, to his compliance with a bad order.”11

Within the cruel ironies of history (the dimension that Eagleton is seeking to represent) Barthes' text, the “uninhibited person who shows his behind to the Political Father”, becomes the corpse that reveals nothing and

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everything (Eagleton, p. 141). The “Political Father” cares for his inhibitions as well as maintaining the riot police. The writing/reading subject has been overwritten by a history that not only stacks its deck, but also keeps cards in reserve. There is to be no kenotic anticipation of closure; the telos remains provisional and dialectic; the riot police discuss Sartre in every café. The absence of any “liberating” epistemology in this political situation deprives both sides of ethical value. The discourse is not overthrown through emptying.

In psychological terms this kenosis that denies the social structures which surround the production and reception of texts amounts to a refusal to acknowledge the independent status of the other; all products are to be treated as products and evidence of the self. The fact that such a view requires others to maintain the world that continues is not implied in the method. This failure to take account of the world around the text is a reflection of the critical enclosure of the string of signifiers.

One is reminded here, in the midst of discussing the social consequences of a practice of kenotic deconstruction, of the views expressed by Hegel on

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12 In talking of Socratic logic Marcuse notes: “If man has learned to see and know what reality is, he will act in accordance with truth. Epistemology is in itself ethics, and ethics is epistemology”, One Dimensional Man (London: Abacus, 1972) p. 105. This supports Plato's views quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

13 It should be said, in this context, that Eagleton acknowledges the political awareness of some Post-Structuralist criticism. In particular, he singles out Derrida's work and defends Derrida's methods from those followers who perpetrate what Derrida calls "institutional closure". Eagleton writes: "the widespread opinion that deconstruction denies the existence of anything but discourse, or affirms a realm of pure difference in which all meaning and identity dissolves, is a travesty of Derrida's own work . . ." (Eagleton, p. 148).
the artist as ironic genius. Hegel, in the Introduction to his *Aesthetics*,\textsuperscript{14} points out the way in which the freedoms of the ironic genius are negated by his surrounding everyday life:

he who has reached this standpoint of divine genius looks down from his high rank on all other men, for they are pronounced dull and limited, inasmuch as law, morals, etc., still count for them as fixed, essential, and obligatory. So then the individual, who lives in this way as an artist, does give himself relations to others: he lives with friends, mistresses, etc.; but, by his being a genius, this relation to his own specific reality, his particular actions, as well as to what is absolute and universal, is at the same time null; his attitude to it all is ironical. (Hegel, I. 66)

The critic with no cards in his hands, no less than the divine genius spoken of by Hegel, is the fool of the game he plays. The fact that others are willing to perform and compete for even emptier hands is not surprising. The “self-enjoyment” that Hegel talks about is common to both cases. Kenotic deconstruction, like the self-irony of the genius, is an attempt to preserve from deconstruction (and thus irony) the very aspects of reality that require deconstruction.

For Hegel the Comic is to be contrasted with the Ironic:

the comic must be essentially distinguished from the ironic. For the comic must be restricted to showing that what destroys itself is something inherently null, a false and contradictory

phenomenon, a whim, e.g., an oddity, a particular caprice in comparison with a mighty passion . . . . (Hegel, I. 67)

Through the ludic kenosis of deconstruction the emptied “text” neither fills the self, nor does it empty it; the self is preserved from any kind of action because the “text” is radically undecidable. Generalising from the basis of a radically undecidable text, we might protest our inability to ascertain the referential validity of any text offered to us, including formal documents that might require our reacting to referential instructions. Presented with a demand for outstanding taxes, how are we to decide what to do if we cannot decide the status of the text? While we may not be able to determine finally or decide whether the text is a joke, what we can know is our response to the text. As Eagleton points out, we can know language as “something we do, as indissociably interwoven with our practical forms of life”. And, as an extension of this, and following Eagleton's views on Derrida, what we can understand from our response to the undecidable text is the “logic by which a particular system of thought, and behind that a whole system of political structures and social institutions, maintains its force” (Eagleton, p. 148).

There is, then, another more positive side to deconstruction and thus there is a positive version of kenotic deconstruction: when the emptying of the text is performed as part of “something we do”, as part of an intentional appropriation, then it becomes a superior game in every respect to the game
of dominance criticised by Eagleton. Wine can be decanted; wine can be poured on the floor. The kenotic critic is himself subject to kenosis.¹

Peter Fuller is another Marxist critic who has, in recent times, employed the term “kenosis”. Since Fuller's usages occur before Eagleton's, it is possible that Fuller's views have informed Eagleton's passing reference. Eagleton, though he does not expand on the quotations given above, nonetheless extends Fuller's theoretical applications from the realm of the artist and his art, into the realm of the critic. In doing so Eagleton points out the purely negative applications, and by implication, the positive alternative uses for a kenotic criticism.

Faced with what he sees as a crisis in the fine arts, Fuller utilises the concept of self-emptying to both describe and account for the “drained out [and] vacuous character” of much modern art:

In the late nineteenth century in Britain theologians developed a concept which can usefully be adapted to the Fine Art situation. They found themselves pondering a persistent problem in Christian dogma: Jesus was manifestly often wrong in his judgements and limited in his knowledge yet how could this be if he was really very god of very god, who was, of course, supposed to be omnipotent and omniscient. Charles Gore, a theologian of the Lux Mundi school, attempted to resolve this tricky problem

¹ While this thesis follows the history of ideas that leads from Kant through Hegel, on to existentialist and phenomenological views, it would be possible, going other ways, to arrive at similar results. The Post-Structuralist connections become more apparent in the final chapters where the theories of Kristeva and Lacan are treated.
by reviving the idea of kenosis, or divine self-emptying. He held that the knowledge possessed by “The Christ” during his incarnate life was limited because in taking to himself human nature god had actually emptied himself of omniscience and omnipotence. Now it is just such a process of kenosis or self-emptying that characterizes the Fine Art tradition from the late 1880s onwards. Paintings and sculptures acquire an ever more drained out, vacuous character, as if artists were voluntarily relinquishing the skills and techniques which they had previously possessed. They have been picked up by advertising artists.¹

The response to this situation by the intellectuals was, says Fuller, to demand that Fine Artists “continue to be ‘real’ artists who took as their content and subject matter not soap-suds but all that was left after the kenosis, i.e., art itself” (Fuller, Crisis, p. 58). This sounds very much like Hegel’s demand on artists in a time when the prevailing sentiments required openly ironic treatments of all subjects no matter how serious. Though Hegel was seeking a return to a non-ironic art rather than resting happy with the structural dregs, his complaint was against a similar enemy. Hegel writes:

But the ironical, as the individuality of genius, lies in the self-destruction of the noble, great, and excellent; and so the objective art-formations too will have to display only the principle of absolute subjectivity, by showing forth what has worth and dignity for mankind as null in its self-destruction. (Hegel, I. 67)

¹ Beyond the Crisis in Art (London: Writers & Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1980) p. 56.
Fuller goes on to point out the consequences for both artist and emptied art: "Very soon, of course, even the intellectuals preferred the texture of soap-suds, or whatever, and so there were very few viewers" (Crisis, p. 59). Dare one suspect that the deconstructionist goes home to vegetate in front of the openly referential television screen; or, in earlier terms, that Hume rests secure in the knowledge that the horse is in the stable? What Fuller makes obvious is the continuation of the desire to experience the content of art long after the content has been alienated by the ideology that prevails; the emptying produces an absence that does not answer the desire. In this sense the emptying reveals the structural relationship between the desire and the content and evidences the failure of the displacement to take over what it has taken.

Dealing with “American Painting since the Last War”, Fuller reviews “the Whitney's 1979 Biennial on Valentine's Day” and writes of the works shown: “Such work lacks even significant development of stylistic features. It signifies nothing but its own expansive vacuity. It is the product of professional artists who have nothing to say and no way of saying it” (Crisis, p. 70). He traces the history behind this emptiness back to the beginnings of the twentieth century. Cubism “offered a half-promise of an entirely new set of representational conventions distinct from the visual ideology of the old bourgeois academies and salons”, but it failed to realize its “half-promise” (Crisis, p. 71). Instead the tragedy of modern history was unfurled leaving artists
unable to respond and unable to withdraw to old visual conventions. The Fine Arts were

marginalized and rendered impotent: they seemed to have been stripped of an area of experience appropriate to their practice . . . The imagery of the unconscious, dreams, and fantasy seemed the last territory . . . hence the Surrealist episode. After that, they were bereft of both subject and content for their work, and the tradition became progressively more kenotic, or self-emptying. (*Crisis*, p. 72)

Here Fuller turns the reverses of history into the new order, the new tradition. In the same year, in “The Rise of Modernism”, Fuller deals with the issues of kenosis as they affect the role of artist:

I have elaborated the notion of the kenosis or self-emptying of the Fine Art tradition: kenosis is a term I borrowed from theology. I am using it to refer to the apparent relinquishment of the professional and conventional skills by the Fine Artists and to the abandonment of the omnipotent power the painter once seemed to possess to create, like God, a whole world of objects in space through illusions on a canvas. I see this general kenosis as having been ruptured at various points — most notably after the Second World War in Europe, New York, London, Chicago and elsewhere — by tremendous outbursts of expressionism in which artists attempted to find ways of speaking meaningfully of their experience, including historical experience, once more.
Nonetheless, the process of kenosis, with these occasional regenerative hiccups, proceeds.¹

The crisis in the Fine Arts that Fuller speaks about seems to be the consequence of a failure of nerve on the part of the artists as much as it is the consequence of the historical re-appearance of a tradition of kenosis. The loss of the role of a god-like creator would appear, on the surface, to offer a multitude of alternative and new ways of viewing the world. This of course is the case, as Fuller's qualifications outline. The fact that these alternatives have not resulted in a return to the values of the past, nor in an advance to a new tradition based on filling and fulfilling, causes Fuller to maintain his complaints.

While Fuller has no fully worked out critical use for kenosis it is obvious how powerful the term becomes when appropriate parallels are draw. Charles Pickstone in an article titled "Mystical Dangers: A Note on One Tendency in Contemporary Art Criticism and its Theological Implications" offers an assessment of the theological implications of Fuller's secular kenosis. In doing so he overlooks the historical aspect of Fuller's kenosis. Pickstone, after quoting from the Fuller excerpts offered here, goes on to say:

it is not immediately clear why the Christian concept of kenosis should be a helpful analogy [for Fuller's treatment of the crisis in the Fine Arts]. Kenosis, christologically speaking, was an attempt (which failed) to overcome a major problem in explaining how

Christ could be God and man at the same time . . . One cannot say that Christ, in the fullness of his humanity, was a drained-out version of God . . . On this level it is difficult to understand Fuller's comparison. To say that artists are godlike beings forced to empty themselves to paint modern art is surely a neo-Platonism Fuller would not accept. Likewise to compare Christ's relinquishing his equality with God with an artist's relinquishing the skills and techniques of the classical fine art tradition sounds rather extraordinary.1

Pickstone is quick to isolate Fuller's often extravagantly negative comparisons. However, the shift in consciousness that Fuller alludes to in his extravagance is nonetheless a real component of his argument and a vital part of his kenotic views of modern art. Taking his example from the work of the late nineteenth century British theologian, Charles Gore of the Lux Mundi school, Fuller is drawing an historical parallel between the shift in the views of Christ in nineteenth century England and the shift in the role of the artist in subsequent years. As religion has lost its central image of the God/man, so the arts have lost their central image of the artist/god. Both religion and art have seen their exclusive techniques taken; both “guilds” have been reduced from major social institutions to minor; both have suffered the loss “of a shared symbolic order”.2

1 Theology, Vol. 88 (March, 1985) p. 126.
Fuller's ideas on Gore's kenosis are in sympathy with Don Cupitt's:

Gore's kenotic theory is of merely historical interest now. He must
describe an ethical, not a metaphysical, kenosis for the excellent
reason that a metaphysical kenosis is incompatible with theism. . . .
the idea of kenosis in bourgeois Christian thought is clearly socially-
conditioned. In a class society, where the Christian tradition was
carried by people of very high status and privilege, there was a need
for christological validation of the duty to “condescend to men of low
estate”.3

While the historical aspect of Fuller's argument is lost on Pickstone (primarily, one
suspects, because Fuller is an atheist and Pickstone is not) he readily appropriates
Fuller's kenotic critique:

Theology and liturgy . . . are both . . . cultural artifacts. Their roots are
in the same expressive, symbolic language . . . as art. They too have
been “drained out”. In the realm of the Church for example, a
triumphant Victorian church has succumbed to generations of self-
doubt and soul-searching, and still no end is in sight. Likewise, a
robust theology which could be preached to an entire empire is now
unsure of itself, its authority sapped by biblical criticism, sociology
and church history studies. Also, a liturgy once dignified and bold has
been replaced by one which many find shallow, and which even its
adherents find somewhat prosaic. Is not this, too, kenosis of a sort?
(Pickstone, p. 127)

account of Gore's theology can be found in Bernard Reardon's From Coleridge to Gore (Longman, 1971).
Pickstone, in using Fuller's “blunt critical instrument”, illustrates the ease with which kenosis can be employed to mediate in a crisis and maintain something that is to be privileged. For Pickstone there is no problem with the tenets of belief; all the problems are with the daily uses of the church. If a lot of emptying can restore the tone of things, then kenosis is good. Pickstone goes on to quote Anthony Bloom's idea that “the absence of God is as significant as his presence, to the Christian” (Pickstone, p. 127). While there is a vital negativity in this view, in day-to-day terms it amounts to a claim that because the service was boring it must have been inspired.¹

But Pickstone sees clearly the moral burden of Fuller's kenosis. Behind Fuller's Marxist approach lies a secular version of “the whole pattern of redemption, the spirituality suggested by the famous passage in Philippians”. Pickstone continues:

The Philippians are to be obedient, just as Christ was, since just as his voluntary obedience and kenosis led to exaltation, so (the implication is) will theirs. In other words, artists in obedience to the truth (this being one of the main criteria of great art) have had to renounce the traditions of fine art for various reasons not at the moment clearly understood. After all, not knowing why is part of kenosis. “Never had the old visual conventions seemed more irrelevant”. But, the implication is, this is not a process totally without hope for the future. (Pickstone, p. 126)

¹ This vital negativity is essential to the personal religious aspects and to literary aspects of kenosis.
The version of kenosis put forward by Pickstone can best be described as Cultural Kenosis. Fuller and Pickstone are both deeply concerned with the maintenance of cultural structures, though in an inverse way. If culture is the evidence of man's humanity, then this version of kenosis is suggesting that in the evidence can be found the origins of man's humanity: from the products we can determine the producers and from the producers we know the products.

Not unlike the negative kenotic-deconstructionist described by Eagleton, Fuller and Pickstone appropriate the ethical gesture of emptying in order to preserve or revive a status quo. Whereas Eagleton was approaching the psychology of those who perform in this way, both Fuller and Pickstone concentrate on the results of cultural emptying. This in no way denies the overall moral thrust of the Jeremiads both men preach. As with deconstruction and kenosis, there are positive and negative versions of Fuller's and Pickstone's kenosis. Even the ludic kenosis pejoratively described by Eagleton, while it lacks any specific reference to moral matters, nonetheless can be seen to be implicated in the redemptive and preservative aspects of kenosis. It is perhaps unavoidable: when kenosis is mentioned, redemption is invoked.

Following Cupitt's assessment of Gore's kenosis makes it obvious that there is no metaphysical component in Fuller or Pickstone. What ethical concerns do remain are as suspect as were Gore's. Pickstone concludes his article in this way:
Surely as Christians it is better that we have the courage to face up to the impoverishment, the kenosis, of our culture — our liturgy and theology included. According to our pattern of redemption, through impoverishment we become rich; after kenosis obediently accepted, maybe our culture will aspire to new glories. (Pickstone, p. 128)

Kenosis, on this view, offers no promise of immediate personal gain. The emptying is a form of sublimated desire: it pushes the promise into the future. When the personal gesture offered by Christ is offered as a cultural gesture rather than a psychological one, the political overtones are generally repressive. Similar things could be said of Fuller's views, except that Fuller does not prescribe the cultural redemptive pattern; he describes a process that is already operating. When the emptied object is offered in place of the symbol, desire has been displaced.

We have seen, in the case of Fuller's kenosis, that the concept carries its history in very obvious ways. The redemptive pattern appears to be firmly affixed; the potential for ideological appropriation remains. In addition to this theoretical baggage, kenosis also carries, perhaps because of its metaphysical imprecision, the aura of poetry. Biblical scholars suggest the kenosis passage was taken by Paul from an early Christian hymn.¹ This view offers very genuine attractions, not the least being the attention it brings to the original passage as

a work of literature. Treated as a poem or hymn, quoted in a context, the passage reveals both its poetic qualities and its polemical scope. It is these “additional” values that we need to attend to if we are to establish an “overview” of the biblical source of kenosis.

Ernest F. Scott, in his exegesis of the kenosis passage from Philippians, writes:

When he tries to describe this disposition, Paul's language turns from prose to poetry as he pictures the revelation of it in one “who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men . . . He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.”

What a picture! After all that scholars have done to explain the meaning of this language, it is certainly best understood as an Oriental picture of eternal reality. There are elements in it that seem like echoes from the ancient myth, which Milton revived in “Paradise Lost”, that some highly placed being in the heavenly host had aspired to be equal with God and was cast out because of that pride which is the chief sin against God and the source of “all our woe”. Here Paul holds up a contrasted figure who, with the nature of God, became a servant to the lowliest on earth, whom we would consider beneath us; and who, by enduring all that the typical sins of men can do, revealed how respectable people (with whom we would feel quite at home) may be the chief enemies of the living God who seeks their liberation.
The thing to do with a picture is not to analyze it, but to let it talk, as Paul wanted it to talk to those in Philippi who were exalting themselves. It suggests that God the creator, who “eternally gives himself that we might exist”, has had in his nature from all eternity this outgoing, self-giving disposition of mind; which became visible by one supreme revelation in Christ, reaching down to individuals in order to lift each one out of self into a new union with the selfless life of God, for which our spirit was created. Once this revelation was made in a deed, there was nothing that could be added to it.

There is dynamite in this picture of the Creator's eternal interest in each human personality. It blasted the social climbing which had showed its ugly head in Philippi. And down through the ages it has been the heart of a continuous revolution; for the forces of change always start, like the “vengeance of God”, from just those distressed areas where human personality is being exploited and suppressed.2

In this reading Pickstone is turned on his head. Scott, albeit in exuberant and populist mode, puts forward what must be called a liberation kenosis. Scott reads Christ's original act of emptying as a psycho-social drama, an action that reveals the fundamental ability of the self to be transformed. Here the forces of the socio-economic world produce changes in personal attitude that then produce changes in the self. There is no desire to preserve or maintain; there is no desire to mediate; all is lost and all is gained. The redemption is achieved, not through a silent wait for the return of a significant liturgy, but through the

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active throwing off of expectation and then the taking on of a new view of reality.

Going from God to servant is not simply being emptied of the qualities of the lost state. It is also being filled with the qualities of the state assumed. In highlighting this aspect of kenosis, Scott provides a more nearly adequate historical and formal account of the biblical passage. He also produces an account that shows how kenosis can combine the ethical qualities of Gore's interpretation and the psychological associations of Eagleton's.

The cultural views of Pickstone and Fuller do not really fall within the ambit of Scott's kenosis, since liberation kenosis has at its heart the relationship of the individual to God, to him/herself and to the social world at large. Without this trinity of relationships being in order, there is no culture for the individual; it does not matter what state the liturgy is in, or what state the fine arts are in. Eagleton's views on language again need to be stressed, to ensure that the cultural view of kenosis is not assimilated with the liberation view. Language, as something we do, is something we do with and to each other; “human personality . . . is exploited and suppressed” by words as deeds in ways that require positive deconstructions if the social reality of exploitation and suppression is to be exposed and overthrown. Liberation kenosis can then be seen to operate in a redemptive pattern both within the individual consciousness and within a body of criticism. The emptying of the self, as well
as the emptying of the products of the self, must be performed as contiguous and continuous activities for this liberation to be achieved.3

If and when sung as a hymn, the biblical kenosis passage would no doubt be moving (and thus answer Pickstone's cultural crisis). This liturgical and poetic aspect of the passage survives into the present. Graham James, writing of the Alternative Service Book in 1983, expresses pleasure to find the kenosis passage given as a canticle under the title “The Song of Christ's Glory”. James points out that there is something peculiarly English about this inclusion (the mediation aspect) and then goes on to recount the history of the term as used in christological debates of the last hundred years. What is of direct interest in the history provided by James, is the attempt to use kenoticism as “a Christology of the middle way”.4 As Christ was progressively humanized so christology has had to turn from seeing the “incarnation as the pre-supposition” to seeing that “Christ's divinity could only emerge as the end of Christology, not its starting-point, otherwise the whole christological framework would be rendered mythological” (James, p. 9). It is from this point in the historical debate that Fuller takes his cultural kenosis.

John Macquarrie, in his “Charles Gore Memorial Lecture” given in 1973, provides the following exposition:

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3 As given here, Scott's description of kenosis appears to have no metaphysical significance: the aim of liberation kenosis is simply personal, social and ethical. What makes Scott's views convincing is the dialectical pairing of fullness/emptiness and master/servant.

Kenosis is not the dimming down, as it were, of the divine nature in an atypical act of condescension but is the very expression of that nature at its deepest and most significant level. . . . it is this utter self-outpouring that constitutes his glory and that transfigures him so that God-language becomes a necessity if we are to speak of him with any adequacy. The paradox is that his abasement is also his exaltation. On the cross he is “lifted up”, as John's Gospel asserts in that same passage . . . [3:13] in which is asserted the identity of him who ascended with him who descended. This is the paradox of personal existence, that emptying and fulfilling, kenosis and plerosis are the same; and he who utterly emptied himself, Jesus Christ, is precisely the one who permits us to glimpse that utter fullness that we call divine.¹

Through an understanding of the “human self-emptying of Jesus Christ”, Macquarrie asserts we can approach the problems of a self-emptying incarnation. Put prosaically: Christ’s leaving will assist us to understand his coming. Macquarrie distinguishes his views from what he describes as “`a new style kenoticism', that is to say, a type of christology which sees the ultimate significance of Jesus in his human self-emptying” (p. 123). Macquarrie also stresses the human self-emptying of Christ, but he wishes to move from the premise and evidence of Christ’s human self-emptying to make claims about the nature of the Logos. In doing so he propounds a type of creation kenosis:

When we use God-language about him, we mean that the self-emptying of Jesus Christ has not only opened up the depth of a true humanity but has made known to us the final reality as likewise self-emptying, self-giving, self-limiting. The kenosis which was of such interest to the traditional kenoticists, the kenosis implied in incarnation, is seen to be only one moment, though indeed the climactic one, in a whole history of kenosis. For instance, creation too is kenosis. God limits himself by sharing the gift of existence with his creatures. Yet it is only so that he can be God, and this enables us to see more clearly the mysterious link between kenosis and plerosis. For an Absolute who retained the fullness of being within himself might be metaphysically ultimate but could hardly be God in any religious sense. He is God and evokes worship because he comes out from himself and submits himself to the self-limitation that goes along with creative and redemptive love. (p. 123)

Macquarrie would appear to have staked out a claim for the absolute view of kenosis. From the elementary pair of “fullness/emptiness” he establishes a kenotic cosmology. In a way this is a totally reductionist view in that it structurally implicates all history in the process of kenosis: history as the elaboration of an initial act of emptying then becomes redemptive because the action of emptying implies its common opposite, filling. Macquarrie, true to the teleology hidden in this metaphysic, shifts the weight of “filling” to its consequence in “fulfilled".
Similar views are expressed by Hegel in his *Phenomenology of Mind*. In the chapter “Revealed Religion”, Hegel establishes the dialectic in kenotic terms. Before proceeding with Hegel's views it is necessary to provide a brief account of Hegel's usage or rather non-usage of the term “kenosis”. In the passage about to be quoted, the translator, J.B. Baillie provides the word “kenosis”. A.V. Miller, in his more recent translation, uses the word “externalization” (p. 465), though elsewhere he falls back on “kenosis” (see for example p. 492 “... but this externalization, this kenosis...”). The original word provided by Hegel is *Entausserung* which is often translated as “alienation”. *Entausserung*, in German, has legal associations that fit in with the legal associations of the English word “alien” meaning to “transfer the property or ownership of anything; to make over to another owner” (*OED*). A father could, for example, make over the family property to his son and thus not exclude himself from what was given up. *Entausserung* has a range of meanings that go well beyond the current common associations of “alienation” in English. The concepts of “externalizing” and that of “emptying” are part of this range of positive connotations.  

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1 The standard English text *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977) is usually preferred to the earlier *Phenomenology of Mind*, 2nd. ed., trans. J.B. Baillie (London: Allen & Unwin, 1931). Both texts will be used. In this chapter, the Baillie translation has been preferred because of the more overt theological language employed by Baillie. Miller's translation stresses the secular and philosophic aspects of Hegel's thought; Baillie's translation brings out the general theological environment in which Hegel was writing.

2 There is no evidence of Hegel ever using the word “kenosis” in any of his known writings. This in itself is strange enough to deserve comment. It would appear that Hegel deliberately refrained from using the theological word even when writing about incarnation.
Hegel, translated by Baillie, writes:

The essential Being beholds only itself in its Self-existence, in its objective otherness. In thus emptying itself, in this kenosis, it is merely within itself: the independent Self-existence which excludes itself from essential Being is the knowledge of itself on the part of essential Being. It is the “Word”, the Logos, which when spoken empties the speaker of himself, outwardizes him, and leaves him behind emptied, but it is immediately perceived, and only this act of self-perceiving himself is the actual existence of the “Word”. Hence, then, the distinctions which are set up are just as immediately resolved as they are made, and are just as directly made as they are resolved, and the truth and the reality consist precisely in this self-closed circular process. (p. 767)

Here Hegel outlines the phenomenology of kenosis. The evidence of self, which Hegel calls “independent Self-existence", is only comprehended by the “essential Being" in the form of an outwardizing or spoken word (the Logos). Self-knowledge is then to be found only within this kenotic process. This process, in its logical extension, becomes a model for truth and reality to the self perceiving itself within the “circular process”. Kenosis then, as described by Hegel, amounts to a dialectical relationship between an externalizing and internalizing consciousness, a dialectical relationship between an act of self-emptying and self-filling.
The significance for kenosis of Hegel's re-description cannot be overestimated. In bringing the methods of a “process” philosophy to the kenosis argument, Hegel frees the term from what D.G. Dawe describes as “the stone of stumbling”:

If the Logos limits itself either by dropping certain attributes, or by modifying them, then the share of the Logos in the life of the Trinity and its world-ruling functions ceases while the Logos is Incarnate. As long as the absoluteness of the Godhead is defined in terms of its co-inherence, the lessening of one Person of the Trinity destroys the unity and absoluteness of the divine. Every critic of kenotic Christology from J.A. Dorner to Donald Baillie has seen this as the stone of stumbling. The only writers that had a way around this difficulty were those of the Hegelian speculative tradition, like Liebner, who espoused a radical doctrine of God which was unacceptable to the kenotic writers. The Hegelian doctrine of God encompassed the changes and limitations envisaged in kenosis as a necessary stage in the development of the Absolute.3

Dawe offers an historical account of how these new nineteenth century views of kenosis grew out of new views of human psychology. With the shift from seeing the individual as a simple and fixed thing to seeing individuation as an ongoing process, a process that requires defining “the person in terms of

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3 "A fresh Look at the Kenotic Tradition", Scottish Journal of Theology, 15 (1962) pp. 345-46. Dawe puts forward what might be described as the “paradoxical” view of kenosis. Dawe proposes a descriptive account of kenosis: "God is mutable in the forms and modes of self-revelation. Thus a kenosis is possible that does not vitiate the reality of God precisely because the kenosis serves the redemptive purpose of God. Kenosis is not an explanation of this freedom [the freedom to take on human limitations] but a description of it within which doctrine must be reshaped" p. 349.
various forms of consciousness, specifically the consciousness of the self”, went the
view that “human self-consciousness was not something set or given once and for all
by an antecedent human nature . . . human consciousness was developing or growing
yet never attaining to full actuality” (Dawe, p. 342). Hegel, in granting to the
Absolute the qualities of human consciousness, grants qualities of the Absolute to
human consciousness. Kenosis, as a description of consciousness, becomes a
description of reality.

In an earlier section of his chapter on “Revealed Religion”, Hegel deals with
“the unhappy consciousness” of the sceptic and the stoic. Treating the
phenomenology of the “cycle of the creations of art”, he raises matters that throw
further light onto the issues raised by Eagleton's treatment of deconstructionist
tenosis. Hegel writes:

The cycle of the creations of art embraces in its scope all forms in
which the absolute substance relinquishes itself. The absolute
substance is in the form of individuality as a thing; as an object
existing for sense experience; as pure language, or the process of that
form whose existence does not get away from the self, and is a purely
evanescent object . . . .4

Hegel's “purely evanescent object” is not unlike the post-structuralist undecidable
text, but Hegel would be willing to accord this object, “whose

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4 Baillie, p. 754. The translation by Miller gives the "evanescent object" as "a vanishing object" (italics in original) (Miller, p. 456).
existence does not get away from the self'', a place among the more traditional versions of art as construct and object of human consciousness.

Hegel envisages the stoic and the sceptic as attending “round the birthplace of spirit as it becomes self-consciousness” in art. At the centre of this circle is “the yearning agony of the unhappy despairing self-consciousness”, the same consciousness that inhabits the artist as “ironic genius”. The spirit that is to be revealed in this birth-place is again a version of the kenotic dialectic:

Spirit, here, has in it two sides, which are above represented as the two converse propositions: one is this, that substance empties itself of itself, and becomes self-consciousness; the other is the converse, that self-consciousness empties itself of itself and makes itself into the form of “thing”, or makes itself universal self. Both sides have in this way met each other, and, in consequence, their true union has arisen.¹

Hegel goes on to talk of the kenosis of substance as the expression of its implicitly being self-consciousness, and of the kenosis of self-consciousness as the expression of its implicitly being “Universal Being”. In this way Hegel, through his phenomenology, avoids the questions of indeterminacy that haunt Post-Structuralist criticism. Hegel grants the features he finds in consciousness to the objects of consciousness: kenosis applies to both; it is a fundamental aspect of the dialectical process.

¹ Baillie, p. 755. Miller offers “kenosis” in this passage, within square brackets. For “relinquishment” he offers “externalization”; for “empties itself” he offers “alienates itself” (Miller, p. 457).
The significance of kenosis to the dialectic is underlined by Hegel when he
deals with the more explicitly religious usage, specifically in his treatment of the
incarnation of Christ. W.T. Stace summarises:

The world is the other of God. Or, to express it otherwise, the
universal allows the particular to go forth from it in free
independence. Thus there arises that division and separation between
the universal and the particular, which appears as the estrangement
between God and the world. This estrangement, in its special
reference to man as a part of nature, is presented in the doctrine of the
Fall. Man, as particular spirit, is in his essential nature distinguished
from, estranged from, the universal spirit, which is God. My
particularity and finitude are precisely the factors which constitute
my lack of identity with God.²

Because Hegel saw this estrangement as inherent in the very notion of man, he saw
the reconciliation as equally inherent. These aspects Hegel treats as being eternal
truths; the fact that man represents them, in picture language through art, and gives
them history through religion, is an expression of man's historical journey towards
reconciliation. Man, for Hegel, yearns for this event. His way is presented through
the movement of “the return of the particular into the universal in the moment of
individuality” (Stace, p. 513). While this reconciliation is an eternal truth, it also
appears in history in the incarnation and the death of Christ.

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Hegel, in his treatment of Christ, is careful to separate the historical events of Christ's life from the concept of Christ:

the Divine Being is reconciled with its existence through an event, —
the event of God's emptying Himself of His Divine Being through His factual Incarnation and His Death. The grasping of this idea now expresses more specifically what was formerly called in figurative thinking spiritual resurrection, or the process by which God's individual self-consciousness [the Christ] becomes the universal, becomes the religious communion. (Baillie, p. 780)

The particular and the universal are reconciled through the individual. Kenosis then for Hegel, as for Macquarrie, has this absolute aspect: it is the process by which is effected the incarnation and the salvation of the individual. Hegel's views stress the phenomenological aspects that account for the fundamental value of kenosis as a feature of consciousness. In ways similar to Heidegger's poet, the human consciousness, for Hegel, evidences itself in the disclosing, through emptying, and in the covering, through consciousness, of its essential being.

In Heidegger's account there are, however, significant differences. Heidegger, in "The Origins of the Work of Art", writes:

Language is not only and not primarily an audible and written expression of something to be communicated. It not only furthers the advancement of the overt and the covert as thus meant in
words and statements, but language brings what is as something that is into the Open for the first time. Where there is no language as in the being of stone, plant, and animal, there is no openness of what is and consequently no openness also of that which is not and of the empty.¹

Heidegger's views, while they preserve much of Hegel's incarnation kenosis, stress the human in the form of the disclosure of being. Stones and plants and animals do not open up what is and what is not: this project belongs to man. This project of disclosure is further enveloped by human facticity. History for Heidegger is “the transporting of a people into its appointed task as entrance into what has been given along with that people” (Heidegger, p. 77). While this may appear to be a minor qualification of Hegel's kenosis, in its stressing of the found nature of mankind's given task, Heidegger's views bear an imprint that is distinctively existentialist.

A similar shift from the absolute to the existential occurs in Graham James' already mentioned work. James, by and large, follows Macquarrie's critique, but he does not extend the absolute kenosis as put forward by Macquarrie. What he does is reveal emotional nuances in the theology. In doing so he shifts the attention from the experiences of Christ to the experiences of ourselves. He points out the devotional (poetic) power of the

traditional kenotic view and stresses the parallels between Christ's actions and the actions of the priest for the Christians of the early Church:

. . . the Christ who empties himself to share our humanity they regarded as a type of the priest who empties himself to share the life of the people he serves. The images of their theology were a source of religious power, firing the imagination, and integrating their lives of devotion with the intellectual quest for truth. (James, p. 11)

The power of kenotic imagery is seen by James to lie in its ability “to express an experience common to the human condition, and . . . [draw] on it, [to] make it characteristic of Christ's own nature” (p. 12). Here he reverses the direction of the flow in Macquarrie's imagery. James suggests that Macquarrie's kenoticism “should start not even with the human Jesus but with ourselves" (p. 13). This is an existentialist plea and, while it lacks the trappings of Hegel's huge historical view of man's consciousness, it is nonetheless like Hegel's understanding of the stoic and the sceptic, agonizing over the emptying and filling of consciousness by its own awareness. The Priest takes the place of the stoic and the sceptic rather than the place of Christ, since it is the “experience common to the human condition" that is made to typify the experience of Christ. In drawing attention to the Priest and the congregation, James deprives the Absolute of its reified value: human experience validates the kenotic process.

James, because of his existential approach, is more ethically aware in his treatment of kenosis than either Macquarrie of Hegel. James’ agenda is not
only to humanize kenosis but also to popularize it. His appeal is to common-sense:

Most of us have some idea of what self-emptying might mean. We sense that in emptying ourselves of pride, in giving ourselves at a deep level to others, that life becomes strangely real and fulfilling. We sense that in the self-emptying that human love demands that paradoxically we become more truly human. Authentic humanity is thus one in which to undergo kenosis achieves plerosis. . . .

In all this there is no hint of the virtue of self-denial. That is in itself a form of selfishness since it requires attention to oneself. Rather the spirit of self-emptying is one of self-forgetting; a natural yielding of oneself in self-giving and not one which is forced and planned. (James, p. 13)

James is here, of course, dealing with the little “s” self and with the problems of an estranged ego. His terms such as “authentic” and “self-forgetting” are the terms of popular psychology. As such they will be treated more extensively in Chapter Six “Kristeva's Katharsis and Jung's Self”. His view has about it some of the flavour and grandeur of Hegel and Macquarrie's absolutist views, but James' popularised kenosis, in ignoring the difficulties inherent in its own emotions, lacks rigour. James appeals to the heart: we all know what kenosis is or might be because we have all experienced such and such emotions. The appeal is attractive in that it stresses the human facticity of the experience and the affective nature of that experience. It may be preferable to the muddle-headed theological propositions and to the extreme
metaphysical assertions of the more politically motivated kenotic theorists. James' version, as a sermon, seeks to draw attention to a commonality of human emotion and to align that emotion with a larger theoretical structure. What such a rhetoric lacks in rigour it makes up for in immediate appeal.

Before concluding this account of kenosis, there are two further views of the concept to be looked at. These I will here refer to as the mysterious and the propagandist views. The first finds in the concept a series of paradoxes that point in significant directions, but fails to elaborate the content of its paradoxes. The second view sets up the term in place of already existing terms, that is, it seeks to give a new name to an old concept and thereby convince us that our understanding has been significantly enhanced. As illustrations of these two views I have, perhaps unfairly, taken two recent articles: David H. Wallace's “Heilsgeschichte, Kenosis and Chalcedon”; and Stephen Benko's “A new Principle of Mariology: The Kenotic Motif".1

Through an inversion of the central concept of emptying, Wallace's account of kenosis edges the theological debate towards the mysterious:

The Kenosis passage is a confession that when Christ became incarnate, he added to his eternal deity a true and entire human nature. Here are both being and Heilsgeschichte, ontology and history. They complement one another in a mysterious and paradoxical relationship. That God should become man is the scandal and the paradox of Christian faith, as Kierkegaard has

1 Both are included in Oikonomia (Hamburg: Herbert Reich Evang, 1967).
properly shown, and any attempt to dissolve this mystery is an attempt to dissolve God’s operation in Christ. (Wallace, p. 255)

One can clearly see the intention of avoiding the petty squabbles and of allowing the original biblical passage to regain the poetic qualities it once had. But Wallace, in his return to the “descriptive and hymnic affirmations" of the “Kenosis Christology” and the “Logos Christology" avoids the difficult task of elaborating the descriptive aspects of the passage. The passage does affirm an aspect of the incarnation, that it is typified by emptying. Wallace avoids this most obvious characteristic of kenosis.

Rather than directing attention to the question of emptying, Wallace directs it to the question of belief. He asserts that to be confronted “with paradox and mystery without any attempt to resolve the stated scandal that the Word became flesh, or that the pre-existent Christ took upon himself the form of a servant” (Wallace, p. 257) is to be confronted with a need to believe in the face of mystery. When we call something a mystery, the appropriate response is either belief or disbelief; no argument is required.

In the case of Benko the concept becomes a motif; the means by which the kenosis is achieved is raised to the level of causes; Mary enters as the major player in the drama of the incarnation. This amounts to a physical definition of kenosis and as such it becomes slightly comic. Benko writes:
The means by which the self-emptying takes place is the birth from the virgin's womb. In this general meaning the second century fathers referred to Mary and in the later controversies Mary is again the one who is the means of the “kenosis”. This motif played an important role in the Arian controversy and afterwards even Apollinarius used it, because, as he wrote, “Incarnation is self-emptying”. (Benko, p. 269)

Many of the passages offered by Benko to substantiate the views of the early Church Fathers seem to support a variety of views on kenosis rather than one sustained and continuing view of the Virgin's relationship with the incarnation of Christ.¹ Leaving such disputes aside, the arguments put forward by Benko seek to sustain a view of Mariology rather than a view of kenosis. For Benko the fact that Christ acquired flesh is the true significance of the incarnation or, to allow his slightly more convoluted expression:

The Virgin supplied the matter of Christ's flesh and the divine power is manifested by the new mode of birth in which the incarnation took place. That is the true significance of the Virgin birth of Christ, “since to deny his true flesh is also to deny his bodily sufferings”. (Benko, p. 271)

Put this way, incarnation is an ambiguous event in which the virgin birth is God's manifestation or the virgin birth is the source and evidence of the incarnation. Self-emptying becomes virgin-birthing which becomes acquiring

¹ It should be said that Benko provides a wealth of early evidence that is not readily available. This evidence is of considerable value in its own right.
flesh without impregnation. The virgin birth has taken over the place of the concept of self-emptying. This taking-over is of more immediate interest here because it demonstrates the danger of renovating an old concept in order to support a view in no way implied by the old concept. In this case Benko's historical arguments are neither adequate nor entirely spurious; the physical aspects of Christ's birth and death were and remain important in theological debates; but the question of acquiring flesh never appears to have had any direct relevance to kenosis.

This opening chapter has dealt with a variety of ways in which kenosis has been recently employed in criticism, theology and philosophy. At least fifteen kinds of kenosis have been noted: ludic; cultural; metaphysical; moral; liberation; humanistic; creation; phenomenological; dialectical; incarnational; poetic; existential; popular; mysterious; and physical. From the large number of kinds of kenosis mentioned several major distinctions can be made. What becomes clear is the centrality of the redemption/incarnation pattern. Expressed in terms of identity, this amounts to a pattern of transformation. The initial, or given identity, is firstly emptied (seen as of no account), and then replaced with a new identity that implies a relationship with the initial identity (the original identity is preserved in the new identity as the identity of the master is preserved in the identity of the slave). This new identity is further implicated in a course of history (a life that culminates in death) that gives significance to the transformation.
Having investigated the historical concept and determined its broad operating parameters, the next step is to align the concept with other existing literary terms with similar character. Chapter Two will explore the relationship between kenosis and katharsis. From this exploration it will be possible to establish the transposed dimensions of both katharsis and kenosis.
CHAPTER TWO

KENOSIS AND KATHARSIS

As katharsis is to the dramatic
so kenosis is to the lyric
so kairosis is to the epic

Although the central argument of this thesis can be simply expressed in the above ratio, at no other time will the argument enjoy the uncontested simplicity of this expression. The relationship of katharsis to the dramatic is a vexatious question and, while some attempt will be made here to clarify this relationship, it is not the intention of this chapter to engage in disputation. Rather a model of the relationship between katharsis and the dramatic will be constructed and then used as a guide in the construction of a model of the relationship between kenosis and the lyric. In Chapter Three, a model of the relationship of kairosis to the epic will be established.

Katharsis, for better or worse, has come to acquire a popular meaning that makes superficial comparison with kenosis an easy matter. Where katharsis is seen as the evacuation of certain difficult emotions, kenosis is seen as the emptying of certain unwanted characteristics of the
self: katharsis is “letting it all out” and kenosis is “leaving it all behind”. As one deals with
emotions so the other deals with psychic aspects; both deal with therapeutic forms of loss.¹

In this distinction between a populist kenosis and katharsis the volitional differences
are not remarked and equally the questions of causation are overlooked. Also, in these “street
definitions” it is possible to swap terms so that katharsis can do the job of kenosis and vice
versa. In many cases, because of the availability of the term katharsis and the absence from
common parlance of kenosis, it happens that katharsis is employed when the more appropriate
term would be kenosis. Modelling these two terms in comparative ways will make it possible
to clarify the appropriate domains of each.

Literary criticism has no real control over its own terminology, in the sense that any
critic is free to take up the terms of another critic and redefine them to serve his own ends. In
the case of Aristotle's katharsis this vulnerability to creative extension has been aggravated by
the attempts of classical scholars to determine the meaning of the original term. Anyone who
has ventured into these deep waters will be well aware of the conflicts and contortions of
katharsis criticism and could sympathise with Kenneth C. Bennett’s attempts to purge
katharsis. In his article “The

¹ The application of katharsis to psychology will be dealt with in detail in the Chapter Six “Kristeva's Katharsis and Jung's Self”. Freud's
specific employment of katharsis as a major stage in analysis will be treated there via Jung's critique and the major revision offered by
Kristeva.
Purging of Catharsis”, following a survey of recent treatments of katharsis, Bennett writes:

I trust that this brief sampling of modern critical versions of catharsis will be sufficient to show how far the concept has diverged from the original interpretations, and, in particular, how the theoretical orientation of the critic can warp the word. . . . a survey of classical scholarship on the matter is also dismaying — and confusing — and it seems wisest to purge catharsis of its accreted meanings and declare a decent, thoroughgoing scepticism concerning Aristotle’s intent. What we, as critics, need to do first is overcome the urge to deal with catharsis at all when commenting on tragedy, to give up the obligatory nod to Aristotle.2

But matters are not quite as distorted as Bennett pretends. His real and important aim is to insist on the affective aspects of literature and to urge that more attention be paid to the relationships between tragedy and the individual, the audience, society, and history. Since kenosis is directly involved with these affective questions this present thesis is one response to Bennett’s urging.

The main body of classical scholarship falls into reasonably well defined contending views and each of these views (minus their supporting

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arguments) puts forward a significant aspect of katharsis as it might be used in relation to the tragic. Aristotle writes:

> Let us speak of tragedy, recapitulating the definition of its nature that arises from what has been said. Tragedy, then, is imitation of a serious and complete action possessing magnitude . . . accomplishing through pity and fear the katharsis of such passion.¹

The two most prominent critical readings of this passage treat the katharsis mentioned as relating either to purgation or purification. These two views break down into conflicting versions of what purgation and purification consist in, but nonetheless this basic divergence typifies the discussion. Either the emotions of pity and fear are to be purged or else they are to be purified of their unwanted disturbing content.

E.P. Papanoutsos in his article “The Aristotelian Katharsis” divides these prominent readings into three groups: “the `moral’, which is the oldest; the `psychological’; and the `aesthetic’, the most recent”.² This listing implies a certain historical “drift” away from Aristotle’s terms to those of the present. A similar shift can be noted in the previous chapter on kenosis with the implication that the resultant move to an “aesthetic”

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view is the business of this thesis. Such an implication is both appropriate and facile. So long as this shift from one dominant view to another is seen as an accumulation or an intensification of the original “moral” view then such a shift is to be applauded; but there is something ahistorical about these divisions. One can deduce these same three groups from several single critical sources, which is to say that the “moral”, “psychological” and “aesthetic” views are all valid components of Aristotle's original assertion. For example, Milton has this to say in his introduction to *Samson Agonistes*, following his quotation of the katharsis passage:

> Tragedy, as it was antiently compos'd, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other Poems: therefore said by Aristotle to be of power by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions, that is to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirr'd up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so in Physic things of melancholic hue and quality are us'd against melancholy, sowr against sowr, salt to remove salt humours.¹

Milton happily (like Aristotle before him) introduces “reading” as another way in which the audience may experience katharsis and we can sympathise with this compromising of the affective precisely because our

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appreciation of Greek tragedy is similarly compromised. With the assistance of modern cinema we may lay claim to an equivalent kathartic experience to what we might imagine the Greeks experienced. Aristotle's formulation was also compromised, since the major period of Greek tragedy had passed by the time he wrote.

The moral aspect of tragic katharsis is seen by Milton in medicinal terms, a quite common treatment of katharsis and one that has its metaphoric accuracy. Morality for Milton is pragmatic and rational. If the imitation of passions reduces the passions to a "just measure with a kind of delight", then the value of the method is proven. This reduction may be described as the psychological aspect of katharsis. The relationship of this vicarious purification to the artistic structures employed to produce the effect is the aesthetic domain of katharsis.

Milton interprets katharsis as a purification rather than a purging. He sees the passions being tempered and reduced to "just measure". Yet it might equally be claimed that in the reduction a purging takes place. The point to be made here is that, while Milton obviously falls foul of Bennett's complaints about intrusive additions, Milton does manage to preserve the basic argument intact, to the extent that it could be used to generate the same divergent views that Aristotle's original has produced. Milton's stress on the affective qualities of tragedy is where the stress should fall.

In the final lines of Samson Agonistes the Chorus propounds a Miltonic vision of an ultimate and social katharsis:

All is best, though we oft doubt,
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns
And to his faithful Champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent: His servants he with new acquist
Of true experience from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,
And calm of mind, all passion spent.²

God becomes the Supreme Tragedian, inflicting destruction on those who resist the unsearchable aspect of Providence, and granting wisdom through a “true experience from this great event” to his servants. Milton is obviously blurring the domains of history and the imagination just as his Chorus blurs the actual punishments with the aesthetic (moral) rewards of those who experience the story of history as told in the play. As part of his larger project to “justify the ways of God to man”, Milton invokes the peculiar relationship of the Jewish nation to its history in order to establish, through an aesthetic example, a similar relationship between the English nation and its history.

History itself, then, becomes both the domain of the moral and the domain of the aesthetic; katharsis is the psychological mechanism and the aesthetic method for producing this desired religious result. The katharsis depends on “true experience” just as the “peace and consolation” depends on the spending of all passion. Art, in its ability to

reveal “true experience”, participates in the revelation that exhausts and satisfies historical experience; it manifests, through tragic katharsis, the wisdom of the “close”. In a sense what Milton is here proposing is an apocalyptic view of sacred history, with katharsis as the affective experience that typifies the end.

But has the Chorus been singing of katharsis or kenosis? With “all passion spent” one may have been restored to rationality, or one may have been transformed in more fundamental ways. Samson, through the acceptance of his public role as hero and in willing himself to undergo his final experience, may be seen to be a type of Christ. In this sense kenosis would describe his experience within the play, especially if we allow that all his passions have been spent.

The next division to be noted is between those who locate the katharsis as being in the experience of the audience and those who view its location as being in the play itself. There are of course further sub-divisions within these two groups, but as with purgation and purification, by and large, the parameters are maintained: either the audience experiences the purification/purgation or else the play evidences the purgation/purification. One sub-division of the purification-within-the-play version needs to be mentioned. This view holds that rather than purification the katharsis amounts to a clarification.
With this major division we meet the major problem of the modern scholarship devoted to classical katharsis: is katharsis affective or is it structural? The answer that springs most immediately to mind is that it is both; if the play affects us it is because there is a structure within the play that permits this affect (the aesthetic view). But the structuralist view goes further, to claim that the katharsis is the purgation or purification of the passions of pity and fear within the actual plot of the play. As Monroe Beardsley says:

According to this interpretation, the concept of catharsis is a structural concept — it belongs to the formal analysis of the drama itself — rather than a psychological one.³

The earliest version of this structuralist katharsis was put forward by Goethe in a paper on Aristotle's Poetics, which Beardsley summarises:

[Goethe] argues that Aristotle's katharsis should not be interpreted as a psychological effect of the tragedy, but rather as a relationship within the tragedy itself: “When the course of action is one arousing pity and fear, the tragedy must close on the stage with an equilibration, a reconciliation, of these emotions”. (p. 260)

Faced with the ascendency of rationalist philosophy, Goethe makes these claims in order to strengthen the case that art has cognitive value. On these grounds it might be argued that Goethe's reasoning was indeed an imitation of Aristotle's original revaluation of sense experience in the face of Platonic thought-based philosophy.

The attempt by the Romantic movement to occupy the ground taken over (or discovered) by the rationalists is here caught in an extreme pose. It needs to assert the cognitive value of the artist; it needs to valorize its epistemology; it needs to reduce the importance of the irrational aspects, the affective qualities of its performance, and instead claim achievement of rational consequences within the works themselves. Here is recorded a moment of fundamental doubt in the western artistic consciousness: Goethe must claim for the work what previously belonged to the audience. Schiller's category of the "sentimental" is born in this moment of lost confidence: art turns within in imitation of the Idealist individual.

This structuralist view of katharsis has been taken up in recent times by Gerald F. Else. Else gives the katharsis passage in this way:

Tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action which is serious, complete, and has bulk, in speech that has been made

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attractive, using each of its species separately in the parts of the play; with
persons performing the action rather than through narrative carrying to
completion, through a course of events involving pity and fear, the
purification of those painful or fatal acts which have that quality. (p. 221)

Else supports the purification view for what sound like logical reasons: to purge incidents
from the play would appear absurd. Equally, to purge emotions from an audience may be
taken to be absurd, inasmuch as the memory of the passion is not purged when the emotion is
purged. That the working out of both purgation and purification at the level of passions
amounts to the same thing is not self-evident. There are obvious ethical differences between
the two as suggested courses of action, as directives, but as metaphoric descriptions of an
aesthetic/psychological/moral experience both might be accurate.

This point is taken up by Eva Schaper in her article “Aristotle’s Catharsis and
Aesthetic Pleasure”. After lucidly demonstrating that Aristotle is using katharsis in a
metaphoric way, she goes on:

it is not very helpful to translate “catharsis” at all, if its metaphoric character
is admitted. Surely the point of a metaphor is that it can extend a literal
meaning of a term so as to suggest a use for which it would be inappropriate
to attempt a straight translation. (pp. 133-34)

Schaper is able to argue that katharsis could include within its metaphoric range both the meanings of purification and purgation:

The medical and religious functions referred to by “catharsis” in general Greek usage are not all that remote from each other, if one remembers the Pythagorean merging of semi-religious and semi-scientific notions in the idea of purification, or the Orphic cult mysteries which preserve traces of pre-scientific, that is, pre-physiological, medical practice. “Purifying” does not exclude partial purgation; in purification something may be ejected, as in distillation, though some thing remains. And medical purgation need not be thought as evacuation only: the “purged” organism is usually understood as having been purified. The religious sense of “catharsis” can in any case be held to be a metaphoric extension of a basically chemical sense of “purification”, and in such a metaphor allusion to purgation need not be denied. (p. 134)

Gerald F. Else, on the question of purgation/purification, is directed in his reading by the logic of his own theory. What he finds difficult about purgation is the suggestion that something actually passes from the play through the audience and thence nowhere. In favouring purification, he supposes the basic work of purgation has been done by the poet, prior to the performance, in the writing of the play. There is no doubt that Aristotle supports the critical function of the poet and the vital need for the organisation of the incidents so as to produce the affect
required. What is in doubt, according to Else, is the quality of the affect, that is, the state of the affect when it is transmitted.

Corroboration for Else's reading may be found in the plots of various tragedies and in the Greek concern with taboos and purification rituals. In his treatment of Chapter 14 of Aristotle's *Poetics* Else writes:

The man who has committed an act that is pregnant with horror, but in ignorance, and who redeems himself and proves his essential innocence by his own horror when he discovers his mistake, has established an unassailable claim to our pity, and especially if the steps that lead to the discovery, and thus clear the way for our pity, are logically connected from first to last. (p. 449)

Else obviously has *Oedipus Rex* in mind as his example, but Beardsley points out "that there are many difficulties in making [Else's views here] fit the actual patterns of the tragedies Aristotle knew — even *Oedipus Rex*" (Beardsley, p. 66). If one looks at Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, it becomes obvious that purification within the play, while being of immense importance, is the subject of intense critical scrutiny. The failure of Orestes' purification in *The Eumenides* is not seen as a failure of the ritual (of katharsis) but as an inadequacy on the part of the ritual to discharge the psychological and sociological condition of the tragic hero. Orestes, after the murder of his mother (in *The Libation Bearers*), says:
I would have you know, I see not how this thing will end. I am a charioteer whose course is wrenched outside the track, for I am beaten, my rebellious senses bolt with me headlong and the fear against my heart is ready for the singing and dance of wrath . . . (1021-1025)

. . . look upon me now, how I go armoured in leafed branch and garland on my way to the centrestone and sanctuary, and Apollo's level place, the shining of the fabulous fire that never dies, to escape this blood that is my own. (1034-1038)⁶

Orestes is ready to go off and be purified; all is as Else would expect. Orestes claims a full purification: “Long since, at the homes of others, I have been absolved/ thus, both by running waters and by victims slain” (The Eumenides, 451-2). But Athene is required to answer the unanswerable, the Furies. The pattern established in this play promotes a kind of forgiveness as opposed to a successful purification; Athene solves the matter with a rational decision that indirectly could be seen to support Else’s basic assertions of a structural katharsis, but only at the expense of his desire to have the plot imitate the structure of katharsis. Orestes is successfully purified long before the kathartic climax of the play. The religious version of katharsis has itself been subjected to the aesthetic katharsis of tragedy and re-won in a form that is conscious of a need to subject the ritual itself to critical examination.

In spite of these major questions, Else's views on the pleasures of tragedy usefully provide both a traditional account of katharsis and a structuralist approach:

the “special pleasure” of tragedy — that is, of the best tragedy — is neither simply intellectual nor simply emotional, but has its roots in both realms. It is a pleasure springing from emotion, but an emotion authorized, and released by an intellectually conditioned structure of action. The emotion flows unimpeded because when we feel it we feel it as justified and inevitable. (Else, p. 449)

Irrespective of the “universal” appeal of this view, Else warns against “smuggling the `catharsis of the emotions’ back into Aristotle's theory by means of Aristotle's views on the pleasures of tragedy” (p. 448fn). He asserts that:

The tragic pity and fear are the regular emotions we know by those names, not a purified version of them. If they have any special quality, they have it by virtue of the fact that tragedy is an imitation: that is, the fact that it is an imitation of life, not the real thing, so that we feel the emotions in question for someone else (a dramatic character) and not for ourselves. But Aristotle nowhere emphasizes this factor of “aesthetic distance”; he harps instead on the directness and immediacy of the dramatic form and the likeness of the tragic hero to us. (p. 449)
By this means Else surely gets the katharsis of the emotions he claims he does not want. The directness of Aristotle's affective katharsis is re-thought by Else into the more complex and indirect structure of post-romantic criticism. The fact that the affect is produced through an imitation, and that this imitation is of the very same passions that are then affectively produced in the audience, is no real enlightenment. To equate “imitation” with “indirect” is no advance unless the overall directness of Aristotle's views is taken into account. Else's exposition illuminates the processes of the structurally based katharsis, but there seems no good reason to deny this same katharsis (via imitation) to the audience.

The view that the form has purged the emotions in the moment of presentation (and therefore imitation) is likewise an illumination, but unless we assume a form of indirection between presentation and reception, there appears no need to deny the experiencing of katharsis to the audience while allowing it to the structure. The tragic on this basis would become simply a critique of the ritual of purification and as such could amount to little more than an instructive moral example.¹ The view that the passions, through their being structured, have become acceptable, offers an instructive account of the aesthetic experience; it offers an explanation for the willingness of the audience to suffer

¹ The _Oresteia_ is not simply a critique; the experience of katharsis is quite evident at the end of the trilogy.
emotions they might normally be expected to flee from. But it still fails to account for the
direct and immediate nature of Aristotle's affective category of katharsis; the impact remains.

Since the field of katharsis criticism is so wide, it is not surprising to discover
Papanoutsos' dismay at recent structuralist views of katharsis that take up Goethe's location of
the affect in the play. Papanoutsos claims that in all other post-Renaissance accounts

it is unanimously maintained that the definition [of the kathartic effect of
tragedy] refers to the emotional state of the audience . . . that witnesses the
performance and is moved by the tragic spectacle. (p. 361)

As evidence of this structuralist re-location of katharsis he cites recent articles by K. G.
Srivastava in the *British Journal of Aesthetics* where Srivastava "maintains that according to
Aristotle what is being purified in tragedy is the `pitiable and fearful' incidents themselves as
they exist in the body of the plot" (Papanoutsos, p. 361). What Srivastava brings to this now
familiar argument is the reading, taken from Leon Golden, that the imitation is of “pitiable
and fearful incidents” and that katharsis is to be translated as “intellectual clarification”. 2 With
these two interpretative tools Srivastava is able to establish an ultimate structuralist version of

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katharsis little different to Else's, except that it stresses the reading of “intellectual clarification” through the ordered imitation. Faced with this approach, Papanoutsos is moved to defend the “emotionalist” tradition:

At the end of the tragic performance we are not the same persons as at the moment when we were being choked by pity and shaken with fear; the passions that now hold sway over us are no longer common pity and fear but qualitatively different emotions that can only be imparted by the magic of great art. Could it have been this that Aristotle had in mind when he considered the function of tragedy to be the “katharsis of the passion?” (p. 363)

One is reminded here of Sartre's hero Antoine Roquentin, who looks towards music as a way of relieving himself of the burden of conscious existence. Roquentin reflects:

The voice, deep and husky, suddenly appears and the world vanishes, the world of existences. A woman of flesh had that voice, she sang in front of a record, in her best dress and they recorded her voice. A woman: bah, she existed like me . . . I don't want to know her. 3

At the precise moment that the hero is able to envisage the source of the “imitation” as human he is faced with his “objecting” (Sartre's word) of the woman. Here the magic, the affective aspect of the record, is only

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to be sustained while the indirectness of the words and the indirectness of the reception are maintained. In this case the words are:

When that yellow moon begins to beam

Every night I dream my little dream.

The sense of “estrangement” is here assisted by the foreign language in which the words are sung (they are given in English in the French original) and the poetic nature of the words. The hero is relieved and affected through this doubling of the aesthetic distance. His consciousness of his existence, however, returns and with the return the series of thoughts that sickens his life begins again.

At the end of the novel Roquentin yearns for an even deeper release from existence into being. He seeks purity through an aesthetic experience that amounts to an existential katharsis:

And I too have wanted to be. Indeed I have never wanted anything else; that’s what lay at the bottom of my life: behind all these attempts which seemed unconnected, I find the same desire: to drive existence out of me, to empty the moments of their fat, to wring them, to dry them, to purify myself, to harden myself, to produce in short the sharp, precise sound of a saxophone note. (p. 248)

Reflecting on his ability to be moved by music, the hero concludes that through the life of the artist he can come to experience being. Here the
effect of art is such as to require imitation of the affect. The process of imitation becomes then a chain: from artist to art, from art to audience, from audience as artist to experience in general.

Roquentin is moved:

The Negress sings. So you can justify your existence? Just a little? I feel extraordinarily intimidated. It isn't that I have much hope. But I am like a man who is completely frozen after a journey through the snow and who suddenly comes into a warm room. I imagine he would remain motionless near the door, still feeling cold, and that slow shivers would run over the whole of his body.

Some of these days
You'll miss me honey

(pp. 251-52)

In Book VIII of his *Politics*, Aristotle deals with the value of music in education. Aristotle points out the benefit of music for the “release of emotion” and observes that some people are:

affected by religious melodies; and when they come under the influence of melodies which fill the soul with religious excitement they are calmed and restored as if they had undergone a medical treatment and purging (katharsis). The same sort of effect will also be produced [i.e., by appropriate music] on those who are specially subject to feelings of fear and pity, or to feelings of any kind.¹

¹ Trans. Barker, cited by Beardsley, p. 66.
Roquentin’s unwanted emotions may better be described as “angst” and “ennui”, but the effect of the music appears to be the same. He is “calmed and restored”, even uplifted. The terms he uses to describe his alteration are those of a physical transformation, the melting of snow.

Before arriving at this kathartic release from his negative emotions, Roquentin speaks disparagingly about the affective qualities of music:

To think that there are idiots who derive consolation from the fine arts. Like my Aunt Bigeois: “Chopin’s Preludes were such a help to me when your poor uncle died.” And the concert halls are full to overflowing with humiliated, injured people who close their eyes and try to turn their pale faces into receiving aerials. They imagine that the sounds they receive flow into them, sweet and nourishing, and that their sufferings become music, like those of young Werther; they think that beauty is compassionate towards them. The mugs. (p. 246)

While at first this reads as an attack on “the fine arts”, later the hero turns on jazz as well. He attempts to resist the music and its pure suffering. His failure is due to the pure nature of the music (“It does not exist”) and also, on this occasion, to his state of mind. This time when he runs “up against existents” they are “devoid of meaning”; the music, in its affectiveness, is beyond the very physical qualities that “unveil it” (p. 248). On the earlier occasion he was able to jump this state of awareness and too rapidly determine the singer as the presence of the song.
What is of value to the present argument in Roquentin's musical katharsis is the proposition that the state of mind of the audience, as much as the capacity of the art-form to bear it, produces the affect of katharsis. As he struggles with the “Four notes on the saxophone” (p. 247), the affect is produced: without the notes there would be no katharsis; without the struggling there would be no katharsis. The truth in his attack on the “mugs” is that in order for the music to work the audience must become actively involved and not sit passively “try[ing] to turn their pale faces into receiving aerials”.

Taking Aristotle's views on this musical katharsis into account, it appears preposterous to deny the active as well as the affective side of his tragic katharsis. Even so, the views of Else are not denied by this passage, and as seen in the quotations from *Nausea*, the peculiar structural values of music can easily be argued so as to vindicate the restorative virtue of the medicinal value within the series of notes. Such a view would be in alignment with the views of Else when he sees the kathartic value of tragedy in the series of incidents. What Sartre's hero proposes, in expanding on his new view of being as an aesthetic existence, could be made to support Else without much trouble. And it must be remembered that, for Aristotle no less than Sartre and Else, the position of the artist is a privileged one.
Yet the contention would seem to be puerile. Surely the passions are known only in their incidence; surely the character is only known in its action? Papanoutsos is correct to stress the affective thrust of Aristotle, but surely the structuralists are correct to stress the co-extensive source of this affect. The weight of criticism is on Papanoutsos’ side but the pursuit of the category of the affective requires that these other implicit propositions be accepted and investigated.

It might be suggested that the contrasting views are evidence of different basic approaches: the structuralists start from the play as a text; whereas the traditionalists start from the performance as experienced as text. As an existentialist Sartre takes the phenomenology of the creation/reception of the work as the only point.

Bennett throws light on an aspect of katharsis and the affective not mentioned in the classical context: the affect on the author. Given that it has been held that the katharsis might be related to either the drama or the audience (or both), it surely becomes possible to argue that the katharsis might be related to the poet and the players. One possible reason for this oversight is the very nature of drama. Being a performance art, tragedy’s kathartic aspects could not be expected to be effective until such time as the play is performed. The affective aspects of the play proper could not be evident when the play itself is not evident. On this basis of performance it makes sense to include the
playwright and players as part of the audience, maybe a special or privileged part of the audience, but nonetheless a part of the audience when it comes to being affected by the kathartic aspects of a drama. Aristotle would appear to be arguing otherwise in Chapter Six of his *Poetics* where he says:

> The Spectacle, though an attraction, is the least artistic of all the parts, and has least to do with the art of poetry. The tragic effect is quite possible without a public performance and actors; and besides the getting-up of the Spectacle is more a matter for the costumier than the poet. (1450B 17-20)

His comment, as well as stressing the minor nature of the staging and the major nature of the play as text, also illustrates Aristotle's distance from the tragic age of Greek culture. While the artistic merits of the spectacle will vary from play to play and from production to production, it is pointless to deny the artistic power made available through the performance aspects of drama. The same is true of the lyric. But in the case of the lyric, because it is not bound to the time-and-space requirements of the tragic, it becomes possible to think of a kind of katharsis that does apply to the poet in the action of creating. Here the performance can be viewed as co-extensive with the creation and so the writing can be seen as the experiencing of the katharsis.

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As Monroe Beardsley points out in his Aesthetics, this is exactly the version of katharsis put forward in the Romantic period:

We have seen how Aristotle’s theory of katharsis (as usually interpreted) was a kind of emotionalist theory, but the contrast is important to note: the Romantic view is that poetry is a katharsis for the poet primarily, and only secondarily for the reader. The poet, says Shelley, is an overheard nightingale, “who sits in darkness and sings to cheer its own solitude with sweet sounds” (Defense of Poetry). In writing his poem, the poet gets rid of the overflow of emotion. (p. 249)

Beardsley goes on to quote from the Reverend John Keble’s Oxford lectures on poetry (1832-41), that poetry can “act as a safety-valve, preserving men from actual madness”. This therapeutic benefit is extended by Keble to readers to a lesser extent; the major beneficiary is the poet. We may wish to argue that what Keble and Shelley are referring to is the added benefit that the artist experiences through the relationship of creator to created object. What must, however, be accounted for is the artist’s experience of a kathartic release during the moment (or during lengthy periods) of creation.

What this reading of katharsis leads to is a necessary extension of the notion of the affective potential of art. From the Romantic emphasis we might conclude that katharsis is an affective mode potentially attending the creation, performance and experiencing of any art. The fact that Shelley and others wish to grant a greater katharsis to the poet is perhaps the consequence of both the Romantic imagination and the peculiar features of lyric poetry.

Following the Romantics, the questions of the relationship between poet and audience have become prominent. Music, in Sartre's *Nausea*, exists in its fully affective aspects only when it is experienced, in Sartre's terminology, as being. This experience requires a complex psychological relationship, a relationship that is not to be dominated by an originating artist, except that the artist is part of the focus of the complex as the one who also produces the work as an experience. Such a definition of reception will be attempted in later chapters. What needs to be pointed out here is the relative ease of establishing a theory of reception in the case of a performing art like music. In music there is an experience that is the producer as much as the product of the performance. Because the lyric shares aspects of both language as text and language as experience, it is potentially of value as a mediating category. The fact remains that one can assess theories of aesthetics simply on the basis of the art form chosen as the proving example of the theory. The present theory does not escape this limitation; rather it embraces it.
How this audience-and-artist relationship works is the subject of Mikel Dufrenne's *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*. Dufrenne points out the necessity of the audience in any aesthetic creation:

the spectator participates in the play doubly. As a member of an audience, he collaborates in the performance of the work at the same time that he “gets into form” to apprehend it. However, it is as a solitary and meditative consciousness that he communes with the work for the sake of its metamorphosis into an aesthetic object.  

In his chapter “The Affective A Priori”, Dufrenne focuses on the interrelationship between feeling and the affective:

Feeling, itself affective, knows the affective as the primary sign of the object. To desire a woman is to know her as desirable, and this quality is as evident as the color of her eyes or the shape of her body. It is for this reason that the noetic function of feeling has a unique value and is not tainted by subjectivity. To deny that a certain patently desirable woman is desirable is to refuse to feel — which is as arbitrary as refusing to see. . . . Feeling is only a certain way of knowing an affective quality as the structure of an object, and it is disinterested in spite of the sort of participation which it presupposes. Just as the feeling of the desirable is not a species of desire, so the idea of a circle

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is not round, or the feeling of the tragic itself tragical (even if it may be
oppressive or exhilarating). Thus we may say that affectivity is not so much
in me as in the object. To feel is to experience a feeling as a property of the
object, not as a state of my being. The affective exists in me only as the
response to a certain structure in the object. Conversely, this structure
attests to the fact that the object is for a subject and cannot be reduced to the
kind of objectivity which is for no one. (pp. 441-42)

Dufrenne goes so far as to grant a certain subjectivity to the aesthetic object. He argues that
“Instead of being determined from without, affective qualities involve a certain way of relating
themselves to each other, a manner of constituting themselves as a totality — in short, a
capacity for affecting themselves” (p. 442). These views very much support and extend the
“structuralist” readings of katharsis, but equally they extend the “traditional” or “affective” or
“emotionalist” view. The understanding that the feeling is located in the object is perhaps the
clearest expression of the notion of aesthetic distance: the pity and fear are in the structure of
the play as the object of the affective experience. It is this locating of the feeling that permits
the audience to participate and not, as Else suggests, the fact that the emotions have been
purified within the structure.¹

¹ A countering argument might be made that the passions cannot be located within an aesthetic structure without their having already been
transformed. This last view is one held by Herbert Marcuse. For Marcuse, the existence of a dimension called the “aesthetic dimension”
permits this transformation. For Marcuse this transformation is an epistemological possibility; when we see in the aesthetic dimension we see
differently. In seeing differently we see the object in its negativity (its possibilities) rather than in its positivity (its fixed nature). See especially
Yet Dufrenne’s point that the affective aspects within the object relate to each other may be used to support Else’s contentions: the interrelationship of the affective aspects argues for a structure of “knowledge”; the parts “know” each other and the audience anticipates, in the aesthetic experience, that the parts will “know” each other. Therefore the audience does not anticipate being left with a residue of unrelated affective parts that require the audience to become the objects of those affective parts. We do not like to leave the play with feelings that have no immediate objects other than ourselves. The feelings must be attached to objects (incidents) within the drama or else we feel cheated of the aesthetic experience.

Such transposing of the affect is precisely what is intended in the structure of advertising and the structure of ideology. As Judith Williamson remarks:

We are not participants in an ideology until we are active within its very creation; paradoxically, ideology means that we are participants, subjects, i.e. “initiators of action” in accordance with “freely held ideas”. But just as these values which we hold only emerge in their being assumed as already existing, so similarly we only function as subjects in being addressed by the ad as already subjects: “appellated”. By the time the ad has said, “Hey, you — you know what Catherine Deneuve / a Rolls Royce / Susan Hampshire means, don’t you? Well, this product means the same” — it
has addressed you as somebody with a freely held body of knowledge (= first aspect of ideology) and as somebody able to think and act, able to perform an active part in creating something (in this case a meaning for the scent / car / wallpaper) on the basis of this freely held knowledge (= second aspect of ideology). In the process of the ad's "saying" this and your "understanding" it, the "knowledge" referred to as anterior has been created by reference; and the active subject has been created by assumption.¹

Our prior understanding becomes the object to which the affects are attached. Unable to account for the affects within the domain of the "aesthetic object" (the advertisement), we become the object of the advertisement and the subject of the exchange. Caught in our own knowing, we are offered the final location of the affect: when we purchase the object or service advertised, the affect is then transferred to the object purchased. In the exchange we perform the transformation and recover our roles as subjects within the ideology.

In arguing for the a priori nature of the affective, Dufrenne distinguishes three levels of relationship between subject and object: presence, representation and feeling. These three levels correspond to "an attitude of the living, thinking, or feeling subject respectively" (p. 444). In its relationship with these three levels, the subject is constitutive

¹ Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising (NY: Marion Boyars, 1978) p. 44.
at the level of presence, through what Merleau-Ponty calls the corporeal a priori, which trace[s] out the structure of the world experienced by the lived body; at the level of representation, through the a priori which determine[s] the possibility of an objective knowledge of the objective world (it is here that Kant is most relevant); and at the level of feeling, through the affective a priori, which open[s] up a world lived and felt by the deep self in the first person. The subject is presented in a new form at each level — as lived body in presence, as impersonal subject in representation, and as deep subject in feeling. It is in these forms that the subject successively assumes a relation to the lived, represented, and felt worlds. (p. 445)

Dufrenne notes that feeling “does not belong exclusively to the spectator confronted with the world expressed by the aesthetic object”. Feeling, he says, “belongs to anyone capable of assuming sufficient personal humanity and depth to experience and illuminate a personal world which is not merely the world of the body or understanding” (p. 445). It is in this way that the deep self of aesthetic experience is connected with the deep self of “normal” felt reality. Like Sartre's hero, the illumination provided by the felt experience depends on the assumption of “sufficient personal humanity” and on the ability to distinguish a personal world that is not “merely the world of the body or understanding” (Sartre's world of the existents). In the case of aesthetic objects these qualities may be seen as independent aspects of the work and as aspects constituted by the subject.
Dufrenne asserts that the affective quality “is the soul of the expressed world” and that the “total world of the work receives unity and sense only through affective quality — which, as it were, gives rise to the work in order to be, in turn, exhibited by it”. Because affective quality is “constitutive”, “the feeling by which it is known enjoys a sort of priority in aesthetic experience” (p. 446). This priority is what the “traditionalists” assign to katharsis, whereas the “structuralists” give the priority to the object which embodies the affective quality, that is, to the play. Dufrenne’s distinction is that the tragic is what he calls the affective quality (and category when it is talked of separately), whereas katharsis is the “feeling by which” the affective quality is made known.

Dufrenne defines the *a priori* nature of the affective in this way:

An affective quality is an *a priori* when, expressed by the work, it is constitutive of the world of the aesthetic object and when it can also be felt independently of the represented world in the same way that we can, as Kant says, conceive of a space or a time without objects. At least this is true in principle, if not in fact. In fact, we know the *a priori* only through the *a posteriori*; and in aesthetic experience the expressed world and the represented world, along with affective quality and objective structure, are always united. (p. 446)
According to Dufrenne, a tragedy becomes a tragedy only in its being constituted, through affectivity, as a tragedy. The value in his definition is that it permits the highlighting of the relationship between the affective quality which is in some sense necessarily in the structure of the play as it is constituted by the audience, and the feeling by which this quality is “known”, which, however complexly, is known only by the audience. Through this definition it becomes possible to value both sides of the katharsis dispute.

One major question about Aristotle's katharsis proposition has not yet been dealt with, namely the putting forward of the affect as an argument within a discourse of argumentation. We take katharsis at whatever face value we do, with the risk of mistaking his intentions. Francis Sparshott's reconstruction has the advantage of seeming to offer an adequate account of Aristotle's overall reasons for presenting katharsis in the first place (Aristotle does not use the term in his *Ethics*) and for presenting it in the way he does. Sparshott complains:

Neither the amount of scholarly discussion of what Aristotle meant or should have meant or the prominence of the term katharsis in our less formal discourse bears any reasonable proportion to the part it plays in Aristotle's treatise: katharsis is invoked once, in a subordinate clause for which nothing prepares us, which is not explained, and which is not referred to in the rest of the *Poetics*. There is something
absurd in devoting such reams of exegesis to what has the air of a passing comment. ¹

Sparshott extends this type of questioning to the actual text of the Poetics and asks “why Aristotle should have written an Art of Poetry at all, and why, in doing so, he should have paid special attention to the already moribund genre of tragedy” (Sparshott, pp. 20-21). The only plausible answer says Sparshott is that Aristotle “wished to rebut Plato’s attack on tragedy in Republic, Book 10, an attack that formed part of Plato’s critique of the moral and intellectual bases of Greek institutions” (Sparshott, p. 21). Looking at Aristotle in this light, it appears that his general policy was to subvert “Platonism from within, preserving its values while demolishing its other-worldly bias and thereby discrediting its denunciation of existing Greek practice” (p. 21).

Plato’s main objection to tragedy was that it lacked contact with “truth” — that is, as the context shows, with the clarification of moral concepts. The Poetics as a whole can be taken as a many-sided response to that objection from a thinker who does not believe that such clarification can effectively be achieved by talking. But the katharsis clause, as usually understood, responds to a specific charge within Plato’s general polemic: that by their vicarious grief at tragic performances the spectators get into the habit of indulging their emotions, so that the effect of being emotionally

moved in the theatre is to make one a more emotional and therefore a less rational person (*Republic* 605B-606D). The claim that through pity tragic imitation purges or purifies pity gives the lie direct to Plato's thesis that “If one nurtures and strengthens one's pitying tendency in the affairs of others, it is not easy to restrain it in one's own misfortunes” (606B). (p. 21)

Sparshott further isolates the Plato/Aristotle dispute in a passage from Plato's *Phaedo*. In this passage (from Chapter 13 [68B-69E]) Socrates talks of the “vulgar 'virtue' whereby people are rendered brave by a cowardly fear of disgrace, and are temperate in their desires so that their desires can be best gratified in the long run” (Sparshott, p. 22). Sparshott finds parallels in the language of the Aristotle katharsis passage and this passage in which Socrates talks of “a sort of katharsis of all such things” (69B 9-10 Burnet). Sparshott concludes:

If Aristotle's katharsis clause was written with this passage in mind, the implication is that it is not through intellectual attainments that katharsis is brought to fear and the like. Plato's condemnation of the internal dialectic that he discerns operating in the demonic virtues is misplaced. It is, indeed, only through emotion that emotion is purified, only through fear that the katharsis of fear is effected. And it is tragedy that does it. (Sparshott, p. 23)

This view of katharsis is to be called polemical rather than ethical, according to Sparshott, because of Aristotle's intentions (p. 24). Sparshott
suggests that the *Poetics* should be viewed as a defence of the social value of tragedy and that with respect to katharsis Aristotle

has told us, at most, that tragedy does (no doubt temporarily and superficially, but for everyone) the sort of thing that Plato hoped would be done (permanently and fundamentally, but for a few people) by a lifetime devoted to philosophy. This is all he has told us, and we have no reason to think he had anything else to tell us. (p. 26)

Of course Sparshott is happy to see all the accumulated meanings of katharsis remain. He sees the most fruitful approach to be an exploration of “all the kinds of katharsis a fourth-century mind could have envisaged, and all the ways they might be involved in the structure and experience of what Aristotle thought of as tragedy” (p. 26). His stress on the intentional and polemical aspects of the katharsis passage is designed to highlight the cultural value of tragedy as an experience: katharsis becomes the experiential vehicle of this cultural value.

Looked at in Sparshott's way, katharsis acquires both a cultural value and an aesthetic function: katharsis can then be seen as both the structural evidence of the cognitive value (pleasure) of tragedy and as the emotional evidence (audience response) of the cultural value of the play. Taking Dufrenne's proposition of the affective *a priori*, we can allow cognitive value to the “emotional dynamics” and emotional value to the “cognitive pleasure” of tragedy (Sparshott, p. 20).
What Sparshott has done is to relieve the argument of excessive “over-determination” and permit boundaries to the argument that account for the dynamics of Aristotle's views. In doing so, however, he still leaves the overall question of the specific value of katharsis as obscure as before. The structuralist views of Else and others simply internalize the purification/purgation theme and in doing so do not arrive at an aesthetic view of katharsis that grounds the term within literature. The same can be said of the traditional views in that they rely on the purgation/purification theme to account for the specific affect of tragedy.

Having united these views in a grand polemical sweep, we still need to answer the perhaps elementary question: “what is there in katharsis that can be called ‘aesthetic’?”

This question is the subject of Eva Schaper's article, “Aristotle's Catharsis and Aesthetic Pleasure”. Schaper, in dealing with what might be called the “rhetoric of tragedy”, makes several obvious and therefore important points. One is: “Catharsis can only happen to someone who in the presence of a work of art accepts the role of an aesthetic spectator” (p. 140). A second is summed up: “In all enjoyment of art we find a response to something which is presented to us and not actually lived through by us as agents. All aesthetic enjoyment involves us thus as spectators” (p. 141). This relationship of “intentional spectator” to

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aesthetic object is clearly shown in the distinctions drawn between the two experiences of music in Sartre's *Nausea* mentioned above. When the relationship is not maintained at the intentional level, the aesthetic experience is denied. In terms of Dufrenne's three levels we may say that the spectator has willed a shift from one to the other when taking up the aesthetic attitude and also when denying it. The refusal to feel, as Dufrenne points out, is just as perverse as the refusal to see. Distortions of perception that are willed at the cognitive level can be compared with willed distortions at the affective level.

That there are cognitive aspects as well as emotional aspects to the affective qualities of tragedy has been explored above; the fact that these cognitive aspects do not necessarily spring to mind simultaneously with the emotional reception does not imply that the consequences of this cognitive “adding up” of events is not known. The affect is felt, says Schaper, “with peculiar intensity” (p. 140). This “peculiar intensity” and this mixture of intellectual reception of and emotional response to the tragedy can only be called “an aesthetic response, and it is in this sense that ‘aesthetic emotion’ and ‘aesthetic understanding’ indicate the same phenomenon” (p. 140).

Schaper considers Aristotle’s katharsis to be purely aesthetic:

For Aristotle, catharsis is the response to an imitation, to that which is presented as if it were real, to that which is convincing and probable despite not being fact, to that
which is complete in itself by virtue of conforming to some formal principles of art. “Catharsis”, then, is a term of aesthetics and not of psychology. (p. 141)

While this may appear to be a unmysterious version of katharsis, Schaper’s real interest is in subjecting the mystery of “aesthetic pleasure” to critical scrutiny. In reconstructing the debate between Aristotle and Plato on katharsis, she points out each philosopher’s different sourcing of the emotion experienced by a spectator:

Plato believed that the emotions felt in the presence of art were emotions shared and emotions imitated, emotions somehow handed over by the poem to the audience. For Aristotle the emotions which are undoubtedly felt are emotions created. According to him we do not simply take over or copy the emotions which are fictionally presented to us; we respond to the total structure of fictional events with emotions of our own, not with emotions caught by infection. Such emotions bring about the cathartic transformation of felt involvement into aesthetic joy. (p. 142)

This clear description of the structuralist view seeks to incorporate the rhetoric of the aesthetic experience into an understanding of the nature of the affective. Having relieved katharsis of its extra-aesthetic aspects, Schaper extends the domain of the term to other forms of art. As a genuinely aesthetic term, that is, one that arises in and is limited by the
aesthetic experience, katharsis becomes available for use with other genres, not as a psychological term (describing the release of emotions, or the cleansing of emotions), but as a term of aesthetics that can assist in the description of any particular genre. Schaper does not fully develop this aspect of her argument; she states the possibility.¹

The basic limitation placed on this development is the necessity to describe the devices of each genre that permit katharsis and the emotions which “transmit” the experience. It may well be that katharsis, while being of value in the understanding of other art forms, has its greatest value in the understanding of tragedy. Schaper writes:

Tragic catharsis, catharsis through pity and fear, provides the most poignant instance of a cathartic effect. It shows in a very striking form what is at stake in the enjoyment of any work of art: that the emotions felt by audiences or spectators and the complex reactions to fiction are functions of the work qua work, that is to say, bound up with the formal nature of the artefact. In art forms other than tragedy, catharsis is effected through other emotions of response, for other art forms not only employ other devices, but in their fictional statements are concerned with other aspects of human life. (p. 141)

¹ Frye comments: ‘‘The principles of catharsis in other fictional forms than tragedy, such as comedy or satire, were not worked out by Aristotle, and have therefore never been worked out since’’ (Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957) p. 66). This thesis aims to work out principles for the other broad genres. Frye's comment stimulated the search for the connections between kenosis and the lyric. It then became theoretically attractive to find a further affective term for Aristotle's third genre.
Again and again, pity and fear are turned to as if talking of these two emotions will somehow overcome the difficulties of accounting for the structure of katharsis as an affective category. The limited range of Aristotle's “emotions of response” to the tragic has often been noted. Why should Aristotle feature pity and fear over other emotions and why should these two emotions be seen as the “emotions of response” that effect the katharsis? Many other emotions are experienced, no less important in their aesthetic function. Returning to Sparshott's views and to the Republic, it becomes apparent that Aristotle, in making his claims for the katharsis of tragedy, was making the best possible case rather than the only possible case against Plato's views.

In the Republic Plato charges the comic, the epic and the lyric with being no less culpable than tragedy. He specifically talks of vulgarity, humour, sex and violence as examples of themes and styles that promote emotional experiences in literature (606). Through the involvement of what Plato referred to as the dimension of the irrational within the aesthetic experience, literature is affective, in all its genres. In his Politics, Aristotle, we remember, talks of “feelings of any kind” being purged by the kathartic affect of music. Each genre calls on a wide range of emotions. It is not the precise definition of emotions that is important (in this context), but rather the affect that is effected. Pity and fear, as such, do not produce katharsis nor do they produce the tragic. A critic would
not feel it inappropriate to talk of katharsis simply because no evidence for fear and/or pity could be found in a particular work. Equally, a critic might feel it appropriate to talk of katharsis where a tragic event and the emotions of pity and fear were all absent; the promotion and release of emotions experienced through humour and the promotion and release of sexuality through vulgarity are illustrations of the kathartic nature of the comic genre. While Aristotle outlines katharsis as the affect of the tragic, he could have applied katharsis as the affective experience of the broad genre of drama itself. Such a view will be put forward in terms of the interpreted genres in the following chapter.

It is to another genre that we must turn next, but before proceeding to deal with the lyric some comparison must be made between kenosis and katharsis. In his *Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrop Frye, in dealing with his distinction between literature as product (aesthetic) and literature as process (creative), points to a distinction between the views of Aristotle and Longinus. This distinction corresponds to a further distinction, that between the fictional and the thematic. Frye writes:

For Aristotle, the poem is a *techne* or aesthetic artifact: he is, as a critic, mainly interested in the more objective fictional forms, and his central concept of catharsis. Catharsis implies the detachment of the spectator, both from the work of art itself and from the author. (p. 66)
In the case of Longinus and the thematic aspects Frye notes:

the external relation between author and reader becomes more prominent, and when it does, the emotions of pity and terror are involved or contained rather than purged. In catharsis the emotions are purged by being attached to objects; where they are involved with the response they are unattached and remain prior conditions in the mind. (p. 66)

This last distinction (between the purging and the containing of the pity and terror) is developed in a rather ingenious way by Frye to further his primary distinction and also, one feels, to complete a “pretty pattern”.¹ Without disputing Frye's pattern we can move on to his final differentiation between Aristotle and Longinus, a distinction between the concept of katharsis and that of ecstasis:

Just as catharsis is the central conception of the Aristotelian approach to literature, so ecstasis or absorption is the central conception of the Longinian approach. This is a state of identification in which the reader, the poem, and sometimes, at least ideally, the poet also, are involved. We say reader, because the Longinian conception is primarily that of a thematic or individualized response: it is more useful for lyrics, just as the Aristotelian one is more useful for plays. (p. 67)

¹ This “pretty pattern” is given more extensive treatment in Frye's *Fables of Identity* in the chapter “Towards Defining an Age of Sensibility” (pp. 130-37).
Accepting that a process involves a product and equally that a product involves a process, and that the fictional implies the thematic and the thematic the fictional, Frye's distinctions make a great deal of sense in this present context. We cannot simply remove the term "ecstasis" and supply "kenosis", despite the temptation. Frye's distinction between process and product does, however, offer a real opportunity to distinguish katharsis from kenosis.

On the question of product versus process Dufrenne utilises Scheler's notion of "goods":

When a value is only an accessory quality in an object, the object has, so to speak, no personality of its own. It is mere Sache, not a Ding. In contrast, when the object is "constituted" or "unified" by a value — "thoroughly permeated" by a value — it is a good. But a good reverts to the status of a thing if the value in it is for any reason devalued. (pp. 446-47)

Here the value of the product is determined by the process of valuation. The reader/spectator constitutes the product as the work itself is constituted. If the reciprocal relationship breaks down, then the product loses its value and becomes "mere Sache". While Frye is not dealing with "value" at this point it is important to note the intentional aspect of his terms.
Let us relate katharsis to product and kenosis to a process that does not come to a resolution. In this equation how can we account for ecstasis or absorption? Inasmuch as katharsis can be seen as the product of a process (the transformation of the emotions of pity and fear through their attachment to objects (incidents)), we might wish to say that ecstasis is the product of a process (the containment of the terror and pity through the failure to attach and the consequent identification with the thematic). Katharsis and ecstasis are, in their manner of functioning, as the final outcome of a process, equivalent. Both may be determined as the emotional effect of the affective aspects of their different forms. In this distinction we would be saying: “As the tragic produces the experience of katharsis, so the lyric produces the experience of ecstasis”. Through these distinctions it will become apparent that kenosis is not, in its manner of functioning, identical with either of these two terms. Equally it will become apparent that kenosis is the more appropriate term to use if one wishes to maintain the distinction between process and product that Frye makes.

We have already noted how Hegel is able to take up kenosis as an equivalent for his dialectic. In addition his version of katharsis discloses the very distinction being made here. Hegel identifies katharsis as a moment in the process, that is, as a stage of recognition in the historical process of the “false one-sidedness” of individual “aims and
passions” and as an opportunity for the showing of “eternal justice” (Aesthetics, II. 1198-199). This showing, as described by Hegel, is vaguely dialectical: the “false one-sidedness” is stripped away “while the positive elements . . . [arising from the true volition of individuals in conflict are displayed in tragedy] as what is to be retained, without discord but affirmatively harmonized” (II. 1199). Hegel's description of the stripping away of false one-sidedness converts katharsis into an ethical emetic. The larger movement, the restoration of the “naturally harmonious ethical powers”, is what is said by Hegel to produce this effect:

   in the case of Aristotle's dictum we must therefore fix our eyes not on the mere feelings of pity and fear but on the nature of the subject-matter which by its artistic appearance is to purify these feelings. (II. 1197)

The “subject-matter” is of prime interest to Hegel when discussing katharsis. In the case of kenosis, by way of contrast, it is the process of incarnation itself that is the centre of Hegel's dialectical interest. This distinction, as well as revealing Hegel's single-minded pursuit of the dialectic, is an indication of the clear difference in the manners in which kenosis and katharsis function. Kenosis is a process; katharsis is a product. Frye's distinction could, therefore, be better served with kenosis as the central concept rather than ecstasis. Ecstasis, or absorption, could then be seen as a product of the process of kenosis, or a moment in the process that has been raised to the level of central conceptual importance
precisely because it attracts a similar affective response. As an effect of the aesthetic object (creation) it is a moment readily open to observation by self and others. It draws attention to itself as the central response to a process.

This is not to deny that kenosis also produces: the incarnation is the obvious product of the process, but this incarnation is itself bound up in the total redemptive pattern and thus implies a consequence that ultimately negates (qualifies through its negativity) the product. In the kenotic process the self which is emptied becomes the new self which is to be emptied which in turns becomes the self which becomes the Self which is empty; the very achievement of product is the final consequence and therefore negation of the process. As Herakleitos says: “Even the posset separates if it is not stirred”.¹

Sartre's Roquentin gives us the opportunity to observe how intertwined these terms become in the attempt to account for the phenomenology of the aesthetic experience. We remember that Roquentin’s earlier attempts at a kind of katharsis through music failed because of his denial of the relationship of audience to a work of art. His subsequent success illustrates the appropriate rhetoric. In this successful katharsis Roquentin achieves a certain level of identification with the piece of jazz that could be accounted as absorption. Absorption

leads to a treatment of art as process, a process that through its power to achieve being (absorption) leads to the identification of the listener/audience with the artist. Frye's “ideal” is achieved through the identification of receiver with producer or creator with creator. Roquentin's monologue also clarifies the existential process which makes identification possible:

And I too have wanted to be. Indeed I have never wanted anything else; that's what lay at the bottom of my life: behind all these attempts which seemed unconnected, I find the same desire: to drive existence out of me, to empty the moments of their fat, to wring them, to dry them, to purify myself, to harden myself, to produce in short the sharp, precise sound of a saxophone note. (p. 248)

The product, the note, is itself the source of the desire to produce, through its being experienced in this emptied and purified state.

The aesthetic experience here is typified by the totality of this process: Roquentin is describing what in this thesis is called the transposed or aesthetic kenosis. His earlier, failed attempt was not a failure as a katharsis; he was purified momentarily; he did achieve the experience of the aesthetic taking over: “the world vanishes, the world of existences” (p. 149). His need to overcome this aesthetic distance produced a return to normality. Sparshott considers such a return the ultimate outcome of the Aristotelian katharsis, and contrasts its outcome
to the Platonic katharsis of wisdom, which he considers as deeper and more abiding in its effect. The transformation implicit in the tragic katharsis is explicit in the case of Plato's view of wisdom: for Plato the self is changed through the acquiring of wisdom, whereas (following Sparshott) in tragic katharsis the emotions are altered momentarily. Roquentin's second katharsis is transformational or Platonic. He finds the garden of normality a thorny place. The garden of being he experiences as a being-at-home in the world. When the garden of normality is restored, it is transformed by this experience of being. Along with the emotion experienced Roquentin has also experienced a transformation in his attitude to reality and in his understanding of existence as a process.

The precise functioning of this aesthetic kenosis, as an affective process in relation to the lyric, is the subject of the following chapter.
In his *Poetics*, Aristotle has little to say of the genre of the lyric. His scant references to such a large and well recognised form of poetry could well be the result of lost parts of the text of his *Poetics*, but this appears an unlikely answer. As W.R. Johnson says in his book *The Idea of Lyric*:

> when the superiority of tragedy over epic has been so elaborately and so cunningly demonstrated (1461a-1462b), it is unlikely that lyric could have garnered anything but the crumbs of his [Aristotle's] praise.¹

In the absence of comments one way or the other, we may speculate, as does Johnson, about the possible attitude of Aristotle to the lyric genre and the possible reasons for this attitude. The significance of such speculation is, of course, dependent on its value not to Aristotle's *Poetics*, but its value to the present discussion.

As has already been argued in the previous chapter, the battle between Aristotle and Plato is of continuous importance to our reading

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of Aristotle. His assertion of the cognitive value of mimesis (Poetics 1448b) and the cognitive value of poetry (1451b) clearly distinguishes his aesthetics from Plato's. But, as pointed out in the previous chapter, Aristotle's views on katharsis still leave the domain of the aesthetic in a secondary position; the transformation achieved through the acquiring of philosophic wisdom is still superior to the momentary relief and insight of katharsis; philosophy retains its pride of place.

While Aristotle takes Plato to task over the value of artistic imitation, he nonetheless maintains the status quo. At the very point where Aristotle might have been able to put forward an elaborate and forceful argument for the superiority of the lyric genre (through its ability to imitate a more permanent and radical form of moral awareness; perhaps even its ability to imitate/create the patterns of Plato's much loved wisdom), his radical programme seems to have failed: the master-student relationship remains. Aristotle, no less than Plato, fails to see the essentially moral nature of the lyric genre and so both moralists miss the opportunity of disclosing what in this thesis is called kenosis. Such a shift to inwardness had to wait until the Romantics.

Johnson's perceptions about Aristotle's "failure" to recognise the value of the lyric deserve to be quoted at length:

One thing about the nature of poetry that moderns have steadily recognized and that ancients could not recognize is
the significance, the importance, of the inner stories that personal lyric imitates. Aristotle, perhaps, did not see that Sappho also is imitating a human action, or he thought that the action she imitated (whether her own or that of an imagined person — “When I state myself,” said Dickinson, “as the Representative of the Verse — it does not mean — me — but a supposed person”) was too insignificant, too “merely personal,” to be the vehicle of the anagnorisis (“recognition”) and the peripeteia (“sudden change in fortune”) that make manifest hoiaan genoito (“what may be”) — such things as may possibly occur any place, any time. But “He is a god in my eyes,” [Sappho] fragile and ephemeral as the action it imitates might seem, catches and holds the light of things as they are, everywhere, always, as surely as does the Iliad or the Antigone. It differs from an epic or a tragedy in its dimensions and range; but it needs offer no apologies for its intensity or its profundity or its own moral grandeur. Aristotle’s passion for order led him, it seems, to prefer the concentration of drama to the (to him) uncontrolled sprawl of epic; but, so far as one can judge, his earnestness precluded his appreciating both the earnestness and the concentration of personal lyric. (pp. 82-3)

The truth in this argument becomes clear when we take an example from Greek literature that in itself throws into relief the three genres under dispute. Many passages could serve this present purpose but the one chosen has a particular value for this argument in that “point of

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view”, “action” and “theme” as separable aspects of the three genres of epic, dramatic and lyric respectively, are, in the example offered here, of equal value.

In Book XXIV of Homer's *Iliad* we witness Priam's pleading with Achilleus for the corpse of his son, Hektor. Priam urges Achilleus to

> remember your father, one who is of years like mine, and on the door-sill of sorrowful old age. And they who dwell nearby encompass him and afflict him, nor is there any to defend him against the wrath, the destruction. Yet surely he, when he hears of you and that you are still living, is gladdened within his heart and all his days are hopeful that he will see his beloved son come home from the Troad. But for me, my destiny was evil.

(Bk. XXIV, 486-493)

Priam finishes his appeal with a declaration that he has “gone through what no other mortal on earth has gone through" (505), and yet, and as proof of the originality of his suffering, he kisses the hand of the man who killed his children (506). Priam huddles at the feet of Achilleus and weeps for Hektor. In response Achilleus weeps for the memory of his father and for the death of Patroklos. He praises Priam and reflects:

> Such is the way the gods spun life for unfortunate mortals, that we live in unhappiness, but the gods themselves have no sorrows. There are two urns that stand on the door-sill

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of Zeus. They are unlike for the gifts they bestow: an urn of evils, an urn of blessings. (525-28)

Treated as an example of a lyric, these passages throw the stress onto questions of identity. Such a stress is more appropriate than emphasising either the realization of an action that in itself reveals the foundation of ethics in an action-based epistemology (Plato/Aristotle on both wisdom and the tragic) or a point of view about reality that reveals an eternal truth (epic). The intensity or concentration that Aristotle looked for in the tragic is certainly here, but the concentration is achieved through the devices of the lyric. The I-You identification that permits the novel actions of both actors is an identification that is typical of the Greek lyric. Johnson writes:

The most usual mode in Greek lyric (probably) and in Latin lyric (certainly) was to address the poem (in Greek, the song) to another person or to other persons. What this typical lyric form points to is the conditions and the purposes of song: the presence of the singer before his audience; his re-creation of universal emotions in a specific context, a compressed, stylized story (I love you, hate you; You, I, We feel awe in the face of the hero's splendour as we feel awe at the gods who bestow this splendour); and, finally, the sharing, the inter-change of these emotions by singer and audience. The specific context, the fiction of I and You and their situation of discourse, concretizes the universal, makes it perceptible and makes it singable. (p. 4)
Johnson spends a great deal of time in his book following the fate of lyric pronouns through the history of the genre. It is from his stress on “the pronominal form and lyric identity, the dynamic configuration of lyrical pronouns that defines and vitalizes the situation of lyrical discourse” (p. 23) that my treatment of the lyric as a “discourse of identity” arises. The shift in attitude towards an I-You discourse in lyric poetry that Johnson charts is extremely interesting and shows the value of an historical approach to genre. While the “you” may have left the page and T.S. Eliot may plead for a voice talking “his own thoughts and sentiments to himself or to no one” (Johnson, p. 1), and while Johnson may read Sylvia Plath's lyrics as examples of “the death of lyric” (p. 21), I share his faith in the “renascence of lyric identity and its pronouns” (p. 22). Further, I would argue for the persistence of the I-You relationship in such cases as Eliot's and Plath's, where the I has swollen or been dissolved.

Priam has to invent the discourse, the “fiction of I and You”, by taking on the role of the suppliant (“But now Priam spoke to him in the words of a suppliant” (485)). He has to establish, through the universal emotions he evidences, his right to create a new action, his right to beg and receive his son's fallen body. In so creating the new I-You context, Priam extends the domain of the lyric moment to the furthest possible moral boundaries: he involves the enemy in this discourse and thereby achieves a moral and psychological universality that stands out as a major achievement of the *Iliad*. 
The reply by Achilleus is no less original. How could it be otherwise if this new discourse is to succeed? The giving of the body is not here the lyric achievement of Achilleus; his lyric achievement is his realization in memory/imagination of his oneness with the situation of Priam. He replies in kind, which is to say he certifies the I-You relationship invoked by Priam, in spite of the cultural restraints that would deny such a lyrical empathy being possible between enemies. The identification of their common sufferings transcends the role of suppliant that Priam initially took on and through this identification Priam's request for the body of Hektor can be met.¹

Achilleus has recognised the universal between himself and Priam. He experiences a sudden change of fortune as a result of this recognition and through this change in fortune Achilleus' understanding of what may be is extended, even if only marginally. He attributes the audacity of Priam's request to the protection of "some god" (564), which is the same as saying Priam's action is a part of "such things as may possibly occur any place, any time" (Johnson, p. 83). The ironic failure of Achilleus to build from this identification with Priam a larger understanding of his own personal and impending tragedy is a feature of Homer's methods.

¹ The Christmas cease fire in World War I could also be looked upon in a similar light. The universalization of the battle-field is there realized in a moment of lyric intensity.
rather than Achilleus' personality, though this too is a possible reading. Achilleus quickly puts Priam back in the role of suppliant (570) and, as if to seal the lyric moment, he discounts the further pleadings of Priam telling the old man, “No longer stir me up, old sir. I myself am minded/ to give Hektor back to you” (560-1). This defence of the lyric moment of identification is then both an assertion of the intensity and validity of the moment of recognition and, as well, a dramatic recovery of the story by Homer after an awesome cameo.

We may look upon the weeping of both men in this scene as a kind of katharsis and so we can view the scene as a miniature Aristotelian tragedy. All it lacks is an externalised action of some magnitude (the giving up of Hektor's body would do). But such a reading requires that we deny the centrality of the I-You relationship and the centrality of the common recognition of this I-You relationship. As a dialogue it is closer to the answering sonnets of Shakespeare's characters, Romeo and Juliet, than it is to line-swapping interchanges in Greek tragedy. Both men speak their lyrics and share the roles of speaker and listener.

Through this identification of speaker and listener we may return to Frye's notion, taken from Longinus, of the "thematic or individualized response" (Frye, p. 67 ). Priam and Achilleus are both absorbed briefly in the lyric moment. Their ecstasis arises precisely as a result of their failure to maintain an objective distance (the distance here of enemies)
and the containment or involvement of their pity and fear. Their weeping does not evidence a katharsis; it rather evidences the intensification of their awareness, as individuals, of their respective and separate roles in the drama of life. Weeping together, they nonetheless weep apart and their sharing in the understanding of human mortality and wretchedness does not relieve them of their individual sufferings; their joint witnessing of each other has its own psychological efficacy. Emptied of their roles as enemies, they are immediately realised in their roles as members of families. Through this common kenosis they experience a deeper lyrical (thematic) understanding of self, family and others.

The keeping and involving of the fear and pity is a typical feature of the kenotic process: the emotions are not expelled or cleansed; they are incorporated in the new identity and stand as evidence of the new identity. Such evidencing obviously leads to the possible situation of false evidencing and the simulated kenotic process of the confessional.²

So far it has been assumed that what is meant here by lyric is understood. Further investigations of the kenotic function of the lyric will require a definition of lyric that is more critical and comprehensive. What follows is a brief history of the term “lyric” that enables its potential relationship to the term “kenosis”, once transposed to aesthetics, to be realised. This history is heavily indebted to the work of William Elford

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² This idea is treated in detail via Julia Kristeva’s notion of the ‘abject’ in Chapter Six.
Rogers' *The Three Genres and the Interpretation of Lyric*, but it ends in a critique of Rogers' model of the lyric. From this critique will emerge what might best be described as an expanded model, a model capable of dealing with affective relationships and of supporting a notion of aesthetic kenosis.

There is little difficulty in finding descriptions of the lyric that will assist in the present project. The views of the Romantics on the lyric and katharsis given in Chapter Two already point the way towards the heightened subjective state that first comes to mind when kenosis is mentioned. Better and worse versions can be found; the better ones seek to integrate the subjective aspects of the lyric genre within a large philosophic scheme. Hegel for example has this to say of Romantic poetry:

Poetry, the art of speech, is the third term, the totality, which unites in itself, within the province of the spiritual inner life and on a higher level, the two extremes, i.e. the visual arts and music. For, on the one hand, poetry, like music, contains that principle of the self-apprehension of the inner life as inner, which architecture, sculpture, and painting lack; while, on the other hand, in the very field of inner ideas, perceptions, and feelings it broadens out into an objective world which does not altogether lose the determinate character of sculpture and painting. Finally, poetry is more capable than any other art of completely

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unfolding the totality of an event, a successive series and the changes of the heart's movements, passions, ideas, and the complete course of an action. (Aesthetics, Vol II. p. 960)

Here Hegel is dealing with all three genres lyric, epic, and tragic. Later in this work he distinguishes these genres: and has this to say of the lyric:

Its content is not the object but the subject, the inner world, the mind that considers and feels, that instead of proceeding to action, remains alone with itself as inwardness, and that therefore can take as its sole form and final aim the self-expression of the subjective life. Here therefore there is no substantive whole unfolded as external happenings; on the contrary, it is the intuition, feeling, and meditation of the introverted individual, apprehending everything singly and in isolation, which communicate even what is most substantive and material as their own, as their passion, mood, or reflection, and as the present product of these. (II. p. 1038)

Hegel, following Aristotle, gives pride of place to the drama but his reasoning is very much in the Romantic vein. Because of its ability to deal with the internal as an externalized realization, the dramatic can unite the lyric and the epic. This union also reveals the relation of the individual to others:

in drama, as in lyric, the character, on the one hand, should express as his own the whole burden of his inner life, but
on the other hand he reveals himself effectively in his actual existence as one entire person related to others; therein he directs action outwards and therefore immediately adds the gestures which, just as much as speech, are a language of the inner life, demanding artistic treatment. (p. 1039)

Hegel here makes a major advance on the views of Aristotle and Milton by allowing that the acting is a vital part of the total action. He also adds the inner dimension which is the hallmark of the Romantic “advance”.

It is the direction of action outwards and the relation of one actor to others that is said to give the dramatic form its superiority. Hegel assumes, along with most Romantic critics, that the lyric is a purely inward experience and not part of a discourse of identity in which the I-You relationship is both founded and secured. The validity of this valuation is grounded on the presumption that the lyric is frequently read alone and in silence and is likewise written alone and in silence. But, as we remember, Aristotle and Milton both allowed that the tragic effect was to be found in the text of the play, which at the least allows for the reader to reconstruct or construct the required relationships between characters in isolation. A similar textual efficacy is surely to be granted to the lyric: in the reading of a lyric, regardless of the pronominal state of the poem, the I-You discourse is more than implied, it is taken for granted, if only in the means of putting the poem in the world. There is
never a voice that speaks to itself alone, since to speak is to speak out. The dislocation of the focus of this speaking out, so that the You of the I is not obvious in the speaking, is a feature of a disguised dialogue; it is a speaking past the one addressed. Such speech draws attention to the structure of the speech rather than to the speaker. In the case of the monologue the relationship is different. Here the auditor is relieved of a response to the speaker as the person owning the speech. The auditor is not relieved of response to the speech as an instance of language.

In Aristotle’s *Poetics* we can clearly see the ethical points in his constructions; in Hegel's *Aesthetics* we can clearly see the metaphysical points in his constructions. Both men begin from positions of advantage that allow them to take overviews of the genres they are dealing with. Inasmuch as both men produce interesting descriptions, their views avoid the charge of being only normative and prescriptive. But their models of genres still attempt to define the general nature of literary types. In the case of Hegel, because his views are put forward as part of a larger metaphysics, his treatment of the lyric appears to be rewarding enough for the critic to overlook the generalizations. If, however, we look at a less pretentious model we can very readily observe the potential for inanity in this approach. In Barbara Hardy’s *The Advantage of Lyric: Essays on Feeling in Poetry* we read: “Lyric poetry isolates feeling in small compass and so renders it at its most intense. To say more about the form is to raise doubts and exceptions”.

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To say so little raises just as many, if not more, doubts and exceptions. Bypassing what he describes as “generalities of the tritest kind”, René Wellek (following Austin Warren) argues for the treatment of genre as a matter of convention. Conventions he sees as having “moulded” individual works of art importantly (p. 225). Rogers argues strongly against such views (Rogers, pp. 28-9). Wellek goes on to attack such usual attributes of the lyric as “the supposed intensity, inwardness, immediacy of an experience which can never be demonstrated as certain and can never be shown to be relevant to the quality of art” (Wellek, pp. 251-2). One can agree with this complaint about descriptive definitions and with the more serious attack raised by Wellek that much theory is made without any real “relation to actual poetry” (p. 238). In such theories the lyric is normally being explained as lyric in terms of another field of study such as theology or psychology or philosophy.

Since these are precisely the fields on which the present study draws, some defence of my approach is in order. The concept of kenosis comes from theology and appears to operate in a psychological way while carrying the burden of philosophic propositions. Whether these taints can ever be removed, or indeed need to be removed, will not be decided by theoretical assertions, unless those assertions offer a superior way of

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integrating the muddle of ideas that have historically congregated under the umbrella of “kenosis”. Similarly with the concept of the lyric, we must look for a way of utilizing the available descriptions without falling into generalizations that become prescriptions. The desideratum is a description that illuminates both the concept of kenosis and that of the lyric.

Rogers puts forward an eloquent defence of the three genres and in particular of the lyric. Starting from the premise that “we do not know how language is possible, and we would have to know that to give genre-concepts genuine metaphysical status”, Rogers accepts his genre definitions to be “valid only as models” (p. 11). He embraces the hermeneutic circle of Heidegger and others:

We are left, then, with the concept of interpretation as a making-explicit of what is already understood, and understood in a way that is either different from (Dilthey), or more fundamental than (Heidegger), cognitive scientific knowledge. (p. 17)

Following Rogers and Heidegger, we can look on the concepts of both the lyric and kenosis as parts of interpretive models that allow us to “make explicit our understanding of cultural objects”. We may go further, as Rogers does, and require of a model of the lyric that it be reflexive:
the interpretive model should help us to make explicit our understanding of literary genre itself. Genre-concepts must have a certain peculiar nature because of the nature of understanding itself. Understanding, as Dilthey often stresses, is always the understanding of a whole. The understanding of the literary work is also at the same time an understanding of its genre, and so the genre-concept in interpreting the work must also interpret itself. (p. 19)

Rogers argues that, following Heidegger's views on understanding, we can look on the understanding of both the genre and the work as “mutually constitutive; that is, we understand the work by understanding the genre, and we understand genre by understanding the work” (p. 20). The two logical traps or tautologies Rogers does wish to circumvent in his definition of genre are (1) that, “if understanding the work is the same as understanding the genre, why do we need separate genre-concepts at all?” and (2) that, if the genre-concept is made explicit before being used as an interpretive model, “will we not always be interpreting literary works in terms of something else, some model that has already been interpreted and made explicit?” (pp. 20-1). Rogers sets out to determine a genre-concept “such that (1) its employment does not already presuppose an explicit understanding of the literary work, and (2) the genre-concept, although initially explicit, is explicit in an `empty' way — that is, as a concept whose meaning cannot be filled out except in the act of interpretation itself” (p. 21). To satisfy these conditions Rogers' genre-concept has to become reflexive.
Before arriving at his own genre-concept, Rogers investigates the views of several other theorists. His treatment of Emil Staiger's theory is of particular interest. Staiger too follows Heidegger and takes from the existential notions of Time put forward by Heidegger. For Staiger “Lyric is associated with the past, epic with the present, and dramatic with the future” (p. 38). In Heidegger's philosophy, it must be remembered, these time categories are not what they are in everyday usage. Dasein in projecting itself into the future does so in terms of its possibilities. Its possibilities are determined by its past and its past is evident as that which Dasein has inescapably become and the circumstances into which Dasein has been “thrown”. The present is the precise situation in which Dasein can “realize some possibilities and avoid or renounce others” (Rogers, p. 37). Staiger, in accord with Heidegger, “associates the past with feeling: Dasein encounters its past most clearly by ‘finding itself’ in a state of mind, a feeling that is ‘given' and that shows what it has already become” (Rogers, p. 38). Looking at the three genres, Staiger declares the mode of the lyric to be recollection, the mode of the epic to be presentation and the mode of the drama to be tension or projection. Of interest here is Staiger's notion that in recollection there is “no time at all yet”, that the lyrical recollection is “absorbed in the momentary” (Rogers, p. 38). The concept of “absorption" in relation to the lyric we have already met; the sense of the momentary will appear later.
While Rogers takes issue with the overall metaphysical ambitions of Staiger's genre theory, he nonetheless sees an advance: "Staiger's crucial insight for a theory of interpretive models is that genre-concepts can be treated as relational concepts constitutive of understanding" (p. 41). Rogers follows Wellek in criticising Staiger for failure to relate his theories to actual poetry (Rogers, p. 37). In Staiger's system the "author's relation to the subject-matter is different in each case. It follows that the understanding reader's relation will also be different. Not only is the lyrical author concerned with feeling — he recollects his subject-matter (as does the understanding reader)" (pp. 40-1). While Staiger's model has advantages for both Rogers and Wellek, Staiger's model falls down for Rogers in that it does not "make explicit the concept of 'recollection' in the interpretation of the lyric" (p. 41). The concept of "recollection", as employed by Staiger, appears to operate with a pre-existing metaphysical value. This metaphysical value Rogers sees in the treatment of recollection by Staiger as

a fundamental possibility of one's existence to take up the relation of "recollection" towards things, but that does not mean that one's understanding of "recollection" is in any meaningful sense constituted by understanding the lyric. (p. 41)
Before proceeding further one should ask: “Does kenosis suffer from this complaint?” Is our understanding of kenosis “in any meaningful sense constituted by understanding the lyric”? Or is kenosis “a fundamental possibility of one's existence”? We might further enquire (as Rogers does) whether we are simply erecting kenosis as a heuristic concept that we expect to find. Such a heuristic concept would provide us with a descriptive concept and even perhaps a conventional concept, but it would not provide us with an interpretive concept (Rogers, p. 28).

Having found Staiger's theories wanting because his relational concepts are already interpreted within Heidegger's metaphysics, Rogers then proceeds to determine genre-concepts that are even more “empty” than Staiger's. For Rogers, Staiger's relational concepts are what Kant might call “empirical concepts, as opposed to a priori principles” (p. 41):

the relation of “recollection,” for example, is given as a relation in experience; we have the relation itself in our experience of one of the possible mental stances that we can assume toward things. A priori concepts in Kant's philosophy, on the other hand, by nature are not furnished with an intuition in experience, but instead are the conditions for the possibility of experience. Thus we do not directly intuit the relation between substance and accident, for example, though our conceptual knowledge that the sugar-bowl is white (indeed, our experience itself of a white sugar-bowl) presupposes the relation of substance and accident. (pp. 41-2)
To assist in his search for “empty” concepts, Rogers calls on Kant's categories:

The *a priori* concepts are what Kant, following Aristotle, calls the categories of thought. They seem to be the kind of concepts we are looking for. That is, these concepts are such that, although they initially have a purely logical meaning, they acquire genuine significance (for Kant, participate in genuine conceptual knowledge) only by their application to an object of experience . . . . (p. 42)

Rogers outlines Kant’s “doctrine of the categories of relation” (p. 44). Starting with the forms of judgement of Aristotelian logic (the categorical, the hypothetical, and the disjunctive), Kant elaborates a relational function of the understanding for each of the forms according to the manner by which they relate subject and predicate. For Kant the categorical judgement, which has four forms (all X are Y; no X are Y; some X are Y; some X are not Y), corresponds to the *a priori* relation of inherence and subsistence (substance and accident). For example, “in order to make the judgement `This sugar-bowl is white,' I have to represent to myself a something, a substance (the sugar-bowl) that is somehow the bearer of all the properties (such as whiteness) that inhere in it and through which I know it” (Rogers, p. 45). For Kant, this relation of substance to accident “is posited in every categorical judgment” (p. 46). In the hypothetical judgement (if X then Y) the
relation that is presupposed by the judgement is that of cause and effect or causality and dependence. While we may think it is experience that tells us “if there is smoke then there is fire”, there is nothing in experience that makes this causal relationship necessary; causality as a relationship is thus an a priori concept.

What is significant for our immediate purpose is the relation that Kant determines for the disjunctive judgement (either X or Y but not both). To this judgement Kant assigns the relation of community or reciprocity inasmuch as “community is the causality of substances reciprocally determining one another” (Kant, p. 116). Rogers explains: “the relation of community is thought of as the relation between parts in some whole that the parts taken together exhaust” (Rogers, p. 47). Kant acknowledges the obscurity of this last relational concept and he offers as compensation a quite detailed account:

Now in a whole which is made up of things . . . one thing is not subordinated, as effect, to another, as cause of its existence, but simultaneously and reciprocally, is coordinated with it, as cause of the determination of the other (as, for instance, in a body the parts of which reciprocally attract and repel each other). This is a quite different kind of connection from that which is found in the mere relation of cause to effect (of ground to consequence), for in the latter relation the consequence does not in its turn

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reciprocally determine the ground, and therefore does not constitute with it a whole — thus the world, for instance, does not with its Creator serve to constitute a whole. (Kant, p. 117)

While this passage makes sense enough of itself (it is the same passage Rogers offers), it is of assistance to offer the explanation given by Kant in his *Logic*.\(^2\)

Here Kant compares the categorical judgement with the disjunctive:

The following schema of comparing categorical with disjunctive judgments may illustrate that in disjunctive judgments the sphere of the divided concept is not considered as contained in the sphere of the divisions, but that what is contained under the divided concept is regarded as contained under one of the members of the division.

In categorical judgments, \(x\) that is contained under \(b\) is also contained under \(a\).

In disjunctive judgments, \(x\) that is contained under \(a\) is contained either under \(b\) or \(c\) etc.

The division in disjunctive judgments thus indicates the coordination not of the parts of the whole concept, but all the parts of its sphere. There I think many things through one concept; here one thing through many concepts, e.g.,

the definitum through all characteristics of coordination. (pp. 113-14)

The example Kant gives in Pure Reason is that “ `The world exists either through blind chance, or through inner necessity, or through an external cause'. Each of these propositions occupies a part of the sphere of the possible knowledge concerning the existence of a world in general; all of them together occupy the whole sphere” (p. 109).

While the a priori relational concepts are empty, they gain their “real significance" by being “interpreted (that is, talked about) in terms of the very experience that presupposes them" (Rogers, p. 47). In the “Transcendental Dialectic" Kant attacks the illusions and contradictions that arise when these concepts are used in the domain of “pure concepts of reason". As Kant writes in his Prolegomena:

As the psychological, cosmological and theological ideas are nothing but pure concepts of reason, which cannot be given in any experience, the questions which reason presents to us in respect of them are offered not through objects but through mere maxims of reason for the sake of its own self-satisfaction .

The first meeting between these “empty" concepts and the world of possible experience comes at the temporal level. We do not think of

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these concepts in relation to experience without involving time. So, substance becomes “permanent; its quantum in nature is neither increased nor diminished” (*Pure Reason*, p. 212). Causality takes on the temporal aspect of succession (p. 218). And community in Kant’s “Third Analogy” acquires the “Principle of Co-existence” (p. 233). To these three temporal terms Kant adds respectively three “dynamical relations, from which all others spring”: “inherence, consequence, and composition” (p. 236). While the first two are accounted for easily, the last, that of “composition”, is a little more difficult. In order to understand it we must first take account of the distinction that Kant draws within the meaning of his term “community”, even though the bearing of this distinction on the present argument will not become evident until later in this chapter. Kant writes:

The word community is in the German language ambiguous. It may mean either *communio* or *commercium*. We here employ it in the latter sense, as signifying a dynamical community, without which even local community (*communio spatii*) could never be empirically known. . . . Without community each perception of an appearance in space is broken off from every other, and the chain of empirical representations, that is, experience would have to begin entirely anew with each new object, without the least connection with the preceding representation, and without standing to it in any relation of time. . . . In our mind, all appearances, since they are contained in a possible experience, must stand in community (*communio*) of apperception . . . If this subjective community is to rest on
an objective ground . . . the perception of the one must as ground make possible the perception of the other, and reversewise — in order that the succession which is always found in the perceptions, as apprehensions, may not be ascribed to the objects, and in order that, on the contrary, these objects may be represented as coexisting. But this is a reciprocal influence, that is, a real community (*commercium*) of substances; without it the empirical relation of coexistence could not be met with in experience. (p. 236)¹

We see here in Kant's elaboration an example of the notion of reflexivity that Rogers' wishes to bring to his model. In order for Kant to interpret his category of community he must apply this category to possible experience. The physical example that Kant supplies for the above quotation is of special value in a later context but it serves here to illustrate the point. Kant writes: “The light, which plays between our eyes and the celestial bodies, produces a mediate community between us and them, and thereby shows us that they coexist” (p. 235). To make such a judgment about experience Kant must employ the category of community and in order to talk about the category of community Kant must talk about the application of the category to an experience. Arriving at this assessment, Rogers is happy to pronounce: “That circularity or reflexivity is exactly what makes the categories suitable as interpretive models applicable to genre-theory” (p. 48).

¹ Rogers does not include this distinction in his account of “community” and “coexistence.”
Having determined his categories, Rogers proceeds to associate the three traditional “broad genres”, epic, lyric and dramatic, with “the Kantian relational categories — substance, causality, and community, respectively”:

I shall maintain that an interpretation of a work is constituted by interpreting the relation between two certain entities said to be “in” the work, but actually arising only as a result of the interpretation itself. For the moment, I shall call those two entities by the open and problematic names of “mind” and “world.” To interpret a work as epic, then, I shall argue, is to interpret the relation between mind and world in the work as one of substance and accident; to interpret a work as dramatic is to interpret the relation in terms of causality; to interpret a work as lyric is to interpret that relation as one of community. (pp. 48-9)

The terms “mind” and “world” here are not given, by Rogers, the history that they perhaps deserve. Edward S. Casey, in his Translator's Foreword to Dufrenne's *Phenomenology*, when dealing with Dufrenne's use of a notion of the “world” of a work, points out the earlier use by Ingarden of such a notion as the “world of the work” which is then worked out, especially in Dufrenne's case, with a “mind” or rather “subject” relating, as a witness to this world, through alienation (p. xxvi). Both Ingarden and
Dufrenne are interested in spelling out what the “world of the work” is in itself; in this sense their notions are not similar to Rogers' concept which is only filled out in interpretation. Nonetheless their views are of value when they treat the relationship between their “world” and an audience. When Ricoeur, in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* deals with the “world of the text”, he deflects attention to the work's reception: “to interpret is to explicate the type of being-in-the-world unfolded in front of the text”.2 Ricoeur's stress on being-in-the-world allows for the dynamic relationships established by Rogers.

It would appear possible to substitute for Rogers' two terms (mind and world) either the two terms of Hegel's metaphysical explanation of genre (subject and object) or the two terms of existential phenomenology (self and other). This last set especially points the way towards a substitution of the whole process of kenosis for Rogers' two terms. In his critique of Hegel's model, however, Rogers writes:

Hegel presents the concepts of “subject” and “object” as ultimate metaphysical principles, valid in the same way for the creator and for the interpreter. Thus . . . genres are explained in terms of something other than the works themselves. We borrow concepts made explicit in metaphysical interpretation and apply those concepts to literary works. Again, the genre-concepts thus derived are

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not interpretive in the sense of helping us to make explicit our understanding of the work. To apply genre-concepts based on the concepts of “subject” and “object,” we must first make explicit our understanding of the literary work. (p. 36)

Thus the problem remains: while ever the terms are not filled out in the interpretation of the literary work, they remain exterior to the work; there is no need for an interpretation of the lyric in order to explain the relationship between subject and object, or self and other. Rogers points out that his categories too could be erected “into ultimate metaphysical principles, derived philosophically from experience or from abstract thought, to be used for ‘defining’ things” (p. 75). He allows that his model, used improperly in these ways, might still be not “significantly worse (or better) than the other genre-theories springing from similar motivations” (p. 76). What would be lost by such an approach would be the interpretive model. The two-sidedness remains while ever it is possible to “operate” the model in two different ways, but Rogers is to be praised for his courage and insistence:

Only inasmuch as we are prepared to allow our genre-concepts themselves to remain problematic, to be fully interpretable only in terms of each individual work, can we say that we have genre-concepts compatible with a satisfactory interpretive model. (p. 76)
Having established the structure of mind and world in each genre through Kant's relational concepts, Rogers illustrates similar examples of mind and world relationships from other philosophers: “Descartes, for example, uses the substance-attribute vocabulary to talk about the mind, and the world as it appears in the mind . . .”; “John Locke, on the other hand, as an empiricist at times seems to hold that world causes mind when sense-impressions cause thought” (p. 49).

For his example of the third relationship Rogers cites Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms* and Merleau-Ponty's views on the relation between the subject of sensation and the sensible. These supporting views show that the stress on reciprocity and simultaneity in Rogers' theory is not, by any means, a new or unusual feature of views on the lyric genre or of aesthetic experience in general. Rogers quotes Cassirer talking of Wilhelm von Humboldt's views on language:

> what language designates and expresses is neither exclusively subjective nor exclusively objective; it effects a new mediation, a particular reciprocal relation between the two factors. . . . language arises where the two ends are joined, so creating a new synthesis of “I” and “world”.

In terms of the immediate nature of experience Rogers quotes Merleau-Ponty's views on sensation as “`a transaction between the

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subject of sensation and the sensible,' where `it cannot be held that one acts while the other suffers the action'; instead, `The sensible gives back to me what I lent to it, but this is only what I took from it in the first place' " (Rogers, p. 50). Such an interchange upholds Rogers' views on the reciprocal relation between subject and object in the world of the lyric, and also supports the views on the affective argued in the previous chapter: effect and affect are reciprocally related.

Rogers tops off these discrete or singular models by comparing all three relational concepts with “Dilthey's theory of the Weltanschauungen" or world-views. Dilthey follows the triple structure of Kant and arrives at three world views the last of which is of interest here, what Dilthey describes as “Objective idealism". In this world-view, Dilthey says, “we fill and animate the whole of reality with the values which we feel. . . . We rediscover in reality the moods which it evokes in us" (pp. 151-2). Rogers finds in Dilthey's “Objective idealism" the “relation of reciprocity or community between the mind and the world" (Rogers, p. 52).

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3 Although Rogers courts the idea that his views might be "infected from the root by the philosophical assumptions that gave rise to Romanticism itself" (pp. 67-8), he prefers to deny this historical account and trust that "the lyrical mode of interpretation, when it writes its history of English poetry, will place the time of greatest achievement during the Romantic period" (p. 68).
While these models add weight to Rogers' project, they also demonstrate the basic contention of Kant that, when such epistemological concepts are employed in metaphysics, they become problematic. Again Rogers stresses, after Kant, that “we cannot interpret the categories in isolation, apart from the experiences that presuppose them” (pp. 52-3). It is when attempts are made to attach the categories of relation to the three topics of metaphysics (psychology, cosmology and theology) that the problems arise. Each of these topics has its own problem that springs from the illusions and contradictions generated when the relational categories are interpreted apart from possible experience. To psychology goes the problem of immortality; to cosmology goes the problem of freedom/necessity (there are four problems: world as infinite/finite; simple/composite; freedom/necessity; meaning/contingency); to theology goes the problem of God. But it is the problematic nature of Kant's categories that Rogers wishes to embrace.

The table facing this page lists the relational concepts Rogers takes over from Kant's philosophy. These concepts are listed in three columns, one for each of the genres, since they are the concepts at issue. A similar table is offered for the additions that Rogers makes.

Having retraced the basic construction of Rogers' model, we must now follow his account of the “mind of the work” and the “world of the work”. Many of the views offered by Rogers explore the same country as this present thesis. They explore the relationship between reader and
work, or speaker and listener, that has been in this chapter referred to as a
discourse of identity. In seeking to establish a relational definition of the
genres, Rogers of necessity finds himself involved in investigating this
discourse.

Rogers defines the mind of the work as a “new subjectivity”, a
subjectivity that “involves a kind of merging of the text and the reader” and a
subjectivity that takes account of “the phenomenon in reading that creates the
understood mind of the work”. To assist in his definition of this complex
phenomenology, he cites George Poulet:

> It all happens, then, as though reading were the act by which a
> thought managed to bestow itself within me with a subject not
> myself. Whenever I read, I mentally pronounce an I, and yet the
> I which I pronounce is not myself. . . . Reading is just that: a
> way of giving way not only to a host of alien words, images,
> ideas, but also to the very alien principle which utters them and
> shelters them.¹

Poulet speaks in terms of reciprocity and community, terms that forward
Rogers' argument. But Poulet develops his ideas further than Rogers requires
and in doing so his workposes questions for Rogers' theory of the “mind of
the work”. Rogers quotes Poulet to this effect:

It is true, as Poulet says, that reading “is the act in which the subjective principle which I call I is modified in such a way that I no longer have the right, strictly speaking, to consider it as my I. I am on loan to another.” But it is also true that the alien I is not the author: “Each of the works, while I am reading it, lives in me its own life. . . . the subject which presides over the work can exist only in the work” (Poulet, pp. 60-61). In reading, the work becomes a kind of “mind conscious of itself and constituting itself in me as the subject of its own objects,” such that the reader becomes “a consciousness astonished by an existence which is not mine, but which I experience as though it were mine” (Poulet, pp. 62-63). (Rogers, p. 54)

Within this “community of feeling” (Poulet, p. 63), within this “common consciousness”, Poulet wishes to distinguish active and passive players:

the parts played by each of us are not of equal importance. The consciousness inherent in the work is active and potent; it occupies the foreground; it is clearly related to its own world, to objects which are its objects. In opposition, I myself, although conscious of whatever it may be conscious of, play a much more humble role content to record passively all that is going on in me. A lag takes place, a sort of schizoid distinction between what I feel and what the other feels; a confused awareness of delay, so that the work seems first to think by itself, and then to inform me what it has thought. Thus I often have the impression, while reading, of simply witnessing an action which at the same time concerns and yet does not concern me. This provokes a certain feeling of surprise within me. I am a
consciousness astonished by an existence which is not mine, but which I experience as though it were mine. (Poulet, p. 63)

Paul Ricoeur, dealing with similar issues, raises similar ideas but from a more psychological point of view. Ricoeur borrows from Freud the notion of “relinquishing of the subject” and that of “the subject . . . not [being] master in his own house”. In so doing he points to the possible “narcissism of the reader”; as a reader one finds “only oneself in a text”, the result being that this self is “imposed and rediscovered”. Ricoeur describes this “self-criticism of the reader” as “the purification of the act of appropriation”. He writes:

Relinquishment is a fundamental moment of appropriation and distinguishes it from any form of “taking possession”. Appropriation is also and primarily a “letting-go”. Reading is an appropriation-divestiture. How can this letting-go, this relinquishment, be incorporated into appropriation? Essentially by linking appropriation to the revelatory power of the text which we have described as its referential dimension. It is in allowing itself to be carried off towards the reference of the text that the ego divests itself of itself. (“Appropriation,” in Hermeneutics, p. 191)

Here we might read “carried off towards the reference of the text” to mean related with the world of the work. The comparison with Freudian
analysis is essential. The subject must undergo a similar appropriation of the experience of the unconscious and at the same time a divestment of the ego as simple subject.

Poulet wishes to call this “astonished consciousness" the “consciousness of the critic: it is the consciousness of a being who is allowed to apprehend as its own what is happening in the consciousness of another being". From this “consciousness of the critic” Poulet wishes to study the “whole series of nuances” of critics as they participate in the “various forms of identification and non-identification” open to them through their entering the relationship “between criticizing subject and criticized object” (Poulet, p. 63).

Some of this project directly reflects on the views of Rogers, but the primary distinction between his approach, of interpreting empty concepts within literary works, and Poulet's approach, which stresses the delights of the “consciousness of the critic”, means their conclusions must diverge. Poulet's impressionistic account of the phenomenology of identity involved in the act of reading is of value to this present thesis as an account of a discourse of identity. Compared, however, with Rogers' theory of interpretive genres, Poulet's phenomenology does not allow the required “emptiness" and provides a description which appropriates the very relation that Rogers seeks to interpret.
The “mind of the work” (Rogers’ term not Poulet’s) according to Poulet “lives its own life within me; in a certain sense, it thinks itself, and it even gives itself a meaning within me” (Poulet, p. 62). For Poulet the “total critical act” amounts to “the exploration of that mysterious interrelationship . . . established to our mutual satisfaction [through the mediation of reading and of language] between the work read and myself” (p. 67). This “total critical act” must avoid both “extreme closeness and extreme detachment” or else find a way to embrace both, if it is to take advantage of the loss of egocentricity that results from having the thoughts of another inhabit the reader. So, for Poulet, the “mind of the work” is to be seen as the mind of another (though not that of the author) engaged through the magic of literature; whereas for Rogers the “mind of the work” is the mind of the work as disclosed in the act of interpretation. For Poulet the critic is an impressionist observing every nuance of the interrelationship; for Rogers the interpreter is a student of hermeneutics seeking to locate the “mind of the work” in relation to the “world of the work”.

In a very real sense there is no argument between Poulet and Rogers. Poulet is looking at the relationship between the reader as a subject and that other subject that is astonishingly created in reading. For Rogers this double subject relationship is not of great importance; indeed, this is a weakness in his argument that will be dealt with later. As stated earlier, Rogers’ stress falls on the relationship of the subject in the work (as the “mind of the work”) and the world of the work; how this subject
is formed in terms of the reader he gives no special attention, apart from his references to Poulet. One might, in support of Rogers, note again the passive nature of the reader in this complex subject described by Poulet: “the consciousness inherent in the work is active and potent . . . I myself . . . play a much more humble role”. Rogers is interested in an active and potent consciousness in its relationship with its world; Poulet is concerned with the shifts of distance between the critic and the subject of the work.

The distinction between the direction taken by Rogers and that taken by Poulet illustrates the inadequacy of the concept of the mind of the work employed by each. When Poulet talks of the alien I, the consciousness of the work that is in the reader, he locates this I as a single identity; he treats it as an egocentric consciousness, aware of itself in the reader. For Rogers, this alien I is the mind of the work which, wherever it becomes conscious, is found in interpretation, in relation to the world of the interpreted work. Neither Rogers nor Poulet takes account of internal relationships that exist within this alien I.

What is put forward here, and added to both Poulet and Rogers’ descriptions, is a four-part subject structure that accounts for: (1) the I of the reader; (2) the I of the writer; (3) the alien I that is not the reader but retains identification with the reader; and (4) the alien I that is not the author but retains identification with the work. This last aspect of the subject is obviously open to multiple pronominal relationships with
the author through such associations as personae, dramatized voices, multiple narrators and characters. The existence of this double subject within the mind of the work is best exemplified in the case of what Johnson calls the “I-You poem”:

the poet addresses or pretends to address his thoughts and feelings to another person — in William Wordsworth’s phrase to Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “As if to thee alone”; in this category the person addressed (whether actual or fictional) is a metaphor for readers of the poem and becomes a symbolic mediator, a conductor between the poet and each of his readers and listeners.²

While Johnson shows an historical fluctuation in “this dialectic of I and You, this lyrical discourse” (p. 5), and while he points out a modern sense of “the uselessness, the unreality, of identity” (p. 9), this dialectical structure remains whether the lyrical You remains or not. Indeed, while the lyrical discourse of “I-You" is peculiar to the lyric, this double structure of identity is to be found in the mind of the work in all genres. While in the lyric this relationship is realized as a dialectic, in the other genres it is realized according to the relationships that obtain between the world and the mind of the work. Said in its most obvious way, there is a sense in which the mind of the work relates inwards in the work towards the world of the work, and a sense in which the mind of the work relates outwards towards the mind of the reader of the work. The

² *The Idea of Lyric*, p. 3.
work itself is received by the reader in a double relationship. The relationship between the mind and the world that Rogers employs to typify each genre is considered, in this new identity-structure, as being operational within the mind of the work, and as creating complex relationships that are peculiar to each genre.

We may now turn from the mind of the work to the world of the work. Merleau-Ponty proposes that language is a kind of gesture and that a watcher understands a gesture “by feeling its significance, as it were, in his own body”. Gadamer proposes that an interpreter of a text interacts with that text, and that this interaction is like a conversation: “Because the interpreter is truly open to the text as one is open to an interlocutor . . . [and] something results that is, strictly speaking, in common”. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty and Gadamer, Rogers concludes that along with a “mind in the work that is neither simply the author's mind nor simply the reader's”, there comes into existence “a world that is not simply the reader's world” (Rogers, p. 54). This world of the text is like the world that stands behind a foreign language; it is a “view of the world implicit” in the foreign language that we must adopt if we are to understand that language. When adopting it, we do not thereby give up our previous world-views. Rogers continues:

the mind and the world of the work . . . are mutually dependent.

When we come in interpreting to make explicit conceptual statements about the mind and the world of the work, each statement about either entity will determine the
statements we can make about the other. To say that Hamlet makes fun of Polonius is to imply that the world of the play is one in which the springs and forces of human action are dark and mysterious to men like Polonius. Conversely, to say that the world of Hamlet is dark and grim is to imply something about the inferred stance of the mind of the work towards human experience. . . . If I may for a moment be somewhat reductive: the great interpretive questions are, “What is the work (author) saying?” and “How does the work (author) say it?” The second question can be read, “By means of what fictional world does the work (author) say it?” (p. 55)

We can note in this reduction the absence of the question: “How do I as a reader receive what the work says in relation to how the work says it?” That is, a simple ego-centric subject has emerged in relation to its world. These comments do not reflect on the value of the criticism that Rogers generates with his model. The problem is, in part, how empty a concept can be before its ceases to function.

At this point in his argument Rogers reasserts that these terms are to be seen as empowering an interpretive act which is the making explicit of an understanding. The distinction between world and mind of the text is a distinction that “we are compelled by the nature of interpretation itself” to make. Rogers agrees that “works themselves do not in any absolute sense `consist of’ world and mind”, but he claims “it is impossible to write an interpretive statement without speaking of the
works as if they were constituted thus” (pp. 55-6). If we accept this to be the case, what then distinguishes the genre of the lyric? Rogers sums up:

The relational concept associated with the lyric mode . . . is community or reciprocity. The interpreted mind of the work, that is, finds itself in a relationship with its world such that it seems that either is determining the other. (pp. 67-8)

The description is close to the relationship between reader and mind of work that Poulet describes as “union without comprehension”. According to Poulet, “I may identify so completely with what I am reading that I lose consciousness not only of myself but also of that other consciousness which lives within the work”. In this case, while “reading has delivered me from egocentricity”, that is the subject of the reading is not myself, “I lose myself into that alien world” (p. 67). Such a loss would be absorption or ecstasy; egocentricity has been lost but also the distance between reader and the I of the reading. While the reader may still be accounted as passive inasmuch as the work is not of the reader's making, the relationship of identity is clearly one of reciprocity. The other extreme to such reader-identification, Poulet suggests, is reading that maintains a cold, unbridgeable critical distance. In both cases egocentricity is overcome, but in the second case “I keep my distance and refuse to identify” (p. 67). What Poulet offers is a set of companion terms which permit the traditional distance determinations of the three broad genres to be seen, not only as obtaining within the model Rogers
establishes, of relations between the mind and world of the work, but also as obtaining between the reader and the complex subject which has been proposed as the mind of the work.

The distance-based distinctions may be applied to our expanded model. The distance relationship typical of each genre in its internal relationship between mind and world and, following Poulet, typical of the relationship between mind and reader, may now be seen as also typical of the relationship between the I-You of the mind of the work. It is not surprising, given this level of mirroring, that this relationship should also exist within the world of the work, both in the manner of the relationship of the parts (in the case of the lyric, it being involved with part/whole relations) and the actual subject matter (which itself in lyric is often explicitly to do with the reciprocal relations between mind and world).

Rogers provides many examples of these last relationships. Of Ezra Pound's “In a Station of the Metro”, he notes:

It is especially noticeable in interpreting Pound's poem that the parts of the world tend to be conceived also in terms of reciprocal relations . . . The relation of reciprocity seems pervasive in interpreted lyric. The nature of the petals determines the nature of the faces for the mind — the faces are conceived in part by means of the petals. But the reverse is also true. The petals are what they are in the poem only because the faces are there for them to be compared to. The images work in both directions . . . . (p. 74)
Similar parallel relational structures are found in all the genres such that drama is “pervaded by relations of cause and effect” (p. 61) and in the epic “characters . . . tend to become `real' (or `substantial') by a process of acquiring a sufficient number of definite and consistent attributes” (p. 61). Rogers notes a similar structure in the substance/accident relationship between the mind of the work and its world in epic (p. 179).

Because the genre is pervaded by the relation between its mind and its world, Rogers is able to establish the traditional Aristotelian views on representation in terms of distance relationships:

The reciprocity of mind and world in the interpreted lyrical work has an interesting implication, namely that it is impossible for the lyrical mind to present itself as detached from the lyrical world in the way that it is possible in drama or epic. In interpreted drama, the mind is not given in the world, but by means of it, and so complete detachment is the rule. No matter how involved the spectator might become, the world of the drama is presented as something that would go on whether the spectator (or the author) were present or not. In epic, the world is given through the mind, as thought, and this implies a different kind of detachment. That is, the mind has only limited possibilities with respect to the world it tells about, for that world is only thought in a mind. The mind can think about the world, and it can tell about it, and that exhausts its possibilities. It is interesting that epical works are frequently in the past tense, and their events are
therefore placed in the realm of the unalterable. Joyce cannot live in the Dublin of his works, for the place is only something he tells about, only a thought in his mind. But it is impossible for the lyrical mind to represent its world this way. The relation between mind and world is reciprocal, and the lyrical mind as interpreted always has possibilities in the world it talks about. (Rogers, pp. 68-9)

Simply restated, what distinguishes the interpretive genre of the lyric for Rogers is the reciprocal relation between the mind of the work and the world of the work “such that each determines the other” (p. 69). Of vital interest here is the notion that the lyric retains an active relationship between the mind of the work and its world: both can and do influence each other. The notion of active “distance” in the lyric allows the affective terms of katharsis and kenosis to be introduced into Roger’s genre model.

Because the mind and the world of the work is different in each genre, the affective relationship that holds between the mind and the world in each interpreted genre is different. If the distance between mind and world is that found in drama, the affective relation of katharsis will apply. In his account of the drama, Frye seems to lend some support to this formulation, though he also suggests some of its difficulties:

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1 Both Warren and Wellek in their coverage of genre show the variety of temporal associations given to distinguish one genre from another. It is interesting to see Rogers here toying with grammatical time. Another conclusion that he could draw from the frequency of the past tense of presentation is that this shows the pervasion of the substance/accident relationship.
Catharsis implies the detachment of the spectator, both from the work of art itself and from the author. The phrase “aesthetic distance” is generally accepted now in criticism, but it is almost a tautology: wherever there is aesthetic apprehension there is emotional and intellectual detachment. *(Anatomy, p. 66)*

Frye distinguishes between Aristotle's katharsis, which can be seen to relate to the tragic, and Longinus' ecstasis or absorption, which can be seen to relate to the lyric. Rogers' views coincide with these more traditional approaches. If we argue that detachment is the essential requirement of aesthetic katharsis, then can we argue that absorption, identification or active reciprocity is the essential requirement of aesthetic kenosis? That is, can we move from the relational terms of Rogers interpretive genres to what would best be described as the affective terms of the interpretive genres? If we follow the arguments of Dufrenne for an *a priori* category of the affective (and this is achieved along very similar lines to Rogers' argument) the taking of this step would seem to be in order. That is, in the relation of the mind of the work to the world of the work there is a further relation that is implied and, at the least, this affective relation is potentiated by the genre-relationship between the mind and the world of the work. Without detachment katharsis can not occur; without identification (which requires reciprocity, and reciprocity requires identification) kenosis can not occur.
The immediate problem is not the establishing of the *a priori* nature of our affective relationships. What is needed is to establish that in an act of interpretation these affective relationships hold as the relations between the mind and the world of the work. To follow Rogers: if interpretation is the making explicit of an understanding, then this experience of understanding, no less than that of its being made explicit in interpretation, must be accounted an experience with an affective dimension. Interpretation is therefore burdened with the making explicit of this affective relationship.²

According to our expanded model of the mind of the work, when Frye says that detachment typifies “aesthetic apprehension”, he is locating this relationship at the reader extreme. On our model, then, Frye's notion of aesthetic distance is the basic “divestiture” described by Ricoeur. But, remembering that for Ricoeur this divestiture was accompanied by appropriation, we arrive at a double description. No only is the reader set at a distance, but the reader overcomes that distance through appropriation. This appropriation amounts to an identification. Structurally we must conclude that the reader is initially distanced through loss of egocentricity and then, through appropriation, becomes part of the mind of the work.

² See here the hermeneutic approach to criticism taken from Gadamer and followed by Hans Robert Jauss in his *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Brighton, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1982). Jauss refers to the first aspect, that of understanding, as “the progressive horizon of aesthetic perception” (p. 149). The approach taken by Jauss will be looked at in greater detail in Chapter Seven.
Since a loss of self is involved and since an identification is made, we might wish to describe this basic aesthetic relationship as being kenotic rather than kathartic. The distance described by Frye is then seen to be different from the detachment. We may agree that without the distance there can be no detachment, but it is vital here to distinguish these as moments or as positions within the series of relations that hold in the aesthetic experience. If the spectator does not enter, through distance from himself, into the mind of the work, then no detachment can occur, since this detachment is not between himself as spectator and the work but rather between himself as part of the mind of the work and the world of the work. Thus we have disclosed what might be called the epistemological kenosis: to know the aesthetic object as an aesthetic object we must engage in this kenotic process. This makes sense of Poulet's comment that, when the reader fails to maintain this basic distance, all that is achieved is “a union without comprehension”.

Given that distance, between the mind and the world of the work, is the relation that initiates and governs the affective relations, we can suggest that these affective relations will also be seen to obtain within the mind of the work. In the case of the lyric, kenosis may be seen as the relation pertaining to the I-You discourse.

Before turning to an investigation of the kenotic relations between the mind (as the inward-looking aspect of the complex subject) and its
world in the lyric, we should establish the affective relation that obtains between the mind and world of the epic. Having found an affective term to match the katharsis/dramatic relationship for the lyric, can we go one step further and isolate an affective state for the epic?

For Rogers, we remember:

In epic, the world is given through the mind, as thought, and this implies a different kind of detachment [from that of interpreted drama]. That is, the mind has only limited possibilities with respect to the world it tells about, for that world is only thought in a mind. The mind can think about the world, and it can tell about it, and that exhausts its possibilities. (pp. 68-9)

This kind of epic detachment may be related to the Kantian judgement initially used to ground the relations. For the epic the judgement concerned was that of the categorical and its relation was that of substance to accident. Later in his argument, when Rogers comes to apply his model to actual works, he determines “literary techniques” particular to each genre (p. 178). For the lyric, Rogers arrives at a notion of the “concept of ‘trope’ ” in which he includes “any verbal device interpreted as holding up two entities as distinct while asserting their sameness” (p. 180). This concept of “trope” is seen to be grounded in the concept of “reciprocal relation”. For the dramatic the technique, following such notions as the centrality of action, is that of structure (p.
This is seen to be grounded in the causal relations of the dramatic. In the case of the epic,

The fundamental technique of works interpreted epically is *point of view*. The interpretation of a work as epic exists only inasmuch as there is articulated a point of view, a mind conceived as substance in which the world exists as thought. (p. 179)

Rogers expands:

my argument here is that the concept of “point of view” can be seen to “fall out” of the genre-theory as a logical consequence of postulating that epical interpretation regards the mind of the work as a substance containing its world as the accidents of its thought. What we articulate and fill out when we articulate that substance in interpretation is precisely the point of view. (p. 179)

What this amounts to is a logical description of “character”. The accidents amount, in terms of point of view, to incidents, just as substance, in terms of point of view, amounts to character. Within the epic, the same process which leads the reader to establish characters through the attributing of incidents to substantial identities, leads the reader to the formation of the point of view within the mind of the work. The narrator becomes a character.
Henry James delights in the close reciprocity between substance and accident, asking: “What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?” The thinking and telling mind, the character as narrator, the character as point of view and the character as part of the I-You relationship that forms the mind of the work, are seen as determining incident and incident as illustrating character.

With this twofold relationship we are able to suggest that the distance between narrator and the world of the work will be itself a twofold distance. The incidents, inasmuch as they are to be incidents, must firstly have about themselves the “objective” aspect of incident before they are to be attributed to the narrator as illustrations of his character. As attributed illustrations they become, in terms of substance/accident relations, the aspects of the person, here given as thoughts.

Since the dramatic is seen in terms of distance between the mind and world, and the lyric is seen in terms of reciprocity between the mind and world, it is convenient here to appreciate the double distance between the mind and world of epic as being a combination of the lyric and dramatic relations of mind to world. As pointed out, incidents must have about them an objective aspect; this objectivity is comparable to the

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objective nature found in the world of the dramatic. In the case of character as narrator, we as the reader in the mind of the work must be able to engage this mind in reciprocal relationship if we are to see this character/narrator/mind of the work as a substance, as a character. This reciprocal relationship, while inviting identification, is always restrained by the objectivity of the incidents that illustrate the narrator. Character here, as in the world of the epic, is given as a substantial thing, an objectively realised self that retains its distance through its very realization as the owner of its attributed incidents.

The double distance described between narrator and reader in the mind of the work has been seen to describe the relationship between mind and world in the epic. Since this double distance also exists in the relationship of accident to substance and substance to accident, it would appear that we have managed to ground our affective relationship for the epic genre in the relations that are seen to hold for that genre. That is, as katharsis is tied to distance and kenosis is tied to reciprocity, so the affective relation for the epic is tied to a double distance, a bi-focal relation in which the reader must maintain distance as well as proximity if the relation between substance and accident is to hold. To “know” Katherine and to “know” Heathcliff, we must see their incidents as attributes or illustrations of their substantial natures as characters. If these incidents do not have about them an objective nature as things that exist within the fictional world, then we cannot identify with such characters. Equally, the objective nature of their incidents holds them
separate from us, holds them as substantial, even though this substantial nature is what is given to them by the mind of the work. We, as part of the mind of the work, through identifying attributes as belonging to substantial characters, give the very history to those characters that then makes them substantial and holds them, through the attributed and objective incidents, apart from us.

This dialectic is not kenotic inasmuch as the reader in the mind of the work is always held at a distance. It is perhaps easiest to see in novels where the reader is invited by the narrator to attribute incidents in advance to characters, as is the case in detective novels and mystery novels where the agents of actions are the source of the mystery. The same holds true wherever character formation takes place. Rogers reflects:

The characters of works in epical interpretations tend to become “real” (or “substantial”) by a process of acquiring a sufficient number of definite and consistent attributes, a sort of critical mass, to allow the reader to begin inferring attributes that are not specifically given. . . . Jacques Maritain says, “The novelist is primarily concerned not with the action, but with the agents. This principle . . . stresses the essential difference between the novel and the drama. . . .”

Maritain's principle suggests that in drama we find character in the service of plot, and in epic (novel for Maritain) we find plot in the service of character. Our

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genre-theory suggests that Maritain's formulation should be somewhat extended: if substance-accident relations pervade the interpreted epic, then the mind of the epical work is interested in substance in general — be it of characters, of things, or even societies. The epical mind is interested in the whatness of things as well as of people . . . and action serves to convey that whatness in the epical interpretation. (pp. 61-2)

Building on these distinctions we might say that the dramatic is interested in the “howness of things” and that the lyric is interested in the “being of things”. Rogers makes other distinguishing comments in passing, such as that the dramatist shows us a world while the narrator in epic tells us about one. No term is offered for the lyric but we might suggest that, within the reciprocal relationship of the mind of the work, the interpreted lyric creates a world.

What springs to mind is Sartre's already mentioned novel, *Nausea*. In *Nausea* the “whatness of things” does not assist in the formation of character: this substantiation of things so drains the character of the hero Roquentin that the investigation through action of things and society leaves him in the state of nausea. This affective state is the direct result of the failure of the character to be sustained by the substantiation of himself through the whatness of anything. It is only through the kenotic experience of music that he achieves any identity that makes him feel at home in the world. Sartre's novel can be interpreted as an epic in which
the subject matter is the failure of the epic realization of substance at the affective level of character. It remains a novel (as well as becoming an anti-novel) because it articulates the relation of substance-accident. In its exposition of the lyric it reveals the very distances that are employed to distinguish the various affective relations of each genre. In its ending its sounds a note of triumph for the epic, as Roquentin seeks to ground his new life in the experience of “a sort of joy” (p. 251) that resulted from his kenotic aesthetic experience. The irony is already revealed in the shift from the identification through simile of “I am like a man who is completely frozen after a long journey . . .” to the distance involved in “I imagine he would remain motionless near the door” : the simile takes on its own life (pp. 252-53). In this extension, the hero is not only lyrically articulating his experiences; he is turning them into an independent history of substance-accident relations. He now speculates about writing a book: “But not a history book: history talks about what has existed — an existent can never justify the existence of another existent.” In his book he wishes to “make people ashamed of their existence.” Based on his feeling of joy he hopes to “succeed . . . in accepting [himself]” and in bringing to others, as readers, a similar experience. While he knows the aesthetic experience of writing will pass, he hopes that as an attribute of his history “a little of its light would fall over my past” (p. 252). In this way the hero is locating the sense of self as a substance, as an historical self, in the past: we are the incidents that have adhered to that substance.
Sartre's nausea is an affective state resulting from the failure of the substance-accident/character-incident dialectic to produce the desired affective relation, a relation in which incident would ground character, in which action would describe agent, in which history would define person. Now that we have a name for its breakdown, what name should we give to the proper function of this affective relation? The word that proposes itself, following the work of Frank Kermode, is *kairosis*.

In *The Sense of an Ending*, Kermode deals with two concepts of time. He writes:

The clock's *tick-tock* I take to be a model of what we call a plot, an organization that humanizes time by giving it form; and the interval between *tock* and *tick* represents purely successive, disorganized time of the sort that we need to humanize. Later I shall be asking whether, when *tick-tock* seems altogether too easily fictional, we do not produce plots containing a good deal of *tock-tick*; such a plot is that of *Ulysses*.  

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1 It took a very long time before the desired term made itself apparent. The argument to this point, including the examples taken from Sartre was made without any conscious recollection of the work of Frank Kermode. The term used as a stop-gap was that of "karacterization". While this term was singularly ugly, it nonetheless took account of the parameters of the category of an affective term for the genre of the epic.

2 No earlier usage of *kairosis* has been yet been found. The lack of such a usage is perhaps a reflection of a general cultural lack of interest in accounting for affects. Our experience of time is fundamental and any "disorder" in our experience of time is immediately made apparent to us.

This expectation of tock following a predicting tick is the basic fiction we call time. If we do not “maintain within that interval following tick a lively expectation of tock” (p. 46) then our experience of time is simply an experience of one thing following another. Such an experience Kermode refers to as an experience of chronos. When we anticipate tock, we “confer organization and form on the temporal structure” (p. 45) such that our experience of time includes an expectation of significance. To maintain this significance we “need fictional devices” in order to “defeat the tendency of the interval between tick and tock to empty itself” (p. 46). For Kermode

such plotting presupposes and requires that an end will bestow upon the whole duration and meaning. To put it another way, the interval must be purged of simple chronicity, of the emptiness of tock-tick, humanly uninteresting successiveness. It is required to be a significant season, kairos poised between beginning and end. It has to be, on a scale much greater than that which concerns the psychologist, an instance of what they call “temporal integration” — our way of bundling together perception of the present, memory of the past, and expectation of the future, in a common organization. Within this organization that which was conceived of as simply successive becomes charged with past and future: what was chronos becomes kairos. (p. 46)¹

¹ Kermode provides an account of the history of both chronos and kairos. While the original Greek usages do not support the strong distinction (both terms are used in both senses), the Biblical references tend to support his approach.
The affective state of nausea in Sartre's novel is the result of the failure of time to be experienced as kairos. Kermode, in his chapter "Literary Fiction and Reality" takes Sartre to task:

What about time? It is, effectively, a human creation, according to Sartre, and he likes novels because they concern themselves only with human time, a faring forward irreversibly into a virgin future from ecstasy to ecstasy, in his word, from kairos to kairos in mine.\(^2\) The future is a fluid medium in which I try to actualize my potency, though the end is unattainable; the present is simply the pour-soi, "human consciousness in its flight out of the past into the future". The past is bundled into the en-soi, and has no relevance. "What I was is not the foundation of what I am, any more than what I am is the foundation of what I shall be". Now this is not novel-time. The faring forward is all right, and fits the old desire to know what happens next; but the denial of all causal relation between disparate kairos, which is after all basic to Sartre's treatment of time, makes form impossible, and it would never occur to us that a book written to such a recipe, a set of discontinuous epiphanies, should be called a novel. Perhaps we could not even read it thus: the making of a novel is partly the achievement of readers as well as writers, and readers would constantly attempt to supply the very connections that the writer's programme suppresses. In all these ways, then, the novel falsifies the philosophy. (p. 139)

\(^2\) Sartre is treating "ecstasy" as a standing out in time. Kermode is treating "kairos" as a standing in time as a sequence that has an end.
It is this experience of the connections, amounting to the affective experience of identity within the epic genre, that we shall refer to as the experience of kairosis. Inasmuch as this experience includes the experience of the discontinuous as the ever present possibility of one thing simply following another, chronosis must be included within the concept as an essential part of the giving of substance to the character within the epic genre. But it is through the experience of kairosis that the reading subject establishes characters and experiences characters as the substance (kairos) with accidents (chronos).

The failure of Sartre's hero to achieve such a sense of a continuous epic identity does not deny the experience of kairosis to the reader. Within Roquentin's failure, his ecstatic experience of time as a moment of fulfilment is experienced by the reader as an incident that adds to the substance of the fictional character.

Establishing this third affective relation isolates kenosis as the affective relation peculiar to, or rather, distinctive of the lyric genre. Through an expanded version of the model put forward by Rogers of the interpretive genres, we have been able to establish structural distinctions that permit the inclusion of affective relations within the model and allow questions of receptive aesthetics to be raised. What we must now investigate are the identity relations that hold in each genre between the mind and the world of the work. These investigations will allow us to further ground the affective relations of the genres.
Once identity relations for each of the three genres have been isolated, we shall investigate the relationships in the genre of the interpreted lyric, between: (1) the mind of the work and the world of the work as object (subject and object); (2) between the mind of the work and the Self (part and whole); and (3) between the parts that constitute the mind of the work which might better be described as the relations between the self and the other. Although these investigations will take us into the areas of cosmology, theology, and psychology respectively, such excursions are required if we are to understand the transformational qualities peculiar to the lyric. In wandering off into the bush in this way, we are placing ourselves outside the protection of Rogers' "empty" concepts. Or are we?

As (light-hearted) *apologia* I offer the following. Kant describes the "peculiar character of disjunctive judgments" in terms of their being problematic. While the problematic nature of the metaphysical conclusions drawn from the three *a priori* relations is held in common with the disjunctive judgment, the disjunctive judgement is problematic in all its operations. Kant, in his *Logic*, writes:

The members of the disjunction are altogether problematic judgments of which nothing else is thought but that they, taken together, are equal to the sphere of the whole as parts of the sphere of a cognition, each being the complement of the other . . . And from this follows: In one
of these problematic judgments must be contained the truth or — which is the same — one of them must be assertorically valid, because outside of these judgments the sphere of cognition under the given conditions comprises nothing else, and one is opposed to the other; consequently, there can be true neither anything else outside them, nor more than one among them. (p. 113)

Which, in part, means something like Blake's "Enough or too much?" The disjunctive judgment is problematic in both its parts (only one of which is true) and in its whole (nothing outside it can be true). In his *Pure Reason* Kant offers this explanation:

the judgment, "The world exists by blind chance", has in the disjunctive judgment only problematic meaning, namely, as a proposition that may for a moment be assumed. At the same time, like the indication of a false road among the number of all those roads that can be taken, it aids in the discovery of the true proposition. (p. 110)

Whether our excursion down these roads leads to knowledge of the right road to take, or not, we will be carrying out the conditions of the disjunctive judgment. Having expanded the model of the interpreted lyric, we must stumble forward into the "this" or "this" or "this" of identity, in our exploration of the limits of the affective. Within the three lyric identity discourses it is not expected that any one discourse will be found to have priority. In this way our "going bush" is designed to bring
us home rewarded with a better understanding of the implications of the three
lyric epistemic relations.
CHAPTER FOUR

PERSONAL IDENTITY AND THE THREE GENRES

In the previous chapter the lyric was described as a “discourse of identity” because of the reciprocal relation it creates between the speaker and the reader (the I-You relationship expounded by Johnson). While our argument has tended to support this notion of the lyric as a “special” discourse of identity, it has also revealed that similar identity relationships hold in the other broad genres. As in the lyric, these identity structures, in the other two genres, reflect the logical relationship that was found to hold in each genre between the mind of the work and the world of the work.

For the epic this identity relationship is that between a substance and its accidents; for the dramatic the identity relationship is that between cause and effect; for the lyric the relationship is that of reciprocity or community, or that between parts and parts and a whole. Although initially this arrangement may seem no more than a pretty pairing, through the illustration of these identity relationships it is possible to disclose the “how” of the affective relations in each genre. For example, how does the lyric affect us through a kenotic relationship, and how is this affect structured?
Most philosophical discussion of personal identity is carried out in terms of our knowledge of the identity of someone else. The question usually asked is "how do we know that someone is or is not the same person" rather than "how do I know that I am still myself", or indeed, "how do I know I am myself". In terms of aesthetic experience both of these approaches to personal identity are of value, especially when the affective qualities of the aesthetic experience are taken into account. It is of some concern to us as readers that Katherine be Katherine and Heathcliff be Heathcliff, and that they do or do not know such to be the case.

In recognizing the identity of characters, say in the epic genre, we establish or re-establish ways of recognizing ourselves and others as characters, that is, as substances with accidents. In this process we do not know Katherine more as Katherine the character than we know ourselves when we know ourselves as characters: rather, we know Katherine as a character differently to the way we know ourselves as characters, since the aesthetic experience of character comes as an exclusively organized “biography”; we cannot know what incidents the author might have included but left out. This aspect of exclusion gives the fictional character a kind of positive value that we know only in relation to fictional characters and others as characters when our knowledge of these others
is limited to their tale of themselves.\footnote{Such tales function as works of fiction.} Thus the bar-room biography between strangers has about it the positive value of an exclusive biography; we, as listeners, cannot know what has been left out in order to arrive at the present biography. We can, though, question the speaker, and include in our understanding the body language that went with the story. The ironic aspects of character formation differ from one form of experience to another.

In the case of our own biographies we know ourselves as characters both positively and negatively: we know some of what is left in and some of what has been taken out. The point here is that in our investigation of the identity of Katherine as a character we are engaged in a similar kind of identity operation as we are engaged in when we investigate ourselves as characters, that is, when we organize our life into a biography. Hence, in our aesthetic experience, we are concerned with identity from both a subjective and an objective point of view.

While this everyday approach to the questions of personal identity may create philosophical problems, such problems will be met as they arise. We are not in the present discussion concerned with the “how” of our experience of identity in any absolute way external to literature. Nor are we concerned to prove philosophically valid any particular view of
personal identity. What we are seeking to establish is the structures of identity that mark the interpretive genres.

What is assumed is that experiences of identity take place in the three genres and that these experiences of identity are related to the affective propositions of each genre. This approach discloses the problems of personal identity through the way a reader might approach a text. Readers expect to find characters in novels and will go to great extremes to flesh out stick figures; there is a definite satisfaction in the process. It is assumed that texts are able to provide experiences of personal identity and that such experiences are recognizable by the reader as experiences of identity. It is further assumed that readers, and people in general, are concerned with matters of identity and that part of a reader's motivation in approaching a text is to approach the issues of identity. Following chapters will offer a variety of psychological accounts of such motivations.

If we wish to see each genre as typified by a kind of discourse, in relation to identity, then the terms proposed here are: the epic is a discourse of time; the dramatic is a discourse of space; the lyric is a discourse of self. These three discourses can be seen through the three further terms that relate: the epic with character; the dramatic with action; the lyric with the thematic. Another trilogy relates the epic with whatness; the dramatic with howness; the lyric with suchness. Some of these terms have been dealt with, some appear self-evident, and some await justification.
Amongst philosophers, the most often held views on personal identity are those that can be described as memory-based views. By investigating these memory-based approaches we can establish a model of aesthetic identity for the epic that will allow the generation of identity structures for the other genres. In the most popular philosophic theories our identity is said to be constituted in two ways: one, we know ourselves as bodies persisting in time and space; and two, we know ourselves in memory as existing by virtue of a history of ourselves.

C. H. Whiteley argues for a model of personal identity that takes account of our sense of bodies and memories persisting:

We do not (to use the rather slippery contemporary jargon) have two separate concepts of personality, one physical and one psychical, but a single concept of a person in which both elements are united.\(^1\)

Although Whiteley agrees with this essential unity, he shows how these two aspects of identity can be treated separately: "we use two distinct and separate sets of criteria for the identity of persons". In terms of "material identity" the criterion we use is continuity and this has two aspects: one, that the body has continued either in the same place or else in a "continuous track"; two, that any changes the body has undergone

have been changes “by degree” (p. 101). In terms of the psychical identity, of identity in relation to “mental personality” (p. 102), Whiteley argues for the essentially continuous nature of consciousness: “The stream of consciousness has its given continuity over time: one phase of it is related to another by becoming or passing into that later phase”. In consciousness continuity takes the form of process: “Awareness of process must be a continuous awareness in a single consciousness” (p. 103).

This last point perhaps accounts for the lack of interest in personal identity from a subjective point of view, in philosophy. Whiteley asserts: “Any state of consciousness that I encounter is ipso facto my own” (p. 100). Hence, following Descartes, there can be no real question about my identity: to pose the problem is to ipso facto solve it. I become, by accident, the substance thinking the question; I am identified by attribution. This “proof” will be looked at later in this chapter.

Within this stream of consciousness there are, however, “gaps” such as sleep and loss of consciousness. These “gaps” are to be filled up by “memory” (p. 103). Memory, far from being “a single capacity . . . [is] a cluster of connected capacities” (pp. 103-4). This cluster allows for such abilities as the recalling of incidents, the knowing of locations, and the sense of time as a sense of “Then” and “Now”. This last feature allows for memory to account for identity through sequences that “jump intervals in consciousness” (p. 105). By extension it accounts for the
discontinuous nature of a reader's sense of continuity that typifies the characters in epic. We experience epic characters in fragments across the discontinuous plane of reading; such reading, through its temporal quality, reflects the discontinuous way in which we know our own lives.

Through the features of the memory-based identity we are able to arrive at the concept of a person, as "a social, moral, and legal concept". This social definition means, says Whiteley, that in any identity dispute where "an inconsistency between the physical and the mental criteria" occurs, in arriving at an answer, "consciousness" would take "priority over the body" (p. 110). Thus, to be recognized as a person one must have such memory-based features of identity as are recognized by the society or group in which one presents as a person. To be a member of a group one must maintain particular registers of memory (such as for example who won the last test match between Australia and England). To be an individual one must maintain a special set of memories, just as a tribal Aborigine might be expected to maintain the memory of a particular part of the tribe's history. While these expectations are made known to us in our normal socialization experiences, the concentrated awareness of identity that is found in literature (including all forms of spoken and written media) provides the major catalogue and critique of "what it is to be a person" in all societies.²

² For an attack on approaches such as Whiteley's, an attack that wishes to talk of one single ground for numeric identity ("spatial temporal continuity"), see James E. Broyles' article "Wittgenstein on Personal Identity", Philosophical Investigations, 9:1 (Jan. 1985) pp. 56-65.
Whiteley's model accounts for much of what we understand by way of the identity of characters in the epic. In Whiteley's model the physical and mental aspects of identity are parts of a unified notion of identity. They are both based on the same underlying model of matter, the model of substance and accident. This is not to say that body relates to substance and mind to accident, but rather that both aspects of identity (body and mind) are seen in terms of matter as substance and accident. Consciousness is seen as an essentially continuous substance with individual events in memory being the accidents. The body is essentially a continuous substance with its changes of "degree" forming its accidents. This analysis, then, offers a single model of identity, based on one model of matter.

Taking memory to be the identity relation that typifies the epic clarifies why the term "time" was applied to this genre at the opening of this chapter. Further to this we can add the notion of "becoming": characters, through attribution of incidents, "become" themselves. The common notion about becoming is that we were always as we are; it is just that now we have become who we always were. Following Whiteley, we can see this aspect of necessary attribution to be a feature of consciousness itself. We do not normally ask "To which self am I to assign this mental event?" (p. 100). What we think, we assume we are thinking and we therefore assign the thought to ourselves; it becomes our property, and we become the person thinking each thought as it arises.
Whiteley would say we never ask this question, but experience with mental disturbance and varieties of therapy makes it apparent that this question needs to be asked, both as an internal question (which part of my many selves) and as an external question. The whence of the mental event is an aspect of the event; it too gets attributed and thereby accepted in the acknowledgement of having the mental event. In the case of brain-washing, the mental events that I must call my own come in a tainted form because the whence defines the what.

Kant approaches this kind of substantial or attribute-based identity as a problem in his *Pure Reason*. S. Korner provides this account:

In the Analytic of Concepts Kant has drawn a sharp distinction between the “I think which must be capable of accompanying all my presentations”, thereby giving them synthetic unity, and the empirical, introspected, self which is itself a presentation. To be truly *a priori* rational psychology must have for its subject the former, i.e. the self of pure self-consciousness. This however is not, according to Kant, an object of experience. It is a necessary condition of objective experience and so of the applicability of the Categories. It is not an instance of any Category.¹

¹ *Kant* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1955) p. 112.
Stated more simply, Kant points out the “I” that presents is not the “I” presented in any “presentation”. I cannot thus go from the “I” of “I think” to the assumption that this “I” in “I think” is the same “I” who does the thinking. From this we can argue that the process of attribution is problematic in respect of the substantial “I” formed and also by the accidents attributed to this “I”. This problem can be illustrated in an incorrect attribution, in for example the attribute of the “I” in “I am superman”. The “I” of the presenting cannot be carried over to the “I” making the statement. It is both incorrect to say an “I” is substantiated by the attribute of being anything, and incorrect to say that such an incorrect “I” is “superman”.

In “The Final Purpose of the Natural Dialectic of Human Reason” Kant accepts that we must treat the notion of personal identity as an “as if”. We must grant substantiality and forgo (but not forget) the problematic nature of this identity:

in psychology, under the guidance of inner experience, [we shall] connect all the appearances, all the actions and receptivity of our mind, as if the mind were a simple substance which persists with personal identity (in this life at least), while its states, to which those of the body belong only as outer conditions, are in continual change. (Pure Reason, p. 551)
While a body/mind split is accepted, the body is nonetheless seen as comparable, in its states, to the mind. Both body and mind suffer “continual change” in their states; both are considered under the same model of substance.

Kant’s huge “as if” (the other relations have theirs as well) is to be viewed as having “not only great systematic but also great heuristic usefulness” (Kroner, p. 124). The use we make of it is so common as to be transparent: we do not see, we use it. In the case of the epic genre the way we form and follow characters is based on just such a model of identity. Both the characters of the epic and the character of the narrator that forms the point of view of the epic are constructed through this “as if”. We treat Katherine “as if” she were a character with a substantial mind, a mind substantiated by her incidents.

Enshrined in this notion of personal identity is a notion of a Christian soul. Hence the question of bodily identity (for Kant and others) is removed or placed in a relation of distance. But, like the mind, the body too is continuous and suffers states of change; like the mind the body too cannot be logically defined, as a substance, by its attributes; like the mind, the body too is ultimately an “as if” identity, inasmuch as it is known only to consciousness and thus, as a constituent of identity, is also grounded in consciousness. Here the question of the continuous nature of the consciousness of the observer who is observing the continuous
nature of a body and a mind is brought out as the unasked question. Herakleitos' notion of flux rests on a similar dilemma.¹

The affiliation between body and mind is not followed through by Kant. He desires to establish an “as if” mental identity that functions like a soul, a soul that through its permanence might ground the “as if” of an eternal soul. Because of this search for an eternal soul, the metaphysical problem associated with the relation of substance and accident is, for Kant, that of psychology. While the quest of the epic genre may not be for the eternal soul, the epic is involved in the business of establishing enduring characters; it is involved with the proposition of identity that can be derived from the relation of substance and accident; it is involved in how incidents as attributes do (or do not) stick to the substance of characters. In these ways the epic genre involves Kant's psychological problem derived from the hypothetical judgment, that is, the problem of an eternal soul.

Seeing epic character in terms of the Kantian problem of the eternal soul reinforces notions of both interiority and surface in character. The lack of an interior dimension to a character only becomes of critical interest when a critic is attempting to give substantiality to a character that refuses the offer. When major characters have no such interiors they are seen as surfaces. The substance-accident model of substance offers

just such opportunities for irony, parody and manipulation and is balanced on the temporal
plain by the doubleness of our understanding of time as a continuity and as a discontinuity.
As we have seen in the previous chapter, this doubleness is experienced through our
interpretation of epic character as the affect of kairosis. Inner and outer are the spatial
equivalents within the affect of kairosis.

Having investigated the memory-based model of identity in the epic, and having
grounded this model of the epic in the substance-accident model of matter, we can now turn to
the other genres. In order to ground the identity models for the lyric and the dramatic, we will
need to determine two further models of matter. Looking to Kant we discover the
pervasiveness of the substance-accident model. For each of his three relations Kant offers
separate descriptions of time (permanence, succession, co-existence) to account for each
relation, but he offers only one description of space or objects as matter, that of substance and
accident, the relation found in the categorical judgment. This view of substance, being the
relation of the categorical judgment, would seem to account for itself: for things to be they
must abide by this relation, or rather in our judging that things are, we must assume this
relation. Heidegger is more generous. In “The Origin of the Work of Art” he outlines three
common models of “thingness”. The first model is that of substance and accident, which
Heidegger says “seems to correspond to
our natural outlook on things".² He questions, as we have in a different way, whether this view, in its natural outlook, is a mirror of things or whether “the structure of the thing as thus envisaged is a projection of the framework of the sentence” (p. 24). The second model he puts forward is that in “which a thing is nothing but the unity of a manifold of what is given in the senses.” In this approach the “situation always prevails” (p. 25). This model will be applied to the lyric genre. The third common model Heidegger offers is that of matter and form: “What is constant in a thing, its consistency, lies in the fact that matter stands together with a form. The thing is formed matter” (p. 26). This third model of matter will be applied to the dramatic genre.

As form is to matter, so structure is to the events within the dramatic genre. There would seem to be nothing outlandish about this alignment, indeed it is rather a commonplace of literary criticism. Since drama deals with actions, and actions are presented in drama in a causal sequence, the form of this sequence is what allows the sequence to acquire significance. While this may be commonplace, to go on to say that this way of presenting significance amounts to a proposition of identity may at first sound strange; and to call this kind of identity bodily identity may seem a further confusion.

Why do we need any further description of the body in terms of identity? Surely the substance-accident model accounts for all situations in which the question of the identity of a body could be asked? This proposition may be correct in terms of the notion of identity as commonly put. In philosophy, personal identity is a question of how we can know that this body is the same body as the one we previously identified. In terms of literature this question is either answered to the satisfaction of the reader or else the logic of character breaks down. But this sense of natural identity is not the only way we know ourselves nor the only way we understand identity in literature. While we have seen that the body can be as easily described in the terms of substance and accident as can the mind and that in being so described the body is identified in terms of continuity and memory, this substance-accident description of the body fails to account for the kind of causal identity that we know most immediately through being the owner of a body. As owners of bodies we are, both in terms of facticity and in terms of historicity, caught or thrown into events. The question of “how we are” is our constant companion; the question of “what we are” is something that is only asked from time to time.

This urgency about our howness is not simply the result of the relative stability of our whatness; the question of how is ever present, so much so that it is only in certain situations that we bother to ask in any identity sense “how are we”, meaning “how is it that we find ourselves
as an identity in this series of actions”. However, even when my grocer asks of me “how are you today”, this kind of causal identity is invoked. While my grocer may assume my answer will be slight, he would not fail to understand if I started to tell the plot of my recent illness. So, while the substance-accident model accounts for the what, it does not account for the how. Its interest in degrees of change is simply directed at establishing the continuity of a present body with a past, not in the process of change as an identity in itself. I cease to be the man suffering and become the man who had an illness.

The form-matter model, like all the three models of matter, claims to be able to account for everything as a thing and in so doing to account for the mind as well as the body. In this way it is no different from the other models. How then does it differ in its operation from the substance-accident model? Since we are accustomed to viewing the distinction between drama and epic as that between a genre in which character serves action and a genre in which action serves character respectively, we can view the distinction between these two models of matter and these two propositions of identity in a similar way. Both genres deal with characters; both deal with causal sequences of action. In the case of the epic these actions are attributed to character according to the identity proposition of substance and accident; in the case of the dramatic actions are informed by a structure according to the identity proposition of cause and effect.
In this way we arrive at two different kinds of personal identity: the one most familiar to us, that of substance and accident, in which Hamlet is the son of his father; and the other in which Hamlet is the participant in a sequence of actions, that will ultimately, because of its causal structure, generate a consequence. In this second model, the form and matter model, Hamlet dies as a consequence of a series of actions. He may, as a character participating in a series of actions, inform the action, that is, bring form to the matter through his particular actions and reactions, but he dies as a consequence of an overall structure that informs the sequence of action. He does not die because he is Hamlet as a substance with attributes in tow; he dies because a rapier is envenomed, because he accepts a challenge, because he has offended Claudius, because he has returned to Elsinore, and so on.

We have called this kind of identity body identity because it is as owners of bodies that we know this causal identity most immediately. As owners of bodies we are the result of an organic sequence of causes and effects; we know our body as the sequence of stages and states that it passes through, regardless of any desires that we may have. Thus we age; thus we suffer diseases. In bringing our understanding to bear, through this causal model, we are able to structure (inform) our relationship with such sequences. Through this informing we acquire a causal identity in the sense that we become aware of our causal relationships and seek,
through knowledge of them, to alter our identity as a causally related person. It is as owners of bodies that we suffer the causality of the world; it is as owners of bodies that we share in the common fate of our society. It is as persons that acquire and understand identity through their physical existence that we enter the identity relationship of the dramatic genre.

This is not to assert that under this bodily identity is held only those aspects of our knowledge of ourselves that pertain to our bodies. Rather, in the concept of our physical identity is to be found those relations that are indicative of causal relations. So, by extension, the ability the police have to lock me up (which they have because I have a body that can be locked up) is relatable, in this identity, to my inability to avoid the consequences of another's actions on my life. This condition does not arise simply from my having a body but rather from my being an individual in a society. The study of such relationships in society is rightly the study of ideologies. It is only through an understanding of the causal chains that our society determines for and with us that we are able to locate our social identity. Among all possible actions those which can constitute a sequence of significant actions are defined by discourse rules. A study of these rules makes it possible to determine the relations of freedom and necessity which hold for a particular discourse within a particular society.³

³ Kant sums up his relational terms: “The three dynamical relations, from which all others spring, are therefore inherence, consequence [Konsequenz], and composition” (Pure Reason, p. 236). The term “inherence” is obvious enough from our treatment of identity as a relation between substance and accident. The term “composition” will explain itself in relation to the lyric genre, as we proceed.
These notions of freedom and necessity take us back to Kant. As was the case in the Kantian relation of cause and effect, in dramatic identity the causal connection between events raises the problems of necessity and freedom. In tragedy the chain of events is taken to be unavoidable; in comedy it is said to be free to a variety of interruptions. This view allows us to account for such cross-cultural effects as Japanese audiences taking Macbeth to be a comedy. The chain of events that cause the character to act is seen, in that culture, as susceptible to change.

This question of necessity and freedom raises a further distinction between epic and dramatic identities. The alterations that describe genre-defining changes in identity are distinct. In the case of the epic, as pointed out above, the character becomes more himself through the addition (or revelation) of further attributes; we know Heathcliff more and more as the narration goes on. In the case of drama the changes that take place in terms of identity are absolute: a cause brings about an effect; each state is seen to be different, inasmuch as action is definite and thus definitive. In terms of character, such changes are known in drama primarily, according to Aristotle, in terms of reversals. In tragedy we see the good man fall; such a fall follows a necessity that is irreversible; the sequence, in its consequence, becomes fixed. In comedy, where freedom reigns, the very fact that we find ourselves, as social
beings, involved in causal chains creates the humour. Everything is permitted especially if it abides by a series of causal rules. These rules have their absolute validity, just as in tragedy, but in comedy the absolute nature of the rules is employed to subvert the necessity that a culture ascribes to particular causal chains. The provisional nature of these cultural chains is most clearly brought to light in works where the sequence of events announces its provisional nature through a dramatic change of direction. In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* the first three acts proceed within the rules of comedy. The last two acts follow the rules of tragedy. As Mercutio dies, the provisional becomes fixed and the star-crossed lovers are locked into a causal chain that has its tragic outcome. We can see the difference clearly described in W.B. Yeats' poem “Easter 1916”:

> This other man I had dreamed
> A drunken, vainglorious lout.
> He had done most bitter wrong
> To some who are near my heart,
> Yet I number him in my song;
> He, too, has resigned his part
> In the casual comedy;
> He, too, has been changed in his turn,
> Transformed utterly:
> A terrible beauty is born.\(^4\)

Here action, as a causal sequence, has, in its consequence, changed the characters from participants in the “casual comedy” into tragic figures. This kind of change in terms of character typifies identity within the dramatic genre. Characters, as known in action, are open to being “transformed utterly”. This kind of change we know, in our bodily identity in terms of such immediate causal sequences as car accidents or acts of violence. While such events of everyday life are not the events of the tragic genre, there is a temptation to describe them as tragic. We might wish to conclude that their antecedent events were irreversible, arising, as they do, out of causal sequences that have irreversible consequence. In that we ascribe fate as the cause of particular events in our life then we are treating these events in our life as part of our causal or bodily identity.

John Jones has argued that Aristotle saw change, any change (including the rise from bad to good), as “essentially tragic”. Such change we may describe as causal change. Change, in terms of memory-based identity, is different. In the case of dramatic identity, change amounts to loss. In the case of epic identity, change amounts to addition: what is added to our understanding of the substantial character.

These two kinds of identity may be negatively defined in terms of the aspects of reality that “haunt” them. In the case of the dramatic

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identity it is what we can lose while remaining the same that haunts our causal knowledge of ourselves. To take a reductive example: how many parts of my body or physical abilities could I lose and still think of myself as the same person? Or in beard theory, how many hairs must I lose before I am said no longer to have a beard? In the case of the epic identity, how many additions to my knowledge of myself as a character could I make and still think of myself as the same? For example, if I disclose to myself through the travails of life that I am an alcoholic child-molester, would I think of myself as the same substantial character that I knew before these disclosures?

These examples, while they distinguish between the modes of change in each genre, may seem a little facile to cope with aesthetic praxis. For Aristotle the dramatic change consisted of two things, a reversal and a discovery; in the case of the best tragedies, these two changes take place together. Oedipus discovers who he is as a member of a family and this discovery leads to the reversal in his life. What must be noted about dramatic discovery and reversal or loss is the external nature of these changes. Discovery and loss are brought about as events in a sequence of actions and such discoveries and reversals then lead to further actions in consequence.

In the case of change in the epic genre a distinction has been drawn between the discovery of character (as in drama) and its epic
“disclosure”. In Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, Quentin's nature is disclosed to him in the long “conversation” with his father. Such a disclosure shows the essentially internal nature of the change, or rather the internal source of the new awareness. This new awareness reveals to Quentin more of who Quentin is, but it does not cause a reversal in the character: if anything it promotes his continuing as he was, except that, now more aware of the problem that is his character, he can do a better job. In no direct way can we see his killing himself as the consequence of this moment of self-disclosure. Quentin kills himself because he remains himself, not because his life has suddenly been reversed.

Since we are so accustomed to the “natural” way of looking at character, such distinctions may appear tricky rather than real. Both of these forms of change can be found in all genres; both can be found within the same work; a single character can be treated both epically and dramatically. When we interpret dramatic change, we respond to a causal representation of discovery and reversal, whereas when we interpret epic change, we respond to the growth of character represented as substance-accident. This distinction may be made with examples drawn from everyday life rather than from literature.

Upon discovering myself an alcoholic I would discover myself drinking as part of a causal chain of events. I would first see myself drinking, but not as an alcoholic; I would be drinking “because of X and
Y and Z”, and not “because I am an alcoholic”. The reverse example would be where “something fell from the sky”, for example, if I won the Lotto. In this case I may well wish to see myself as the character who won the Lotto: “I am the man who won the Lotto” (as if this was someone to want to be) rather than “because of the nature of chance I have a lot of money”. Here the contrasting examples illustrate the separate identity business of each genre: in epic, characters have things attributed to them; in drama, characters have things as part of an action sequence.

What, then, is the lyric form of change and how does it relate to the relations we have already seen to typify this genre? If dramatic change is known in terms of discovery and loss, and epic in terms of disclosure and addition, then the lyric change is known in terms of disjunction and alteration. The identity is defined and redefined in relation to an other (the self as other; the world as other; another person as other). What “haunts” lyric identity is the doubleness of absorption referred to by Longinus and Frye as the mark of the lyric experience.

In this lyric merging a disjunction and an alteration take place, such that the self is disjoined from its previous identification and then altered in its overall relation with its trinity of others. Any shift in relation with one of the others results in a shift in relation to all the others. Such disjunction and alteration can be seen in Shakespeare’s sonnets
and indeed in the sonnet structure itself. The breaks of the sonnet mark clearly the disjuncture and reflect the expected alteration to follow. What makes Shakespeare's sonnets particularly good examples of this disjuncture/alteration form is his heavy reliance on disjunctions to relate the octave and the sestet and indeed to pin-on the couplet. In Sonnet 153 the speaker seeks the restoration of his health by taking the curative waters, possibly at Bath.

Cupid laid by his brand and fell asleep.
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrowed from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distempered guest,
But found no cure; the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire — my mistress' eyes.

Rather than a secondary remedy for his complaint, the speaker here claims contact with the original source of remedial fire: Cupid's flame.

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6 It must be remembered that “and” functions as a disjunction in this context since it draws attention to a junction and thus might have been a “but” or an “or”. Some forty of Shakespeare's Sonnets have a strong disjunctive (“and”, “but”, “or”) as the first word of line 13, and some twenty have a strong disjunctive at the opening of line 9.
It is through a newly re-established relationship with his mistress that his disjuncture with the world has been overcome. The double disjunction (at lines 9 and 13) marks the alteration. In Sonnet 138 the disjuncture is announced at the beginning of the sestet, but it is eschewed precisely because of its power to alter the identity relationship between the speaker and his beloved.

But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told.

Therefore I lie with her, and she with me,
And in our faults by lies we flattered be.

The range of further examples is a catalogue of the themes of love. In Sonnet 47 the theme of preservation of the image of the beloved is toyed with in a series of disjunctions. Either he will remember the beloved through looking on a picture of the beloved, or else he will employ “thoughts of love”. When both of these methods fail, he will then employ the physical reality of the beloved.

Within the rhetoric of love, these disjunctions are examples of the gentler and more positive aspects of the lyric disjunction. In negative terms, absorption in the lyric experience amounts at the least to a distraction and in its fullness to a variety of madness. The part is swallowed by the whole; or the part assumes itself to be the whole.
Keats’ Negative Capability makes such a process of absorption prototypical of the poet:

A poet is the most unpoetical of any thing in existence; because he has no identity — he is continually in for — and filling some other Body — The Sun, the Moon, the Sea and Men and Women who are creatures of impulse are poetical and have about them an unchangeable attribute — the poet has none; no identity.\(^7\)

Here Keats sets out the negative aspect of the lyric experience. The absorption, the very ability to identify, now with one thing, now with another, constitutes the identity of the poet as without “an unchangeable attribute”. Such an identity (which is not really “no identity”) is recognizable as the lyric identity.

How does this notion of lyric change compare with the two other kinds of change? In Hamlet, when Ophelia in her madness discourses to Claudius about personal identity, she offers us a way of illustrating all three:

They say the owl was a baker’s daughter. Lord, we know what we are, but know not what we may be.

(IV.v. 42-3)

“What we may be” can mean: what we may become (epic); what we may be, in the causal sense of we may be killed or driven mad (dramatic); what we may be right now, in the sense that, without knowing it we could presently, in ourselves, and of ourselves, be mad (lyric).

As lyric utterance Ophelia's speech plays on the haunting possibility that the “unchangeable attribute” which constitutes the sense of being Ophelia, or Hamlet, or the King, may be found to be in reality changeable, that identity may become explicitly embroiled in disjunction and alteration.

As illustration of epic change we might interpret Ophelia's words as a reproach to Claudius. He was once the brother-in-law of his present wife, once the brother to the King. Now his attributes have changed, he has become additionally substantiated as the King. His epic change follows the tense of Ophelia's example; like the owl that once was a baker's daughter, the King once was brother of the King. That such an addition to substantial character is possible implies further additions that are equally possible. Based on the logic of the present in relation to the past we may derive a future in relation to the present: because he-who-was-not-King became the King then the King can become something else. Such possibility haunts the epic character for whom no series of attributes may be seen to totally account for the substance of character and no series can be final.
The example Ophelia provides of the baker's daughter turning into an owl would seem to indicate the dramatic kind of change, not only because it is given as a radical transformation, but because the change is seen to arise out of a sequence of events, namely the failure of the baker's daughter to give bread to Christ. In dramatic terms (following Aristotle) the reversal in her physical form would be the result of the discovery by the baker's daughter that the man she refused to give bread to was indeed Christ.

Earlier in the play, Ophelia refers to Hamlet in his "madness" as a "blown youth/ Blasted with ecstasy" (III.i.162-63). This account of Hamlet's "madness" fits the description we have provided here of the lyric kind of change. Hamlet, as a "blown youth", as a person with an "unchangeable attribute" like Keats' "Men or Women", is "Blasted with ecstasy". If such a "noble mind" can be "o'erthrown", what then remains fixed in Ophelia's world, especially since she, as part of the sequence of actions, has lost her role as the intended bride of Hamlet? The radical disjunction in the expected course of events results in an equally radical alteration in Hamlet's relations with Ophelia.

The baker's daughter speech reflects on Ophelia's own transformation: she has become the "blown youth/ Blasted with ecstasy".

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8 The word "blown" accounts for the organic stage of maturation that Hamlet has reached. As such this stage accounts for change as a defining feature of the identity. Hamlet has grown to become a "blown youth". This stage now describes his epic identity.
If this lyric approach to Ophelia's change is taken, the analogy between her situation and the baker's daughter's reversal needs to be explained. Where in the play has she denied charity? No example is to be found. Indeed the example of the baker's daughter, while it offers to explain change in dramatic terms (discovery/reversal) actually explains no such change in the play. In terms of its religious or moral origins, the analogy attempts to account for changes that arise through the fallen nature of man, that is, the daughter was without charity because of human nature. Such a change might be argued to be that of disclosure and addition, except that the daughter does not become more substantial as a person because of her disclosure. Could this example illustrate the disjunction and alteration typical of the lyric change? Man, as fallen, is already in a disjunctive relation with God (part to whole); when man seeks to maintain such a split, through maintaining his substance (here as the baker's daughter) in the face of his Saviour (as the agent of re-union or as the one who ends the disjunctive sequence by completing it), man is altered in his relation with God (the daughter is not killed but rather transformed).

While there might be some merit in these distinctions, in terms of the play, the real significance of the example lies in what it reveals about Ophelia. Since the baker's daughter seems to have nothing directly to do with Ophelia in moral terms, we must look at the example in indirect

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9 A possible “gift” that Ophelia hasn't given to Hamlet, that plays on her mind, is the gift of her virginity.
terms. Ophelia, offering an account of her own state to others, offers a moral account of her madness. She, like the baker's daughter, has gone mad because of some failure on her part. She is offering a rationalization which is itself an example of a rationalization, an attempt by man to account for the kind of loss of substantial identity that we have seen here to typify the lyric change. In this way we can view Ophelia's change as a lyric transformation within a tragic sequence. Her ability, like Lady Macbeth's, to enter a course of action that amounts to a disjunction within the play, further stresses her lyric fate. By contrast, at no time in the play is Hamlet ever outside the action; his course of events is firmly described. Ophelia asserts her freedom from the action in the only way possible while still remaining on stage.

The way in which lyric identity undergoes lyric change may be understood through the model of matter Heidegger describes as "the unity of a manifold". Heidegger points out the affective nature of such a model:

> In what the senses of sight, hearing, and touch convey, in the sensations of color, sound, roughness, hardness, things move us bodily, in the literal meaning of the word. (p. 25)

Such a perspective on "things" brings them too close for Heidegger's philosophic purposes (p. 26), but for our model of the lyric such a situational model, that relates "things" in terms of their sensual

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This aspect of personal identity is all too infrequently dealt with in philosophy. When it is treated it is normally set up in order to be dismissed. Wittgenstein, in his *Blue and Brown Books*, after dealing with identity in similar terms to the substance-accident models already discussed, turns to the area of affective identity, that is, identity arising out of the perception of self or reality. This aspect of personal identity Wittgenstein treats through visual perception. He asks:

what sort of identity of personality it is we are referring to when we say “when anything is seen, it is always I who see”. What is it I want all these cases of seeing to have in common? As an answer I have to confess to myself that it is not my bodily appearance. I don’t always see part of my body when I see. And it isn’t essential that my body, if seen amongst the things I see, should always look the same. In fact, I don’t mind how much it changes. And I feel the same way about all the properties of my body, the characteristics of my behaviour, and even about my memories. — When I think about it a little longer I see that what I wished to say was: “always when anything is seen, something is seen”. I.e., that of which I said it continued during all the experiences of seeing was not any particular entity “I”, but the experience of seeing itself.\(^\text{10}\)

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Wittgenstein goes on to dismiss (in a similar way to his dismissal of a substantial “I” either as body or as memory) the notion that what was meant was “`whenever anything is seen, it is this which is seen', accompanying the word ‘this’ by a gesture embracing my visual field (but not meaning by ‘this’ the particular objects which I happen to see at the moment)” (p. 64). This view says Wittgenstein “only serves to bring out the senselessness” of the expression. Thus, in seeing, it is not the subject, nor is it the object, nor it is the body, nor is it memory, nor is it some general field of view that is substantiated. What remains and may be identified, in each experience of seeing, is “the experience of seeing itself”.

In pursuing this kind of identity Wittgenstein cites such tautologies as “This tree is the same thing as this tree”. Such views point out the static nature of their privileged perspective: “Thus we may be tempted to say ‘Only this is really seen’ when we stare at unchanging surroundings, whereas we may not at all be tempted to say this when we look about us while walking” (p. 66). Such an argument against the static view of perceptual identity illustrates how flimsy such identity is when compared with our previous models. Not only is there no subject or object but there is also no vantage point from which the experience can double itself and thus claim a kind of photographic identity: this experience of seeing this tree is thus not identical with this next experience of seeing this tree.
Wittgenstein's logic leads to a description of experience N.L. Wilson calls “space-time language”, a language able to describe what Wilson calls “space-time individuals”. With such a language we are able to describe the kinship (Quine's word) between “the successive parts of Venus” (morning and evening star) as a relation obtaining “between two individuals”. In “substance-language” which describes “substance individuals” such a relation between the parts of Venus would in fact be seen as a relation of identity and the “substance-language” description would account for the parts of Venus as “stages in the history of the same individual” (p. 590). Wilson comments that: “In passing from S-T language to a substance-language we pass from a four-dimensional manifold of changeless individuals to a three-dimensional manifold of individuals enduring through time” (p. 590).

Such a fixed quality of the S-T description accounts for the sense of disjunction that we find in the lyric. Each vision is absolute in its four-dimensional account; each vision is overcome in each successive vision even though relations of kinship obtain. At no point in these four dimensional descriptions does identity become substantial in the sense of one part of the vision claiming the whole. As I see the tree, I and the tree are fixed. As I see the tree, I and the tree are fixed. This second seeing is distinct because it is a separate “experience of seeing itself”, and

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neither I nor the tree are identical, though we do have a relation of kinship with our earlier four-dimensional reality. Each vision of the tree exists within this disjunctive understanding. While the vision is “fixed”, it knows itself, through kinship, as an alteration or as a variation.

Wilson works this argument through to its comic conclusions which make it difficult, using S-T language, to describe swimming in a river, since both the swimmer and the river are involved in four-dimensional realities and four-dimensional realities are static. The problem is amusing but amounts to little, since the Herakleitian views of time which support S-T language involve descriptions that treat process time as static time. Time, as an aspect of the four-dimensional description, is itself a description of a process and not simply the description of a location within a three-dimensional process. Time is thus not something else that is outside the process. Hence the frequent accounts of timelessness found in lyric poetry; time in the lyric is the time of the experience and not some other measure that lies outside the experience as an account of duration or succession.

Adding Wilson's account to Wittgenstein's, we arrive at an experiential notion of identity that has its own language of time and space relations. What we can take from Wittgenstein is the inability to substantiate either the person seeing or the thing seen through a substantial subject called “I”. What is substantiated is “the experience of
seeing itself. For this affective identity to function as an “as if” identity within the lyric genre it must be an identity that is found not as a process (which is what describes the process of becoming in the case of the epic) but as an identity that is found in process, within the actual process of its apperception, in its four-dimensional reality. Such a model is provided for within Kant's previously discussed relation of community.

With regard to this reciprocal “as if” relation Kant argues:

Thirdly, and finally, in the domain of theology, we must view everything that can belong to the context of possible experience as if this experience formed an absolute but at the same time completely dependent and sensibly conditioned unity, and yet also at the same time as if the sum of all appearances (the sensible world itself) had a single, highest and all-sufficient ground beyond itself, namely, a self-subsistent, original, creative reason. (*Pure Reason*, p. 551)

Kant's desire for an “original, creative reason” may not be shared by all, but his statement of an “absolute but at the same time completely dependent and sensibly conditioned unity” is what we require to describe the “as if” identity of lyric poetry. Within this complete dependency and sensory conditioning, such an identity amounts to the reciprocal relation between subject and object that we have called the relation typical of the lyric. Within “the experience of seeing itself” we find both subject and
object interdependent in a “sensibly conditioned unity”. This unity Kant, we remember, describes as the dynamic relation of “composition”, and Heidegger as the “unity of a manifold”.

Does this model allow for change or alteration? Remembering Wittgenstein's point about the static nature of identity assertions based on affective models, we can look again at Kant's example of "community" and ask what happens to perception when we move our view from one object to another:

We may easily recognise from our experiences that only the continuous influences in all parts of space can lead our senses from one object to another. The light, which plays between our eye and the celestial bodies, produces a mediate community between us and them, and thereby shows us that they coexist. (Pure Reason, p. 235)

Here coexistence is determined precisely as a process, a movement “from one object to another”. Wilson might counter that each seeing of each object must be considered a separate seeing and that only a relation of kinship holds between the views in each case. Such a view may be the consequence of applying S-T language to science, but in the case of a field of perception or an “experience of seeing itself” movement and not stasis is the appropriate assumption. In terms of lyric identity the relation between fields of vision may be treated disjunctively (each field is known as an absolute and is therefore, by comparison, a fixed thing) but the
relations within each field are not. Each part of the field coexists within a reciprocal relation; no one part has priority in terms of identity. The river is never known minus the swimmer when the swimmer is swimming, nor is the swimmer ever known minus the river while the swimmer is swimming.

The lyric genre is typified by a thematic approach to reality. The epic genre, which has character as its major concern, constructs character by means of the identity relation of substance and accident. The dramatic genre, which has action as its major concern, exhibits identity in a relation of cause and effect. Having defined the lyric's approach as thematic, can we exemplify this concern in the identity proposition that we have established for this genre?

What we are looking at in the lyric identity relation is a relation between parts and between parts and a whole. In light of Kant's example, such an identity relation may be described as “constellation”. The term brings with it other, happy associations. When we examine the term “theme” we discover that, in addition to the customary usages which relate to repetition and variation, “theme” may denote “proposition” and include astrological connotations. The OED gives as its sixth definition: “The disposition of the heavenly bodies at a particular time, as at the moment of a person's birth.” Such a notion of spatio-temporal “disposition” or “constellation”, especially inasmuch as such a
“disposition” is seen to be “problematic” or “propositional”, is exactly the kind of term we need to describe the peculiar identity relation in lyric poetry. “Constellation” then becomes the four-dimensional description of identity, such a description taking as its terms of identity the disposition of the parts within the manifold. The constellation of an identity describes the relationship between the self and its trinity of others.

Identity as constellation accounts for an order of experience not accounted for by causal or character identity. In particular, constellated identity may be used to explicate “suchness”, the experiential reality that is always dispositional. We never find ourselves in our experiences minus such dispositions; we never find ourselves in experiences outside of a constellation or relation of parts. Since such an identity is volatile, since it offers variations at an alarming rate, we are chary of calling it an identity relation at all. Yet we catalogue such experiences for their personal and cultural importance. Our major moods, our major emotions, our experiences in intimate relations: such matters become the business of lyric poetry because they have been raised to the level of theme. As themes they remain propositional. This is not to say they are tentative, but rather that they are problematic in that they stand as a relation of identity within a reciprocal relation.

Kant, while we noted his association of disjunction with the mode of the problematic, would not call such a proposition a proposition, precisely because it must remain problematic (we can never know if the set is full). Instead, Kant terms such a proposition a “judgment” (Logic, p. 116). Since the term “proposition” has, in common usage, more of the sense of “problematic” than of “assertoric”, it will be used here, though Kant’s sense of the subjectivity of “judgment” should be retained.
In the case of the most famous constellation proposition “I love you” (what Barthes calls “the Great, the Unique Metaphor which says tirelessly, ‘I love you’, and thus establishes the lyric discourse”) the identity of this statement is always problematic in relation to the speaker's three others, especially the other person. The other can always deny the discourse, which then forms the new constellation of rejection.

The concept of a constellated identity has a wide application and can be used to explain a range of everyday experiences as well as those thematized in lyric poetry. The television program *Candid Camera* frequently provides negative evidence of the existence and operation of constellated identity. Many episodes feature incidents where the basic culture objects have been tampered with. Thus, for example, doors do not open or doors open onto other doors. One episode featured a mail box that had no mailing hole. People arriving with letters to mail were met with an object-as-other that failed to take its expected place in the constellation. Their responses were varied, but all sought for some time to confirm the identity relationship they had expected to form with the mail box. Returning to Wittgenstein's notion of the “experience of seeing itself” as the identity aspect of perception, we say here that mailing the letter, as an experience in itself, was the identity engaged in when the people came to mail their letters.

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The failure of one part in this constellation to reciprocate the identity (that is to function in the experience in the expected relation) meant that the identity constellation had to be reformed. In this reformation the responses of the individuals indicated their involvement in this identity relationship. As a television audience we can find such de-constellations and re-constellations funny because of our everyday involvement in such identity constellations. If the world in general ceased to play its part in such constellations, our sense of certainty would rapidly disappear. The systematic alteration of such constellation expectations constitutes brain-washing.

A poetic account of constellated or lyric identity is given in Wallace Stevens' “Late Hymn from the Myrrh-Mountain”:

Tomorrow will look like today,
Will appear like it. But it will be an appearance,
A shape left behind, with like wings spreading out,

Brightly empowered with like colours, swarmingly,
But not quite molten, not quite the fluid thing,

A little changed by tips of artifice, changed
By the glints of sound from the grass. These are not
The early constellations, from which came the first
Illustrious intimations — uncertain love,

The knowledge of being, sense without sense of time.¹

Not only is a present constellation of identity given, but it is related with previous
c constellations, both adjacent (tomorrow/today) and distant (early/previous) constellations. In
its relations with other constellations this one acquires the fullness of its thematic value. The
theme, by its disjunctive nature, assumes the existence of both other themes and variations
through kinship of itself. Current constellations are devalued by comparison with earlier
constellations which provided such experiences as “sense without sense of time”. The current
constellation labours under a knowledge of time as a seasonal dissolution.

In the poem that follows “Late Hymn from the Myrrh-Mountain” in the Collected
Poems, “Man Carrying Thing”, the notion of the non-substantial or non-attributive value of
objects within the perceptual field is put forward. The existence of a mind-object relationship
is seen as a resistance; the poem, like the object in the field of view, “must resist the
intelligence/ Almost successfully”. As an example of this resistance the speaker indicates how:

A brune figure in winter evening resists
Identity. The thing he carries resists

The most necessitous sense. Accept them, then,
As secondary (parts not quite perceived

Of the obvious whole, uncertain particles
Of the certain solid, the primary free from doubt,

Things, floating like the first hundred flakes of snow[...]. . . .

(pp. 350-51)

A moment of non-identity is placed at the core of the lyric structure. The objects within the field, especially the objects that we are not paying particular attention to, “Almost successfully”, like “The poem”, resist identity, resist becoming primary parts of “the obvious whole”. In the second part of the poem the speaker goes on to compare such a state of resisted identity to the sudden emergence of “A horror of thoughts that suddenly are real”, a horror that lasts until “The bright obvious stands motionless in cold”.

Seeing “the first hundred flakes of snow” is an innocent experience, the experience of snow before we have located the event as a primary event in our present constellation. These sudden eruptions, these sudden appearances, like those of the “brune figure” and whatever
he is carrying, catch us involved with “an obvious whole”; we are caught in a current identity relationship with the objects of our field of view. Then, startlingly (in the case of the snow), or indifferently (in the case of the “brune figure”), our “obvious whole” is altered. Before we have been able to identify with this changed whole, we see, for a moment, that wonder of wonders, an object minus or rather resisting identity.

Why this innocent experience should be compared with “A horror of thoughts that suddenly are real” becomes apparent when we recall that within any constellation the three others of the self are always implicated if not actually presented. In “Man Carrying Thing” attention shifts from the other of objects to the other of self, the unconscious. The experience of unidentified objects summons up the experience of unidentified thoughts; the question of where the man fits in is related to the question of where these thoughts fit in. The thoughts become “real” as the man becomes real, by entering the “obvious whole” in a way that “resists/Identity”.

Thinking of the “brune figure” as entering the peripheral vision of the speaker illuminates the association between the objects and thoughts.

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1 The notion of “indifference” needs to be qualified. The “brune figure”, like the snow flakes, enters consciousness before it is brought to the attention of the identity structure being formed within the reading experience. For most readers the word “brune” would firstly function, like the snow flakes, as an object that enters attention without a clear consciousness of what was going on. For most readers “brune” would function simply as an adnoun. Conscious effort would be required to take up a dictionary and search out the “meaning” of what already had taken on meaning through reading. The reception, by the reader, of “brune” is offered as a model of the reception, by the speaker, of the snow flakes.
Thoughts that come “Out of a storm of secondary things” are thoughts that enter consciousness, like the snow flakes and the “brune figure”, in a way that presents their reality as other; their resistance to identity within the current constellation evidences their quality of otherness, their quality of reality. The staggering invasions of otherness confound identity to the point where the speaker complains: “We must endure our thoughts all night”. The pronominal acceptance of the thoughts into the lyric identity of the speaker is set against the anticipation of the rising of the sun; at sunrise “The bright obvious” will stand “motionless in cold”. Such an image of anticipated rescue from the unsettling “horror of thoughts” is not, however, an answer to their reality. The image of rescue is an image of salvation, an image of a totality that will constellate all. The sun does not “stand motionless” and so the speaker is asserting that we, as those who experience the “horror of thoughts”, must persist in our enduring. We must continue to re-constellate our identity while ever we find our identity in relation with the world of others.

The “brune figure”, as a symbol of the poet, is carrying something. The something, though it “resists// The most necessitous sense”, is described within the paradox of the title of the poem. The thing the figure is carrying is the poem that carries the figure. Through this paradox the reality of the speaker as the maker of the reality is made known. Also announced is the paradox of the imagination: by realizing the “brune figure” as a “real” thing, the reader's imagination becomes the “Man Carrying Thing”. In carrying the “brune figure” the reader also
finds this figure as the other, but not just as any other: it is carrying the other of the reader. Conversely, the reader is carried by this other inasmuch as this other is the speaker who is also carrying “his” other. This paradox provides an excellent description of the reciprocal speaker/reader relationship that forms the mind of the work.

The complex relationship of reading subject and speaking subject engages the reading subject in a constellated identity. The reading subject finds himself as part of an identity that finds itself as part of an identity in which the whole becomes the experience of the poem. The reading subject is found as an identity in the experience of reading itself. The reading subject identifies as a part to a whole, this whole being the experience of the poem. The fact that the reading subject is also a part of this whole (is included in the whole) means that identity cannot be attributed to the reading subject; the reading subject gains identity only through reading itself (taking “reading itself” to include all aspects of the experience and not simply sitting at a table).

The description given here of the constellated or lyric identity matches in many ways the description of constellation found in the psychology of Jung. As Jolan de Jacobi writes: “The archetype is, so to speak, an “eternal” presence,’ says Jung, and to what extent it is perceived by the conscious mind depends only on the constellation of the moment.” Jacobi explains in a footnote: “In this context ‘constellation’ means the state of consciousness to which the unconscious stands in a
compensatory relation; it is manifested in the distribution of psychic energy and the corresponding charge of the archetype that has been touched and ‘called awake’ by a current problem.” What we can take from this account is the notion of the eternal presence of the evidence of the other within any moment; the ego is always, in every state of consciousness, constellated in some way with the unconscious. We can add that such constellations always interrelate the ego not only with the unconscious but with the world and with others; and that such constellations, while they constitute by far the largest part of our personal identity, are especially the business of the lyric genre.

In summary: having grounded each identity relation in a model of matter, we have been able to determine these identity relations by the logical propositions that describe each genre. In this way the identity relations offer to mediate, through this grounding in a model of matter, between the logical and the affective propositions of each genre. It is because we interpret ourselves in these three ways that we are able to understand as epistemological models the propositions of identity in each genre. Through this identification of the way of knowing with the way of being, the three genres are able to produce the affects of being as knowing. The affective propositions, because of their ability to distance the reader, each in its different way, are able to articulate these affects of being as knowing in each genre.

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2 Whether such distances be seen as a product of the epistemological model or the product of the rhetorical structures of each genre is really a question of whether rhetoric is seen as existing separate to epistemology or whether it is seen as a manifestation of a way of knowing.
So far we have given examples of the logical propositions of each genre but we have not provided examples of the affective or the identity propositions of each genre. While the identity propositions are easily generated, it has to be admitted that the affective propositions pose a very real problem in terms of the number and variety of propositions that clamour for recognition. R.D. Laing's *Knots* springs to mind. It would also seem to be almost a prerequisite of affective propositions that they be irrational. For example, in the case of the lyric we would need to pose as a basic model of kenosis: “I am because I am not because I am other because an other is me”. As a logical description, however, this example is minus its affects.

We may describe epic's identity relation in what Kant calls the “assertoric” mode: “I am the one that loves you.” This proposition is in what Kant calls the “assertoric” mode. We may describe the dramatic identity relation: “Because we made love, now we are lovers, and because we are lovers, we must get married.” This proposition would rightly belong to a comedy; its hypothetical judgment is really in the mode of the “problematic” though it pretends to the “assertoric”. We may describe the lyric's identity relation in the example already given by Barthes: “I love you.” This judgment is minus its verb “to be” which assists in restricting attribution. The judgment, however, parades as a categorical judgment and therefore as one belonging to the “assertoric” mode. What
is disclosed, by the absence of the verb "to be", is the disjunction that accounts for the "problematic" nature of the proposition.

The table facing this page lists the assertions made with regard to each genre. Having taken our theory this far, we find ourselves at the place where three roads meet, the three roads of the other, the roads of the lyric identity. The first road to be taken will be that which leads to the object.
Aesthetic kenosis, or self-emptying, can be seen, from our investigations in the previous chapters, as the affective relationship between the mind of the work and the world of the work when this relationship of mind to world is interpreted as reciprocal. Within the discourse of identity that constitutes the mind of the work in the lyric, the initial aspect of aesthetic kenosis can be observed. The relationship formed between the reading subject and speaking subject of the work requires, through its reciprocal formation, the giving up, or transformation, or qualification of the distance between these two parts of the mind of the work. Within the mind of the work of the lyric genre this distance is overcome in an empathetic identification that constitutes the speaking subject in a way different to its constitution by the other two genres.

In the case of the lyric, the speaking subject found in the mind of the work is to be seen, and met, as “real” within the constellated identity formed between the reading subject, speaking subject and world of the work. It is because the identity of the speaking subject in the lyric is propositional that it acquires this reality. The reality of the lyric speaking
subject is as much the result of the reciprocal relationship within the mind of the work as it is the result of the reciprocal relationship between the mind and the world of the work. In this way, the reality of the speaking subject amounts to a “realization” of the speaking subject within its two domains: the domain of its world and the domain of its relationship with the reading subject. The speaking subject is constituted from two directions both by and with the reader as other, and by and with its world as other.

Rogers, following Käte Hamburger, makes a distinction between fictional speaking subjects in the dramatic and epic genres and the “real” speaking subject in the lyric mind (Rogers, p. 69). The distinction might be refined: the speaking subject in the epic world is fictional (along with its fictional world) whereas, following Coleridge's notion of “suspended disbelief”, the world of the dramatic is fictional (along with its speaking subject).

Through the reader’s involvement in this constitution of a “real” or “realized” lyric subject, the reader, in a moment of aesthetic kenosis, suspends the god-like identity of distance that marks the other genres, and lives in the world of the speaking subject. The reading subject draws near the speaking subject and is able to identify with, or be absorbed in, the consciousness of the world of the work of the speaking subject. The vital or active nature of this relationship between the mind and the world in the lyric, accounts for the final stage of the kenotic process: the
reading subject is rewarded with an enlarged understanding of itself and with a transformed view of its identity. As witness of the speaking subject in its world, the reading subject has been realized as constituting and being constituted by the other. This reciprocal identity is the work of the aesthetic kenosis.

Many of these points about the lyric are commonplaces requiring careful examination. Rogers, following Dilthey's notion of a “relation of aesthetic contemplation, where the mind actually finds as an `objective' quality of the world the emotion, value, or pleasure it put there”, has this to say on lyric reciprocity:

When we regard something aesthetically, we see in the thing the objectification of our own inner state, while at the same time being aware that the thing is, by entering in through our senses, somehow the determiner of our state. But that is not the only kind of experience that illustrates a reciprocal relation. Empathy with another person, inasmuch as his mind is conceived initially as a constituent of my world, is another such relation. When I experience empathy with another person, I remain aware of his mind as an other, yet he ceases to be merely an object. For I know what he is feeling, by means of knowing what I am feeling. I know the object, as it were, by consulting myself. (p. 68)

The very large assumption here is that it is possible for the mind of another person to be “conceived initially as a constituent of my world".
Rogers would appear to be following Heidegger as eloquently summarized by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*:

Being, Heidegger tells us, is *Mit-Sein* — that is, “being-with”. Thus human-reality the characteristic of being is that human-reality is its being with others. This does not come about by chance. I do not exist *first* in order that subsequently a contingency should make me *encounter* the Other. The question here is of an essential structure of my being. But this structure is not established from outside and from a totalitarian point of view as it was with Hegel. . . . I discover the transcendental relation to the Other as constituting my own being, just as I have discovered that being-in-the-world measures my human-reality. Henceforth the problem of the Other is a false problem. The Other is no longer first a particular existence which I encounter in the world — and which could not be indispensable to my own existence since I existed before encountering it. The Other is the ex-centric limit which contributes to the constitution of my being. He is the test of my being inasmuch as he throws me outside of myself toward structures which at once both escape me and define me; it is this test which originally reveals the Other to me.¹

Within the lyric mind of the work, within the identity discourse, we find something very like Sartre's “structures which at once both escape me and define me”. The reading subject and the speaking subject engage in this subject-other relationship such that, while the world of the

speaking subject is not numerically identical with the world of the reading subject, nonetheless the reading subject, in the lyric, is thrown outside of himself towards the reciprocal relationship between the speaking subject and the world of the work. In this “test” the other is revealed. In this “test” the self of the reading subject is constituted in relation to the speaking subject.

While the description of “empathy” offered by Rogers may appear a simplified version of Sartre's views it takes us back to Heidegger. In *Being and Time* Heidegger characteristically complains of calling “This phenomenon . . . `empathy' " and goes on to describe it as “the first ontological bridge from one's own subject, which is given proximally as alone, to the other subject, which is proximally quite closed off.” In his outline, Heidegger makes several distinctions that must be added to the account of both Rogers and Sartre. Firstly Heidegger distinguishes “Being towards Others . . . from Being towards Things”. Secondly he distinguishes “Being with” and “Being towards Others”. For Heidegger “ `Empathy' does not first constitute Being-with; only on the basis of Being-with does `empathy' become possible”. Thirdly, while the relationship of “Dasein to Dasein . . . is already constitutive for one's own Dasein”, “The relationship-of-Being which one has towards Others" is not a “Projection of one's own Being-towards-oneself `into something else' " . Such a relationship would mean that “the Other would be a duplicate of the Self”. For Heidegger “Being towards Others" is “an autonomous, irreducible relationship of Being: this relationship, as
Being-with, is one which, with Dasein's Being, already is.” While he sees this relationship as “autonomous”, Heidegger admits that “mutual acquaintanceship on the basis of Being-with, often depends upon how far one's own Dasein has understood itself”.²

While each of these three relationships (subject/object; self/Self; self/other) will be investigated in this and the following two chapters, what is of immediate interest is the autonomy of the relationship of being with and towards others. This irreducible relationship, in allowing empathy, allows the reciprocity that typifies the lyric relation. I can “know” the relations that the other has with things inasmuch as I can “know” the other in his “knowing”, since, as other, he is a constituent of my Being. The same holds for my “knowledge” of the other in relation to himself and in relation to others. I do not hold this relation with the other because of my relation with my own Being--owards myself; rather I hold this relation with the other because this relation of being-with and towards the other is constitutive of my being.³

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³ In taking up Heidegger's terms, we are not establishing concepts that are either "empty" or "full". Within the complex subject of the lyric the identity possibilities of the subject are "relational concepts constitutive of understanding" (Rogers, p. 41). It will be argued in later chapters (especially Chapter Seven) that it is within the interpretations of identity that are provided by language that the basic possibilities of the subject are constituted. Within the dimensions of literature, these possibilities are presented in their constitution: the identity interpretations that constitute our understanding of genres constitute our understanding of aesthetic identity. The disclosure of identity within the genres of literature is a disclosure of the constitutive role that the genres play in the formation of a variety of language-determined identities all of which require “aesthetic distance” to operate.
In dramatic and epic genres the relationship of Being-with the other is found, but the relationship of Being-towards the other is not. For Heidegger “empathy” becomes possible “only on the basis of Being-with” and further, “empathy” “gets its motivation from the unsociability of the dominant modes of Being-with” (p. 162). Thus, there are other modes of Being-with than that of Being-towards or “empathy” that could account for the special nature of the “Being-with the Other” that is to be found within the identity relations of the mind of the work in the epic and dramatic genres.

On this basis we can now turn to investigate the relations between the speaking subject and the objects of this speaking subject's world within the genre of the interpreted lyric. Because of the reciprocal relation found between the mind of the work and the world of the work in the lyric the objects of this world acquire the ability to affect the mind of the work. Through this potency, these objects exist as parts of what Heidegger calls the world: “that by which human reality makes known to itself what it is”.

But this aesthetic world, this world that is, to use Ricoeur's words, “opened up by the text . . . frees us from the visibility and limitation of situations by opening up . . . [an other] world for us, that is, new dimensions of our being-in-the-world.” Following Wilhelm von Humboldt,

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Ricoeur describes what is established within these new dimensions as “the relation of man to the world” (p. 202). Ricoeur (following Heidegger) gives priority to this relationship over the understanding of “another person”:

What we understand first in a discourse is . . . a project, that is, the outline of a new being-in-the-world. Only writing, in freeing itself, not only from its author, but from the narrowness of the dialogical situation, reveals this destination of discourse as projecting a world. (p. 202)

This projected world establishes the relation of a man to the world; and only discourse does this (as opposed to language) because it “is addressed to someone”. Ricoeur points out that minus this “referential function, only an absurd game of errant signifier remains”. In his stressing of the priority of the projected world Ricoeur illuminates an aspect of reading that is too frequently overlooked. As readers we fall into the relations offered within the mind of the work without noticing these relations; or we notice the projected world before we notice the relations we are implicated in by our seeing this world: we look at the landscape before we question the ground we are standing on. Aesthetic identity structures acquire through this mode of attention (or inattention) a translucent quality. As dialogue, aesthetic identity structures insist on the referential aspect of language; because this level of referral is
continuous in the aesthetic experience of identity, it falls below the horizon of view.¹

The objects, then, of the lyric world are objects within a projected world, a world that establishes its relation of a man to the world within its address to someone. This new-being-in-the-world is the speaking subject in relation to his world, addressing someone (the reading subject). Within the world of the lyric, because of the reciprocal relationship between the speaking subject and the world of the work, the objects of that world exist as “real” objects in relation to a “real” subject. The question of how else they might exist is illuminated by Japanese aesthetics.

In *The Theory of Beauty in the Classical Aesthetics of Japan* Toshihiko and Toyo Izutsu establish two basic ways of viewing the objects of the lyric world. The alternatives are illustrated through a distinction between the treatment of objects in waka and the treatment of objects in haiku. In waka:

Nature description as a product of . . . an existential experience of the poet in which he recognizes Nature as the external locus where he can get into the most immediate and intimate contact with his own inner Self (the non-articulated), is no other than a description of Nature.

¹ Shifts in rhetorical reference are a feature of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. At various times in the novel the reader is made aware, in a startling way, that the speaker in the novel has implicated their consciousness in his tale.
as his contemplative “field”, which in its turn constitutes the poetic-linguistic “field” of waka. This peculiar form of Nature-description is given in this way a structural sanction as a dynamic and immediate expression or manifestation of the non-articulated Subjectivity, kokoro, the state of Mind.1

This field is further defined as “the semantic-cognitive-contemplative” field (p. 24), and it can be equated with little difficulty with the “relation of aesthetic contemplation” that Rogers takes from Dilthey, a relation in which “the mind actually finds as an ‘objective’ quality of the world the emotion, value, or pleasure it has put there” (Rogers, p. 68). This “objectification of our own inner states” is a common enough way of viewing the status of the objects of the world of the lyric that are to be related, through reciprocity, to the mind of the lyric work. It is a view that makes its own idealist sense.

The aesthetics of the waka would have it that the full force of the lyric for the reader, as reading subject, is to be achieved through the discourse of identity that constitutes the mind of the work. The subjectivity, the non-articulated aspect of the reader, as subject, is free, through the aesthetic contemplation, to be surprised by the articulated consciousness of the work. But this approach leaves far too much on the side of the mind of the work and, especially in the case of the lyric mind of the work, such a state of imbalance threatens to override the

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supposed reciprocity between the speaking subject and the world of the work. If the objects of this field are no more than the objectification of the non-articulated subjectivity of the speaking subject, then these objects are sufficiently known to the reading subject through the speaking subject’s relation with the reading subject. As reader I am given the value, I am informed of the objects, I am told, as is the case in the “point of view” of the epic genre. I do not engage in the mind of the work in relation to the world; my access is purely through the speaking subject. Parallels may also be seen to the externalization involved in the notion of the dramatic: the emotions take on their objects, as voices, or actors, and as reader I am shown these objects.²

When dealing with the Japanese notion of subjectivity in the Subject-Object relationship, the Izutsus point out that “whatever is named or nameable, has no validity of its own except in the capacity of a `subjective object' ''. But this idealist notion must be understood within the context of its corollary, that the Subject, as cognitive self, is not granted self-subsistency by this assertion:

The subject, according to this view, is that which articulates the object, but the very subject articulates itself as subject by its own function of what we have called above the

² T.S. Eliot’s “objective correlative” would obviously be directed by this criticism away from the lyric genre and into the dramatic. The status of the correlative is not that of real object but rather as objectification of a non-articulated subjectivity.
“existentiating articulation” consisting in articulating constantly, moment by moment, different objects one after another.

What is meant by this is that the subject, by completely identifying itself with its own articulating function, establishes itself as the Subject, i.e. the all-unifying consciousness comprising both the subject and object as ordinarily understood. (p. 30)

Here the constant articulation of subjectivity amounts to the reciprocity which has been said to operate between the speaking subject and the world of the work in the lyric. When the subject, as either reader or speaker, is denied self-subsistency the relation of reciprocity is re-established within a mind-world balance which must include alteration of movement if there is to be an active relation between the two. Here, then, we can see the sense in which saying that the lyric subject is “real” implies that it is not self-subsistent. If the lyric subject is fictional, this fictive character of the subject is what allows it to be seen and treated as a self-subsistent character. Kermode points out “that whereas there may be, in the world, no such thing as character . . . in the novel there can be no just representation of this, for if the man . . . had no character we should not recognise him” (p. 138). In the case of the epic, the self-subsistent and fictional narrator has his world as an attribute or as a series of thoughts in his mind. In the case of the speaker of the dramatic, it is the self-subsistent nature of the fictional world of the drama that generates the fictional stability.
With this real but non-self-subsistent speaker in the lyric we can relocate Eliot's notion of the “objective correlative” within the domain of the lyric. What we are looking at, in this waka poetry and in poetry that illustrates an “objective correlative”, is not a lyric poetry that deals with real world objects as such, but rather a poetry that deals with the objects of the non-articulated subjectivity. These non-articulated objects of subjectivity are then objectified and occur within the lyric as objects in nature. These objects, however, point not to nature but back to the domain of the speaker's non-articulated subjectivity. The poet is articulating, through objectification, what otherwise could not be articulated.

While these unseen internal objects of the lyric speaker might be taken to be aspects of an unconscious, an absolute conclusion would be rather hasty. Since these objects become conscious only within the field of poetry, they exist only as articulated aspects of consciousness within this field. How they are known beforehand is a question that poetry is in no position to answer. As non-articulated aspects of subjectivity, they could range from dim feelings through to unconscious eruptions. Within their articulation in the field, such objects can equally be seen to arise from both the symbolic and the semiotic aspects of the field itself. As the articulation of the field, there is no real requirement to find homes for such located objects. Only in the field of their articulation do they exist; and they can and do arise in the field of their articulation as aspects (objects) of the field. Frye's criticism of Jung's notion of a collective unconscious is pertinent:
A psychologist examining a poem will tend to see in it what he sees in the dream, a mixture of latent and manifest content. For the literary critic the manifest content of the poem is its form, hence its latent content becomes simply its actual content, its dianoia or theme. (*Anatomy*, p. 111)

These objects, as objects in the field, point back to the non-articulated aspects of the speaker's subjectivity and point to themselves as aspects of the poetic field. In no way, except via notions of correspondence, do these objects point to their status as real world objects. While they realize subjectivity, they themselves are not realized as real world objects in the relationship. As such these objects are objects of the self in its pose as natural: the world corresponds; “the mind actually finds as an `objective' quality of the world the emotion, value, or pleasure it has put there” (Rogers, p. 68).

Along with the subject-related sources of such objects, one should of course list things like poetry manuals and cliché. Such objects do not necessarily have "vitality" or "originality". Subjectivity is sustained by repetition within the field and the anticipation of expected objects provides pleasure through the articulation of the structure. But both Eliot and the Izutsus expect the activity, at its best, to be an engagement between the non-articulated subjectivity and the corresponding natural domain.
If this approach and this pose of the natural self was not “natural”, then we would rightly consider this appropriation of objects to be the most unnatural of all. Another, more “natural” way of viewing objects within the poetic field initially appears strange. This is how the Izutsus describe the second approach to subject-objects:

In the case of the *haiku* . . . Nature — natural things and events — is given an objective actuality in the midst of the empirical reality, the implication of which, however, should not be taken in the sense that *haiku* is a purely objective description of Nature as a concrete, empirical reality, but rather it is to be taken in the sense that Nature, which the haiku-poet is to confront and deal with in his creative activity, is supposed to be in itself essentially empirical, objective and actual. Otherwise expressed, in the creative activity of *haiku* the primary importance is attached to the experiential actuality of the poet who gets into a dialectic encounter with Nature and the objective external world. And such an experiential actuality of the poet vis-à-vis Nature necessarily presupposes that Nature be externally posited with an objective solidity, as if it were an entity ontologically quite independent of the subject. (p. 64)

This view of subject-object relations allows haiku to reveal to the full the relation of reciprocity between the speaking subject and the world of the work. By granting the status of actuality to the object, the subject, through its haiku approach, acquires the possibility of entering what would best be described as a self-actualizing experience with the
object. In contrast to the situation in waka, in the haiku, because the object is taken as empirically real (within the field), it is not some aspect of non-articulated subjectivity that is realized in relation with the object, but rather the self of the subjectivity, that is, the speaking subject. This confrontation of subject and object, on the basis of radical difference, marks the haiku approach:

The poetic “field” of haiku is essentially an existential-cognitive “field” in which the dialectic event of subject-object encounter is to take place. The cognitive-existential event itself goes on creating moment by moment the poetic “field” of haiku. In each of the actual occurrences of dialectical encounter there are realized illuminating correspondences between the subject and object in their phenomenality. Both the creative-cognitive subject and the cognized object disclose their own phenomenal aspects to each other moment by moment in their limitless varieties and variegations. A certain phenomenal aspect of the creative-cognitive subject illumines outward a certain particular aspect of the cognized object, which in its turn steers the self-illuminating focus upon another particular aspect of the cognitive subject itself, thus continuing indefinitely, and each phase of this illuminating correspondence forms the potential poetic “field” of the event itself. The cognitive subject and the cognized object are merely the two poles constitutive of the energy “field” of the phenomenal, existential event, which the linguistic “field” of haiku tries to represent with its centripetal dynamics. (p. 73)
It is not strange that a convincing example of what is here described as subject-object relations in the haiku should be found in the work of Heidegger. In the poetic treatment of a jug in his lecture “The Thing”, Heidegger searches, through a field of awareness of “what is near”, for what “in the thing is thingly”. 

As a vessel the jug is something self-sustained, something that stands on its own. This standing on its own characterizes the jug as something that is self-supporting, or independent. As the self-supporting independence of something independent, the jug differs from an object. An independent, self-supporting thing may become an object if we place it before us, whether in immediate perception or by bringing it to mind in a recollective re-presentation. However, the thingly character of the thing does not consist in its being a represented object, nor can it be defined in any way in terms of the objectness, the over-againstness, of the object.¹

Heidegger's distinction of “thing” from “object” may be used to delineate the difference between the objects of the waka and haiku as a difference between objects and things. In haiku the “thingly character” is what is met in the existential confrontation. Heidegger ends his lecture: “Men alone, as mortals, by dwelling attain to the world as world. Only what conjoins itself out of the world becomes a thing”(p. 182). Within this

field of the attained world the speaking subject and the object are conjoined and there appears the thing. Heidegger stresses the reciprocal nature of thinging:

If we let the thing be present in its thinging from out of the worlding world, then we are thinking of the thing as thing. Taking thought in this way, we let ourselves be concerned by the thing's worlding being. Thinking in this way, we are called by the thing as the thing. In the strict sense of the German word bedingt, we are the be-thinged, the conditioned ones. We have left behind us the presumption of all unconditionedness. (p. 181)

Having “left behind us the presumption of all unconditionedness” we are realized in the relation with the thing, and while the active side still falls to the subject, the subject is realized in its being “be-thinged”. It is within this relationship, within the field of the “cognitive-existential event”, that the new aesthetic identity of the lyric poem is found. The “illuminating correspondence” between subject and thing is here disclosed in the new identity, the identity won out of the realization of the phenomenality of the subject in dialectical relation with the phenomenality of the object, the object having acquired in the process the status of “external object” or, following Heidegger, “thing” within the field. The importance of this revealed status is not that in giving the object special value we overcome the quandary of solipsism; rather it indicates that, within the identity change of the kenotic process of the
lyric, there occurs an alteration in the status of the objective realm. As the existence of the subject is realized, within the “phenomenal transiency” of the existential confrontation with the object, so the object is realized reciprocally. Both are seen as being without self-subsistency and “each unit of aesthetic-existential experience is [seen as] irrevocably passing away and elapsing moment by moment” (Izutsus, p. 72).

We should note here that “correspondence” is used in haiku with the sense of each answering each, whereas in waka the “correspondence” claimed is a capacity to be substituted for. The haiku relation between subject and object may well be called that taken by the Adam-self. In the Heideggerian revealing of things we see Adam naming the objects. Heidegger even sees this redemptive process of nominalization as a condition of man's being through his being-with things. The other view, that of the natural-self, or the waka self, leaves man conditioned by his relation with his “own inner Self (the non-articulated)” (Izutsus, p. 22).

In Sengai, The Zen Master, D.T. Suzuki translates and comments on a poem by Sengai:

The Floating Gourd

It is like a gourd floating on the waters: it is never steady, now sinking, now rising, at the mercy of the winds. The gourd itself is altogether unconcerned. Buddha or Devil,
Yao or Shun, Confucius or Mo-tzu, Lao-tzu or Chuang-tzu may all come to take hold of it. But the gourd will elusively slip out of their grasp. Amazing!

Pictured and inscribed by Gai the Useless, in response to the request of Saichiro.

Suzuki comments:

The ultimate reality or the Tao (Way) is absolutely independent of all our efforts to comprehend it. When we think we have it at last, it steps out of our grasp. Yet it is floating before our eyes regardless of our intellectual attempts to nail it down to a fixed board of comprehensibility. As long as it is looked upon dichotomously as an object, it is always out of our reach. The point is therefore to identify ourselves with it and leave ourselves to float with it on the everflowing stream of life.²

Here the natural-self is caught in its own contemplative field. The objects of correspondence between its innermost self and Nature threaten to deny it access to the very reality it seeks, which is the realization of its self in existential relation to both itself and the world in which it lives. So long as this world is held at bay by being viewed “dichotomously as an object”, the gourd will always slip from grasp. Having found the gourd to serve as objectification of the desired state of mind, the subject has

denied himself access to this very state of mind by locating the objectification between himself and his own state of mind. The poetic field of contemplation has both served to illustrate the natural-self in its relation to the objects of its own invention and to illustrate the failure of this objectification. In this way the poem has its cake and eats it; it raises the object of contemplation in the world of the poem and relocates it in the mind of the poem. We must identify with the object and understand both the object and the desire as belonging to the mind of the poem. In this sense the world of the waka serves as mirror in its reciprocation: we get back our own desire “naturalized”. The identification with these objects of our own invention then grounds the new identity.

To illustrate these two approaches to the relationship between the subject as speaker and the mind of the lyric, we can turn again to the poetry of Wallace Stevens. In a sense Stevens' work is so rich with examples of both kinds of approach, examples that argue both for and against themselves, that this chapter could easily be diverted into the land of Supreme Fictions and be lucky to find its way out.

Paul A. Bové, in his Destructive Poetics, offers a critique of “Two late poems, ‘Not Ideas about the Thing but the Thing Itself’ and ‘The Rock’ . . . [as] good examples of Stevens' sympathy for ‘unreconciled' antithesis. ‘The Rock' questions the primacy of matter over imagination, whereas ‘Not Ideas' asserts the certitude of objects' existence
What is typical of Stevens is that, rather than putting either approach forward as a thing in itself, his poetry argues the propositions inherent in the approaches that his poetry takes, even while the poetry takes these approaches. In doing so, the poetry of Stevens in many ways gainsays the very effects that these approaches are able to achieve when they are practised minus the articulation of their poetic propositions as logical propositions. The affective quality of the poetry is brought to the attention of the reader while the reader is being affected. This shift or displacement of the affect sets up a pattern of indirection that hides or disguises intentionality within a problematic, such that “meaning” gains an aura of significance beyond the possibilities of the poem.

By contrast, in the example from Sengai the question of the relative status of imagination and reality is not raised at any point in the poem, nor indeed in Suzuki’s commentary. The inter-involvement of the imagination with the objects of its own invention and the necessary location of these objects between the speaking subject and any empirical world do not immediately lead to a dispute about the relative merits of either the effects, the process or the participants. In the Sengai poem what is sought, in contrast to a fictional statement about the status of imagination and reality, is a practical answer to the questions raised by the poetic propositions. The poem asks “how can I grasp the gourd”, not “is my imagination more real than any possible world”.

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Bové, in his reading of Stevens, too readily follows the assumed propositions behind the logical propositions and very readily mistakes the speaking subject for the author. When the one who asks the questions within the poem is questioned within the world of the poem the answers are sometimes different. There is a “why” that remains for the reading subject to ask. The answer, arising from the reciprocity between the speaking subject and the world of the poem, frequently is not found in that world but in the speaking subject. The questions are those of the self and not those of the world. To penetrate the “aura” of meaning one must attend to the questions posed for and by the speaking subject.

What roles do waka and haiku relations play in Stevens' work? Bové contends that in “The Rock” “reality resides in the mind's active perception in a moment of `vivid sleep’ ”, and thus “The Rock” advocates a positive valuation of imagination. In the case of “Not Ideas” the “source” of the cry of the bird in the poem “is most emphatically taken away from the realm of the mental" and thus “Not Ideas” supports reality. By way of further contrast between these two poems, “the type of imagination which the persona praises in `The Rock' is here [in `Not Ideas'] derogatorily classified as a `vast ventriloquism' ". Bové goes on:

The point of this metaphor [“vast ventriloquism”], of course, is the denial of primacy, of origin, to the imagination which functions only as a mouthpiece, as it were, of something else, beyond human creation. For the
persona of this poem, the other exists independently in reality. It does not depend on any source for its being, nor does it take part in any questionable ontological state like “sleep's faded papier-mâché”.

In this poem [“Not Ideas”], then, the primacy of the imagination is temporarily replaced by the fiction of complete immanence, which holds that the other can completely manifest itself and its Being so that its “meaning," its “nature," can be understood primordially. The poem certainly moves in that direction and, in fact, seems to arrive at this “final" position. The simile of the last two lines [“It was like/ A new knowledge of reality"], however, points out that this idea of the revelation of the other and the gathering of new knowledge is also a fiction. (p. 211)

Two points may be made straight off. Why should the replacement of the imagination by “complete immanence" be seen by Bové as temporary? Does he assume the dominance of the imaginative mode? Or is he here alluding to that credulous scepticism in Stevens which conceives of all views as real fictions? If this last is his presumption, the dominance he gives to the imaginative (free) side of the fictional is out of place.

The second point addresses Bové's reading of the final simile. The simile can, in a simple, non-reflexive way, be read as meaning that this knowledge pretends to be new and therefore really is old, another example of fiction. It can also be read to mean that, although pretending
or appearing as if it were new, the other as the object of knowledge (including the knowledge as part of the object) really is as it always was. It is an example of itself that was always known as one of man's fundamental (and therefore fictional) ways of knowing reality. The being like new of the knowledge therefore reflects the efficacy of this way of knowing. It can only return “like new” in the sense that knowledge, as a way of knowing, was never new; it either always was or else it never was.¹

It is best not to make premature judgements about how imagination and reality are valued or reconciled in a Stevens poem. While Bové's approach reveals the essentially dynamic nature of the view of reality put forward in the poetry of Stevens, it does so at the expense of structures and relationships that offer to “explain” this view of reality. Armed with our model of the lyric identity as constellation, we can clarify these structures and relationships.

In Stevens’ “The Sun this March” the speaker is confronted with “The exceeding brightness of this early sun”. Since the speaker offers no qualification at the outset, is the sun of this poem to be read as real or as imaginary? Is this the sun of “The inconceivable idea of the sun"

¹ Imre Salusinszky in his series of interviews, Criticism In Society (London: Methuen, 1987), asks each of his interviewees to comment on this particular Stevens poem. The variety of readings of this difficult line about “new knowledge” is instructive.
(“Notes Towards a Supreme Fiction‘‘)? If so, then it is within the notion of the interdependence of the real and the imagined:

Two things of opposite natures seem to depend  
On one another, as a man depends  
On a woman, day on night, the imagined

On the real. This is the origin of change.  
Winter and spring, cold copulars, embrace  
And forth the particulars of rapture come.

(“Supreme Fiction”, Collected Poems, p. 392)

This notion of change arising out of the interdependence of the real and the imagined is extended to include an affect, the desire that arises in both priest and philosopher:

And not to have is the beginning of desire.  
To have what is not is its ancient cycle.  
It is desire at the end of winter, when

It observes the effortless weather turning blue  
And sees the myosotis on its bush.  
Being virile, it hears the calendar hymn.

It knows that what it has is what is not  
And throws it away like a thing of another time,  
As morning throws off stale moonlight and shabby sleep.

(“Supreme Fiction”, p. 382)
Thus we have a relationship between reality and the imagination on the one hand and on the other a force that allows for movement within this interdependence. This essentially negative force, here described as “desire”, arises in two forms. Firstly it arises as the “beginning of desire” in the realization of not having. Secondly it arises in the having of “what is not”. Between these stages of desire, a cycle is generated. How reality and imagination are to be balanced in a world affected by desire is hinted at in “The Man on the Dump”:

One sits and beats an old tin can, lard pail.
One beats and beats for that which one believes.
That's what one wants to get near. Could it after all
Be merely oneself, as superior as the ear
To a crow's voice? Did the nightingale torture the ear,
Pack the heart and scratch the mind? And does the ear Solace
itself in peevish birds? Is it peace,
Is it a philosopher's honeymoon, one finds
On the dump?

(p. 203)

Is the ear, through its dependence on the bird, tortured as mediator between the scratched mind and the real bird? Interpreting the dump as the graveyard of the images of the imagination, makes it possible, after “One rejects/ The trash”, for there to be a relation between man and moon:
Everything is shed; and the moon comes up as the moon (All its images are in the dump) and you see
As a man (not like an image of a man),
You see the moon rise in the empty sky.

(p. 202)

While there is evidence here of “syntactic uncertainty” (Bové, p. 206), the point, for our purpose, is that the relation between self and moon exists, is posited on the existential-cognitive field claimed by the Izutsus to typify the haiku. Here is achieved a moon-rise. The pronominal complexity and the dramatic structure of this passage argue as much for the rhetorical direction of the poem as they do for some fundamental uncertainty on the part of the speaker. When we assume the reading subject to be the object of such “syntactic uncertainty” and such pronominal complexity, these devices can be seen to argue as much for a quest to elicit an affect in the reader as they argue for a larger philosophic problem. Indeed, there are many reasons to see the “syntactical uncertainty” as an aspect of a “personality” in the speaker. The uncertainties are those that arise from a conscious control on the part of the speaker and not as the result of subliminal affects that infect the semiotic dimension of the discourse. On this view, it is part of the “personality” of the speaker to employ syntactical structures that explore the pronominal complexities made available by the discourse of the lyric. The existence of such structures is made evident within the discourse and not as a separate philosophic statement.
If we return to “The Sun this March”, we do not find an achieved sunrise. In this poem the sun, like the nightingale, has already tortured the eye and burned a mark on the mind. In relation to the sun's brightness the speaker does not become aware, by an objective comparison, of his own darkness. Rather he is made, by the brightness of the early sun, to “conceive how dark I have become”. He has been affected by the real, that is, by that which arises, unasked, external to himself and, in this case, known through the contrast of negativity. The sun should not, according to his idea of the March sun, be so bright this early. The speaker has been caught with “what is not/ And throws it away like a thing of another time,/ As morning throws off stale moonlight and shabby sleep.” (p. 382) Or so we might assume, but having been caught by the unexpected,¹ the speaker is thrown by this unexpected event of the real into a realization of what he still holds. Unable to change (change being the dynamic of the relationship of dependence between the real and the imagined), the speaker is revealed as caught in his previous notions of change. The sun

re-illumines things that used to turn
To gold in broadest blue, and be a part

Of a turning spirit in an earlier self.
That, too, returns from out the winter's air,

¹ See Herakleitos: “If you do not expect the unexpected, you will not find it; for it is hard to be sought out and difficult” (fr. 4, as given in John Burnet's Early Greek Philosophy (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1963) p. 133).
Like an hallucination come to daze
The corner of the eye. . . .
(pp. 133-4)

Not only is the speaker caught, but he is caught by his own previous inventions, by the very self that conceived such things, by the very conceits of this earlier self. These things, like hallucinations or inventions of the self that mask the self's ability to participate in the dependence of the real and the imagined, "daze/ The corner of the eye". The speaker then asserts the knowledge that he presently has of where he stands in this relationship:

Our element,

Cold is our element and winter's air
Brings voices as of lions coming down.

Oh! Rabbi, rabbi, fend my soul for me
And true savant of this dark nature be.

(p. 134)

In "Not Ideas About the Thing But the Thing Itself" the "scrawny cry of the bird" is heard "At the earliest ending of winter,/ In March " (p. 534). Here too the sun is "real"; it too "was coming from outside". But in "The Sun this March" the "earliest ending of winter" was not expected; what is heard instead of the real is the visionary, voices of judgment: "voices as of lions coming down". The speaker looks again for the wanted "desire at the end of winter" ("Supreme Fiction", p. 382), but he is caught holding "a thing of another time", a "calendar hymn"
that has been found wanting. Instead of a choir of real birds as in “Not Ideas”, he meets with an imagined and archaic chorus.

The response on the part of the speaker to his predicament further asserts his being caught out of place. He asks that the rabbi “fend my soul for me”. Now, “fend” in its range of meanings illustrates the speaker's true situation. “Fend” most obviously could be read to mean “defend”. Reinforced by orthodoxy, the present self, which is in trouble, would be assisted in staying in its trouble. If we take the meaning of “fend” to be “argue”, we have started to search out the problem; we have started to view the self of the speaker within its constellation, and as being constituted by its constellation.

Another approach to “fend” would be to construe it in relation to the word “shift”.2 “Fend” could be taken to mean “change” which, one might assume, is the desired outcome of this request. A further possible reading would be to read “fend” as meaning “put in order or rearrange”. This last sense is an elaboration of “change” that allows us to see more clearly what Stevens means by his notion of “change” that arises from the dependence between the real and the imagined. If “change” is taken in this relationship to be “radical change”, such change would of course

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2 The inclusion of “shift” as an implied possibility in the meaning of “fend my soul” is perhaps a liberty. While the original context supplies an object (the soul) it would still seem possible that the intransitive meaning of “fend” is available in this context. The several columns of citations in the OED all carry some of the sense of the substantive “A shift or effort which one makes for oneself.”
result in a breakup of the marriage. What “change” would mean here is “movement in the relationship” such that new positions of arrangement are taken up within the relationship of dependence.

This view of “change” is identical with the notions of disjunction and alteration that we described as typical of change within the lyric genre. The constellation of relations that gives identity to the lyric speaker with “The Sun this March” is to be redescribed, or at least such a redescription is sought. In searching for such a new identity relation, the speaking subject makes clear the pattern of relations between the self and its three others that constitutes the lyric identity. We may now examine these relations.

The speaking subject of “The Sun this March” relates with both objects that are real, and objects that exist as either correspondents to the speaker's imagination or as objects (that is, inventions) of that imagination (remembering here that, as in “Man Carrying Thing”, thoughts are as “real” as objects and can question, as much as objects, the state of the constellation).

The importance of Stevens for our argument is that in his lyrics we can see the necessary relation between the waka view of a contemplative field and the haiku view of an existential-cognitive field. Nature, as part of both fields, exists as a "subjective object"; the difference, as revealed
by Stevens, is one of activity. In the case of the waka field the objects exist as
inventions within an imaginative construct that locates these objects in a
relation of correspondence. In the case of the haiku the objects are found as
real; they have the ability to impinge on consciousness or, in Stevens' phrase,
to "scratch the mind". This mind-scratching brings the very relation between
the mind and the world into question. In "The Sun this March" the speaker's
imaginative invention of the seasons is found inadequate; the reality of the
unexpectedly bright sun impinges on his consciousness and reveals him within
his own invention of the seasons. His inventions are disclosed as being "real"
within the constellation of inadequacy.

The dependence of the imaginary on the real is also revealed. For
Stevens "What we see is what we think" (p. 459); in contrast "what we think
is never what we see" (p. 460). Only in the imagination, only in consciousness,
is anything scratched. Having been caught with an inappropriate invention, a
wrong seasonal model, the speaker is then presented, not with a healing vision
of the sun, but with a detailed exposé of his inadequate model. This account
shows the need for a new understanding; the constellation is found to be
inherently disjunctive: it proposes its own incompleteness.

The speaker searches for this new understanding, not by pursuing an
existential confrontation with the sun as real. He turns instead to
another part of the self-other relationship that we have described as typical of
the lyric. He seeks to relate with the “rabbi”. This other is susceptible of many
possible interpretations. Is the rabbi an aspect of the self, indicating a self-self
relationship? The second self might be either another aspect of consciousness
not now present, but imaginable (“my better self”, for example), or else the
Self of Jungian psychology. Alternatively is the rabbi the imaginative
equivalent of the sun, a part of the self-object relationship? This last
suggestion obviously splits into the two approaches possible in relation to
objects already described above. The rabbi might symbolize the actual sun as
real (in which case it ceases to be the real sun), or might symbolize the sun as
correspondent within an invention.

A further possibility is that the rabbi is an other, either an actual other
in the sense of a person known, or an other in the sense of a possible other
who might be the “true savant of this dark nature”. His formal title implies the
rabbi’s capacity to expound on matters of law and matters of doctrine. The
speaker would hence be calling on an other of knowledge; there would be
knowledge that can, and does, illumine the speaker’s “dark nature”. Such laws
are expounded in the “Supreme Fiction”.

Viewed as a possible other, the rabbi asserts that there is a way to
re-establish the relation of dependence so that what the imagination
knows will not be found wanting, but the birds of morning will sing as a choir at the arrival of spring. The most obvious prices to be paid in this quest for a new constellation are the loss of the “earlier self” and the loss of the present self that finds itself in need. This present self is lost within the final appeal. A further relation is established between the self and the other; a new constellation is presented through disjunction and alteration.

It is important to note that, like the imagination/reality relationship, within this relationship there is established a superiority, the superiority alluded to in the question “Could it after all/ Be merely oneself, as superior as the ear/ To a crow’s voice?” (p. 202-3). Is this superior one the rabbi? The relationship between the speaker and the rabbi is one of appeal to a superior. In his appeal to this superior does the speaker also affect the rabbi? The question asked of the nightingale could be asked of the speaker: “Did the nightingale [speaker] torture the ear,/ Pack the heart and scratch the mind [of the rabbi]?” (p. 203). And further, “does the ear/ Solace itself in peevish birds [appellants]?” As reading subjects this question, internal to the appeal, may fly past our ear, maybe; but only because we too, as reading subjects, are in need of our own rabbi.

In “The Sun this March” it can be shown not only does the self relate as a part to a part to a whole, but in this relationship of a part to
a part to a whole the actual location of the subject in this relationship is of vital importance. In asking the rabbi to relocate the speaking subject, the speaking subject illustrates the critical nature of location within the relationship of reciprocity that holds in the lyric. This question of the location of the speaker also relates to the position of the reader within the poem. In the case of “The Sun this March” the speaking subject and his relationship with others is clearly defined, primarily because the speaker is, as a subject, clearly defined in relation to his world. Such clarity of location is not always found in the poetry of Stevens.

David Walker, in his study of the poetry of Stevens and William Carlos Williams, points to the large number of Stevens poems in which there is no consistency or substantiality in the identity of the speaker. In such poems, argues Walker, there is no “dramatized speaker in any actual situation” to be found: “meaning inheres not in any externally projected drama, but in the drama of sensibility that is enacted as one reads it”. For such poems Walker proposes the name of “transparent lyric”: “in replacing the lyric speaker with the reader as the centre of dramatic attention, the poem itself becomes a transparent medium through which the reader is led to see the world in a particular way.”

In tracing the history of the modern lyric from the Romantics to Williams, Walker eschews what he sees as the trap of a thematic

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treatment. If we treat Williams and Stevens, in relation to the Romantics, through a thematic approach, we can “conclude that the two poets remain essentially Romantic”. Walker avoids such an unhelpful conclusion by taking what he calls a “rhetorical and epistemological” approach (p. xiv). In asking how the reader and speaker are related, our primary concern has been rhetorical; an asking how the speaker-reader is related to the world, we have been concerned with epistemology. The affinities of Walker's approach to that of this thesis make many of his points of argument compatible with our model.

Lyrics which allow the reader to exchange places with the speaker may be termed, after Walker, transparent lyrics. For Walker “reading a transparent lyric is analogous to confronting the phenomenal world directly, without benefit of the overt mediation exercised by a lyric speaker” (p. 26). “The act of reading the poem . . . becomes analogous to the act of writing it, and in turn to sharing in the process of imaginative transformation”. In such a state of shared identity there comes into existence what Walker calls “a peculiar state in which the imagination both is and is not one's own” (p. 39). He quotes Stevens' metaphor for this state: “When the mind is like a hall in which thought is like a voice speaking, the voice is always that of someone else.”

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Walker allows us to establish the transparent lyric as a relation between the complex subject in the mind of the work and the incomplete world of the poem:

The transparent lyric may be defined as a poem whose rhetoric establishes its own incompleteness; it is presented not as complete discourse but as a structure that invites the reader to project himself or herself into its world, and thus to verify it as contiguous with reality. In imitating the process of thinking, of confronting the world and responding to it, the poem engages the reader in a different way from poetry grounded in an expressive theory of art, and thus requires a different kind of criticism. (p. 18)

The distinctions made here have already been drawn between the waka and the haiku views of the relation between poet and his world. The historical shift, noted by Walker, from the treatment of the speaking subject as “an identifiable discrete personality” (p. 8) to the kind of self-conscious “speaker” we find in the poetry of Stevens is marked by an epistemological shift from viewing Nature as “symbolic” to viewing it as “an irrational and autonomous ‘other’” (p. 10). Seeing Nature in this way,

the other tenet of Romantic criticism — confidence in the power of the imagination to create harmonious bonds between self and world — also becomes suspect. If reality is shifting and ephemeral, then any attempt to establish a systematic communion with it is simply an egotistical projection and doomed to failure. (pp. 10-11)
Since this Romantic balance of the trinity of others was displaced for the Modernists, a new balance was needed, a balance in which “the questions of identity and continuity” (p. 11) would be answered within art. Walker continues:

This shift in epistemological stance was accompanied by a changing position toward the reader. Since subjectivity was suspect, the poet could no longer speak with authority from the distance imposed by superior vision. A method had to be devised to draw the reader more immediately into the experience of the poem. (p. 12)

The epistemological shift brought in by Modernism necessitated a change in relation between self and its three others: self and nature (objects); self and self (subjectivity); and self and others (both as readers and as person addressed within the poem). This shift, as an historical movement, shows in a dynamic way the integrity of the model of the lyric we have established. The constellations have changed but the stars remain.

It may be that the kenotic aspects of modern lyric poetry make it especially available to our model of the lyric, but it will be argued that, significant as is the shift that Walker isolates, lyric poetry has always maintained transparency as one mode of presentation. The shift that took place during the Romantic period, in the balance of the other with the
self, brought a kind of opacity to the lyric that has allowed the speaking
subject to develop, in its relation to the reading subject, like the character in
epic. The speaker in a Romantic lyric is inclined towards becoming a
self-substantiated subject that has its own history and soul.

In the distinctions between the objects of the waka and the objects of
the haiku we have traced the development of a transparent rhetoric within a
tradition of relative opacity. But this opacity, in the case of the waka, does not
arise from a notion of personality such as informs the work of Wordsworth.
One can find in the haiku of Basho instances of transparent lyrics and also
instances of opaque lyrics, lyrics in which the speaker points and directs.

One need look no further than Pound to discover a similar variety of
“optical tricks”. Walker, like the majority of critics (including Pound), seizes
on “In a Station of the Metro”. He cites John Reichert's attempt to locate a
speaker and a situation for the poem (Walker, p. xi):

Part of our understanding of this poem has to do with seeing
how the two lines are related to each other. And one way to get
at the relationship is to ask in what sort of actual situation two
such phrases might be spoken in conjunction with each other.
What kind of utterance is it?¹

Although Walker does not deny the validity of this approach, his own later reading locates the reader in the re-creation rather than the invention of the poem:

The reader of the Imagist poem thus occupies a different position from that of the Romantic descriptive lyric: no longer simply observers of the visionary moment, we must somehow learn to share it — by making the associative leap between the two lines of Pound's couplet — in order to understand its meaning. The poem's surface is discontinuous; we learn to read it by intuiting the underlying continuity. At the same time the poem's meaning is fully determined by the poet. (p. 12)

By way of contrast to this determined meaning, Walker cites Stevens' poem “The Snow Man”:

Just as the snow man is merged with the landscape by virtue of the fact that he is literally composed of the same substance that blankets the fields, the reader can understand the poem only by imaginatively entering the process it describes. The meaning of the poem is not in an achieved, localized experience described to the reader — as in “Tintern Abbey” — but in the experience of vision the reader undergoes. The poem itself is thus not the record of an action, but its efficient cause. (p. 17)
While Walker admits “every poem demands a reader's imaginative participation, and thus establishes a dialectic in the act of reading”, he wishes to call transparent those lyrics that require “our imaginative participation”, those poems where “there is no speaker as central presence in the landscape of the poem, without the reader” (p. 17). To separate out such works as *The Waste Land* and Pound's “Metro”, Walker argues that in these poems “meaning is primarily located in the predetermined symbolic structure of the text and not in the activity of reading” (p. 14). How these two things (text and reading) are to stay apart in the case of Stevens and Williams is not clearly stated. Walker cites “the tendency towards organic unity and coherence, towards the integration of parts into a coherent symbolic whole determined by the author” as indications that such works (*The Waste Land* etc.) are “still rooted in the symbolist (and Romantic) tradition” (p. 14). Again, how the poetry of Stevens and Williams avoids organic unity and coherence is not clearly stated; or rather, the grounds of coherence and the grounds of organic unity are not argued, just as the grounds of reading-based meaning and text-based meaning are not argued.

When we discover personality behind Eliot's “impersonality”, or when we discover the sense of “the poem [*The Waste Land*] as the experience of a single self” (p. 13), we lose, according to Walker, the transparency of the lyric: in its place are born a recognizable speaker and an implied reader. Because of this rhetorical structure the poem is, in
itself, more complete and the reader not as active. Or rather the reader becomes active in a different way and can inspect the position he has been invited to take as reader.

How the poetry of Stevens avoids personality, or how the question of personality is avoided in his poetry, is a question that remains to haunt the incomplete poem. Because the speaker in the poetry of Stevens frequently poses as “the master”, as one who can be transparent, it is easy to assume that somehow the rhetoric of the poem escapes the question of personality. That such an approach is possible is not to be doubted, but it is simply one position, however attractive, in a continuum of opacity.

The paradox inherent in this position on personality is that, when the subjectivity of the speaking subject becomes suspect, the subjectivity of the reading subject does not. To suspect the subjectivity of the speaker, the listener must have a subjectivity that can experience itself as suspect and as a propositional identity, an identity that arises in the constellation of suspicion. This discovery may be applied to the subjectivity of the speaking subject so that this suspect subjectivity becomes a propositional identity through its constellation in relation with the reader. Hence we arrive at a new view of the speaking subject’s “personality”. The speaking subject is to be seen as a “master” or one who can position identity within the constellation of suspect subjectivity.
Stanley Fish's notion of contrived surprises includes a speaking subject who contrives to surprise the reading subject with a discovery of the reading subject's self:

In the executing of a strategy, however, the program will be known to only one of the parties; the other must grope toward a knowledge that will completely escape him until he stumbles upon it. It follows, then, that the moment of stumbling, of dawning realization, will always be a surprise (as it must be, if it is to constitute a self-discovery), and yet at the same time it will always have been contrived. In other words, the situation is at once both structured and open: the structure belongs to the catechist whose questions will be the ordered product of his intention, the intention to drive the Answerer to one of the “dark and deep points of Religion”; the openness belongs to the Answerer who will at first see neither that point nor the point of what will appear to him to be a succession of unrelated questions.²

Fish argues that such a view of the relationship of speaker and reader in the poetry of George Herbert allows us to account for features of change that formalism cannot account for:

if a poem is regarded as the unified realization of a single (and therefore stable) intention, then any changes in attitude or point of view can only be seen as the product of pre-planning, and are therefore not real changes at all. (If there is a change of mind, it can only be a character’s in

which case it is literally a fiction.) On the other side, change can only be given legitimacy by denying the reality of planning, that is, by asserting the absence of design. (p. 7)

What Fish proposes is that these two aspects of fixity and alteration be treated as not “the exclusive property either of a formal structure or of a single personality, but of a situation” (p. 26). Fish goes on to say:

Herbert's theory of catechizing provides a way of doing just that, and thus makes it possible to acknowledge both his art and his sincerity without compromising either. Indeed they become interdependent: rather than being a sincere report of a mind in the act of changing, the poem is a sincere effort on the part of the poet-catechist to change his reader-pupil's mind. Sincerity is thus not a bodiless interior phenomenon in relation to which a poem is merely a transcription; sincerity is inseparable from an intention in relation to which a poem (or some other act) is an implementation. In the catechistical situation, the intention is to drive the pupil to a deep and dark point of religion, and its sincere implementation involves the catechist in any number of artful practices (he is a sincere role-player), including indirection and even, if the occasion demands, deception. (pp. 26-7)

Stevens' poetry supplies many examples of this last “artful” practice. Having laid down a programme of expected questions and answers, the speaker is able to glide or jump past the crucial point of a poem. I would example here “The meeting at noon at the edge of the
field" from “The Rock”. This “meeting at noon” is surrounded by negatives; the preceding line states, “It is not to be believed.”¹ In a feat of pronominal complexity the “It” is available for both forward and backward reference. It may be seen to act as a summation of the preceding negations (“The words spoken/ Were not and are not”) and as a qualification of the next words about to be spoken (“The meeting at noon”). The fact the “the meeting” is further qualified by a simile structure (“seems like// An invention . . .”) adds to this negativity. But at no point is this “meeting at noon” overcome by the surrounding negatives; it floats on its own unlike other events in the poem that are announced and then denied. The surrounding structures would encourage, indeed seek to deceive, the reading subject into not seeing what in fact is seen. The reader is invited to pit his imagination against the structure that presents his imagination functioning. The sight of this meeting (which in the reading subject's terms never anything other than imaginary) is contested in the rhetoric of the poem. The meeting not only “seems like// An invention”, it is an invention. Among the possible meanings in “seems like// An invention” are, “appears similar to a contrivance” and, “presents itself to the senses in the way that a thing discovered presents itself to the senses”. In this last example “invention” is taken as the “action of coming upon or finding” (OED) and “seems” is taken in its non-

¹ The negative approach has a subversive aspect. In the Zen strategy the student is told “Don't think of a monkey”. The willingness of the imagination to project images, specifically of things it is told not to imagine, is fundamental to language. The gap between signifier and signified is the synapse of poetry. Stated negatively, the gap is centred on: the structure appears with the monkey.
pejorative sense. The reader finds the meeting; the reader invents the meeting. The negatives amount, on further inspection, to a series of supporting statements. The difficulties that are presented to the reader become the focus of the meeting between the imagination of the reader and the reality of the language within the poem.

Fish allows us to identify an intentional subjectivity within the transparent lyric. The instance of deception supplies the negative evidence of a subjectivity revealed in a rhetoric that demands the reading subject discover "what he is by repeatedly revealing where he is" (Fish, p. 21n). The transparent speaking subject is repeatedly revealed as an absence in this situation. Just as the child turns to its parent in surprise and delight, only to discover the parent does not see what the child sees, even though the parent placed the child where the child would see what it now sees, so the reading subject finds only its own awareness in the place fixed for it by the absent speaking subject.

The child also sees that the parent sees that the child sees that the parent does not see what the child sees. This doubling of the vision within the rhetoric on which it is founded establishes the separateness of the participants in the structure of knowledge that holds between parent

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2 While the common meaning of "seems" has taken on the moral tones of "seemly", it is the post-Romantic fascination with the world of appearances that has clouded the functioning of the word. This clouding has been extended in the case of English through the dominance, in epistemological questions, of the verb "to be". For the reciprocity in seeming is often overlooked in the hurry to question the person experiencing rather than the experience. All aesthetic experience involves both the aesthetic object's seeming and the reception of that seeming.
and child and in the structure that holds between master and pupil. An example of this is found in a Basho haiku which has a clear speaker:

> You light the fire;  
> I'll show you something nice,  
> — A great ball of snow!  

Here the master is “setting-up” the student while asking the student to set up the fire. While engaged in one activity, the student is experiencing anticipation that excites “seeking and contriving”; the student is looking for the unexpected. The moment of revelation is the entry of the unexpected into the consciousness of the student. The ball of snow appears as an object and not as a metaphor or symbol of the process of revelation; its appearance within the imagination of the reader is the moment of imaginative revelation: the object has been manifested in consciousness through the rhetoric of the master.

Fish's discussion of Herbert enables us to draw an analogy between the Zen master's and Herbert's catechistic practices. Herbert replaces the Zen object with the movement of thoughts. This movement of thoughts constitutes the object of revelation. In Herbert's poem “Love-joy” we find the potential for such Zen objects in the grapes that are dropped by the vine:

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As on a window late I cast mine eye,
I saw a vine drop grapes with J and C
Anneal'd on every bunch. . .  

Here the grapes and their falling are not at issue. The question asked in the poem is “what it meant”. It is through a series of answers to this question that the reader, according to Fish, is brought to self-discovery (p. 29). The grapes themselves as objects are twice distant to the reader; firstly because of the past tense (“I saw”) and the speaker's ownership of the seeing; and secondly because of the improbable annealing of J and C “on every bunch”. The latter produces, in the imagination of the reader, what might best be called a “subversive object”, subversive in that such an object claims specific difference, not through its being seen, but through a property it, of itself, holds that marks it as being a vehicle of another reality. These are holy grapes, whereas Basho's snow had quite possibly been pissed on by the temple dog.

This subversive quality of the object frees it from its empirical reality and allows it to figure in the imagination just as the imagination of the person questioned is asked to conjecture what the initials mean: “It figures JESUS CHRIST.” This last answer incorporates the various

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stages of question and answer that precede the authoritative solution. Here the seeing of the object promotes the series of questions and answers.

In the case of the haiku we will now look at, the very opposite is the case: the object is the result of the movements of consciousness and not their cause. In the Herbert poem there was a present speaker; in this Basho haiku there is no speaker, but we can see how this absence reveals the speaker. D.T. Suzuki translates Basho this way:

The old pond, ah! A frog jumps in: The water's sound!\(^1\)

Suzuki comments:

It is by intuition alone that this timelessness of the Unconscious is truly taken hold of. And this intuitive grasp of Reality never takes place when a world of Emptiness is assumed outside our everyday world of the senses; for these two worlds, sensual and supersensual are not separate but one. Therefore, the poet sees into his Unconscious not through the stillness of the old pond but through the sound stirred up by the jumping frog. Without the sound there is no seeing on the part of Basho into the Unconscious, in which lies the source of creative activities and upon which all true artists draw for their inspiration. (pp. 241-42)

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Suzuki claims transparency for the images themselves such that, when the images “are intuitions themselves”, then “the images become transparent and are immediate expressions of the experience” (p. 240). The fact that such transparency comes only to those who have had the experience that is pointed to by the images is accepted by Suzuki in a way that supports Fish's notions of a contriving speaker and a spontaneous reader. In the second series of his Essays on Zen Buddhism, Suzuki writes:

If a noetic experience of a radically different order is to be attained, which sets all our strivings and searchings at rest, something that does not at all belong to the intellectual categories is to be devised. More precisely speaking, something illogical, something irrational, something that does not yield itself to an intellectual treatment is to be the special feature of Zen. The koan exercise was thus the natural development of Zen consciousness in the history of human strivings to reach the ultimate. By means of the koan the entire system of our psychic apparatus is made to bear upon the maturing of the satori state of consciousness.²

To understand such devised utterances we must, says Suzuki, “reproduce the same psychic conditions out of which the Zen masters have uttered these koans” (pp. 110-11). Suzuki lists five “psychic facts”

about these koan exercises. The koan is designed firstly to “bring about a
highly wrought-up state of consciousness”; secondly to keep “The reasoning
faculty . . . in abeyance”; and thirdly to promote, through an engagement with
one's “personal character”, a “spirit of inquiry known as `seeking and
contriving', which never suspends its activity until it attains its end”. These
three preliminary aspects help explain how and why we approach such objects
as obscure and difficult poems. The next two aspects are of more specific
interest to our understanding of the lyric as a structure devised to promote the
attainment of knowledge through the affective structure of kenosis.

This is how Suzuki explains his fourth “psychic” fact:

When the mental integration thus reaches its highest mark there
obtains a neutral state of consciousness which is erroneously
designated as “ecstasy” by the psychological student of the
religious consciousness. This Zen state of consciousness
essentially differs from ecstasy in this way: Ecstasy is the
suspension of the mental powers while the mind is passively
engaged in contemplation; the Zen state of consciousness, on
the other hand, is the one that has been brought about by the
most intensely active exercise of all the fundamental faculties
constituting one's personality. They are here positively
concentrated on a single object of thought, which is called a
state of oneness . . . It is also known as a state of daigi or
“fixation”.

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This is the point where the empirical consciousness with all its contents both conscious and unconscious is about to tip over its border-line, and get noetically related to the Unknown, the Beyond, the Unconscious. In ecstasy there is no such tipping or transition, for it is a static finality not permitting further unfoldment. There is nothing in ecstasy that corresponds to “throwing oneself down the precipice”, or “letting go the hold”. (pp. 109-110)

Suzuki's third and fourth phases enable us more adequately to describe the moments within the kenotic experience of lyric poetry. The identification that marks the lyric is thus seen in these two stages. It is precisely through the intensity of the engagement that the stage of fixation does not glide into simple or passive ecstasy, or into a simple identification with the “object of thought”. Identification would involve the undisciplined loss of self characterized as “letting go the hold”.

At this point of fixation or identification we are beside Basho's old pond, our attention being fixed on this pond in an active stage of oneness. It is only through this level of identification, it is only by our replacing Basho beside the pond, it is only by the speaking subject being absent, that we are able to be surprised by what then enters our field within the poem.
It should be noted that in Suzuki's account of the genesis of this haiku there was no pond present. There never existed, that is, a natural setting for the speaker to inhabit. The haiku arose as part of a Zen catechism; Basho was being questioned by his Zen master Buccho. The series of questions was:

Buccho: “How are you getting on these days?”
Basho: “After the recent rain the moss has grown greener than ever.”
Buccho: “What Buddhism is there even before the moss has grown greener?”
Basho: “A frog jumps into the water, and hear the sound!”

(p. 239)

The pond was added to make the poem scan, or so it is reported. A rather more attractive version (in keeping with Suzuki’s frequent practice of deception) is that the pond was added precisely in order to account for the stages within the movement of consciousness that the poem performs. This addition then makes the haiku portable or autonomous; it is freed from its original discourse because it has incorporated this discourse within its rhetoric. This haiku does not engage the reader through being incomplete but rather because the assumption of the aesthetics of haiku is that the reader will complete the rhetoric. This rhetoric includes the lost parts of the agon that are, like the speaker, very present in their absence.
In the Basho “frog” haiku, when the “ah!” overturns “the empirical consciousness”, we arrive at the fifth of Suzuki’s stages:

Finally, what at first appears to be a temporary suspense of all psychic faculties suddenly becomes charged with new energies hitherto undreamed of. This abrupt transformation has taken place quite frequently by the intrusion of a sound, or a vision, or a form of motor activity. A penetrating insight is born of the inner depths of consciousness, as the source of a new life has been tapped, and with it the koan yields up its secrets. (p. 110)

The fact that it is frequently the “intrusion of a sound, or a vision, or a form of motor activity” that promotes the transformation leaves its obvious mark on the haiku that we have looked at. The Zen treatment of objects was obviously a revelation to Western aesthetics. It is no surprise that Imagism found the easy road to a desired transparency through the oriental treatment of objects.

The fact that Imagism rapidly wilted or degenerated is more an indication of the lack of subtlety on the part of an audience than on the lack of available oriental models that would have allowed Imagism to explore consciousness in and through consciousness of the object. Walker notes the shift in the poetry of Stevens:
his transparent lyrics focus increasingly often, not on the concrete images of the world, but on the mind in the act of reaching for and responding to those images. From about 1940, Stevens' primary means for figuring these acts of imagination rhetorically is to make the act of metaphorical thinking itself the subject of the poem. (p. 64)

“Metaphoric thinking” reclaims the Imagist object in a different form.

In Stevens' “Saint John and the Back-ache” (CP, pp. 436-37) the dialogue exposes the essential “abyss/ Between us and the object, external cause,/ The little ignorance that is everything”. Here the entry of objects into consciousness (the affect) is pitted against the savage “wit” of St John. The answerer, the one with the back-ache, accepts (or does he?) that “It is possible./ Presence lies far too deep, for me to know/ Its irrational reaction, as from pain.” Presence, says Saint John, “fills the being before the mind can think”. Like the first hundred snow flakes, the objects enter consciousness without being seen to enter. This means, according to John, that “The effect of the object is beyond the mind's/ Extremest pinch”. While this is true, it is equally true that the effect of the object is achieved easily “as in/ A sudden color on the sea”. Immediately, true to form, the image is taken back so that “it is not/ That big-brushed green”, nor is it “the woman, come upon,/ Not yet accustomed, yet, at sight, humane/ To most incredible depths”. Such
objects of consciousness, while they are “illustrations are neither angels, no/
Nor brilliant blows thereof, ti-rill-a-woo”. Not angels, not blows of angels, these
objects, as affects of consciousness mean we suffer from our minds:

The mind is the terriblest force in the world, father, Because, in
chief, it, only, can defend
Against itself. At its mercy, we depend
Upon it.

In “Saint John” presence is experienced by the sufferer in the form of his own
“immediate” pain. Such knowledge, while it may illustrate the abyss between
body and mind or mind and world, does not amount to an account of the
effect. In this way the Affect is never equal to the Effect, never identical; the
gap remains unbridged and even the most severe pain cannot provide a direct
account of reality (“the possible nest in the invisible tree”).

While one might be tempted to attribute these sentiments of this
somewhat traditional argument to Stevens, to do so would be to deny the
deviousness of the series of negations that establish the litany of failed angels:

But it is not
That big-brushed green. Or in a tragic mode,
As at the moment of the year when, tick,
Autumn howls upon half-naked summer. But
It is not the unravelling of her yellow shift.
Presence is not the woman, come upon,
Not yet accustomed, yet, at sight, humane
To most incredible depths. I speak below
The tension of the lyre.

What John is arguing about is at the lyre's tension; it is the fact of arguing that has untuned his instrument. To establish his negative litany he has exposed the mind struggling "Against itself", or giving the lie to its own diction in its very diction. Like Milton's Satan, Saint John gets the good lines. In his negations he establishes illustrations that, in their power to animate the imagination and forgo their own negation, act as angels, not simply to "help us face the dumfounding abyss/ Between us and the object" but also to establish the workings of the mind in its own defence. Free of any precise location, even the location within the immediacy of a moment of consciousness, these illustrations, by being quoted in a list, acquire a transparency within the semantics of negation that transcends their own expression through their being communicated; they jump into the unstated pond of the reader's imagination. Here Affect has Effect; here identity in awareness has been exchanged so as to bridge the gap between self and others.¹

¹ In this poem we see another side of transparency, that of irony. By the creation of Saint John in this form we are able to "see through" his argument in both senses.
In this bridging the status of the object has been modified and has become subversive of its metaphoric nature. It establishes itself in consciousness not simply as the evidence of the reader's imagination (the reader's ability to enter into a noetic relationship with the objects of his imagination) but also as the evidence of the rhetorical relationship between speaking subject and reading subject. In this way we may take advantage of the cliché, “I see what you mean”, by taking it literally. Within the structure of the poem the reader sees the objects of his own imagination as shared, therefore as meant, and therefore as intended. In this process the status of the object becomes that of Heidegger's “thing”; “bethinged” the reader stands before his trinity of others.

Arriving again at the place where three roads meet, this time via the object, the reader may be especially aware of the other as Self or unconscious, precisely because the facility of having objects appear from language and inhabit the consciousness, as presence, promotes the awareness of self as a mere part of Self. While this facility is shared with the other, and this awareness shared with the other is its own reward, the knowledge of the community of consciousness points most immediately towards what remains to distinguish and therefore separate the self from the other, namely the possession of a personal unconscious. It is down this road of the self-Self relationship and kenosis that we shall now travel.
CHAPTER SIX

KRISTEVA’S KATHARSIS AND JUNG’S SELF

Just as readers feel their responses to a work of art are their responses, so too readers feel their identities are supported, as independent realities, by any experience they have when responding to a work of art. The fact that a particular work of art affects one reader in ways different to another reader is further “proof”, for the reader, of the independent status of personal identity.¹ Because of this pattern of self-satisfaction built into sensory experience, any study of literary experience that involves the questions of identity, is going to involve, via the response of the reader, some account of the psychology of the individual.

The efficacy of particular symbolic information is a further indication of a personal quality within the reader's response. Why should one reader be deeply moved by a particular symbol while another finds it dull? (Equally, why should large numbers of people be moved by a particular symbol?) Psychological approaches promise answers to such questions. For our purposes here it is not answers that are required but

¹ Personal identity is here being established through difference.
rather accounts of how personal identity is involved in the production and reception of a work of art.

Although kenosis has been established in earlier chapters as a transposed term, a term that belongs, as a term of aesthetics, to the experience of works of art, it is important here to usurp a small province of psychology's territories. Aesthetic kenosis is not without its redemptive potential, a potential to re-constellate the speaking subject and the reading subject of the interpreted lyric within the identity relationship established by the lyric.¹

With the aid of Julia Kristeva's revisionist notions of katharsis, we may appreciate the potential of kenosis as an affective part of the practice of reading, one that may serve in Platonic terms as the bearer of wisdom. Whether the identity transformations of kenosis will be shown to match Plato's requirements of wisdom outlined in Chapter Two will depend not so much on our definition of kenosis but rather on our understanding of the acquiring of wisdom. Kristeva does not appear to use the term “kenosis” in any of her writings. Central to her writings, though, is the concept of identity, especially identity as found in and through poetic language. Her theory of the “speaking subject” is taken up in the subsequent chapter.

¹ While the remainder of this thesis will avoid, wherever possible, the usage of these ornate terms (“speaking subject”, “reading subject”, “interpreted lyric”) and return to more common terms, it is assumed that behind these common terms is the understanding of the complexity of the positions taken in the reception of a work of art.
Jung, or more particularly his syncretist account of the history of modern psychology, is used to provide a structure that will allow comparisons between the affects of the three genres and the various approaches taken by psychology to the problems of identity. With the aid of Jung's concept of the relationship between the self and the Self we may locate the complex identity-reception of the lyric in the larger context of a social project that implicates the artist in his practice.

Kenosis is not a major term in the theories of Jung. The index to his *Collected Works* lists only a few entries and most of these are minor. However, in spite of this seeming indifference, Jung's studies in human psychology provide insights into both the theological and the transposed or aesthetic aspects of kenosis. His views on the Self are of particular relevance, since they permit an extension of our study of aesthetic kenosis into the domain of religion without reinstating kenosis as an exclusively theological concept best suited to an eremetic cave.

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3 The word “Self” will be used wherever possible with a capital letter to distinguish Jung's idea of the Self from what Jung calls the “ego”. Jung does not use a capital to mark the Self and so in quotations from Jung this word will appear as “self”. The problem of meaning whenever “self” or “Self” are used will not be solved so simply. Some degree of initial indistinctness must be anticipated in every usage of “self” no matter what amount of prior defining is done. An excellent account of the many meanings and confusions of “self” is given in Herbert Fingarette's *The Self in Transformation: Psychoanalysis, Philosophy and the Life of the Spirit* (NY: Harper Torch Books, 1963).
Yet some retreat may be the requirement of the lyric poet who takes on the methods and ideas of kenosis. The retreat would of course be seen as an advance and the dilemma of empty/full or emptying/filling would trouble both the activity of the poet as person and the writing of the poet. Through this overt taking on of the kenotic aspects of the lyric, the poetry produced would acquire an obvious reflexivity: it would both be constructed kenotically and its subject matter would be kenosis. These approaches will be taken up later in this chapter.

In “Problems of Modern Psychology” Jung identifies four stages in the process of psychotherapy. These four stages (confession, elucidation, education, transformation) offer a teleological model of man's consciousness. Jung writes:

The first beginnings of all analytical treatment of the soul are to be found in its prototype, the confessional. Since, however, the two have no direct causal connection, but rather grow from a common irrational psychic root, it is difficult for an outsider to see at once the relation between the groundwork of psychoanalysis and the religious institution of the confessional.

(Vol. 16, p. 55)

Confession requires something to be confessed and the thing to be confessed is something that is hidden. Through being hidden, the content that is confessed is owned or kept as a secret; hence confession, or the giving up of this kept secret, amounts to a kind of purging. While
confession, to be confession, entails the expression of affects as part of the confession, Jung also allows that the secret being confessed may itself be an emotion:

When an affect is withheld it is just as isolating and just as disturbing in its effects as the unconscious secret, and just as guilt-laden. In the same way that nature seems to bear us a grudge if we have the advantage of a secret over the rest of humanity, so she takes it amiss if we withhold our emotions from our fellow men. (Vol. 16, p. 58)

Jung quotes from the Greek mysteries: “Give up what thou hast, and then thou wilt receive”. He calls this ancient method of cleansing that was done prior to or as part of initiation, “catharsis”:

The early cathartic method consisted in putting the patient, with or without the paraphernalia of hypnosis, in touch with the hinterland of his mind, hence into that state which the yoga systems of the East describe as meditation or contemplation. In contrast to yoga, however, the aim here is to observe the sporadic emergence, whether in the form of images or of feelings, of those dim representations which detach themselves in the darkness from the invisible realm of the unconscious and move as shadows before the inturned gaze. (Vol. 16, p. 59)

Jung stresses that the confession, or taking on of the shadow, needs to be done in association with others because, “if this rediscovery of my
own wholeness remains private, it will only restore the earlier condition from which the neurosis, i.e., the split-off complex, sprang”. Confession through the kathartic method must be a “full confession — not merely the intellectual recognition of the facts with the head, but their confirmation by the heart and the actual release of suppressed emotion” (Vol. 16, p. 59). Just as with katharsis in the dramatic genre, katharsis as a psychological experience of confession requires the pattern of discovery, disclosure, and reversal; if there is no recognition and no release of emotion, then there is no confession and no katharsis. While Jung sees problems (such as attachment) with this method, especially when applied as a “wholesale confession of sin”, he still stresses the social value of crossing “the gulf [that divides “all of us”] on the firm bridge of confession” (Vol. 16, p. 60).

This concept of katharsis is familiar from the investigations in Chapter Two. As such it could be allowed to stand. But, before moving on to Jung's treatment of other stages evolved from this model of confession, we need, at this point, to introduce Kristeva's revision of both the concept of katharsis and the implications of a kathartic method.

In strong contrast to Jung's account, Kristeva, while valuing the relationship between analyst and analysand, argues against any crossing of the bridge. For Kristeva:
One must keep open the wound where he or she who enters into the analytic adventure is located — a wound that the professional establishment, along with the cynicism of the times and of institutions, will soon manage to close up. There is nothing initiatory in that rite, if one understands by “initiation" the accession to a purity that the posture of death guaranteed (as in Plato’s *Phaedo*) or the unadulterated treasure of the “pure signifier" (as in the gold of truth in *The Republic*, or the pure separatism of the statesman in *The Statesman*). It is rather a heterogeneous, corporeal, and verbal ordeal of fundamental incompleteness: a “gaping", “less One". For the unstabilized subject who comes out of that — like a crucified person opening up the stigmata of its desiring body to a speech that structures only on condition that it let go — any signifying or human phenomenon, insofar as it is, appears in its being as abjection. For what impossible catharsis? Freud, early in his career, used the same word to refer to a therapeutics, the rigor of which was to come out later.¹

The “unstabilized subject" that is the result of Kristeva’s kathartic therapy is not unlike the propositional subject of Japanese aesthetics looked at in the previous chapter. Indeed, many of Kristeva’s views on katharsis offer insights into the nature of kenosis. Through her inclusion of personal identity in the kathartic experience Kristeva is able to expand, while exploring, the more traditional views of both aesthetic and psychological katharsis.

Kristeva's treatment of the philosophic history of katharsis is of considerable interest here to the Plato-Aristotle debate. Her approach allows us to redefine wisdom in terms that clearly recognize aesthetic katharsis as a form of knowledge comparable to philosophic understanding.

Just as the person experiencing katharsis in therapy has come to be required to close up the gap made obvious by the experience, so the concept of katharsis has itself been required to move towards the purified end of the spectrum. Following her reading of Plato, Kristeva writes, “it is the mind alone, as harmonious wisdom, that insures purity: catharsis has been transformed, where transcendental idealism is concerned, into philosophy”. A physical process has been replaced with a mental process. Against this Platonic katharsis (in which the frenzy of the poet “would be useful to the state only after having been evaluated, sorted out, and purified in its turn by wise men”) Kristeva sets the example of Aristotelian katharsis which “is closer to scared incantation”:

It is the one that has bequeathed its name to the common, esthetic concept of catharsis. Through the mimesis of passions — ranging from enthusiasm to suffering — in “language with pleasurable accessories”, the most important of which are rhythm and song (see the Poetics), the soul reaches orgy and purity at the same time. What is involved is a purification of body and soul . . . Rhythm and song . . . arouse the impure, the other of mind, the passionate-corporeal-sexual-virile, but they harmonize it, arrange it
differently than the wise man's knowledge does. They thus soothe frenzied outbursts (Plato, in the *Laws*, allowed such use of rhythm and meter only to the mother rocking her child), by contributing an external rule, a poetic one, which fills the gap, inherited from Plato, between body and soul. To Platonic death, which owned, so to speak, the state of purity, Aristotle opposed the act of poetic purification — in itself an impure process that protects from the abject only by dint of being immersed in it. The abject, mimed through sound and meaning, is repeated. Getting rid of it is out of the question — the final Platonic lesson has been understood, one does not get rid of the impure; one can, however, bring it into being a second time, and differently from the original impurity. It is a repetition through rhythm and song, therefore through what is not yet, or no longer is “meaning”, but arranges, defers, differentiates and organizes, harmonizes pathos, bile, warmth, and enthusiasm... Aristotle seems to say that there is a discourse of sex and that is not the discourse of knowledge — it is the only possible catharsis. That discourse is audible, and through the speech that it mimics it repeats on another register what the latter does not say. (*Powers of Horror*, pp. 28-9)

Here, in Kristeva's account, Jung's “shadow" has become “the other of mind, the passionate-corporeal-sexual-virile" and the purging of surplus affects or releasing of withheld emotions has become the containing of the abject or the bringing “into being a second time, and differently from the original impurity": “Getting rid of . . . [the abject] is out of the question".
Within her account of the history of abjection Kristeva praises Hegel for his rejection of “a `calculation' that claims to eliminate defilement, for the latter seems fundamental to him”. But Hegel, while he “does not condemn impurity because it is exterior to ideal consciousness . . . thinks that it can and should get rid of itself through the historico-social act”. An example of this, provided by Hegel, is that of marriage. Kristeva sees such a state, when looked on as an answer to the problems of impurity, as “a banality that is sadness and silence”. For Kristeva Hegel ultimately “agrees with . . . [Kant's] aim to keep consciousness apart from defilement, which, nevertheless, dialectically constitutes it.” When the impure is “reabsorbed into the trajectory of the Idea, what can defilement become if not the negative side of consciousness — that is, lack of communication and speech?” Through this process of absorption the gap is “overcome” and the shadow is reconstituted as the subdued other of the mind; in this position the dialectical aspect of the shadow is diminished if not conquered (Powers of Horror, pp. 29-30).

While Kristeva rightly points out the sensuous aspects of Aristotelian katharsis, her stress on impurity shifts the focus of the argument between the two discourses of wisdom (the philosophic and the aesthetic) from the domain of the mind and relocates it on the body.
(rather than in it).\(^1\) Such a shift of attention is obviously required to redress the general institutional desire for and satisfaction with clarity born of intellectual certainty; but Kristeva's dramatic swing misses much of the middle ground that belongs potentially to both extremes.

Hegel, for Kristeva, too readily subdues the abject within normative social structures. At the same time he reduces the dimension of the symbolic by placing philosophy over religion and art. Finlay, in his analysis of Hegel's *Phenomenology*, writes:

In religion . . . the identification of Ego with Ego is still only achieved in the medium of picture-thought. A less pictorial identification was achieved in the case of the beautiful soul, whose pure inwardness really amounts, not merely to an intuition of the Divine, but to the Divine intuited itself. Only the opposition to realization makes this last form defective. We must progress to a knowledge of self, not as a floating universal, but in its particular externalization.\(^2\)

Hegel is seeking, in Finlay's words, “Purely conceptual knowledge of knowledge in the form of the self”. This knowledge is not abstract, for the “Ego must not . . . be afraid of the substantial world of objective

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\(^1\) The experience is of the body and on the body and consciousness of the experience is in the body. Stressing the “on”, or the externality of the experience ensures that it is not readily absorbed as a placated other.

Nature: this is its foil and therefore itself. . . . Spirit is all the phases of content in which it externalizes itself, and the process leading these phases back to a full consciousness of self” (Finlay, p. 591). Hegel's stress here is on the importance of the “historico-social act” over the abstract thought; his stress is on the physical realization of desire within the objective world of nature. Such a realization will involve the individual as self in a kenotic process. Hegel writes:

Not until consciousness has given up hope of overcoming that alienation [the alienation experienced by the “torpid Self” in relation “with the alien content of its consciousness”] in an external, i.e., alien, manner does it return to itself, because the overcoming of that alienation is the return to itself, because the overcoming of that alienation is the return into self-consciousness; not until then does it turn to its own present world and discover it as its property, thus taking the first step towards coming down out of the intellectual world, or rather towards quickening the abstract element of that world with the actual Self.³

Failure to overcome the internal alienation that the Self experiences in relation to the otherness of its own consciousness requires that the Self relocate itself in relation to its own consciousness and in relation to “its own present world”. The failure to overcome the otherness of consciousness through externalization of that otherness

³ Hegel, *Phenomenology*, p. 488.
amounts to a retaining of that alienation within consciousness. In this way Kristeva's abject is preserved within Hegel's dialectic, albeit in a rather conceptual way (an in-the-body rather than an on-the-body). His stress is still towards the mind over the body, even though his expression of the shifts between dimensions is as active as those described by Kristeva. For Hegel:

Spirit . . . has shown itself to us to be neither merely the withdrawal of self-consciousness into its pure inwardness, nor the mere submergence of self-consciousness into substance, and the non-being of its [moment of] difference; but Spirit is this movement of the Self which empties itself of itself and sinks itself into its substance, and also, as Subject, has gone out of that substance into itself, making the substance into an object and a content at the same time as it cancels this difference between objectivity and content. (p. 490)

In the final paragraph of his *Phenomenology* Hegel treats the emptying of Spirit into Time as an incarnation (Baillie in his translation uses “abandonment”, Miller “kenosis”). This self-emptying into History, as a “conscious, self-mediating process”, presents, says Hegel, “Systematic Science” with its proper field of study and engagement. While Art and Religion have their place within this field, Hegel's stress on the historico-social realization of Spirit downgrades the significance of the symbolic dimensions as realizations of Spirit. Within the de-stabilized self of the aesthetic kenosis, just as much as within Hegel's Spirit, may occur what
Hegel describes as an absorption “in the night of its self-consciousness” (p. 492).

Indeed the idea of absorption “in the night of its self-consciousness” is one that pertains most immediately to the dimensions of art and religion. Just as Aristotle failed to see the action of the lyric as Action, so Hegel may be cited for failure to see the succession of worlds within the lyric kenosis as a succession of no less account than that of consciousness in History. The inwardness of the lyric, no less than the inwardness of the Spirit’s comprehending of its substance as consciousness, is an inwardness that negates the negativity of its externalization. The lyric kenosis is, as an abandonment of politico-social externality, the abandonment of the opportunity to find negativity through externalization; but, with the added negativity of the self being described as a relationship with the mind of the work, the lyric kenosis acquires access to a history that is both personal (as experience) and transpersonal (as content of experience): the self is both confirmed and denied in a world constituted with the other. This confirmation and denial that is experienced in the lyric kenosis marks a major consciousness of the shifts between externalization and integration. As Finlay says “Spirit is all the phases” and, furthermore, it is “the process of leading these phases back to a full consciousness of self”.

What is missing from Hegel’s account of “all the phases”, and what is present in Kristeva’s account of therapy, is a recognition of the
irreducible otherness of the physical experience, or reception, of the work of art. Katharsis as an experience is marked, in the case of the Aristotelian view put forward by Kristeva, by an otherness that is material. The material and irreducible otherness of this experience is bound up with a complex self as the subject of the experience. For Kristeva “the subject never is, the subject is only the process of signification and only presents itself as signifying practice, that is when it absents itself in the position from which social-historical-signifying activity unfolds itself”. This subject in process is clearly found as a reading subject in avant-garde texts where poetic language dominates and disrupts the normal transcendent position of the reading subject. Such a subject is both predicated by and implicated in the physical experience of reading.

The importance of the material quality of this experience of the reading subject in process emerges only when we allow, along with Aristotle, that the other register of art is typified by “pleasurably accessories” (rhythm and song) that, in Kristeva's words, “arouse the impure, the other of mind". It is these extra qualities that can “bring it [impurity] into being a second time, and differently from the original impurity". These extra-linguistic qualities of the kathartic experience do

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5 One is reminded here of Chaos Theory where X equals X+1. It is the structural additions or alterations that are provided by the repetition in language that give the “extra” information which is a statement of both difference and disjunction. The observation of variation stresses the value of the original experience, the value of the varied experience (as another original experience) and the possibility of further original copies.
not produce, of themselves, “meaning”, rather they arrange, defer, differentiate and organize the experience of the impure or other of mind in ways that are different to “the wise man's knowledge”. If we accept that this different arrangement has its burden of “wisdom” (a “wisdom” that knows purity through “being immersed” in impurity), we can accept, along with Kristeva, that what this register or “discourse of sex” evidences is another way of knowing, a way that we overlook when our attention falls only on “the realm of the signified and the transcendental ego”. It is these heterogeneous and overlooked aspects of poetic language that make “what we call `literature' something other than a `knowledge'; in other words . . . [make it] `the very place where the social code is destroyed and renewed'[Artaud]”.

The coming into being of impurity “a second time, and differently from the original impurity” is what allows the therapeutic use of Kristeva's katharsis to achieve “not a purification but . . . rebirth with and against abjection” (Powers of Horror, p. 31). This therapeutic katharsis has the advantages of “the `poetic' unsettlement of analytic utterance” that illustrates

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6 Kristeva, Tel Quel (no. 61). Quoted here from Coward & Ellis, p. 148. The Artaud quotation used by Kristeva is from L'Anarchie sociale de l'art, O.C., vol. VIII, p. 287.
the completely mimetic identification (transference and countertransference) of the analyst with respect to analysands. That identification allows for securing in their place what, when parcelled out, makes them suffering and barren. It allows one to regress back to the affects that can be heard in the breaks in discourse, to provide rhythm, too, to concatenate (is that what “to become conscious” means?) the gaps of a speech saddened because it turned its back on its abject meaning. If there is analytic jouissance it is there, in the thoroughly poetic mimesis that runs through the architecture of speech and extends from coenesthetic image to logical and phantasmatic articulations. (*Powers of Horror*, pp. 30-31)

The main strength of this analytic-kathartic discourse of psychiatry over the aesthetic-kathartic discourse of literature is in the area of truth. In her earlier work, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva outlines the advantages of “The Text as Practice, Distinct from Transference Discourse” (Section IV). She writes:

The disadvantage of this independence from the transference relation is that it deprives the text of immediate truth criteria. On the other hand, it allows the text to operate in a much wider signifying field than it otherwise would, and to carry out much more radical subversions, which, far from stopping at desire, involve the subject's very jouissance.¹

For the text “There is no limit to what can be said” (Revolution, p. 209); in the therapeutic relationship there is the possibility of regressing “back to the affects that can be heard in the breaks in discourse” (Horror, p. 30). Such breaks and such affects are individual to the particular therapeutic discourse and thus are open to “immediate truth criteria” (Revolution, p. 209) within the discourse. Through their sharing in the location of the subject within language, “text as practice” and the “transference discourse” can be compared and distinguished in the way this language-established subject is related to the language which establishes the subject as process. Kristeva writes:

In the process of transference in analysis, discourse establishes the subject within language precisely because transference permits the analysand to take over the (power of) discourse the analyst is presumed to hold. Although it thereby reconstructs the signifying process, this renewal of power locks it up within a discourse that tests intrafamilial relations. . . . The text, by contrast, is not based on personified transference: its always absent “addressee” is the site of language itself or, more precisely, its thetic moment, which the text appropriates by introducing within it, as we have said, semiotic motility. In so doing, the text takes up strictly individual experience and invests it directly in a signification (Bedeutung), in other words, in an enunciation and a detonation that stem from the socio-symbolic whole. In this way, the significations (ideologies) that preoccupy the social group — the ones implied in its acts or controlling them — are put into play by the process of the subject they wanted to ignore. Indeed this is the
contradiction that characterizes what we have called experience-in-practice.

The text's signifying practice thus retains the analytic situation's requirement that the process of the subject be realized in language. The absence of a represented focal point of transference prevents this process from becoming locked into an identification that can do no more than adapt the subject to social and family structures. To hamper transference, the text's analysis must produce the certainty that the analyst's place is empty, that "he" is dead, and that rejection can only attack signifying structures. This is textual practice's presupposition and its starting point. Admittedly, the designated addressees of the text are often its focus of transference, its objects of attempted seduction and aggression. But this transference relation, supposing that it exists, is controlled more by the structure of the text than by the other, the addressee, and, in any case, concerns only the writing subject and his partner; it could never exhaust the impact of the text as social practice for all its possible readers. (Revolution, p. 208-9)

Kristeva's distinctions between the therapeutic and the textual transference stress the immediate physical aspects of the relationships. Paul de Man, in his Introduction to Hans Robert Jauss' Towards an Aesthetic of Reception, extends these distinctions by questioning what is being understood in the historical understanding of literature and what is being understood in psychoanalysis:
A dialectic of understanding, as a complex interplay between knowing and not-knowing is built within the very process of literary history. The situation is comparable to the dialogical relationship that develops between the analyst and his interlocutor in psychoanalysis. Neither of the two knows the experience being discussed; they may indeed not even know whether such an experience ever existed. The subject is separated from it by mechanisms of repression, defense, displacement and the like, whereas, to the analyst, it is available only as a dubious evasive symptom. But this difficulty does not prevent a dialogical discourse of at least some interpretative value from taking place. The two “horizons'', that of individual experience and that of methodical understanding, can engage each other and they will undergo modifications in the process, though none of the experiences may ever become fully explicit.²

Kristeva's notions of a destabilized subject, and of the secondary and repetitive nature of the kathartic expression and experience, mean that de Man's comparisons between literary-analysis and psycho-analysis can be incorporated into the model of a new subject. This “new subject” “includes the former subject'', the subject that “simply explains, understands and knows'' (Revolution, pp. 160-1). What then becomes “fully explicit'' is not some prior experience, but the practice of the subject, in process, in the present.

With the aid of these models of textual experience we can review the term “aesthetic distance”. Since the audience watching a tragedy cannot be said to own any real part of the drama (as performance) as personal property, they are distanced in a fundamental way from the material of the play. Equally, since the auditor/reader of a lyric cannot be said to own as personal property the content of the poem (and here the case of the poet reading his/her own poetry is included as is the case of a person reading/being read a poem dedicated/written to him or her), they too are distant in a fundamental way from the material of the poem. As Kristeva points out, the relations between these participants are controlled “more by the structure of the text than by the other, the addressee” (*Revolution*, p. 209). While this structure is common to the participants, it is not owned, in the sense of one participant having prior experience of the structure, as the structure is presently being experienced. Whatever earlier experience one or other participant may have had of a similar shared structure, the present structure, as an instance of itself, is beyond individual ownership.

When we return to the confession, as an instance of therapy or psychoanalysis, a similar distance can be observed. Remembering here de Man's point, about the difficulty in determining any experience in the analysis that is prior to the confession and the analysis, it may be seen that the person confessing owns (or is) the secret of the confession only
while the confession is being conducted. Confessions cannot be repeated, since repetition is an acknowledgement of the structure of the particular confession as a thing separate from the content of the confession. In Kristeva's terms this ownership amounts to an engagement in the transference relationship that then allows “immediate truth criteria” to be applied. Such an engagement, far from simply recognizing the ownership of the content, entails the recognition of the repetitive nature of the kathartic process and thereby denies any stable ownership relationship between analysand and the content of analysis. The subject is left with the experience of the abject. The subject is also left with a shared awareness of the distance between the content of the confession and the participants.

In this way the confessional is seen to function only as the instance of itself. Its efficacy is not so much derived from the questionable ownership of the content as it is from the creation of a structure, within the analytic relationship, that evidences that content. It is suggested here that the actual secret is not prior to the structure of the confession: evidencing of the secret is as much the evidence of the capacity to generate the structure that contains it as it is the evidencing of the content or secret. This places the burden of katharsis within the confessional on a recognition between confessor and confessee of the primacy of the situation that permits the confession, that is, of the discourse.
Before being able to approach this discourse, as described by Kristeva, we need to follow through Jung's critique of the development of the confessional model. Kristeva's views on katharsis can be recognised as kenotic in their expression. To locate this kenotic extreme within a continuum of affective relationships we need to return to Jung's history of modern psychology.

In his treatment of the early confessional model of therapy, Jung provides a simple example of therapeutic katharsis. Jung provides this example in order to dismiss its value as an account of therapy. After World War I "there was a regular spate of traumatic neurosis". In many of these cases it was felt that some actual trauma rather than "an established neurotic history" caused the problem. Such cases seemed "to justify a return to the original Breuer-Freud method and its underlying theory". According to this theory,

the trauma is either a single, definite, violent impact, or complex of ideas and emotions which may be likened to a psychic wound. Everything that touches this complex, however slightly, excites a vehement reaction, a regular emotional explosion. Hence one could easily represent the trauma as a complex with a high emotional charge, and because this enormously effective charge seems at first sight to be the pathological cause of the disturbance, one can accordingly postulate a therapy whose aim is the complete release of this charge. Such a view is both simple and logical, and it is in apparent agreement with the fact that abreaction — i.e., the dramatic rehearsal of the traumatic
moment, its emotional recapitulation in the waking or in the hypnotic state — often has a beneficial therapeutic need to recount a vivid experience again and again until it has lost its affective value. As the proverb says, “What filleth the heart goeth out by the mouth.” The unbosoming gradually depotentiated the affectivity of the traumatic experience until it no longer has a disturbing influence. (Vol. 16, pp. 130-31)

The emptying of confession, like the experience of first seeing a play, might be distinguished from abreaction in that the rehearsal of abreaction directs attention from content to structure whereas the katharsis of confession and the first seeing of a play have the novelty of performance that gives credence to content as self-satisfying. Abreaction, in this sense, operates as a critique of confession; it brings to light the secondary quality that underlay the experience. In the case of drama, the critique, the redirecting of attention from content to structure, occurs as a feature of interpretation: the discovery of the causal relations releases the emotional charge.³

This is the view that Jung, following William McDougall, takes of “a traumatic complex”:

the essential factor is the dissociation of the psyche and not the existence of a highly charged affect and, consequently

³ Bertolt Brecht, in his revision of theatre and katharsis, was looking for a critical audience, an audience that was conscious of the “rehearsal” nature of the performance. A brief account of Brecht’s theories is given in the Appendix.
the main therapeutic problem is not abreaction but how to integrate the dissociation. This argument advances our discussion and entirely agrees with our experience that a traumatic complex brings about dissociation of the psyche. The complex is not under the control of the will and for this reason it possesses the quality of psychic autonomy.

Its autonomy consists in its power to manifest itself independently of the will and even in direct opposition to conscious tendencies: it forces itself tyrannically upon the conscious mind. The explosion of affect is a complete invasion of the individual, it pounces upon him like an enemy or a wild animal. (Vol. 16, pp. 132-33)

The wild animal that pounces on the individual is comparable to the external fate that falls on the hero in tragedy; the fateful action of the tragedy, like the autonomous complex, is able to force “itself tyrannically upon the conscious mind”. Arising, as it were, from outside the ego, as it must appear to if it is to be treated as autonomous, the trauma is the wound that evidences, as content, the complex. While the initial release of the affective charge (the katharsis of this complex) at first sight seems to give release, the release is only from the affective charge; the complex remains autonomous. Repeated abreactions, through the direction of attention from content to structure, lead to a weakening of the sense of the complex as overpowering. A similar kind of depotentiation of the affect can be seen in an audience’s response to drama: repeated viewings depotentiate the affective qualities. The same holds true for pornography and violence; the affect progressively lessens.
One may prefer to say that the affect alters rather than lessens. The shift in attention from content to structure that constitutes rehearsal marks the kathartic method of therapy in the same way that the interpretation of the dramatic genre is marked. As Jung points out, this shift is a shift in attention from the source action as cause, first to the complex as effect, and then to the abreaction as affect. Within the causal chain (Kristeva's concatenation) is realized the dramatic proposition: the individual is found, in a primary way, to be related through distance; in terms of action as identity, the individual is found to be dissociated from his world. The world, through action, presents the individual with an identity proposition that works through discovery and reversal: fate is the source of a spontaneous order that threatens the autonomy of the individual. One may describe such identity moments as the true initiation into the order of Heidegger's throwness: in the discovery of distance as the consciousness of a mind related to a world, the character is found in a causal relationship that exceeds his consciousness. While this relationship threatens to impose an infinite novelty (and promises surprise) it proposes an order of events that offers an account to consciousness of the relationship. Fate thus equals identity and katharsis is the proof of efficacy (the identity feels real).

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1 John Macquarrie offers this account: “Martin Heidegger has used the expression throwness (Geworfenheit) as a somewhat vivid metaphor for man's factical condition. Man is thrown into existence, each one is thrown into his own particular existential situation” (Existentialism (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973) p. 191).
Turning again to Homer for evidence, we find in the *Iliad* the discovery of dramatic identity within a causal sequence. Although the general plot of this story is too well known to recount in detail the opening scenes, in order to establish the density of the causal chain a brief sketch of the main causal structure is given here.²

The *Iliad* opens with the Greek armies at Troy suffering a plague inflicted by Apollo. This plague was sent to avenge the loss by Chryses (Apollo's priest) of his daughter Chryseis to Agamemnon. Achilleus (under the guidance of Hera) calls the people to a meeting in order to make some decision and take some action to end the terrible state of affairs. Under Achilleus' protection, Kalchas (the seer) reveals the source of the plague and the course of action which will bring it to an end: Agamemnon must give Chryseis back to her father. This discovery leads to a reversal in the status of Agamemnon; he has been shown to be remiss as the leader of the Greek armies. Agamemnon quickly rises to accept the prophecy and embark on a course of action to resolve matters. While Agamemnon feels that Chryseis is better than his wife, Klytaimestra, Agamemnon will return Chryseis for the good of all; but, in recompense for this loss to his standing, he desires that one of his inferiors should give up his prize. In this way Agamemnon seeks to deny the effect of the causal chain on his identity; he re-secures his status through an act of will that means the

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² All quotations are from (and the names of characters are as given in) Richmond Lattimore's translation, *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).
burden of the sequence must fall on someone else; he attempts to deny the autonomy of the action as it affects him: to use Jung's metaphor, Agamemnon throws the wild animal off his back and expects it to land on the back of someone else.

A similar event occurs in Samuel Peckinpah's film, *The Wild Bunch*. A bottle of spirits is handed around the gang of thieves; one member is to end the chain of association by being the marked one, the one with the empty bottle. When the end arrives all the gang members, except for the altered member, laugh. The irony of this scene is not that the marked person is especially marked, but rather that the only control any of the members have over their fate is the ability to toy with the symbols of dissociation and death.¹

In the case of Agamemnon's attempt to reduce the insult to his status, Achilleus suggests that Agamemnon give back the girl and wait until after Troy is taken, when he may receive repayment of three and four times his present loss. Agamemnon is shocked. The suggestion that he should sublimate his present desire while others are not required to do so is beyond his tolerance and comprehension. Agamemnon questions: "What do you want? To keep your own prize and have me sit here lacking one?" (Bk. 1, ll. 133-34) As leader, Agamemnon cannot tolerate the status of lacking; he will not go from being the one-with to being the

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¹ (USA: Warner Seven Arts, 1969.)
one-without. He asserts his authority since it is precisely his authority that is in question, and threatens simply to take someone else's prize if no make-up prize is given. At this point Agamemnon seeks to carry the girl back to her father but Achilleus will not forgo his challenge. Achilleus threatens to dissociate himself from Agamemnon's cause, recalling it was for Agamemnon that Achilleus went to Troy. Here the thematic aspect of the plot is underlined. The audience is reminded, by Achilleus' words, of the background action, the taking of Helen, that precipitated the whole campaign. The struggle between Achilleus and Agamemnon, for women as prizes, replicates this theme of loss and the consequent reversal in fate that is suffered by those who lose.

Agamemnon's time is yet to come, as the ironic mention of his wife signals. For the moment it is Achilleus who is burdened with the autonomous complex, the wild animal, the less than one, the abject. This complex takes on the charge of the whole cultural history of loss as it is recollected within the plot. The wound, the trauma that Achilleus experiences, may, on the surface, appear to be slight, and his response may, as a result, appear to be out of proportion to the slight he suffers. But the wound is real in ways that are easily understood in modern terms: Agamemnon has the power to usurp property; Agamemnon walks, at will, through Achilleus' world:

but I shall take the fair-cheeked Briseis, your prize, I myself going to your shelter, that you may learn well
how much greater I am than you, and another man may
shrink back
from likening himself to me and contending against me.

(Bk. 1, ll. 184-87)

Achilleus discovers in this threat from Agamemnon the true state of
affairs: Agamemnon will take Briseis and allow Achilleus to leave. Achilleus’
fate has been reversed; not only will he lose his prize and be humiliated but
also he will lose his status as a hero among the Achaians and be reduced to the
status of king of the Myrmidons. This discovery threatens to overwhelm
Achilleus; he thinks to murder Agamemnon there and then. His hand is stayed
by no less than Athene who promises Achilleus the same threefold reward
that Achilleus offered to Agamemnon for forgoing the opportunity to transfer
an effect as a cause. The chain of consequences is sublimated rather than
broken and this sublimation creates in Achilleus the dramatic identity that
Agamemnon successfully resisted.

Achilleus lives out the consequences of the causal identity he acquired
in this initial struggle with Agamemnon. The wound that he suffers is the same
wound that he maintains until the kenotic passage, already treated, in which he
meets Priam over the corpse of Hector. In Kristeva’s terms, Achilleus is truly
abject. The total action of the *Iliad* is dominated by the various rehearsals of
this trauma and its consequent complex. Book one opens: “Sing, goddess, the
anger of Peleus’ son
Achilleus”s. It is not until the scene between Achilleus and Priam that the possibility of integration for Achilleus arises. Only after the kathartic release of the affects in the funeral rites of Patroklos can Achilleus retrieve his will and attain his identity as epic hero. For the majority of the *Iliad*, the character of Achilleus is that of a dramatic hero; it is the character evidenced in the causal sequence as the content of a form or structure that governs, through distance, that sequence. By being thrown out of or up against his world, Achilleus is able to re-enter, abject intact, an enlarged distance, a community born of a fate that now includes his enemy as alien (Priam) and his enemy as rival (Agamemnon).

Underlying Jung's account of the kathartic or confessional model of therapy is the proposition that distance is the source of the patient's problem and, as well, the source of the solution to the patient's problem: distance, as the source of awareness of identity, is fundamental to the therapeutic environment. Simple confession may relieve the patient of the affective charge, but the complex remains intact. In this simple model the katharsis amounts to no more than a purging: no identity is at risk. Indeed, simple confession may be seen as an attempt to preserve the identity through avoidance of the complex; the complex needs its occasional purgative releases but the identity can be sustained within its dramatic causal chain. Like Agamemnon, the patient can avoid the problem of causal identity by locating causal identity within a chain of causes and effects that has a known or anticipated outcome. This chain can serve to secure an existing identity (role) against the threat of
discovery and reversal inherent in any new sequence of events: distance is to be dissociated or collapsed.

Such a model of identity that locates the source of identity awareness within distance runs at a tangent to the standard Western history of identity. From Aristotle to the present there has been a view of identity as substance that locates the source of identity awareness not in the causal chain itself, but rather in the substantial identity that finds itself in that sequence. For Hegel and Aristotle “substance is the ground of itself, it is in that way a self-relation.” And “. . . self-relation is identity, and as self-identical it is a unity”.¹ It is from this unity of substance, in relation, through negativity, with its accidents, that the causal chain is established in a relationship where the “active substance is the cause; the passive substance is the effect”. From this relationship it is realized that:

this distinction [between active substance as cause and passive substance as effect] cannot be maintained. . . . But substance is an absolute negativity, and therefore exerts power, is active. The distinction between cause and effect thus collapses. Each is a cause, and each is an effect. Substance A, as active, operates on substance B, as passive. But B as active, equally operates on A. This is reciprocity, or action and reaction. . . . We see the same truth [action and reaction] in a more advanced form in the spiritual life

of man. We speak of temptations besetting us as if in temptation we remained wholly passive. But it is only because our own feelings and emotions are incited to activity by the outer stimulus that we are tempted. There is really activity on both sides. If we were wholly passive temptation would be impossible. (Stace, p. 218)

Hegel's views of a substance-based identity might best be described as a logical account of identity, whereas the model of a causally-based identity put forward here might be described as a psychological account. Identity, as an awareness of a personal identity, comes into existence only through discovery of the distance between identity as revealed in action and identity as a social construct. Achilleus discovers himself as a causal identity through the distance established between Achilleus the hero and Achilleus the person set upon by the affects of a causal sequence. It is precisely those aspects rejected by the social identity that now confront Achilleus; he is marked by the abject. It is from this negative position, from this identity in conflict, that Achilleus is able to locate himself as a character, that is, as a substance with accidents. Before he can become this character he must integrate the effects of the causal sequence by abreacting the affects. In this process the distance established between cause and effect will be mitigated or bridged, but only on condition that the distance be maintained: the abject is not to be overcome.
Achilleus in no sense confesses his anger, unless the discovery of the anger is seen to be indicative of a repressed emotion that he now reveals. In any case, the working through, in action, of this emotion goes well beyond the simple model of confession put forwards by Jung. In the case of confession the person confessing, having forgone the repressed secret, is then free to be as they are but now minus the repression that was polluting their life. In this way the emptying is a giving up of what is no longer required, or a giving up of that precise secret that threatens to disrupt the present identity of the person confessing. The consequences of this emotion are thus avoided and the economy is restored. The abject is rejected and the distance obviated through the ritual recognition of the social identity of the person confessing.

In the kenosis passage from Philippians, Christ is said to have thought being equal with God to be of no account and so he emptied himself of this identity. A person confessing cannot be seen to be attempting to give up his present identity; he is in fact attempting to preserve present identity by purging it of unwanted or dangerous content. Similar things may be said of the aesthetic katharsis of tragedy except that members of the audience cannot be said to be giving up particular contents. The point of similarity is that within the discourse of drama the social identity of the audience is never brought into question. While everyone may go home sadder and wiser (or happier and wiser) this wisdom is the result of an awareness of the universal human implication in fate as a series of dramatic actions, and the experiencing of the
emotions associated with the recognition of fate as one of the unavoidable conditions of being necessarily implicated in society. The awareness is not exclusive of an awareness of personal fate within history, but it necessarily includes the awareness of human history as the accounting of society as it is aware of itself as action. This awareness of action has been given its presentation or realization in space and it is this spatial quality that authenticates the awareness. What is realized exists and through this realization the tragic aspect of life is purged of the terrors that its realization contains. But no member of the audience is invited, or required to empty himself or herself and go home a different identity; no John Smith is invited to leave as Hamlet.

Through the relationship of distance established between the audience and the world of the work, however, and the replication of this distance between characters and the world they inhabit, identity is established as identity in conflict. The distance relationship of the genre establishes identity as a function of causality, as a function of active and passive, as a function of inner and outer. Thus space is defined in terms of a causal identity that arises through and is in turn defined in terms of distance. It is precisely through its objective relationship with the action that the audience is able to maintain its identity as audience; and yet this objectivity implicates the audience in the realization of identity as a conflict sustained by distance. While the audience does not go home as a group of substantially different identities, its awareness of identity has been brought into question: the experience of aesthetic katharsis does not
simply confirm the status quo. The fate of Macbeth reminds us all that we too can be set upon by the “animals” released by a series of events and that our social identity is at the mercy of events beyond our control; that our sense of substantiality as social identities is constantly under review by the very series of actions that seem to support those substantial identities; and that to be confirmed in such a social identity is to be denied the self-substantiation of such an identity and to be given, in its place, the dramatic action that realizes the identity in space and in conflict. The release of the affect in dramatic katharsis is thus the confirmation of the distance and the evidence of the abject.

Taking the differences between therapeutic confession and katharsis into account, it appears the alignment between the katharsis of abreaction and that of tragedy is more appropriate and illuminating for the study of kenosis. The capacity of the play to be performed, like the capacity of the trauma to be rehearsed, shifts the kathartic release from its central position within an economy of preservation to an even more important position within the economy of conflict. Abreaction, while it lessens the impact of the affect through the kathartic release of the affect, positions the affect within the structure of abreaction in a privileged place as the guarantee of the significance of the experience: no affect, no abreaction. This shift, along with preserving the affect through locating the affect, holds the affect, as evidence of causal identity, at a distance (the abject is not absorbed). Identity is then grounded in distance and difference: identity is known in action and
conflict, and identity is known in relation with another. In the case of therapy this “other” is the analyst (hence Jung’s stress on the necessity of another person in the confession); in the case of aesthetic katharsis the “other”, for the audience, is of course the actor; for the dramatic character the “other” is the series of actions (the forms), in which he (the content) is found.

Although aesthetic katharsis may be seen to point back towards a simple model of confession in which identity is preserved as a substance, aesthetic katharsis has been shown here to point forwards towards a model of abreaction. Accepting that abreaction is the historical outcome of the confessional model of therapy, we may, for the purposes of argument, tie the dramatic genre to this complex or critical form of confession, and then move on to compare the other (interpreted) genres with the other stages mentioned by Jung, those of elucidation, education and transformation.

An alignment between Jung's stages and the genres will force an hierarchical structure on the genres and as such this alignment might be dismissed as idle model-building. Aristotle and Hegel find good reasons to elevate the genre of the dramatic, because of the place they give drama within a larger metaphysical scheme of things. Present-day criticism elevates various of the genres in similar ways except that the metaphysical assumptions are not always mentioned. One is no more capable of excluding assumptions from any argument than one is of
pleading unavoidable desires: to wake in the morning or not to wake in the morning is to establish, through custom and performance, an hierarchy. This present thesis is obviously raising the status of the lyric by virtue of fixing its view on the lyric. In so doing, it is locating the lyric within positions that give it hierarchical dominance. The alignment of this argumentative model with Jung's teleological model of human development might seem to offer the delusion of an answer to the “why” of the identity propositions of each genre; such a delusion is deserving of such a “why”.

Jung mentions the curious finality that surrounds each of the stages of development in modern psychology. He relates this finality to the apparent effectiveness of the various therapies that have followed each of the stages he describes. Lacan talks of this effectiveness, perhaps surprisingly, in terms of guilt:

He [the analyst] interprets the symbol and, lo and behold, the symptom, which inscribes the symbol in letters of suffering in the subject's flesh, disappears. This unseemly thaumaturgy is unbecoming to us, for after all we are scientists, and magic is not a practice we can defend. So we disclaim responsibility by attributing magical thinking to the patient. . . . in the meantime, lo and behold, we have become thinkers again, and have re-established the proper distance between ourselves and our patients . . . . (Écrits, p. 92)
We may wish here, especially in the case of the various genres, to assert that the curious finality that surrounds each genre is more a result of their existence than of their efficacy. Jung, in his account, follows the work of Freud and Adler and thus he establishes a history that proceeds like a progression. In the case of the treatment of the genres here, no such progression or history is implied. The lyric does not include the tragic, nor does the epic subsume the other genres. While Greek epic preceded Greek drama as a matter of history, no form has an absolute precedence. Moreover, as has been seen, within the epic may be found both lyric and dramatic moments.

While a patient's psychological “growth” may be viewed as a progressive uncovering of stages with each stage requiring and/or evidencing a different approach, the various stages, through their particular disclosures, acquire the finality of existence that is attributed here to the genres. Because each stage implies further stages, this does not mean each stage is any more or less radicated; each stage, by being a stage, must imply, through its negativity (its exclusiveness), the existence of other stages. Equally, each genre, through its very function, implies the other genres. In Rogers' terms, the mind of the work and the world of the work can be related through identification or reciprocity; they are therefore related through distance, and through various combinations of reciprocity and distance. This complex of relationships is also found

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2 A term favoured by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Through its associations with “radical” it deserves greater usage.
within the mind of the work of each genre. The complex identity established in each genre as the mind of the work functions as a critique both of the genre in which it functions and of the other genres — indeed, of the concept of genre itself.

Jung allows that “each stage does in fact rest on a final truth, and that consequently there are always cases which demonstrate this particular truth in the most startling way” (Vol. 16, p. 69). Each stage, like each genre, has its own story to tell and its own value. After “confession”, Jung describes “elucidation”. According to Jung, from a critique of the confessional stage Freud found the need to establish a method that would deal with the powerful “transference” that sprang up between doctor and patient. Without getting involved here with the contentious areas of Freud's incest theories, we can investigate elucidation, as outlined by Jung, as a stage in Freud's understanding of confession and katharsis.³

Faced with the blank face of a confessional method (Breuer's) that would and would not produce results, and faced with the obverse unsmiling face of transference, Freud took up his “interpretative method”. This method was required in order to elucidate the transference relationship. The doctor must, in Jung's words, “interpret the transference — explain to the patient what he is projecting upon the doctor”. To help in this interpretation/elucidation, Freud used dreams, dreams the

³ Jung surprisingly or not, depending on your view, follows cap in hand with Freud on some of the less trustworthy aspects of the incest theory.
interpretation of which exposed, in Jung's words, "every conceivable kind of filth of which human nature is capable" (Vol. 16, p. 63). This process, in contrast to the simple confessional katharsis, does require a change in the understanding of the identity of the patient:

The fixation having been traced back to its dark origins, the patient's position becomes untenable; he cannot avoid seeing how inept and childish his demands are. He will either climb down from his exalted position of despotic authority to a more modest level and accept an insecurity which may prove very wholesome, or he will realize the inescapable truth that to make claims on others is a childish self-indulgence which must be replaced by a greater sense of responsibility. . . . Normal adaptation and forbearance with his own shortcomings: these will be his guiding moral principles, together with freedom from sentimentality and illusion. The inevitable result is a turning away from the unconscious as from a source of weakness and temptation — the field of moral and social defeat. (Vol. 16, p. 65)

The identity questions raised by the abreaction process differ from those raised by the interpretation/elucidation process. The discovery of the self as a content in a form, or a self in a series of actions, typifies the identity questions raised for the causal identity by the dramatic genre and by abreaction. In the case of the interpretation/elucidation process the identity questions are those of a substantial self with accidents; the precise ownership of these accidents is what makes this stage comparable to the character model of identity that typifies the epic mode.
If we look upon the discourse of tragedy as essentially one of space (action in space, since space, as an aspect of identity, is known and realized only in terms of action) and we look upon the unconscious as described in this passage as that part of the Self that knows or acknowledges no bounds except the bounds of space (Monkey cannot avoid the Buddha, though he can live 500 years under rock with little trouble), then we can portray this shift away from the unconscious as a shift on the part of the Self from being dominated by space to being dominated by time. Time then is taken to be the essential component of the discourse of the epic.

The loss of the “inept and childish demands”, that Jung talks of, can be seen as a katharsis/kenosis just as the “loss” of the charge of the affect in abreaction could be viewed within this set of processes. In the case of elucidation the loss could be accounted as more of a willed loss or jettisoning than is the case with the loss of abreaction. The dissociation that Jung locates as fundamental to the traumatic condition that is dealt with in abreaction is a dissociation that falls, like fate, on the individual. The very fated nature of this forced dissociation marks the katharsis of abreaction as causal and distinguishes the dramatic loss from the loss and dissociation experienced in elucidation. In the case of elucidation the analysand must choose the dissociation; the analysand must will the shift. Instead of the discovery, through a series of actions,
of the dissociation, in elucidation the dissociation is disclosed through interpretation.

The turning away from the unconscious, experienced in elucidation as a turning away from a self-validating authority, is a turning outwards. In Hegel's terms, it is the externalization of consciousness in time. This turning towards time is also a turning away from space, a turning away from the rules of causal identity, in which there are active causes and passive effects, towards the rules of an epic character, in which all causes are seen to be active and thus effects are seen as the attributes of a substantial identity.

The peculiar power of tragedy can be seen to lie in its ontological aspect. Within the ontology of tragedy, space is revealed through action as essentially tied to change. It is not time that catches up with Oedipus but space: the action will occur because ontologically it can. No amount of time or consciousness of identity as revealed by time will permit Oedipus to avoid the revelation that action will present in space. We may wish to halt his hand at the cross-roads but tragedy does not permit the altered consciousness of time. Agamemnon's son, Orestes, cannot avoid the Eumenides no matter what ritual purifications he makes and no matter what understandings he comes to, through his realizations in time, of the social consequences of his actions.¹

¹ In comedy, by way of contrast, it is the very ability of the conditions of space to be radically altered at any time that gives rise to the turns of fate. On an island or within a forest, in Shakespeare's comedies, magic becomes normal and the normal becomes abnormal.
These restrictions of tragic space/action do not, however, invade the domain of elucidation. The very questions that Orestes cannot answer are the same problems that the patient in the stage of elucidation must attempt to solve. Jung writes: “The problem which now faces the patient is his education as a social being, and with this we come to the third stage” (Vol. 16, p. 65). This third stage, which follows the work of Adler, Jung calls “education”. Jung explains:

The aim of his [Adler's] interpretation is . . . to show the patient that he “arranges” his symptoms and exploits his neurosis in order to achieve a fictitious importance; and that even his transference and his other fixations subserve the will to power . . . Adler's method begins essentially at the stage of elucidation; he explains the symptoms in the sense just indicated, and to that extent appeals to the patient's understanding. . . . Whereas Freud is the investigator and interpreter, Adler is primarily the educator. He thus takes up the negative legacy which Freud bequeathed him, and, refusing to leave the patient a mere child, helpless despite his valuable understanding, tries by every device of education to make him a normal and adapted person. He does this evidently in the conviction that social adaptation and normalization are desirable goals, that they are absolutely necessary, the consummation of human life. (Vol. 16, pp. 66-67)

With this set of terms (investigation, interpretation, elucidation, education) we arrive at a stage that could be compared with the time
discourse of the genre of the epic. The actual requirement of this therapeutic method, as a process, is time itself whereas, the limit of both tragedy and the confession can best be described as space. It is not that without time the epic could not function; every art form requires time no less than any other form; but it is through a discourse of time that epic discloses itself. To see this contrast between the discourse of space in the tragic and the discourse of time in the epic we need look no further than Euripides' *The Bacchae*. In this, the last play by the great sceptic and questioner of the logic of tragedy, Pentheus, the unhappy hero, believes that the world functions rationally, one thing following another (chronos), as it does in the epic. Thus for Pentheus things can be sorted out and fixed up according to rules established by reason; substantial characters can deal with their accidents; substantial characters will, through time, come to a fulfilment that will amount to their identity. Pentheus will become the first public service hero.

But to Dionysus, who is seen as representing a more ancient view of the world, reality is a function of space; he accepts no fixed notions of identity and his epiphanies take whatever form suits the course of events; what happens happens because it can happen as part of a total action, this action being the expression of the limits of space. The will of

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1 Hence the criticisms of Conrad's *Lord Jim* which argue there is not the space of time required for the telling of the tale to occur. While we usually talk of time in terms of a space of time, we do not often talk of space in terms of a time of space: space holds the ground. A similar bias towards space can be noted in the case of the cognitive field or space required for the haiku. Without this field the constraints of time would alter the reception of the work: discontinuity and its companion, epic identity, would invade the space.
Pentheus, the will to dissociate from a more ancient authority, sets his whole people adrift from the certainties and locations of their culture. As Dionysus proclaims: “The day will come when they [the people of Thebes] will be driven from their city to wander East and West over the earth; for Zeus will not suffer a godless city to remain”.

This stage in the history of therapy is the most instantly recognisable to an audience that has been raised on the epic tradition of character-based reality. Characters come to their ends in time through a process that becomes, for the reading subject, a process of interpretation, elucidation and education, as the actual characters of the epic are formed by the reading subject. As readers, we have the choice of determining which events and which actions are to be seen as reflections of character and which are to be seen as peripheral.

This process of interpretation of character is complicated by a register of unqualified differences: within the series of causes and effects, which are the substances and which the accidents? The process is further complicated by the vast (almost unending) series of differences that surround and sometimes invade the register. When is a detail not an aspect of character? When is a detail an aspect of character? The differences in answers given by individuals and by the same people over a period of time reflect the openness and unfixed nature of the

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substantial identity we call a character. Such differences are also a reflection of the variety of registers that are available and which gain favour. A new critical theory of the relationship between the individual and God, society, the other, the unconscious, will alter, sometimes radically, our perspectives on characters.

Such illuminations do not threaten the overall position of character within literature or society. Central to all notions of the epic character is the notion that character is revealed in and through time. Each new understanding adds to our experience of the fulfilment of character, to our experience of kairosis. The shock of recognition of a “new” pattern disclosed within a fictional or historic character is a shock that asserts the validity of the affect. This is most obviously potent in the case where the individual discloses, through therapy, a “new” pattern within their own interpreted character. Such disclosures can arise through direct inspection of personal material (Kristeva's truth value) and/or through the aesthetic experience of kairosis.

As the accidents of the substantial character are displayed through the duration of the epic structure, so the experience of the affect of kairosis is experienced in this duration. The interpretation of character is a continuous process and in the ending which amounts to a fulfilment, the epic provides a resolution which allows for kairosis. Within therapy this ending amounts to the education of character: within the therapy the analysand reaches a point where character has been determined, through
an interpretation of the relationship between accidents and a substantial identity through a series of events within time. Such a stage requires both an identification with those accidents that had previously been rejected as belonging with the character and also with the formation of a distance between the present subject of therapy and the previous character presently being elucidated. Thus what typifies this stage of therapy is the double distance of both identifying with a new content and at the same time relating to this new character from the distance required to identify with the new content. The sense of discovery and of an enlarged character reflect the experience of kairosis: “Now I know who I was; now I know who I am; now I know whom I might become.”

Jung sees a need for a fourth stage in psychotherapy, for what he calls “transformation”. This stage Jung also refers to as “the analysis of the analyst” and he expands:

the doctor is as much “in the analysis” as the patient. He is equally a part of the psychic process of treatment and therefore equally exposed to the transforming influences. Indeed, to the extent that the doctor shows himself impervious to this influence, he forfeits influence over the patient; and if he is influenced only unconsciously, there is a gap in his field of consciousness which makes it impossible for him to see the patient in true perspective. (Vol. 16, p. 72)
Here we see the self of the analyst being treated in the non-substantial way that the analysand is treated by radical therapy, by a method of therapy that sets out to alter the overall make-up or complexion of the personality. Inasmuch as the self of the analysand is altered by entering into the relationship with the analyst and the analysis, then equally, Jung argues, the self of the analyst is altered (or should be altered) by entering into the same relationship. Here we have a disjunctive, moment-by-moment shifting in the field of perspectives. The balance of the relationship shifts from analysand to analyst and back again. Equally there are shifts in perspective as the subject and objects of attention shift.

The notion of shifting balances in the therapeutic relationship can be related directly to Lacan’s treatment of “shifters”. Lacan sets out to establish “what sort of subject” can be conceived for “the structure of language [that] has been recognized in the unconscious”:

We can try, with methodological rigour, to set out from the strictly linguistic definition of the I as signifier, in which there is nothing but the “shifter” or indicative, which, in the subject of the statement, designates the subject in the sense that he is now speaking.

That is to say, it designates the subject of the enunciation, but does not signify it. This is apparent from the fact that every signifier of the subject of the enunciation may be lacking in the statement, not to mention the fact that there
are those that differ from the I, and not only what is inadequately called the cases of the first person singular, even if one added its accommodation in the plural invocation, or even in the Self (Soi) of auto-suggestion.¹

Once we allow that the subjects of a discourse are open to shifting, then the shifts of distance and balance can be seen to occur both within the discourse and within the text of the discourse. The question Lacan asks is: “`Who is speaking?`, when it is the subject of the unconscious that is at issue” (p. 299). Such a question is the constant companion of the lyric. Such a question describes the lyric within its dimension of identity.

Such a question presents itself to Jung as a basic problem of the transformational stage of therapy. Through this approach Jung is able to extend the methods of Freud and Adler to include the elucidation and education of the analyst as a thematic concern. This is a shift that Jung describes as going from the objective level to the subjective. At the subjective level there is no longer a substantial identity for either the analyst or the analysand; both are part of a reciprocal relationship. This shift alters psychotherapy from being “a method of medical treatment” to being “a method of self-education”. Hence, for Jung, ethics are an issue of therapy. Jung writes:

The self-criticism and self-examination that are indissolubly bound up with it [transformation] necessitate a view of the psyche radically different from the merely biological one which has prevailed hitherto; for the human psyche is far more than a mere object of scientific interest. It is not only the sufferer but the doctor as well, not only the object but also the subject, not only a cerebral function but the absolute condition of consciousness itself. (Vol. 16, pp. 74-75)

With the transposition of the subject and object of analytic attention Jung is able to include, or internalize, in the transformational stage, the previous three stages of katharsis, elucidation and education. In so doing he makes identity and its transformations the central issue of both therapy and consciousness.

For the reader of lyric poetry, identity becomes fluid within a relationship that itself demands to be seen in a fluid way: transformation typifies the reader's relationship with the lyric. Within this lyric transformation it is perhaps more immediately apparent that there is an object of attention separate from both the reader and the relationship (which together go to make up the mind of the work). This separate object is of course the poem itself.

Inasmuch as the world of the work (here called “the poem itself”) can be considered to be the object of the relationship, it acquires a potential for transforming the identity of the mind of the work that may
be described as both kathartic and kenotic.² The affective outcome depends on the relationship formed between reader and the mind of the work. The mind of the work is not being considered here as separate to the identity complex formed by the reciprocal relationship between reader and work. Different attitudes taken by different readers influence the identity complex of the mind of the work. If the reader views the world of the work as providing the “message of god”, then the relationship of the mind of the work to its world will be one of dominance or transference; the reciprocal aspects of the lyric identity will be negated by the attitude of the reader. This non-reciprocal relationship may lead to a consequent experiencing of katharsis through the giving over of responsibility to the object of consciousness, the confession being one of inferiority.

Turning to the affective aspect of the lyric, we need to look more closely at the “object” of the therapeutic relationship if we are to reach any further determination about the psychological domain of the “object” of the lyric kenosis. If the therapeutic relationship is defined in the dynamic way that Jung outlines in his transformational stage, neither the analyst nor the analysand constitute the object. Because the relationship of analyst with analysand is deeply implicated in the process of therapy, it is not suited to serve as the object, just as the identity complex of the mind of the lyric is not suited as an object. In the case of therapy what

² It should not be inferred that this object is considered to have a self-substantiating existence separate from the relationship.
serves the role of object, as the world of the work (the poem itself) does in the case of the lyric, is the notion of the Self.

For Jung the Self is not so much fixed in time and space as it is fixed through implication in consciousness. Jung's notion of the Self serves, much as does Hegel's Spirit, to function as an object in a world where, through a process view of reality, there are no objects free of subjects. This object does not, however, avoid the dangers of fixity simply because it is implicated in a process.

It is at this point that Kristeva's critique of Hegel would serve as a critique of Jung. Kristeva, talking of “a new conception of praxis”, writes:

This conception is opposed to the homogeneous direction of Hegel's Absolute Idea, because this idea, even while negating itself, never negates itself in and of itself, in its identity. It remains enclosed in the totality of logical knowledge.³

Kristeva offers an explanatory outline of how the heterogeneous and homogeneous subjects relate to practice:

The moment of transgression is the key moment in practice: we can speak of practice wherever there is a transgression of systematicity, i.e. a transgression of the unity proper to the transcendental ego. The subject of the practice cannot be the transcendental subject, who lacks the shift, the split in logical unity brought about by language which separates out, within the signifying body, the symbolic order from the workings of the libido (this last revealing itself by the semiotic disposition). Identifying the semiotic disposition means, in fact, identifying the shift in the speaking subject, in his capacity for renewing the order in which he is inescapably caught up; and that capacity is, for the subject, the capacity for enjoyment. (“Speaking Subject”, p. 217)

Here the subject in crisis becomes the object. While appearing to avoid the fixity of Hegel's Spirit and Jung's Self, the subject in crisis nonetheless is caught within the reification of epic identity (memory). Such a subject in crisis has the disadvantage, as the object, of accumulating experience. Such a subject becomes the history of itself and, as the history of itself, it both faces further moments of crisis and it faces the enormity of accounting for itself as a personality. Such a subject provides a continuous wealth of evidence and this wealth is a burden that is then only relieved in the kenotic moment of crisis. While this amounts to a renewal and while it may involve pleasure, it involves the potential for the subject in crisis to become confused, as a fixed identity (as a personality), with the Self.¹

¹ For Kristeva this is not really a problem since the attention is specifically drawn away from any substantial identity and is relocated in an identity in process. By her close attention to this phase in the process she avoids falling prey to her own criticism of Hegel. Her subject in process remains isolated in consciousness until it engages the subject as a substantial subject. The dialectic between the lyric and the epic subjects is its own discourse. The dramatic and lyric subjects tend (in their extremes) to cohabit: “the shift in the speaking subject . . . his capacity for renewing the order’ amounts to an action, a lyric action.
Between Jung’s Self and Kristeva’s subject in process the object of the kenotic discourse of the lyric is to be found. Kristeva, in supporting the physicality of the experience, supports the dynamic practice of a subject that is lost and re-found in language. Jung, in supporting the transcendental aspects of experience as it is known through consciousness, supports the otherness of language, the ability of language to point beyond in pointing towards. Thus, for Jung, the object of the kenotic identity discourse of transformational therapy is an object that is evidenced structurally in consciousness. Such an object is an unattainable reality, an object that negates the image of presence through its idealist fixity. For Kristeva the object of the kenotic discourse only appears in the actual practice. Such practice, through its transgression of systematicity, acquires a physicality that defies the transcendental subject. Through the renewal of order, such a subject acquires a reality that offers pleasure and a burden of personality as a character defined by lyric action.²

This last problem, of personality, was well known to T.S. Eliot as both poet and critic:

² This aspect is looked at in more detail later in this chapter, in relation to the poetry of James K. Baxter and in the subsequent chapter in relation to Sylvia Plath’s poetry.
Poetry is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion; it is not the expression of personality, but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things.¹

Within the transformational stage of Jungian psychotherapy something similar to Eliot's notion of escape may be seen to operate. The analysand is not seeking to turn loose emotions or to express personality; rather, the analysand is seeking to escape the static nature of his emotions and personality as he presently understands them. In later years Eliot qualified his comments on impersonality such that his emotive term “escape” begins to sound more like “transcend”. In his essay “Yeats” Eliot writes:

The . . . impersonality [“achieved by the maturing artist”] is that of the poet who, out of intense and personal experience, is able to express a general truth; retaining all the particularity of his experience, to make of it a general symbol. (p. 139)

In a similar vein Jung writes:

The artist is not a person endowed with free will who seeks his own ends, but one who allows art to realize its purpose

through him. As a human being he may have moods and a will and personal aims, but as an artist he is "man" in a higher sense — he is "collective man" — a vehicle and moulder of the unconscious psychic life of mankind.²

Jung's "`man' in a higher sense" is the same general man or Self that Jung points to as lying behind or found in the midst of the transformation experience. In “Psychotherapists or the Clergy" he writes:

The transformation takes place at the moment when in dreams or fantasies themes appear whose source in consciousness cannot be shown. To the patient it is nothing less than a revelation when, from the hidden depths of the psyche, something arises to confront him — something strange that is not the "I" and is therefore beyond the reach of personal caprice. He has gained access to the sources of psychic life, and this marks the beginning of the cure.³

Jung's "not the `I'" should be put beside Rimbaud's famous statement, "For I is an other" ("Car Je est un autre") in the so called "Lettre du Voyant":

Romanticism has never been carefully judged. Who would have judged it? The critics? The Romantics? who prove so obviously that a song is so seldom a work, that is to say, a thought sung and understood by the singer.

For I is someone else (Car Je est une autre). If brass wakes up a trumpet, it is not its fault. This is obvious to me: I am present at this birth of my thought: I watch it and listen to it: I draw a stroke of the bow: the symphony makes its stir in the depths, or comes on to the stage in a leap.

If old imbeciles had not discovered only the false meaning of the Ego, we would not have to sweep away those millions of skeletons which, for time immemorial, have accumulated the results of their one-eyed intellects by claiming to be authors!

The first study of the man who wants to be a poet is the knowledge of himself, complete. He looks for his soul, inspects it, tests it, learns it. As soon as he knows it, he must cultivate it! It seems simple: in every mind a natural development takes place; so many egoists call themselves authors, there are many others who attribute their intellectual progress to themselves!

— But the soul must be made monstrous: in the fashion of the comprachicos, if you will! Imagine a man implanting and cultivating warts on his face.1

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Rimbaud's attempts to realize the self as an other evoke a sympathetic response from Lacan. Lacan quotes the “I is an other” in support of an attack on “the antidialectical mentality of a culture which, in order to be dominated by objectifying ends, tends to reduce all subjectivity to the being of the ego” (Écrits, p. 23). It is significant that Jung sees this other of the I as being a negative aspect of the I. It is of equal significance that Lacan follows Rimbaud in the positive expression “I is an other” which tends, through the existential assumptions included in the verb “to be”, to dissolve the fixity of both sides of the identity equation.

This “I is an other”, this “not the `I' ”, is part of the same discourse of identity we have stressed as typical of lyric kenosis. In the case of the lyric and its particular discourse, the distance that is established within the mind of the work is such as to draw attention both to the content of the lyric (i.e. the particular emotions, experiences etc. of the poem) and to the structure of identity that permits the kenosis alluded to by the notion of the “not the `I' ”. Jung notes a similar double attention:

Often it is simply the deep impression made on the patient by the independent way the dreams deal with his problem. Or it may be that his fantasy points to something for which his conscious mind was quite unprepared. But in most cases it is contents of an archetypal nature, or the connections between them, that exert a strong influence of their own
whether or not they are understood by the conscious mind.

(Vol. 11, p. 346)

The “independent way” and “the connections” take us back to Eliot and his stress on the structural features of impersonality in the poet. According to Eliot, “the poet has, not a ‘personality’ to express, but a particular medium, which is only a medium and not a personality” (p. 27). This stress on the independence of the medium is a direct result of the continuing unwillingness of readers to go past contents. On many occasions Jung asserts the structural nature of his concept of archetypes and yet the contents continue to dominate our interest. Jung complains, for example, of persistent misunderstanding, by readers, of his concept of archetypes. In his Foreword to Victor White's *God and the Unconscious* Jung writes:

I have never maintained that the archetype in itself is an image, but have expressly pointed out that I regard it as a modus without definite content.¹

Faced with the experience of the “not the ‘I’”, we appropriate the contents of the experience which, in many ways, is all we are able to do: the experience of emptying, of discovering the self as part of the “not the ‘I’”, is here filled. It is the primacy of this appropriation that leads us now into the domain of Jung's theories of the Self and the

theological concerns that such views of the Self promote. Victor White in *Soul and the Psyche* writes:

Religion is in no way an obliteration or suppression of the ego, nor an escape from the ego into the purely archetypal or transcendental, but a conscious, rational and ethical relationship of the ego to what transcends not only the ego but the whole cosmos.²

Here the relationship is stressed in order to define more clearly the position of the subject of the experience. White goes on:

The ego is absorbed neither by the “self”, nor by the archetypal generally, but precisely differentiated from them by religion's own establishment of a conscious relationship to them, and should thus be preserved from those psychological disorders which the Jungians call “inflation”. (p. 197)

My dreams thus remain my dreams on condition that the domain of the Self is seen as beyond the ego. The domain of the Self, as evidenced in the dream, must equally be transcended in its structural relationship with the ego in that the archetypes are not directly encountered; what is encountered is their manifestations. While such manifestations may be viewed as dispositional in that they tend to certain

manifestations, Jung argues that it is in fact the disposition to the experience of the manifestations that is central: the relationship between the ego and the archetype is a major feature of his theories. Within this relationship the significance of the symbol or manifestation of the Self is not to be disparaged; indeed it is to be defended, especially against any attempt to abstract from such experiences a dogma that would claim superiority over such an experience. In *Soul and the Psyche* White puts Jung's views in this way:

It may readily be seen that no more or less conceptualized statement about immediate concrete experience possesses the psychological efficacy of the immediate concrete experience of the symbol itself, whether it be presented from outside or from within. The latter can engage all the functions of the psyche: it can be seen, heard and perhaps touched, smelt and tasted, as well as imagined, intuited, felt, reacted to emotionally, played, painted, danced. It “does something to us”, “sends us”, as the abstract intellectual concept cannot. More importantly still, it can and does make us aware of the presence of what is unconscious as well as of what is conscious, of the unknown and the mysterious as well as of the known and the comprehensible. This gives it a power of transforming and integrating psychic energy which can be possessed by no conceptualized scientific theory or credal statement alone. (p. 74)

From the efficacy of the immediate experience of the symbol or manifestation of the Self White deduces that symbols identifying “`God'
or `perfect humanity' (the `Self') with one particular figure, whether it be Christ or the Buddha or Apollo” (p. 75), have a limited or debased value. Because such symbols attempt to give a definite shape to what is defined by Jung as indefinite in its very nature, such identifying symbols of wholeness do not agree with the “indeterminate nature of the archetype” (Jung, Vol. 12, p. 34).

But, by this very definition of the indeterminate nature of the archetype, the immediate experience of the symbol must also be qualified. Inasmuch as it is experienced, it becomes definite; inasmuch as it becomes definite, it threatens to limit the archetype. In relation to such absolute symbols as “God” and the “Self” this process of limitation has long been accounted for by negative theologies. In another of his books, *God the Unknown*, White writes:

this approach says nothing positive about God at all: it consists entirely, not of affirmations, but of denials. The Greeks call it apophatic theology — “denying” theology. St Thomas calls it the *via remotionis* or the *via negativa*: the negative way of removing from our statements about God all that he is not. As St Thomas sets it out, it looks like no more than a matter of words and logic. But in its origin it is much more than that, it is a way of the whole soul to reach out to God in his transcendence, and is a way by no means peculiar to Christians. We find the like in Plotinus as well as St John of the Cross and *The Cloud of Unknowing*; we find a similar process of “stripping” all images and ideas vividly related in the Indian Upanishads.
Likewise the Hindu contemplatives seek to become Godlike by the exercise call pratyahara, in which they say “Neti, Neti” (“not this, not this”) to every thought, image and feeling that comes into their minds, recalling the “Nada” of St John of the Cross.³

This negative or “stripping” approach of the Upanishads is comparable to a passage dilated on by Lacan in “Function and Field of Speech and Language”:

If the domain defined by this gift of speech is to be sufficient for your action as also for your knowledge, it will also be sufficient for your devotion. For it offers it a privileged field.

When the Devas, the men, and the Asuras were ending their novitiate with Prajapati, so we read in the second Brahmana of the fifth lesson of the Brad-aranyaka Upanishad, they addressed to him this prayer:

“Speak to us.”

“Da”, said Prajapati, god of thunder. “Did you hear me?” And the Devas answered and said: “Thou hast said to us: Damyata, master yourselves” — the sacred text meaning that the powers above submit to the law of speech.

“Da”, said Prajapati, god of thunder. “Did you hear me?” And the men answered and said: “Thou hast said to us: Datta, give” — the sacred text meaning that men recognize each other by the gift of speech.

“Da”, said Prajapati, god of thunder. “Did you hear me?” And the Asuras answered and said: “Thou has said to us: Dayadhyam, be merciful” — the sacred text meaning that the powers below resound to the invocation of speech.

That, continues the text, is what the divine voice caused to be heard in the thunder: Submission, gift, grace. Da da da.

For Prajapati replies to all: “You have heard me.” (Lacan, pp. 106-7)

The god of thunder, as presented by Lacan, offers the negative of interpretation as opposed to the negation of “Neti, Neti”. The “Da da da” allows itself to be interpreted in its moment of sensory experience rather than simply redirecting attention away from the evidence of the senses. The “Da da da” brings attention immediately to the language structure supporting the mystical exercise. Both views, the positive of Lacan and the negative of White, can be found combined in the words of Herakleitos:
The wise is one only. It is unwilling and willing to be called by the name of Zeus (fr. 65; R.P. 40).^4

Zeus is to be found and not to be found in the structure of language. In Lacan's quotation from the Upanishads, the focus is on the discourse and the practice (to include Kristeva's views) of signification of the speaking subject. Jung's views are focused on the image or symbol of the Self as a structure in itself and the inherent negativity of this symbol, especially in relation with the ego. While these two views are not necessarily in conflict, the two approaches lead to different ends. Since, in Jung's case, the symbol is seen as an indicator of the Self, both in terms of the existence and the content of the symbol, it transcends its function as a figure of speech: it wishes to be called "Zeus" (it is "not the 'I'"). In Lacan's case the symbol functions within the discourse between the ego and the unconscious and remains as a non-transcendent marker of this relationship: it wishes not to be called "Zeus" (the " 'I' is an other").

Keeping these distinctions in mind, for the moment we must stay with Jung's approach. The point in raising the essential negativity of the project of achieving integration at this juncture is to stress the essential negativity behind Jung's archetypes. Not only is any definition of the unconscious primarily a negative one (that which is not conscious), but

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any definition of the archetypes is also primarily negative, in that such symbols point beyond themselves, and in pointing they do not define what is beyond them. When such a negative view is taken the peculiar efficacy of the immediate experience of the symbols of the Self is not so much reduced as found to be caught up in the process of dialectical kenosis. The symbol, in its manifestation, both points to itself and beyond itself; in so doing it implicates the consciousness of the experiencer of the symbol in the no-saying of the mystics. What starts as evidence of self turns to evidence of Self. In the negation of the symbol of the Self the Self is found.

The Self here would seem vulnerable to Kristeva's critique. The Self appears to be enclosed in a logic that seeks to preserve the ego along with itself. The purpose of Jung's negative approach, looked at in Kristeva's way, seems to be precisely to guarantee the status of both sides of what is, in grammatical truth, a noun (“the not `I' ”). The Self and the ego are both fixed in this nominal relationship; in Rimbaud's expression the “I” and the “other” are related through the verb, which then implicates both sides of the identity in the dynamics of Lacan's dialectical, reciprocal approach: I is an other; another is I.

Here the Self, as object of the therapeutic situation, illustrates in its manifestation the structural relationship of the ego to the unconscious. The images of “the not `I' ” proliferate to such an observable extent as to allow Jung to propose the notion of universal constants in the human
psyche and the existence of a collective unconscious. While this “universality” of unconscious imagery is theoretically comforting, the fact that the images of “the not `I'” also turn back on the ego, at the moment of the experience of the symbols, is disquieting. What is realized is the underlying emptiness of an imagery that indicates wholeness and announces that such wholeness is to be withheld or postponed in its fulfilment: the very promise is the proof of failure.

The instance of the symbol of wholeness, in its efficacy, announces its insufficiency and anticipates its own replication not as content or specific symbol but as a moment in a succession; it is found both through and as disjunction. While it may appear from this that indeed the ladder of transformation has rungs, the concomitant conclusion is that such rungs are used up in their use. The many-faced hero suffers many adventures and finds they all point beyond and yet do not take him there; they all project their completion in time and space and yet, on their completion in time and space, the transformation of the ego is left hanging. The symbols, while being indefinite manifestations of the Self, retain through their very authority as manifestations of the Self their distance from the ego. It becomes apparent, in this history of transformation, that what typifies the ego in its operations with the Self is the filling and emptying of kenosis: identity is found as disjunction.

Along with this experience of filling/emptying go the other elements of kenosis — the willed loss of self or abdication of the ego, and
the taking on of a submissive attitude towards the experience of kenosis. The ego thus determines to find its new self within the relationship between the ego and the Self. In a sense the very project of finding a determinate or fixed or static self is given over: the part accepts the dominance of an anticipated wholeness; it becomes its own history; for its reward it is able to look to the veracity of the symbol or else its affect.

About this sense of wholeness Jung writes:

Although “wholeness” seems at first sight to be nothing but an abstract idea . . . it is nevertheless empirical in so far as it is anticipated by the psyche in the form of spontaneous or autonomous symbols." (Vol. 9, part II, p. 31)

White adopts more Christian terms:

Without willing renunciation of familiar forms of conscious life, the life of the whole, of what Jung calls the Self, is not realized. “Abdication of the ego" is the first condition of individuation — as distinct from a sterile succession of unconscious images in which there is no participation of the ego. (Soul and Psyche, p. 179)

The abdicating ego retains the personable qualities of the pre-abdicating ego; the unconscious retains its mysteriousness. Jung comments that “It is only our ego-consciousness that has forever a new beginning and an
early end." For Jung even the “conscious mind cannot be denied a history reaching back at least five thousand years”. And, while he allows for ecstatic states achieved by eastern yogis, Jung wishes to retain the dominance of the rational aspects of consciousness against the “all embracing . . . nebulous [and] . . . indefinite whole, a state in which subject and object are almost completely identical.” The metaphor Jung prefers is the rather Blakean one of “the old game of hammer and anvil: between them [the ego and the unconscious] the patient iron is forged into an indestructible whole, an individual” (Vol. 9, pp. 287, 288).

Jung's defense of the split between subject and object brings us back to the issue of “inflation” mentioned by White. If subject and object do not remain distinct within consciousness, the domain of the ego and the Self can become confused. The private history of the ego-consciousness that is born and dies continuously is not to be exchanged for the history of the Self; indeed, it is a requirement of the ego that it maintain its history intact within the transformational dialectic. Discussing with Christ as a symbol of the Self, Jung argues:

Both are Christian symbols [the Antichrist and Christ], and they have the same meaning as the image of the Saviour crucified between two thieves. This great symbol tells us that the progressive development and differentiation of consciousness leads to an ever more menacing awareness of the conflict and involves nothing less than a crucifixion.
of the ego, its agonizing suspension between irreconcilable opposites. (Vol. 9, part I, p. 44)

Here the experience of the ego reflects the ego's awareness of the symbol of the self. This is in large part brought about by the features of cognition. Jung writes: “Like the related ideas of atman and tao in the East, the idea of the self is at least in part a product of cognition, grounded neither on faith nor on metaphysical speculation”. The symbols of the Self are thus seen to be reflexive. They reflect the features of cognition that make them apparent. Suspended between irreconcilable opposites, the ego anticipates the wholeness found in the archetypal symbol of wholeness which the “unconscious spontaneously brings forth” (Vol 9, part I, p. 69).

The spontaneous discourse between ego and Self would seem to be seductive, allowing the part to masquerade as the whole and the ego to usurp the Self. Of this problem Jung writes:

It is easy enough to think of ourselves as possessing part-souls. Thus we can, for instance, see ourselves as a persona without too much difficulty. But it transcends our powers of imagination to form a clear picture of what we are as a self, for in this operation the part would have to comprehend the whole. There is little hope of our ever being able to reach even approximate consciousness of the self, since however much we may make conscious there will always exist an indeterminate amount of unconscious
material which belongs to the totality of the self. Hence the self will always remain a superordinate quantity. (Vol. 7, p. 175)

Analysing the “Acts of John”, a text that Jung takes to have been written by a gnostic, Jung isolates what he calls “the danger of gnostic inflation”. The “enlightened John”, through his failure to maintain the tension between opposites and his failure to understand the need for the enlightened one to “recognize his own darkness”, identifies “with his own light and . . . [confuses] his ego with the self” (Vol. 11, p. 287).

This identification appears to be a basic danger of the ego. When we look at the “Naassene and Feratic symbols of Hippolytus” we find that “He is of the same essence as the universe, and his own mid-point is its centre”. The central nature of the symbol as it is experienced leads Jung to conclude that such symbols are the “experience of the unconscious; for the unconscious, though its objective existence and influence on consciousness cannot be doubted, is in itself undifferentiable and therefore unknowable”. The unconscious “gives the impression of multiplicity and unity at once" and unlike the conscious mind the unconscious “shows only the barest traces of any definite contents, surprising the investigator at every turn with a confusing medley of relationships, parallels, contaminations, and identifications”. Any attempt, however desirable, to isolate archetypes as distinct and separate concepts ends in doubt as they overlap and combine. And then, “in sharpest
contrast to consciousness and its contents, [the unconscious] has a tendency to personify itself in a uniform way, just as if it possessed only one shape or one voice”. It is no wonder then that the unconscious, as Jung describes it here, “conveys an experience of unity” and that “people are naively inclined to take all the manifestations of the unconscious at their face value and to believe that in them the essence of the world itself, the ultimate truth, has been unveiled” (Vol. 11, pp. 287, 289).

This unity is seen by Jung to pre-exist consciousness. We find its ontological expression in our sensory awareness that, behind the vast array of things we discriminate in time and space, there lies one world ordered by the laws of time and space, that we inhabit one reality: “We . . . believe that it is one and the same universe throughout, in its smallest part as in its greatest”. For Jung “it is certain that the original psyche possessed no consciousness of itself”; self-consciousness has developed historically and, in becoming emancipated, it has become the “victim of its own verbal concepts”.¹ Through the particularising aspects of language we have lost the “original feeling of unity, which was integrally connected with the unity of the unconscious psyche” (Vol. 11, pp. 288, 289, 290).

While this account is overly simple, Jung's neo-idealist views afford us an excellent insight into the major cultural manifestation of kenosis,

¹ Lacan's views on the birth of consciousness will be treated in detail in the next chapter.
the archetype of Christ. The positing of a primitive unity of consciousness that displays itself spontaneously in the symbols of the Self, a unity that can be progressively courted, anticipated, and cultivated through the integration of opposites, allows for a teleology. History, especially the history of the individual, becomes a purposive and moral adventure or quest.

It must be pointed out that while Jung's views are obviously teleological he goes no further than talking of “an urge towards self-realization”. The unconscious may contrive neurosis but it is “wrong to suppose that in such cases the unconscious is working to a deliberate and concerted plan and is striving to realize certain definite ends” (Vol. 7, p. 182). The fact that this quest should here be seen to begin in Christ's incarnation comes as no surprise. The reflexivity of the symbols of the Self, as noted earlier, reflects the features of cognition: the ego-consciousness finds its own structure within the structure of the symbol of the Self, especially, it is argued here, in the symbol of Christ. Jung ensures continuity on the epistemological plain: the senses, capable as they are of knowing their own “errors”, are forever secured in their very operation; the object is not found wanting. The epistemological corresponds to a psychological continuity: the structures of knowing are secured in their operations; the symbol is not found wanting.

For Jung, unity, within the historical development of consciousness, is found only in “contrast with the formless multiplicity of conscious contents”. The Gnostic Christ
symbolizes man's original unity and exalts it as the saving goal of his development. By “composing the unstable”, by bringing order into chaos, by resolving disharmonies and centring upon the mid-point, thus setting a “boundary” to the multitude and focusing attention upon the cross, consciousness is reunited with the unconscious, the unconscious man is made one with his centre, which is also the centre of the universe, and in this wise the goal of man’s salvation and exaltation is reached. (Vol. 7, p. 292)

The precise danger in this formulation, as noted earlier, is “inflation”. Unless there is a “coherent ego-consciousness capable of resisting the temptation to identify with the self”, then “inflation” is the result: the “ego identifies with the inner Christ”. This aspect of the Christ, as symbol of the Self, has led the Church, argues Jung, to push the historical Christ in preference to the inner Christ. The Gnostics not only stressed the inner Christ but located this symbol of the Self in a relative relationship with man. Jung quotes the “Acts of John” text: “For so long as you call not yourself mine, I am not what I was. . . . I shall be what I was when I have you with me” (Vol. 7, p. 293).

And thus to the concept of kenosis.\(^1\) Writes Jung: “from this it follows unmistakably that although Christ was whole once upon a time, that is, before time and consciousness began, he either lost this

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\(^1\) The passage given here from Jung is the one substantial and explicit reference by Jung to the concept of kenosis.
wholeness or gave it away to mankind" (Vol. 7, p. 293). In a footnote to this comment Jung draws on the Philippians kenosis passage. Here the divine and original kenosis, as illustrated in the gnostic passage, is construed by Jung as a primary exchange between the unconscious and the ego. The unconscious (Christ), being at one with the universe (God), thought this essential unity not to be clung to, and so the unconscious (Christ) emptied itself of this central identification (with itself?) and took on the nature or aspect of the ego, that of a slave. The first moment of transformation is then to be seen as a re-enactment of the Fall. Christ, having willed the emptying, allows, through his identification with man, this quality of will to be seen in the initial fall of man.

Through this disclosure of the relativity of the Self, Jung is able to propose “the existence of a compensatory ordering factor which is independent of the ego and whose nature transcends consciousness" (Vol. 7, p. 294). The fact that such an order would appear to be in a reflexive relationship with the ego, to answer a desire of the ego, is to be balanced against the evidence of the spontaneous nature of the manifestations of the Self. But, since a desire for order is already a reflex (the desire for order is itself ordered), the very concept of order must be seen to belong to the discourse between the ego and the Self. Equally, the contents of the discourse, the very symbols of the Self, must be seen to be products of the discourse. The fact that the kenosis of the ego is reflected in the symbols of the Self does not discount the process of kenosis. It grounds the process in the discourse: the emptying of self as
an aspect of the experience of the ego only exists relative to the Self. The unity that the ego then sees as the particular property of the symbols of the Self is relocated within the discourse between the ego and the Self. The kenosis or emptying of self that typifies the ego's awareness is found also to typify the expression of Self: master and slave are one in the discourse.

Transposed from the dimension of religion and mysticism, these contentions affirm the oneness of consciousness. The consciousness of the symbols of the Self will, of necessity, have the same qualities at the cognitive level as the consciousness of any and all things. Jung confirms: “we can say nothing about the contents of the self. The ego is the only content of the self that we do know” (Vol. 7, p. 238). The symbols of the Self, while appearing to offer another domain to enter, another way to go or see, in fact are seen to give back to the ego the very evidence the ego itself presents. What has been gained is not treasure or trash but rather a discourse. It is a discourse that rests on the oneness of consciousness with itself, a huge and magnificent mirror that grants the ego its own perspective on the universal.¹

¹ Northrop Frye points out the questionable need for a notion of a “universal unconscious”, especially in literary criticism. Frye writes: “For the psychologist all dream symbols are private ones, interpreted by the personal life of the dreamer. For the critic there is no such thing as private symbolism, or, if there is, it is his job to make sure that it does not remain so”, Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957) p. 111.
Of this mirror relationship between the conscious mind and the unconscious, Jung writes:

Because the unconscious is not just a reactive mirror-reflection, but an independent, productive activity, its realm of experience is a self-contained world, having its own reality, of which we can only say that it affects us as we affect it — precisely what we say about our experience of the outer world. (Vol. 7, p. 183)

Before looking into this mirror from different angles, we must look further at Jung's notions of the assimilation by the conscious mind of the unconscious. Jung writes:

If we picture the conscious mind, with the ego as its centre, as being opposed to the unconscious, and if we now add to our mental picture the process of assimilating the unconscious, we can think of this assimilation as a kind of approximation of conscious and unconscious, where the centre of the total personality no longer coincides with the ego, but with a point midway between the conscious and the unconscious. This would be the point of new equilibrium, a new centering of the total personality, a virtual centre which, on account of its focal position between conscious and unconscious, ensures for the personality a new and more solid foundation. (Vol. 7, p. 219)
Jung compares this description to the words of St Paul: “Yet not I live, but Christ liveth in me”; and to the Middle Way of Lao-tzu. The important point to note is the expression of assimilation as a process and that such a process has the effect on consciousness of approximating a new centre of consciousness. That Jung sees such a new process-based centre as like Paul’s “Christ liveth in me” further underlines the kenotic nature of the “long and continuous series of transformations which have as their goal the attainment of the mid-point of personality”. The achievement of such a mid-point is as a result of a “profound transformation of personality” (Vol. 7, p. 219). As a result of this transformation the “individual ego senses itself as the object of an unknown and superordinate subject”; it senses itself as being neither opposed or subjected to the Self but rather as being “attached”. In its attachment Jung sees the ego revolving as it were “round the sun” (Vol. 7, p. 238). Here, then, is the ego re-constellated. In the words of Wallace Stevens such a re-constellation is “like/ A new knowledge of reality”.¹

In William Blake's terms, the re-constellation reveals identity as community: the ego is identified in relation to and with an originating wholeness. As Leonard W. Deen points out:

For Blake, personal identity is a kind of nadir or “limit of contraction” in the fall, as in Tharmas' lament in The Four Zoas:

I am like an atom
A Nothing left in darkness yet I am an identity
I wish & feel & weep & groan Ah terrible terrible.
(Night I, ll. 61-63)

Against this atom-minimum, Blake increasingly uses identity to signify his own active and communitarian image of man. For Blake, full humanity emerges only in a community in which each of us is free to identify himself by unique act.

Conscious identity is never simply one; it is always at least twofold, so that the movement toward community is marked by evolving styles of address, by a growing communicativeness and civility of speech: soliloquy; soliloquy address; dialogue or “mental fight”; and conversation. These last two are more developed in Blake, as the expression of his greater emphasis on identity-as-community.

Romantic soliloquy is a communion of self with self, often former self with present self or projected self with observer, as in “Kubla Khan” or “A Night-Piece”. Soliloquy is the mode in which continuity or deepening of consciousness expresses itself . . . Soliloquy moves very gradually into soliloquy-address, a communion of self with self and also with an other. “Frost at Midnight”, “Tintern Abbey”.

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“There Was a Boy”, “Mount Blanc”, and Keats’s odes begin or end as soliloquy-address: speech addressed to an other (often a personified other) as well as to the self.

Identity is reasserted in the confrontation of visions Blake calls “Mental Fight” — the moving force in most of his prophecies — and achieves full identity-as-community in *conversation*: speaking to another as to the image of God.2

It is difficult to imagine a poet whose work is more suited as an example of Jung's fourth stage of therapy and Blake's ideal of identity-as-community than the New Zealand poet James K. Baxter (1926-1972). Baxter is a kenotic poet, a poet who, especially in his later years, took on the kenotic aspects of the lyric as a guide, not only to the writing of poetry, but also to the living of his life. At the peak of his career as a poet, Baxter walked away from the trappings of his past life, and established a community in a tiny New Zealand village known as Hiruharama (a transliteration of “Jerusalem”). It was here, while struggling with the consequences of a kenotic methodology, that Baxter wrote some of his most powerful poetry.

At important turning points in his life, Baxter wrote verse letters. Within the form of the soliloquy-address Baxter implicated himself and a usually historical other. Frequently he used the epistolary form to fix an other within an aura of intimacy that approaches "*conversation*:

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speaking to another as to the image of God". In "Pig Island Letters" Baxter talks to fellow writer Maurice Shadbolt:

The gap you speak of — yes, I find it so,
The menopause of the mind. I think of it
As a little death, practising for the greater,
For the undertaker who won't have read
Your stories or my verse —
Or that a self had died
Who handled ideas like bombs . . . .

As with Jung's notion of a fundamental dissociation between the self and the Self, the gap announces a lost wholeness. This state of mind is seen as a break in the previously "natural" movement of things. Now a new order has to be found. As with Jung's notion of crossing the bridge through confession, this attempt to establish new associations between the self and the Self must be done in association with others. Baxter takes the opportunity to "confess" through elaboration and elucidation, his own understanding of menopause.

The "gap" goes back, in Baxter's poetry, to the ideas of nada that first appear in manuscript poems around Baxter's eighteenth birthday and re-emerge, seventeen years later, in "The Cold Hub":

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And something bust inside me, like a winter clod
Cracked open by the frost. A sense of being at
The absolute unmoving hub
From which, to which, the intricate roads went.
Like Hemingway, I call it nada:
Nada, the Spanish word for nothing,
Nada; the belly of the whale; nada;
Nada; the little hub of the great wheel;
Nada; the house on Cold Mountain
Where the east and the west wall bang together;
Nada; the drink inside the empty bottle.
You can't get there unless you are there.
The hole in my pants where the money falls out,
That's the beginning of knowledge; nada.

(\textit{CP}, pp. 256-57)

The “house on Cold Mountain” is the house Baxter would come to inherit in his Jerusalem years. The various selves displayed in his poetry are all fragments of a biographic self that is invoked, evoked and usually lived out. Throughout Baxter's poetry there is a very real sense of an auditor who remembers every word ever written by the poet. Somewhere the fragments are being re-assembled to make a transformed whole. A year after the publication of “Pig Island Letters”, Baxter wrote:

\begin{verbatim}
the soul has to become
A stone hidden in the ground
Under a tree that has already been cut down
And sawn up carefully to make timber
For a bridge or a cattle yard.
\end{verbatim}
I inhabit the empty ground.

("The Paddock", *CP*, p. 408)

Sawing up the tree “carefully" amounts to the educative process. The anticipated outcome is communal. The consequences for the poet are kenotic: with the “soul" now hidden, there is no final secure goal; the self has been re-located in relation to the Self; the Self has been re-described as obscure and perhaps finally unknowable; and the poet's project is to inhabit the ground made empty through the kenotic process.

In “Pig Island Letters" the balance is on the side of retention rather than loss. There is hope in simply hanging on: “The wind is a drunkard. Whoever can listen/ Long enough will write again"; (*CP*, p. 277). While the first seven letters cover a wide range of therapeutic registers, all of which refer in some way to a loss of self, the hope is that things will come right in time. Baxter catalogues a rather standard list of experiences and initiations in a brief biographic sketch. In terms of epic identity, the first seven letters are an attempt to update and bring to significance a series of previously unrelated experiences. In front of New Zealand author Maurice Shadbolt as correspondent, Baxter fulfils the role of elder artist instructing his junior in the mysteries of growth.

Letter Eight announces a theme that transcends the project of the epic identity. This letter recalls how, in World War I, Baxter's father
“hung/ From a torture post at Mud Farm/ Because he would not kill”. Archibald Baxter had refused conscription and as a result was sent to the front in France. He survived horrific punishment, both physical and psychological, and returned to New Zealand a public hero of a kind only this nation has managed to provide. As a child and son, James watched as his father supported socialist politics and anti-war ideals. Never shy of standing up for his views, Archibald Baxter published an account of his war experiences at the very outset of World War II. Baxter's older brother was interned in World War II for refusal to serve, and James narrowly missed out on being required to follow in the tradition.

With this inheritance to look back on, Baxter, in Letter Eight, reflects on the precarious nature of his own existence (what if his father had died?) and on the years of political revision that followed the election of New Zealand's first socialist government. Having “watched” his father follow a course of life-threatening, idealistic action and having watched the slow foundering of political hope, in this letter Baxter is moved to talk, like Blake, in aphorisms:

*Political action in its source is pure,*
*Human, direct, but in its civil function*
*Becomes the jail it laboured to destroy.*

*(CP, p. 281)*

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4 *We Will Not Cease* (London: Gollancz, 1939).
These lines were written in Baxter's 37th year. It was during his father's 37th year that he was “crucified” in Europe. Here Baxter questions his faith in direct and transforming action, as a pure possibility of energy. Given the example of his father and his brother, the “aging” poet questions whether “Marx and Christ” will “Share beds this side of Jordan” (CP, p. 281). The question haunts all of Baxter's subsequent work. Images of failed Edens, like Dunedin (the city of the poet's birth) and Jerusalem (especially as anticipated in Blake's poem), run as a stream through Baxter's poetry.

How might he embark on a course of pure action? In Letter Nine Baxter attempts to hold his present ground; to secure himself within an Jungian dialectic of self and shadow:

Look at the simple caption of success,
The poet as family man,
Head between thumbs at mass, nailing a trolley,
Letting the tomcat in:
Then turn the hourglass over, find the other
Convict self, incorrigible, scarred
With what the bottle and the sex games taught,
The black triangle, the whips of sin.
The first gets all his meat from the skull-faced twin,
Sharpening a dagger out of a spoon,
Struggling to speak through the gags of a poem:
When both can make a third my work is done.

(CP, p. 282)
Baxter had, as a younger man, undergone a brief period of Jungian therapy and was well acquainted of Jung's writings. Talking of the three books that helped him as a young poet, he cites Jung's *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*:

> It offered the possibility that my subconscious mind might contain sources of peace and wisdom as well as ghosts, werewolves, hags, demons, and the various zoo of the living dead who crowded round my bed at night.\(^5\)

Individuation, or the long slow process of redeeming the contents of his unconscious mind, is here stated as the project, the pure action that is within his domain. The ending of Letter Nine recollects Baxter the postman wandering the hills of windy Wellington:

> And this man
> On the postman's round will meditate
> The horn of Jacob withered at the root
> Or quirks of weather. None
> Grow old easily. The poem is
> A plank laid over the lion's den.

\(^{(CP, \text{ p. 282})}\)

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In this same letter Baxter praises all those “who held the door/ And gave us space for art,/ Time for the re-shaping of the heart” (CP, p. 282). It is this same role that Baxter now takes on, within the dialogue with Shadbolt. Three forms of pure action possible within the present are confirming the nature of the quest with others, of sharing intimate information, and of acknowledging the need for community within the personal progress.

Letter Ten operates as an anti-climax. The poet predicts an old age in which the fact of survival becomes the only reward. Cheated of a looked for moment of sacrificial mystery, the poet will take on the image of the elder surrounded by grandchildren who await the death of “the natural man”:

It will be what it is, half-life,
For the mystery requires
A victim — Marsyas the manbeast
Hung up and flayed on a fir tree,
Or a death by inches, catheter and wife
Troubling an old man's vanity.

(CP, p. 283)

The death being contemplated here is more that of Baxter's aged father than the poet's own. Archibald did not die such a death and the rituals between the dying father (or his later ghost) and the transformed son lead to some of the strongest poetry of Baxter's Jerusalem years. The
image of Archibald is as present in this series of letters as is the poet himself. Baxter's poetic sense of self always includes everyone he knows as well as everything he knows.

Baxter's weakness for adopting others' idioms as his own, his intellectual promiscuity, makes him an apt object for analysis using the critical instruments Harold Bloom has set out in *The Anxiety of Influence*. In outlining the patterns of influence in major poets, Bloom categorizes “Six Revisionary Ratios”. The third of these he names “kenosis”. In his Introduction Bloom lists:

3. *Kenosis*, which is a breaking-device similar to the defense mechanism our psyches employ against repetition compulsion; *kenosis* then is a movement towards discontinuity with the precursor. I take the word from St. Paul, where it means the humbling or emptying-out of Jesus by himself, when he accepts reduction from divine to human status. The later poet, apparently emptying himself of his own afflatus, his imaginative godhead, seems to humble himself as though he were ceasing to be a poet, but this ebbing is so performed in relation to a precursor's poem-of-ebbing that the precursor is emptied out also, and so the later poem of deflation is not as absolute as it seems.¹

In the already quoted poem, “Paddock”, Baxter represents the kenotic process Bloom describes not with regard to the father-figure of a major poet but in respect of his actual father.

```
I came with my father to a gully above the sea
And left the car parked among the gorse bushes
That nibbled at its paint.
`Here,’ he said,
`Was Old Willy's hut. Here on this bank.
There should be a broom bush that grows thorns;
Yes — `He pulled a sprig of it from the hedge
With eighty-year-old fingers. And in the paddock
Beside a dip in the ground, he discovered the place
In which he walked and wept and saw the light —
`There was an orchard. My brother all but hung me
With a wheel and a rope from that branch’ —
The branch being invisible. Not a stone of the house standing.
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Too many books, too many faces,
Exhaustion — the soul has to become
A stone hidden in the ground
Under a tree that has already been cut down
And sawn up carefully to make timber
For a bridge or a cattle yard.

I inhabit the empty ground.

(CP, p. 408)

The father's poem here is a tale of absence, of memory that has only one sensory correspondence with the world left. As the story of his life,
this poem, made in the presence of the son, is a statement of an achieved spirituality: the father is now becoming, as he approaches death, the inhabitant of mythological time. The kenotic response of the son, while falling within Bloom's description of kenosis, also preserves the poem of the father. Through this inclusion the inheritance is guaranteed.

Bloom ends the section on "kenosis" with a declaration of the supremacy of the poet's ego:

We need to stop thinking of any poet as an autonomous ego, however solipsistic the strongest poets may be. Every poet is a being caught up in a dialectical relationship (transference, repetition, error, communication) with another poet or poets. In the archetypal *kenosis*, St. Paul found a pattern that no poet whatever could bear to emulate, as poet . . . . (p. 91)

While Baxter was never shy of putting his own work forward as his own, and while his later disdain of the whole publishing business was ambiguous to say the least, Baxter comes closer to the ideal of St. Paul than the other poets assembled for this study. This achievement (if that is what it is) may be more attributable to the deeper father/son anxiety he experienced than to any poetic or mystic aptitude. Fluent, prolific and brilliant, Baxter wrote within the definition of poetry given to him at his father's knee.
As Letter Ten looks at the father of the poet approaching the mysteries of dying, Letter Eleven looks at the son of the poet as the son shifts, through language, into the world of the imagination. Here Baxter celebrates the process of generation as he finds himself between his father and his son. Both those before him and those after him have places to go in their lives. Like Jung's image “of the Saviour crucified between two thieves”, Baxter is here caught “between irreconcilable opposites” in this moment of “the progressive development and differentiation of consciousness” (Jung, Vol. 9, part I, p. 44). His father and his son have rites of passage to perform. Baxter, the poet, watches his son enter his own private space, his own journey:

And when he hands me easily
The key of entry, my joy must be dissembled
Under a shutter of horn, a dark lantern,
In case it should too brightly burn,

Because the journey has begun
Into the land where the sun is silent
And no one may enter the tree house
That hides the bones of a child in the forest of a man.

(CP, p. 283)

This space, this imaginative repository of initial desire and satisfaction is recalled for the father by his witnessing how his son enters and exits. It is the exit that Baxter prefers to celebrate. Where is his exit
to be? How is he to leave his present world and journey forward? What rite of passage awaits him? In Letter Twelve it is the “dark wood Dante wrote of” that answers. This *selva* is seen as “no more than the self, the wandering gulf/ That calls itself a man”. When this world of self is looked at “Through the dark prism of self-love” then “Lion, leopard, wolf,/ Show by their anger we are not yet slain” (*CP*, pp. 283-4). The evidence of the unconscious mind, distorted by “self-love”, reflects an ego out of alignment, an ego that suffers, as Jung says, the “explosion of the affect” as an “invasion”: “it pounces upon him like an enemy or a wild animal” (Jung, Vol. 16, p. 133). For Baxter, the evidence of the affect is, as it is with Kristeva's abject, evidence that “we are not yet slain”.

In itself, this disclosure of the unconscious is a prelude to and a harbinger of future joy:

Our loves have tied us to the wheel  
From which it is death to be unbound,  
Yet unexpected, unpredictable,  
Like speckled rain that falls on a wave,  
Come the light fingers on the wound,  
Or where the marae meets the cattle hill  
The face of Beatrice moving in the grove.  

(*CP*, p. 284)

Here the ego as “self-love” is given over. The “loves have tied us to the wheel” and it is these loves that permit the abdication of the ego.
Through this abdication the ego is able to participate in its own experience with the hope of enlightenment from that very experience. Now, from within normality, can arise the “unexpected” images of joy. It is significant that Baxter should provide the image of “speckled rain that falls on a wave” before the ornate reference to “Beatrice moving in the grove”. If the ego, after abdication, cannot experience the unconscious within normality, then the ego has gained nothing. Equally, to be left with images that are “poetic” is to be left with little from the exchange.

The “wheel” of normality is ambiguous; it talks both of sacrifice and of pleasure; it talks of history (time) and it talks of mythology (beyond time). Forgoing “self-love”, the poet is freed into his present world with the possibility of “grace”. Such “grace” is given within normal sensory experience, as the image of rain on water. Baxter also draws on Marian iconography to symbolise the normality of “grace”. At various times this symbolism is useful, at others sentimental and childish. In Letter Thirteen Baxter has the figure of a swagman engage in a conversation with the “Great Mother of God”. In manuscript versions of this poem the swagman is far more outlandish and vulgar in his challenges to the Virgin. In the published version, the swag-man challenges the Virgin in her role as a kind of ticket-collector, to allow him into heaven on the basis of desire. She lets him pass. Part of his strategy is to challenge her with the audacious notion that “Your face is my theology”. Because he is able to see her, and because he sees in her face the image of salvation, he is redeemed in his desire. This amounts
to an assertion of correct alignment: “Because I can see you in all your glory, I must be in your good graces”. Her response is to ask for the “jewel” that she gave him (the epic self). He claims to have lost this “In the thick gorse of the gully”. Her repeated request for a token of selfhood he answers with one of Christ's cries from the Cross: “I thirst” (CP, pp. 284-85).

Immediacy, the selfhood found within the constellation of the dying experience, is argued, on the basis of Christ's death, as the only need at the end. The self, lost “in the thick gorse”, is of no account. This biographic or epic self, this self that travails through time and seeks through kairos to come to something, has here come to death empty-handed and yet demanding to be let in. Death as the ultimate theorem is perhaps the argumentative refuge of the adolescent and the wayward adult, but in terms of the lyric identity it has a peculiar Romantic charm. The question goes: “What good is an epic identity when the show ends?” Tied to the epic wheel, the wheel of everydayness where the ego is to be treated as a substantial identity, the poet gestures towards those states of mind in which the lyric identity seems to offer an account of sufficiency. If during the moment of crisis the self is enough, then the self is enough.

It is this kind of resolution that is sought in Letter Thirteen. “In the whale's belly” the poet sings his song of hoped for salvation. He adds as a postscript:
Is it like that? At least I know no better;
After a night of argument
Mythical, theological, political,
Somebody has the sense to get a boat
And row out towards the crayfish rocks
Where, diving deep, the downward swimmer
Finds fresh water rising up,
A mounded water breast, a fountain,
An invisible tree whose roots cannot be found;

As the wild nymph of water rises
So does the God in man.

(CP, p. 285)

Such springs of fresh submarine water are found off the New Zealand coast. While there is no evidence of Baxter taking to a boat and drinking from such a spring, the physical fact of such springs provides the metaphor with the required reality. It must be possible, this side of Jordan, to experience “God in man”, to approach the Self through the self, from within an achievable physical experience. Such is the urging in the “Acts of John”: “For so long as you call not yourself mine, I am not what I was. . . . I shall be what I was when I have you with me” (Jung, Vol. 7, p. 293). Such is the desire of the poet; such is the rite of passage: to cross the border between the self and the Self and return with the experience of identity regained.
Here Baxter redeems all the failed images of self within the purity of lyric action. It is within the re-constellated lyric identity that the other images are located. To be deeply immersed in water, drinking water, to be surrounded by fresh water within the ocean of salt water, is to be located within the self-Self relationship in the position where subject and object divisions break down, where the gap is overcome. There is no longer a bridge over the lion's den; the lion and the poet lie down together.

Such an experience haunted Baxter all his life. The desire to be at home in the world motivates all his poetry. What makes this example important is the history of selves and their various failures that leads up to the lyric climax and provides the focus for the surrounding epistolary relationship. Baxter is in conversation with Shadbolt but in this last letter he is talking to Shadbolt, not “as to the image of God”, but as to another self. In sharing the desired dream of recovery of self within the Self, Baxter is establishing a community of desire within language. Letter Thirteen, of all the “Letters”, speaks across the shoulder of the reader to a revision of not only the self-Self relationship of the speaker but to a revision of the self-other relationship of writer and reader. To acknowledge the image of desire is to be affected by the desire; to see the image of “grace” is to be affected by “grace”.¹

¹ While these images of the Self may be tarnished with the self's desire for just such images it is the affect that speaks of the independent reality of the unconscious (as pointed out by Jung).
Established at his community in Jerusalem, Baxter felt sufficiently “empty” to offer the following account of his practices:

Through a theology of kenosis Buddhist and Catholic stand on the same ground. Kenosis means self-emptying, always with the proviso that one hopes to make room for God and one's neighbour.

Te Ariki [the son] emptied himself by his suffering and docility to the unknown will of Te Matua [the father]. Let us not imagine that the Father instructed the Son as the skipper of a costal boat instructs the engineer. The will of God is rarely explicit. One learns the theology of kenosis not out of a book but by tramping forty miles with sore feet in the rain. It is a different man who takes his coat off at the end of the journey.

The soul has to be wounded as well as the body. Wounds are like fountains in the soul. Through our wounds we achieve availability. Today, on my forty-fifth birthday, I walk on a cold muddy track between the cottages, meditating as usual on his union with our haphazard calamities, and butchered by my longing for the apparently impossible harmony which will come at the end of all things. We know it now as a naked seed in the ground. Blessed be God.

Four fantails play around me, fluttering up and down, almost brushing my feet in their boldness. The fantail is for the Maoris the bird of death. Perhaps they come to tell me
I will die soon. The thought provokes no sorrow, only the sense of an expected further emptying.¹

Mixed in here are references to both Archibald Baxter, his father, and John Baxter, his son. The very idea of uniting Christian theology with Buddhism arose out of an urge to be reconciled with his son, now a teenager, who had taken to both drugs and Eastern philosophies. The analogy of the ship's engineer is an obscure allusion to two dreams, one each from Archibald and James. The direct significance in the analogy is the failure of the spiritual relationship to follow the criteria of instruction traditional in technical matters. These points are not necessarily important for the reader but they are essential to Baxter's kenotic approach to life and his writing. As if in answer to Bloom's notions of kenosis as a ratio of revision, Baxter asserts a prior and all-encompassing relationship that inflicts a form of total revision on the poet. He is impelled to revise through his relationship with his father; he is urged to revise by his relationship with his son. In itself this new way of looking at the world is, as Bloom points out, a revision that “tends to make the fathers [here read Archibald and James] pay for their own sins, and perhaps for those of the sons [here read James and John] also” (Bloom, p. 91). If only his father had turned this way; if only his son would turn this way. Baxter urgently pursued such ideas and was pleased when his parents entered the Catholic church.

¹ *Jerusalem Daybook* (Wellington: Price Milburn, 1971) p. 40. It is this passage that lead to the present thesis.
Armed with a kenotic theology that goes beyond his father's idealism, Baxter engages in public action to do battle with contemporary society:

... the terrible aspect of our lack of freedom is the fact that we are not free to act communally, when communities are everywhere ceasing to exist, and only a desacralised, depersonalised, centralised Goliath remains to demand our collective obedience.

I do not relish the role of David, in confronting Goliath, who numbs the soul wherever he touches it. But I find myself curiously, perhaps absurdly, cast in that role. And the five water-worn stones I choose from the river, to put in my sling, are five spiritual aspects of Maori communal life —

- arohanui: the Love of the Many;
- manuhiritanga: hospitality to the guest and the stranger;
- korero: speech that begets peace and understanding;
- matewa: the night life of the soul;
- mahi: work undertaken from communal love.

I do not know what the outcome of the battle will be. My aim may be poor. But I think my weapons are well chosen.

***

Ko Ihu taku wai;
Ko Ihu taku kai;
Ko Ihu taku mana;
Ko Ihu taku moni;
Ko Ihu taku aroha;
ko Ihu taku mate.

This prayer chops through a great deal of the stupidity inside me, as Father Te Awhitu splits a log neatly from one end to end with blow after blow of an axe. Since I first made it up in Auckland I have used it constantly. It is the prayer of kenosis —

“Jesus is my water; Jesus is my food; Jesus is my prestige; Jesus is my money; Jesus is my love; Jesus is my sickness and my death.”

It signifies a blood transfusion. It means that one accepts whatever happens as the gift of Jesus. But in Maori it means more than that. It means what it is. (Daybook, pp. 54-55)

Public action is found by Baxter to be pure if empty of ego. Through the Maori language, the action acquires, for Baxter, a lyric purity: the language is in ways that English is not. The negativity of reference is somehow overcome in the “purity” of the communal language. Baxter had earlier anticipated finding a similar quality in church Latin. His knowledge of both languages was never particularly good and in his poetry the Maori additions seldom do more than offer rich and pure vowels for the tongue to play with.¹

¹ Baxter's stress on the acceptance of darkness within Maori culture could be taken to be a statement of the power of a language based on communal and kenotic realities.
The history of Baxter's quest for community has in his poetry a vividness that sets it apart. The gross assumptions often made by Baxter (the man) are more than made up for in the diary of a man anticipating his own death. Within his quest, and as part of his relationship with his father, Baxter becomes the empty hero, the kenotic poet willing to be filled and emptied according to a will that is external. In the year of his death he writes: “I am scattered among corpses and demons. I am tossed up and down like a leaf on a black wind. Yet this may mean no more than that my soul is open to the world we live in”.¹ Empty and open, the poet and the man were both faced with the realities of living with a self that grows larger with its availability and emptiness than it had ever been within the social definitions of poet and average citizen. Inflation, the confusion of the self with the Self, remains a constant problem to both poet and man. In “Night Clouds” the poet collapses into his bed following one of his many excursions from the community:

The light-filled wombs of cloud in the night sky
Signify for me the peace of Te Whaea;

The stars look between them and beyond them,
And when I die I will come to that place,

But now I go up the hill, uncertain
Whether the ones I love, love me or not —

My bare feet slide on the cold mud track,
And I think, 'Perhaps they don't need a father,

'My right place is out here where the stars and the freezing
grass
Teach me so plainly that man is less than a shadow —

. . . .

this old kumara has to rot slowly
Night, cold and memory,
Are his instructors, teaching him how to let go of life,

Accepting the dark unknowable breast
Of Te Whaea, the One who bears us and bears with us.

(CP, p. 505)

The “kumara” is a variety of sweet potato native to New Zealand. As a New
Zealander of European descent, Baxter would be known as a “pakeha”. This
word derives from “kai pakeha” which means an imported kumara. Taking on
the name “kumara” Baxter identifies with the Maori culture. As an old kumara,
his emptying (rotting) is a difficult prelude to the filling (regrowth) that can be
anticipated. Taking on this humble image however is not a final answer to
inflation. The final couplet gives authority to images of darkness and the
unknowable.
In “The Tiredness of Me and Herakles”, the penultimate poem in Baxter's *Collected Poems*, the whole Jerusalem project is reviewed as a mythological and heroic assignment. The poet, as a kenotic and available vehicle for a will beyond his own, looks back at a quest that has, of necessity, failed. Having performed only a few of his assigned tasks, the poet-hero gives up. The biography cannot be added up to a fulfilled and substantial epic identity; he has failed. Like the swagman from “Pig Island Letters”, the poet as hero has arrived without the jewel of a completed identity, and carrying a burden of guilt. The series ends:

> Today I smashed a green hydrangea bush  
> With a walking stick  
> At the edge of somebody's private lawn.  
> Every leaf was the head of a friend.  
> The meat wagon did not come to the scene.  
> Five labours still to go.  
> I am tired already.  

*(CP, p. 597)*

Tired as he may be, the Herculean epic hero is reconstituted, however unwillingly, in his role. The desire to have done with the assignment is not supported; the “meat wagon” does not arrive. The attempt to disown the identity simply adds a further aspect or facet to the epic character. For the hero, identity can be sought but it cannot be unmade.
In “The Return” the poet experiences rejection from all that he knows and has known. This rejection is the result of a psychic crime that the poet negates in its statement: “Sister, if I tell you —/`I have slain a man to my hurt’—/ Do not believe it” (CP, p. 594). The precise nature of the crime is not spelled out but the intent is clear. The poet has willed an action that takes from him the group identity he was entitled to. Nature itself seems aware of this crime and, as with Adam and Eve, there is a sense of the crime being in the service of a knowledge that marks man as man, that marks the self as not the Self. The ego has defended itself from the unconscious through violation. In a gesture born of fear of a final dissolution, it has wounded itself. In the room where the two are together, the one with the mark is the ego:

When I go among the trees, up the path you know well,
Among the red flowers and the green grave-mounds
The trees do not receive me. I think their quiet breasts
Have been told by the Father that I do not belong there
But in some crevice of the ground
Or a place where men are quick to kill each other.

Put both hands over my eyes
And I can imagine water or green leaves
Or the wind blowing across the fields of grass,

Though indeed I am shut out
From the peace of our Father. Tell me, little one,
That my body is strong, that my hands are clean,
That my heart has in it a seed of light,
Then let me come beside you and hide myself
In the darkness of the garden of the shadow of your face.

(CP, p. 594)

The request of the Virgin made in “Pig Island Letters” is repeated but the request is made outside the Father's protection, outside the protection of the quest itself. Like Gawain, the poet seeks the comfort of a crime that will keep him from the final confrontation of loss of self — a loss that, in Baxter's case, had been courted. The appeal is to the other as the witness of his humanity and of his final value as an individual. Having lost contact with the other as nature and the other as Self, he approaches the other as another within a confession. But the confession is designed to fail. The face of the other offers the darkness of sorrow, not the light of joy. The other mirrors the crime. The thing being held onto is the abject; identity merges with the other as in Blake's illustration of “Satan watching the endearments of Adam and Eve”.¹ The wound becomes a new evidence of self as separate from the Self.

Baxter predicted his own end:

On the bank above the road
At the marae my journey ends

¹ The finished version is held by the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. See Kathleen Raine, William Blake (London: Thames & Hudson, 1970) pl. 107, p. 149.
Among the Maori houses. Indeed when my life ends
I hope they find room in the paddock
Beside the meeting house, to put my bones on a road
That goes to the Maori dead. A gap I cannot bridge,
Here in the town, like a makutu has taken
Strength from my body and robbed my soul of light,

Because this blind porangi gets his light
From Hiruharama. The darkness never ends
In Pharaoh's kingdom. God, since you have taken
Man's flesh, grant me a hut in the Maori paddock
To end my life in, with their kindness as my bridge,
Those friends who took me in from the road

Long ago. Their tears are the road of light
I need to bridge your darkness when the world ends.
To the paddock of Te Whiti let this man be taken.

(“Sestina of the River Road”, CP, p. 590)

Within the tribal identity that Baxter was accorded, there was a certain peace
that contained the kenotic urge by affording it expression. In Autumn Testament, the book Baxter was working on when he died, he weaves prose
and poetry, biography and imagination together.¹

I speak myself, as Father Te Awhitu has asked me to, about
prayer, but to less effect. Last week I compared Our Lord to
the Wharepuni, which is the body of the ancestor sheltering the
tribe with his arms and ribs. (Autumn Testament, p. 45)

¹ In his Tribute to Baxter, in Autumn Testament, Frank McKay records: “Autumn Testament is the last volume Baxter prepared for the press, and at the time of his death he was correcting the proofs” (p. vii).
Seeking to draw nearer to his Maori Christ, he writes: “. . . probably I am insincere. I love him, yet his sorrow terrifies me. To go into it, out of the warmth of the tribe, is too like dying before death” (p. 46). In the final poem in *Autumn Testament* the poet accepts the metaphor:

To go forward like a man in the dark  
Is the meaning of his dark vocation;

So simple, tree, star, the bare cup of the hills,  
The lifelong grave of waiting

As indeed it has to be. To ask for Jacob's ladder  
Would be to mistake oneself and the dark Master,

Yet at times the road comes down to a place  
Where water runs and horses gallop

Behind a hedge. There it is possible to sit,  
Light a cigarette, and rub

Your bruised heels on the cold grass. Always because  
A man's body is a meeting house,

Ribs, arms, for the tribe to gather under,  
And the heart must be their spring of water.

(*CP*, p. 568)

In this poem that collects and systematises most of the kenotic, symbols the idea of a systematic progress, of an ordered quest, is rejected. The
very images and symbols of the Self are in danger of intervening between the self and the Self. The only way is through a continuing kenosis. Within this kenosis the idea of the human is transformed. The body takes on the image of God through taking on the symbolic functions of the ancestor. The external tribe and the internal tribe are both drawn towards this meeting house. Personal identity has been relocated within this tribal body.

In *Autumn Testament*, in answer to the concerns of a member of the community, Baxter wrote:

God will give each of us a white stone at the end of the world.
The secret name of each of us will be written there, the name he gives us, and only the man himself will be able to read it. (p. 45)

Here the whole question of epic identity is forestalled and is supplanted with a faith in the immediate, a faith in the lyric moment. The project amounts to a continuous undoing:

In myself what is not myself, the rind of a lifelong egoism, is an obstacle to his mercy. His mercy is perfectly signified by the sun and the calm autumn trees loaded with fruit and the great cliff of treeferns that rises mound after mound behind this house. The maternal richness of nature is part of the redemptive equation which our measuring, grabbing mind can never grasp.
At Hiruharama we go beyond the conscious shell of knowledge, the part of the soul which says — `I want; I have; I am' — into the darkness of the anima, the yin principle in the mind which may be compared to the night itself. It is necessary to make this journey. The anima is the area familiar to Maori thought, the place of fear, the passive night from which dreams come, where one encounters the spirits of nature and the spirits of the dead. At times the journey may be agonising. It may demand the last ounce of oneself, to go beyond oneself, to walk the waters of availability to all things and all persons. But there is always peace beyond the agony. We wait to be turned into entire creatures. At the centre of the darkness we wait for the light of the spiritus to shine, the light that the disciples saw on the Mountain of Transfiguration. (p. 43)

In “Song for Sakyamuni” Baxter courts the Eastern aspect of kenosis and attacks the “poisoned food of Yama . . . —/ `I am, I am, I am,// `A poet, a Catholic, a dry alcoholic,/ A man of forty-four' ". He rejects the ladders as being “part of the pit" and anticipates his evanishment “out through the crack in the rock/ Like an old lizard — No more, no more, no more Becoming!" The sequence ends:

There was a man who lived at Jerusalem,
He had an old coat, he wore his toenails long,

The newspapers made up stories about him
To entertain the housewives — why couldn't he live
In the Kingdom of Anxiety like any other man
And go into his house like a rabbit to its burrow?

God was his problem; God and the universe;
He had, let us say, a problem of identity —

Now, if you go to the valley of Jerusalem,
You'll find that the silence is like any other silence,

You'll find that the river is like any other river,
You'll find that the rain is like any other rain,

But the old man has gone out of the picture,
Leaving an empty picture frame.

(CP, pp. 501-502)

This Eastern calm seldom enters Baxter's work. The kenosis he lived by was Catholic in its theology and Western in its psychology.

Within his kenotic poetic Baxter seldom avoids the influence of every poet he had ever read. The largest influence, as already pointed out, was Baxter himself. Within his kenotic poetic the self becomes the prime source of material both biographic and structural. In imitating himself he repeats; in repeating he rehearses; in rehearsing he brings a therapeutic dialogue to his work. In emptying his various old selves he instates a newer and denser self. Burdened with this heavier self, the lyric hope for pure action never leaves him. In his Jerusalem years the burden
of personality shifts away from the ego (internal) towards the tribe (external).

In the years between “Pig Island Letters” and the “Jerusalem Sonnets”, Baxter's poetry often suffers from a sense of personality that had grown obdurate and monumental in its mass. In “Henley Pub” the travelling salesman repeating his adultery is a figure grown numb through his exploits. The repeated sexual adventure becomes a weight that drags him further into a fixed person. The figure of the poet in the Jerusalem poems is burdened differently. Having made himself a child of Te Whaea (the source; Mother of God), Baxter is prepared to be the iconoclast: “It's a long time now// Since the great ikons fell down,/ God, Mary, home, sex, poetry,// Whatever one uses as a bridge". He accepts as her disciple that “even one's name is a way of saying — / `This gap inside a coat’ — the darkness I call God’. But, still the “fist of longing/ Punches my heart, until it is too dark to see” (“The Ikons”, CP, p. 499). For Baxter the night always came “like a hammer cracking on an anvil” (“Winter Monologue”, CP, p. 496); the self was never at peace for long with the Self; each new constellation implied a future and further re-constellation. Each new image of God is, of necessity, an image between the self and the Self. Baxter accepted this.

In “Jerusalem Sonnets”, a series of poems written as letters to Colin Durning, Baxter rehearses his community at Jerusalem prior to its
being established. Baxter lived, for a time, alone in the village, writing meditative poetry and planning the idea of a community. Just as in “Pig Island Letters”, each of the 39 sonnets essays some aspect of the self-Self battle. The final sonnet proposes the awesome question: “— one thing, how can the image come/ At all to the centre where the mind is silent// Without being false?” (CP, p. 474) This is the darkness that animates Baxter's poetry; the darkness that impels the imagery towards a natural immediacy that can, for the moment, raise an image that is instantly recognised before it is found to be false.

Sonnet 9 of the Autumn Testament sequence of sonnets (written after the “Jerusalem Sonnets”) ends with the declaration of a desire to be “dissolved and swallowed up by the waters”. In these waters of the poet's “soul”, “images rise in sleep”. The images at the centre of the dream, are the images at the centre of the poem. The sonnet opens: “Groper with throats like buckets” (CP, p. 545). Once the image has been sourced within the desire to be dissolved, the path of the image is that of resolution. Once the image has been located in language, language supports the community of perceptions and offers to answer the first half of the kenotic question; “how can the image come/ At all to the centre where the mind is silent”. How this image is brought to the mind of the other, through language, is the concern of the next chapter.
CHAPTER SEVEN

LACAN'S OTHER

The de-centred subject aimed at in Jung's transformational psychotherapy is a subject intrinsically related to and sustained by the Self. Such a relationship is not without limitations and distortions. The very project itself, the questing for such a self-Self relationship is, as a project, caught within larger cultural structures. The feeling of ownership of a self which in turn is "entitled" to a self-Self relationship is to be seen as a social construct. The evidence for the self-Self relationship found in the lyric, in religion and in the psychotherapeutic relationship is evidence of an historical quest. Western civilization has pursued, and continues to pursue, the self-Self relationship as a cultural artifact. As a cultural artifact the quest has its ideology. As a cultural artifact, the quest of necessity defines the self-Self relationship within the ambit of the other. Accorded the privilege of privacy by society, the self is also required to acknowledge inter-personal relationships. The self may prefer to see the self-Self quest as a personal project; required to function with the other, the self discovers the self-Self quest as a cultural construct. As a cultural construct, the quest has systems, methods and rules that all fall within the domain of the other and society.

It is not suggested here that all aspects of the quest can be accounted for within the cultural construct. Areas of intimacy within the self-Self relationship, while accounted for by the construct, are not thereby defined by the construct.
Foucault, following and extending Habermas, refers to the various techniques Western society has arrived at to deal with the self as a cultural and personal object. These techniques of the self “permit individuals to affect, by their own means, a certain number of operations on their own bodies, their own souls, their own thoughts, their own conduct, and this in a manner so as to transform themselves, modify themselves, and to attain a certain state of perfection, happiness, purity, supernatural power”. Implied by the “technologies of self” is a “set of truth obligations: learning what is truth, discovering the truth, being enlightened by truth, telling the truth. All these are considered important either for the constitution or for the transformation of the self.” In a Christian society we are obliged to explore who we are, what we do, what we have done, what we desire and further, we are obliged to “tell these things to other people, and hence to bear witness against . . . [ourselves]”.¹

What Foucault reveals are the “power relations” instituted by technologies of the self. Not only must the individual abide by the internal truth obligations described above, but he must also, in a Christian society, abide by truth obligations of an external nature: he must “hold as truth a set of propositions which constitute dogma . . . [he must] hold certain books as a permanent source of truth . . . [and he

must] accept the decisions of certain authorities in matters of truth". These two areas of truth remain relatively autonomous in Christianity such that the “light of faith” is required to explore the self and access to the truth requires “purification of the soul”. This is not the case in Buddhism where “it is the same type of enlightenment which leads you to discover what you are and what is the truth. In this simultaneous enlightenment of yourself and the truth, you discover in Buddhism that your self was only an illusion” (Foucault, pp. 367, 368).

In Christianity the self is not revealed as an illusion; rather, as in the case of Jung's de-centred individuality, the self, says Foucault,

gives place to a task which cannot be anything else but undefined. This task has two objectives. First, there is the task of clearing up all the illusions, temptations and seductions which can occur in the mind, and discovering the reality of what is going on within ourselves. Secondly, one has to get free from any attachment to this self, not because the self is an illusion, but because the self is much too real. The more we discover the truth about ourselves, the more we have to renounce ourselves; and the more we want to renounce ourselves the more we need to bring to light the reality of ourselves. That is what we could call the spiral of truth formulation and reality renouncement which is at the heart of the Christian techniques of the self. (Foucault, p. 368)
Here kenosis is described within the power play of an unresolvable duality. The subject is required to fill (“discover the truth about ourselves”) and then the subject is required to empty (“we have to renounce ourselves”). Foucault sees evidence of this kenotic relationship in what he calls the “reverse of the performative speech act”. In this reverse act “The affirmation [of a particular reality] destroys in the speaking subject the reality which made the same affirmation true”. The example Foucault cites is the case of a French psychiatrist, Louren, who “is satisfied when and only when his patient says: ‘I am mad', or ‘That was madness.' Louren's assumption is that madness as a reality disappears when the patient asserts the truth and says that he is mad” (Foucault, p. 366). Within the kenotic discourse of spiralling truth formation and renunciation the very performance or affirmation of an achieved state thus becomes the negation of that state. To be is, in the expression of that being as a speech act, to be done away with by the very being that is expressed. Any new self is destroyed in the moment of its affirmation in the act of speaking as the new self. To affirm the new self is to negate the new self in the moment of its performance.

Foucault envisages the failure to achieve enlightenment (fix any particular stage of the subject's quest) to be the result of the social power structures that define the techniques of self. While ever there is a substantial self then it must either be sane or mad; it must either be affirming itself in a revealed truth or denying itself in the search for a
truth that will be affirmed only to be renounced to a witnessing other. The self that is disclosed in this process of transformation is not to be seen as illusion but, in Jungian terms, as part of the Self: it must be preserved to be judged yet again. In the discourse described by Foucault the negation through affirmation and the preservation of the self (as a value) amount to a technique of domination as much as to a technique of self. The self is dominated through its own technique. Yossarian, the comic hero of Joseph Heller's novel *Catch 22*, is caught up in a comic example of this tangle.

Yossarian is informed that he may avoid duty by pleading insanity but if he pleads insanity he must be sane and thus he cannot avoid duty; this is *Catch 22*. To affirm his insanity he must deny it. Equally for the individual to affirm his individuality he must deny it. The individual requires the agreement of the other as to his status as an individual. Likewise, the affirming of the other is just as double-edged. One is reminded here of the Zen stories of the rebellious student who rejects the pronouncements of the master and complains: “who are you to say `do this' or `that'?" The student then affirms his freedom as an individual from this discourse of master and student but is frustrated in his rebellion when the master calls him to come forward and “tell everyone of your views". The student, on taking the stage, is then told to move to the front, to speak up, to stand a little straighter. In his freedom the student is held by the discourse.¹

¹ This same strategy is part of political meetings and any forum. The status of individual is given by the forum.
We are made into subjects by the attentions of others through the very same technologies of self that provide us with the project of transformation. Althusser describes how ideologies transform individuals into subject through the process of interpellation or hailing:

All ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category of the subject . . . ideology “acts” or “functions” in such a way that it “recruits” subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all) or “transforms” the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: “Hey, you there!” . . . Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn around. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he had recognized that the hail was “really” addressed to him, and that “it was really him who was hailed” (and not someone else).¹

Such methods are structural and require no great wisdom to operate; the self in its techniques is clearly accounted for within the techniques of dominance in which the self is seen to be substantial. Inasmuch as the

self is seen as capable of being affirmed in any of its actions, it is denied in its very affirmation. The “Hey, you there!” of the policeman works firstly to affirm individuality, in that I must be an individual to respond, but through response I become the subject. A status quo can then be defined as the series of actions that the society allows to stand as affirmations. Such a series is obviously provisional and open to immediate revision: the category of non-person stands behind the category of person and seeks its own candidates. The policeman can either affirm my individuality or deny it, in and through his handling of the subject he has created. What I cannot do is retrieve my individuality through denial of his hailing. Whether I turn or not I am affirmed and thus negated. My individuality thus has no direct form of affirmation that is not open to denial through affirmation: my particularity is in this sense not peculiar.2

The particular becomes peculiar precisely because it participates in a universal. Jung writes: “The idiosyncrasy of an individual is not to be understood as any strangeness . . . but rather as a unique combination . . . of functions . . . which in themselves are universal . . . it is . . . variability which makes individual peculiarities possible”.3 With this approach we can make new sense of T.S. Eliot’s comments quoted in the last chapter that impersonality is the achievement “of the poet who, out

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2 R.D. Laing, in his *Self and Others* (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books, 1971), explores the varieties of confirmation and disconfirmation open in “normal” and “abnormal” self-other relationships; see especially the chapter titled “Confirmation and Disconfirmation” (pp. 98-107).

of intense and personal experience, is able to express a general truth; retaining all the particularity of his experience, to make of it a general symbol”.\footnote{Eliot, \textit{Selected Prose}, p. 189.}

It is through the expression of personality that impersonality is achieved; for an artist to achieve such a performance deserves Eliot's term of “mature artist”. Denied in the affirmation, the personality or individuality is expressed in the retained particularity of the affirmation; it is how I turn in answer to the hailing by the policeman that expresses this individuality and amounts to style.\footnote{Such style is not beyond the appropriation of ideology. Advertising has established a functional rhetoric of the concrete subject such that the subject, in being called into the discourse, feels individuated through being the named subject.”We are appalled ‘en masse’, but as subjects; subjects, because we are spoken to as already-there-as-subjects . . . we are always the anterior reality which the ad drags about after it . . .”, (Williamson, p. 51).} On this view the denial through affirmation could be viewed as a displacement which brings us back to the de-centred self of Jung's individuated personality.

In this displacement, however, the status of the self is at the mercy of an other. There is no culturally guaranteed relationship with a Self that secures the de-centred self. The subject is now at the mercy of the one that calls the subject. Should the policeman question my epic identity (“What is your name, date of birth”), should the policeman question my present dramatic identity (“Where have you been, where are you going?”), then my lyric identity is at the mercy of whatever re-constellation results from the exchange.
It is obvious that aspects of all three identities will be sustained by virtue of the physical evidence of social status, by the rationality of the account of action, and by the ability of the subject to express, through style, aspects of a lyric self that escape the negative affirmation of being hailed. Equally it should be observed that all aspects of the three identities that are sustained can be denied either through affirmation and/or through denial.¹

In the poetry of Samuel Taylor Coleridge we can see the evidence of a subject caught within the technology of a Christian self and the evidence of the reader being called into poetry as the hailed subject. In his essay “On Method” Coleridge writes of the source of the “idea of being”:

I have asked then for its birth-place in all that constitutes our relative individuality, in all that each man calls exclusively himself. It is an alien of which they know not: and for them the question itself is purposeless, and the very words that convey it are as sounds in an unknown language, or as the vision of heaven and earth expanded by the rising sun, which falls but as warmth on the eye-lids of the blind. To no class of phenomena or particulars can it be referred, itself being none; therefore, to no faculty by which these

¹ Forms of denial include ideological bias of an overt kind but also the mistakes that authority suffers through ignorance. The policeman may mistake a mild stroke for surly drunkenness because the person smells of alcohol, is shabbily dressed and is unable to articulate in an appropriate way.
alone are apprehended. As little dare we refer it to any form of abstraction or generalization; for it has neither co-ordinate nor *analogon*: it is absolutely one; and that it is, and affirms itself to be, is its only predicate.  

Coleridge recommends a dialectical method in the quest for the source of the "idea of being", but such a method he says can only "lead us to a general affirmation of the supreme reality, of an absolute being" (p. 384). In these views Coleridge places himself in the mainstream of the nineteenth century Christian technology of the self. The consequences of these views, especially as they illuminate the relationship of the self with the other, can be explored in Coleridge's poetry.

In the case of the love relationship in Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode", the other is invested with the power of denial or affirmation of the speaker as subject. On a simple reading, "Dejection" works within the dialectic of affirmation and denial. Denied affirmation by the beloved, the lover's identity is fixed in dejection; given affirmation by the beloved, the lover's identity is fixed in acceptance. As the standard "true romance" pattern goes, the lover must seek constant reaffirmation. No such request appears. The poet-speaker tells of his woes and praises the woman, but he does not request affirmation, from the beloved, of his own identity. No such direct request is required. If she but reads it, she has acknowledged the identity of the poet (though not thereby the identity of the poet-speaker within the poem).

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Deeper still, the request is for an acknowledgement of the poet's experience via the agreement of the beloved to the logic of the affect from which the poet suffers; the beloved is to become the subject of that affect. In order to see how completely the other is involved in this poem we need to investigate its origins.

The earliest known version of “Dejection” was written as a letter to Sara Hutchinson (dated April 4, 1802). Coleridge sent several versions (or shorter excerpts) to other friends before publishing the “finished” version in the *Morning Post* (October 4, 1802). Coleridge could not have picked a more auspicious day for the publication; it was the seventh anniversary of his own marriage and the day on which Wordsworth was married. The aesthetic edges are blurred through the direct implication of specific people in the creation and publication of the poem. Sara, as the recipient of the earlier and longer version, hardly escapes the appropriation of the artist when “Sara” is replaced by “Dear Lady!” in the published version. To the members of her social world the “Dear Lady!” is “Sara”.

In order to draw the other into his world, the poet-speaker establishes a (kind of) “thought trap”. Into this trap the other is “invited”. In simple terms this strategy amounts to: “Because I think of you, you become a subject in my thoughts. As a subject in my thoughts
you are subject to my thoughts. Called as a witness, within my thoughts, you then are witness to those thoughts." This “trapping” is clear in the Sara letter.¹

Feebly! O feebly! — Yet
(I well remember it)
In my first Dawn of Youth that Fancy stole
With many secret Yearnings on my Soul.
At eve, sky-gazing in “ecstatic fit”
(Alas! for cloister’d in a city School
The Sky was all, I knew, of Beautiful)
At the barr’d window often did I sit,
And oft upon the leaded School-roof lay,
And to myself would say —
There does not live the Man so stripp’d of good affections
As not to love to see a Maiden's quiet Eyes
Uprais’d, and linking on sweet Dreams by dim Connections
To Moon, or Evening Star, or glorious western Skies —
While yet a Boy, this Thought would so pursue me
That often it became a kind of Vision to me!

(“Sara” ll. 58-73)²

Sara has been included, as the thought-of-other, within this “kind of Vision”. The poet-speaker's present complaint (in the “Sara” poem) seems to be that the vision has been broken, through abuse, and he

¹ To assist with comparisons between the published “Dejection” version and the Sara letter, the letter version will be referred to as the “Sara” poem.

seeks to fix it by appealing to the object of the vision as now the subject of his letter.\(^3\)

Coleridge uses all the poses open to him within his relationship with Sara Hutchinson. An instructive example that contrasts the two versions shows how the speaker in the “Sara” poem is all too willing to call the respondent within the ideology of the writer of the letter:

O Sara! we receive but what we give,
And in our Life alone does Nature live.
Our's is her Wedding Garment, our's her Shroud . . . . \(^4\)

(II. 297-99)

In “Dejection” these lines become:

O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does Nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!

(II. 47-49)\(^5\)

In the “Sara” version the poet-speaker implicates the other, the beloved, in a compact that sets their relationship and their life up as

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\(^3\) Within the love relationship the one who calls becomes the one called and the one named becomes the caller. Without ideological structures to fix the authority roles, all dialogues function within a dynamic that allows for shifts within the roles.

\(^4\) Italics in original. The possessive “our’s” is as in original.

somehow superior. Following this same stanza, in both versions, comes the comparison between the life of the lovers and the “the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd”. When it is “our life” that “alone” provides the place for “Nature” to live, then “our life” has been defined within the self-Self quest. Love has been defined as the absorption of the other as person within the other as Self. The de-centred ego of the transformational quest has re-centred around an other that is not the Self, but, if the self-other (Coleridge-Sara) relationship is broken, then the self-Self relationship is broken. The quest is made conditional on an external or concrete identity, an identity that publicly evidences the success of a private quest: “Because I have Sara I must be in a good relationship with my Self.” There is no doubt that society takes such relationships not only as evidence of raw power (the King taking whichever subject he wishes), but also as evidence of grace or favour (the magic marriage that seals the compact between God and man). To lose the beloved is also seen as evidence of disfavour in the self-Self relationship (“There must be something wrong with him if she turned him down”). Within the “Sara” version of the poem, the speaker is not in a good relationship with beloved, nor has his appeal been turned down. The identity of the speaker is under stress from both possibilities.

6 While “we” and “our” can be read as generic pronouns they are excellent examples, here, of the poet’s ability to implicate through pronominal appellation. Just as with the “Hey, you there!”, the reading audience is called, as part of the larger possibilities of “we”, into the pronominal closeness of appellation. Equally, readers are set at a qualified distance by perceiving the pronoun to include another, but not them. And then, the other, as a position in relation to the speaker in the poem, is both appellated and set at a distance. The other in the poem is able to see the “we” as directed at a possible other rather than a present other, an other that she may wish to be excluded from.
In the “Dejection” version, the “our” has become a simple sharing of a common fate, and the personal identity of the speaker is accounted for within the “objective” relationship of speaker to reader. The speaker is now a poet and no longer a lover appealing for confirmation. Within this identity relationship the “our” marks a universal human condition: we each, within our separate lives, either engage the other as Self and seek to unite with the Self as other, or else we remain part of the “ever-anxious crowd” who never put on the “wedding garment” or the “shroud”.

Within “Dejection” Coleridge offers a major statement of the Western subject caught within Christian and Romantic techniques of the self. The poet-speaker in “Dejection” sets out to redefine or redescribe his lyric identity through a kenotic process, a process that is prescribed within the dogma of the Christian self accepted by Coleridge. To appreciate the extent of Coleridge's exploitation of the technology of a Christian self we need to look more closely into the “Sara” poem. The “viper thoughts” that coil around the poet's mind, “Reality’s dark dream” (“Dejection” ll. 94-5) are fleshed out in great detail (in “Sara”):

Yes, dearest Sara! yes!
There was a time when tho' my path was rough,
The Joy within me dallied with Distress;
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence Fancy made me Dreams of Happiness:
For Hope grew round me, like the climbing Vine,
And leaves & Fruitage, not my own, seem'd mine!
But now Ill Tidings bow me down to earth /
Nor care I, that they rob me of my Mirth /
But oh! each Visitation
Suspends what Nature gave me at my Birth,
My shaping Spirit of Imagination!

I speak not now of those habitual Ills
That wear out Life, when two unequal Minds
Meet in one House, & two discordant Wills —
This leaves me, where it finds,
Past cure, & past Complaint — a fate austere
Too fix'd & hopeless to partake of Fear!

But thou, dear Sara! (dear indeed thou art,
My Comforter! A Heart within my Heart!)
Thou, & the Few, we love, tho' few ye be,
Make up a world of Hopes & Fears for me.
And if Affliction, or distemp'ring Pain,
Or wayward Chance befall you, I complain
Not that I mourn — O Friends, most dear! most true!
Methinks to weep with you
Were better far than to rejoice alone —
But that my coarse domestic Life has known
No Habits of heart-nursing Sympathy,
No Grieves, but such as dull and deaden me,
No mutual mild Enjoyments of it's own,
No Hopes of it's own Vintage, None, O! none —

Whence when I mourn'd for you, my Heart might borrow
Fair forms & living Motions for it's Sorrow.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
But to be still & patient all I can;
And haply by abstruse Research to steal
From my own Nature all the Natural Man —
This was my sole Resource, my wisest plan!
And that, which suits a part, infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the Temper of my Soul.

(“Sara” ll. 233-273)

The full nature of the problem is explained by these stanzas. The general complaint of depression that arises from “Ill Tidings” is marked by the knowledge that something deeper is going on. In Jung’s terms, the ego is no longer correctly related to what Coleridge calls the “Imagination”, his “shaping Spirit”. Unless this relationship can be restored or redefined, then the poet-speaker is at the mercy of his “viper thoughts”.

This reading is rather straightforward. It does not engage the more difficult areas of the poet-speaker's motivations. Within “Dejection” it is apparent that the poet-speaker has been dabbling in certain psychological practises that have led to his present relationship with his imagination. The precise nature of these practices is not explored except in the general sense that he has been turning away from his immediately present world in favour of another reality. In order to do this he has engaged in “abstruse research”, to “steal/ From my own nature all the natural man” (“Dejection” ll. 89-90). The “abstruse research” amounts, we discover from the “Sara” poem, to a commitment to negate the
familial world around him in favour of a distant world of friends. The complaint of the speaker-poet that he has learnt to live where he finds himself is turned upside down by this confession of subversion. Rather than live in his own world alone, he has sought to align himself, through his researches, with others at a distance. This alignment was not simply a matter of friendship: it extended to a deliberate effort to replace whatever emotions he might have expected from his immediate world with emotions from a distant world.

This alignment with a set of emotions that are at a distance is stated in the “Sara” poem in a direct but somewhat confusing way. The “abstruse Research” appears to refer to Coleridge's strategy of pursuing metaphysical speculations when faced with the frustrations of his conflicting emotions. In this process of turning away from his present life to consideration of “eternal” matters, the poet hopes to become “still and patient”. While this reading is obviously foremost in the speaker's “argument”, on investigation, it is apparent that within the poem itself there is detailed a further aspect of “abstruse Research”. Unable to “borrow/ Fair forms & living Motions” (“Sara” ll. 264-65), the poet has turned away from the “real” issues of his present emotional world: the problems at home (“my coarse domestic Life” (“Sara” l. 259)); and the problems of his estrangement from Sara. The inability to “borrow fair forms” that would arise from a happy domestic reality means the poet must borrow such “fair forms” from elsewhere. The elsewhere amounts to the realm of “Vision” outlined in his youthful experience. It is this
habit of engaging in “dim Connections” that has infected the poet. His present complaint to Sara is that he lacks the very images needed to supply him with the primary material for the secondary adjustments. If he were able to hold images of a happy domestic reality with Sara, then he could deal with his emotions through a series of “dim connections”.

The full impact of such a strategy goes beyond the rationalization offered by the abstract “And that, which suits a part, infects the whole,/ And now is almost grown the Temper of my Soul”. The next stanza in the “Sara” version provides the deeper shock:

My little Children are a Joy, a Love,
A good Gift from above!
But what is Bliss, that still calls up a Woe,
And makes it doubly keen
Compelling me to feel, as well as KNOW,
What a most blessed Lot mine might have been.
Those little Angel Children (woe is me!)
There have been hours, when feeling how they bind
And pluck out the Wing-feathers of my Mind,
Turning my Error to Necessity,
I have half-wish'd, they never had been born!
That seldom! But sad Thoughts they always bring,
And like the Poet's Philomel, I sing
My Love-song, with my breast against a Thorn.

With no unthankful Spirit I confess,
This clinging Grief too, in it's turn, awakes
That Love, and Father's Joy; but O! it makes
The Love the greater, & the Joy far less.
These Mountains too, these Vales, these Woods, these Lakes,
Scenes full of Beauty & of Loftiness
Where all my Life I fondly hop'd to live —
I were sunk low indeed, did they no solace give;
But oft I seem to feel, & evermore I fear,
They are not to me the Things, which once they were.

(“Sara” ll. 273-296)

Present reality, in the strong connections that it establishes, unavoidably informs the “abstruse Research”. The poet's contact with nature is diminished through the “distortion” that “Love” has brought to his “Joy”. Not only does he lack substantial images of Sara that would allow imaginative “Fair forms”, but he is faced with substantial images of reality that positively obtrude on his wider world of connections. Unable to realise his image of Sara as the other, his world of images is diminished. Through this diminution, the identity of the speaker is threatened.

The subject that he finds himself to be, the concrete subject, called into his current domestic world by the others of that domestic world, is a subject that he finds to be both affirmed and denied in that world. The others of his world define him as subject, as the concrete ideological subject called out by the appellation “husband” and the appellation “father”. The poet-speaker is seeking the Sara of the poem to call him out as “friend”, as “lover”, as “kindred spirit”, as “mind answering mind”.

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Through the relationship with the other as family he argues he has lost the relationship with the other as nature ("They are not to me the Things, which once they were"). Through the relationship with his wife he claims to have lost his relationship with his imagination or his Self as other. Behind these glaring emotional assertions is the deeper admission, already discussed, that it has been through his own “abstruse Research” that he has lost contact with all three others: objects, Self and other. When this “Research” is seen to include the poet's visionary method of seeking imaginative connections, then the affective nature of his dejection is revealed. It is through an affective process, that of subverting emotions, that the affect of dejection has arisen.

His answer appears to be to shift his attention from the external and failed concrete subject to an inward life, a life filled by the spirit of joy:

JOY, innocent Sara! Joy, that ne'er was given
Save to the Pure, & in their purest Hour,
JOY, Sara! is the Spirit & the Power,
That wedding Nature to us gives in Dower
A new Earth & new Heaven
Undreamt of by the Sensual & the Proud!
Joy is that strong Voice, Joy that luminous Cloud —
We, we ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the Echoes of that Voice,
All Colors a Suffusion of that Light.

(“Sara” ll. 314-24)
His failure would seem to be that he attempted to gain the concrete satisfactions from his relationship with Sara and his friends that he had not been able to find in his family. This failure of the concrete subject is immediately used as the reason to institute the full Christian technology of the self. Now Sara, instead of being an alternative wife, is to become a symbol of innocence (virtue in “Dejection”).

The viper of thoughts that encoils the poet-speaker's mind is part of the “spiral of truth formulation and reality renouncement” that Foucault points out. In the “Sara” poem the rejection of “The dark distressful Dream!” is a rejection of the thought that the poet-speaker is unable to physically comfort his Sara if and when she “pin'd”. In “Dejection” the poet-speaker is turning from the complex itself rather than from any particular instance. This alteration is one of the clear examples of how Coleridge, the poet, transformed the emotional outpourings of Coleridge the man. What it also indicates is the particularity of the problem in its origin. The speaker-poet turns from mere thought of a possible problem within the physical world to a larger concern with the world around him. Unable to deal with the possibility of final frustration in his love for Sara, he turns to the present sensory world for redemption from the viper's spiral of thoughts. As in the (so-called) conversation poems, the poet here seeks a dramatic shift by evoking a surrounding reality.
In the wind he finds a story of redemption, a story of the girl child lost and crying, but not far from home. His cry is this cry; his relation with nature as his other has been re-established; his imagination is working again. He too is lost but near home. The cost, in poetic terms, has been a radical stripping of layer after layer of the immediate. The elemental landscape of the wind interlude is not a resurgence of nature as the poet might have hoped, but rather a bleak presentation of an allegorical landscape that reduces the physical world to stark features and a single lost child. The world has become hysterical, extreme.

In the “Sara” poem this episode is a long way from the ending stanza; it functions as an anti-climax, suggesting that nothing can come from such vain imaginings. It precedes the very passage in which the poet-speaker complains of his “abstruse Research” and may therefore be seen as an example of the outcome of such research rather than as a proof of the reconstitution of the poet-speaker's identity. Looked at this way, the allegorical aspect of the passage can be taken as indicating the plight of the poet-speaker. In the “Sara” poem the lost child is clearly the poet-speaker and the mother to rescue him is Sara. The failure of this rescue is suspended both by the succeeding lines that prove the child (Coleridge) is not in immediate danger and by the anticipation of a possible affirmation from the other (Sara). If the mother answers then the child is saved.
While the poet-speaker prefers the “Permanent” in the “Sara” poem to “all things”, his reasoning for this decision is a major qualification:

To all things I prefer the Permanent.
And better seems it for a heart, like mine,
Always to know, than sometimes to behold,

Their Happiness & thine —
For Change doth trouble me with pangs untold!
To see thee, hear thee, feel thee — then to part

Oh! — it weighs down the Heart!
To visit those, I love, as I love thee,
Mary, & William, & dear Dorothy,
It is but a temptation to repine —
The transientness is Poison in the Wine,
Eats out the pith of Joy, makes all Joy hollow,
All pleasure a dim Dream of Pain to follow!
My own peculiar Lot, my house-hold Life
It is, & will remain, Indifference or Strife.
While ye are well & happy, 'twould but wrong you
If I should fondly yearn to be among you —
Wherefore, O wherefore! should I wish to be
A wither'd branch upon a blossoming Tree?

(“Sara” ll. 151-69)

This is a rather orthodox realization of the disjunctive nature of experience. To see her implies not seeing her. Somehow the other, as Sara, has a reality that is beyond this basic contamination. While he speaks about his own ills, ills that are basic to all human experience, he
at the same time insinuates that the reason for his own withering is the direct result of the failure of some other (his legal wife) to be his real other (his true wife). The depth of this failure reflects harshly on the poet-speaker since, it would appear, he, among his group of friends, is the only one to suffer this stark realization. Like a victim of a contagious disease he removes himself, even in thought, from the idea of yearning to be with his friends.

This contagion, accounted for as dejection by the poet-speaker, is an identity crisis within the overall project of the Christian self. In R.D. Laing's *Self and Others* there are accounts given of similar states of mind as those talked of (and displayed) in Coleridge's two dejection poems. Talking of a patient who “relived in imagination a past situation which had never been more than imagined”, Laing comments that through all the patient's various shifts of distance the patient “eluded the experience of unequivocal frustration, but the price she paid was that unequivocal gratification eluded her”. Faced with ontological insecurity, the individual often experiences a split between mind and body such that “With this loss of unity, the person preserves a sense of having an `inner' `true' self which is, however, unrealized, whereas the `outer', `real', or `actual' self is `false' ” (p. 50).

Alongside this account of a basic split, within the “Sara” poem there is also an attempt to exploit this confession of a false exterior. As Laing writes:
There may come a time when we claim to have realized that we have been playing a part, that we have been pretending to ourselves, that we have been trying to convince ourselves of such and such, but that now we must confess that we have not succeeded. Yet this realization or confession can very well be a further effort to “win” by an ultimate pretence, by once more pretending the last truth about oneself, and in so doing elude its simple straightforward actual realization. One form of “acting” is a frantic desire to make pretences real. Yet the others retain reservations. (p. 52)

The level of self-pity within the “Sara” poem is equal only to the accusation that somehow these special others hold the poet-speaker’s identity in their hands. They are the ones who call him out; they are the ones who hold his name by virtue of their virtue. Somehow they are ontologically secure in ways that are not available to the poet-speaker; their identities are part of what is permanent; his identity is part of what is transient. The poet-speaker vacillates between assertions of the merit of his experience as sensory evidence (in itself of value) to assertions of his reliance on the imagination as the source of his identity (the sensory is not of value in itself). Having lost a simple identity, the poet-speaker, in both versions, is faced with the complex of an identity that still is able to function in all its social roles, and yet is unable to feel true to itself in any of these roles. In many ways he is experiencing the identity of the schizophrenic:
... the schizophrenic does not take for granted his own person (and other persons) as being an adequately embodied, alive, real, substantial, and continuous being, who is at one place at one time and at a different place at a different time, remaining the “same” throughout. (Laing, p. 51)

Dejection, as the affect described by Coleridge, is a lesser form of disturbance, but nonetheless a disturbance that involves a “partial loss of the synthetic unity of self, concurrently with a partial loss of relatedness with the other” (Laing, p. 51) and a partial loss of relatedness with the external world as nature.

The complex world of identity explored in “Sara”, is of more interest to a modern audience that has grown used to a non-substantial subject, than the “fixed up” and dogmatized world of “Dejection”. Few modern readers would feel that the speaker in “Dejection” has adequately accounted for his emotional turmoil. However, within the Christian and Romantic technology of the self, as understood by Coleridge, the speaker in “Dejection” is secure in his state of dejection. The disjunctions experienced by the poet-speaker are all accounted for within the dogma. Satisfying himself that there is indeed a method by which the individual can proceed, Coleridge asserts:
Yea (saith an enlightened physician), there is but one principle, which alone reconciles the man himself, with others and with the world; which regulates all relations, tempers all passions, gives power to overcome or support all suffering, and which is not to be shaken by aught earthly, for it belongs not to the earth; namely the principle of religion, the living and substantial faith which passeth all understanding, as the cloud-piercing rock, which overhangs the stronghold of which it had been the quarry and remains the foundation. . . . the substantiating principle of all true wisdom, the satisfactory solution of all the contradictions of human nature, of the whole riddle of the world. (“On Method”, pp. 386-87)

Based on this dogma, rather than principles of aesthetic distance, the “Sara” poem becomes “Dejection”. The control the poet takes over “raw biographic” material is a control that follows the script. The very presumptions of the individual are to be forgone in the shift towards the “immutable truth”. The “whole riddle of the world” is thus resolved and man is reconciled with his three others, “with himself, with others and with the world”. In the final stanza of “Dejection” this reconciliation is achieved, for the “Dear Lady!” by her being a “simple soul, guided from above”. In “Sara” she gains from being warmed within the community of the “Good & Fair”, much as a “mother Dove/ That borrows genial Warmth from those, she warms” (ll. 327-30). By establishing these qualities in the other, the poet retains the image of harmony. While the self of the speaker is under threat, this image retains the power, through innocence, of resolving “all the contradictions”.
This Romantic self, secure in its various resolving dogmas, haunts the present century. Somewhere, somehow, the self finds a place to rest from the storms of its own enquiries. Mostly it finds rest inside the quest itself; it replaces Coleridge's need for an absolute answer with a project that is all-consuming and necessarily larger than the individual can hope to encompass. Possibly the most secure project is that which seeks to deconstruct the technology of the self.

Roland Barthes, a leading exponent of a method with assumptions in stark contrast to Coleridge's, found the need to strike out against the new anti-technologies that have become, through their own practice, new technologies. Like the old, the new technologies call the individual into the complex of the world of others. Like the old, the new technologies manipulate the individual through his relations with others, especially as these relations are defined within language systems. Barthes writes:

For a long time I supposed that an average intellectual like myself could and should join the struggle (even if it was only in regard to himself) against the tidal wave of collective images, the manipulation of affects. This was called demystification. I still struggle, now and then, but deep down I really do not believe in it any more. Now that power is everywhere (a great and sinister discovery — even if a naive one — of people of my generation), in whose name are we to demystify? Denouncing manipulation itself becomes part of a manipulation-system: recuperated, such
would be the definition of the contemporary subject. The only thing left to do would be to make heard a voice to one side, an oblique voice: a voice unrelated.¹

This attempt to denounce the denouncing of manipulation is also taken up as part of the regress of “the contemporary subject” whether the subject is recuperated or not. Such a regress is not however a restraint that Julia Kristeva accepts. For her the fictional discourse that has replaced the metalanguage of knowing is the result of “the crisis of reason and the crisis of paternal function, which the West is at present experiencing”.² For Kristeva, within a metalanguage (“and any university discourse which is didactic and explicative is a metalanguage”), “the coherence of both sign and syntax” are preserved; “the subject of a knowing discourse is not a subject on trial; its position equals essentially that of Husserl's transcendental ego”. For Kristeva this subject is, a logical and even metaphysical postulate which assures the permanence and fullness of meaning. The transcendental ego is the guarantor of a meaning always already there outside of which neither phenomenological reason nor the consequent theories of enunciation may venture. (p. 212)

² Kristeva, “The Speaking Subject”, included in On Signs, p. 216.
What is on trial for Kristeva is the subject of poetic language: “I say that the particularities of poetic language designate a subject, as we say in French, en procès, on trial and in process”. Such a subject is caught up in “sense as a practice; not a phenomenon but a process of production which presupposes a permanent dialectic (position and destruction) of the identity (which is as much the identity of the speaking subject as the identity of the signification produced for communication)” (pp. 215, 212).

But, while the “unity of the speaking subject” is guaranteed in a “knowing discourse” by the “coherence of the sign and of the predicate synthesis” this unity becomes a limit when knowledge is confronted with “the so-called pathological functions (insanity) or aesthetic functions (the avant-garde) which are not pure knowledge, and which are not limited to the redirection of sign and syntax matrices, but which break down these matrices in order to renew them”. Having reached this limit, knowledge has reached its “penitentiary condition”; reason must now take account of these extreme situations in which “meaning is on trial”; but meaning is on trial (en procès) in “every exercise of language”. Since knowledge and semiology are both “imprisoned in meaning” they must “take into account the trial of meaning”; “walled into the transcendental ego” they must “outline the course of the subject on trial, in process: en procès” (pp. 215, 216).
Kristeva supports the “Freudian revolution” which she sees as having displaced “the Western episteme from its presumed centrality”. For her the “theory of meaning” must “attune itself to the theory of the speaking subject as a divided subject (conscious/unconscious) and go on to attempt to specify the types of operation characteristic of the two sides of this split; thereby exposing them to those forces extraneous to the logic of the systematic” (p. 214fn). To carry over this split, and evidence it in the practice of language, Kristeva distinguishes “two modalities of signification: the semiotic and the symbolic”.

The semiotic mode consists of the “primary organization (in Freudian terms) of drives by rhythms, intonations and primary processes (displacement, slippage, condensation)”; this mode functions “in all adult discourse as a supplementary register to the sign and predicate synthesis” (p. 216). This mode of the semiotic carries much of the burden of the Russian Formalist sense of “poetic language” that Kristeva sees as designating a subject on trial.

The second mode of signification Kristeva calls the “symbolic” by which she means:

precisely the functioning of the sign and predication. The symbolic is constituted beginning with what psychoanalysis calls the mirror stage and the consequent capacities for absence, representation or abstraction. The symbolic is a matter, therefore, of language as a system of meaning (as
structuralism and generative grammar study it) — a language with a foreclosed subject or with a transcendental subject-ego.

(PP. 216-17)

Both “sense as a trial” and the “speaking subject on trial articulate themselves precisely on the impetus of the interaction between these two modalities”. But these two modes do not interact freely. The “emergence of the semiotic in the symbolic is subservient to the transformational conditions in the relation between subject and receiver; anguish, frustration, identification or projection all break down the unity of the transcendental ego and its system of homogeneous sense and give free rein to what is heterogeneous in sense, that is, the drive” (p. 217). Signifying practice then becomes a practice “where practice is taken as meaning the acceptance of a symbolic law together with the transgression of that law for the purpose of renovating it.” For Kristeva:

The moment of transgression is the key moment in practice: we can speak of practice wherever there is a transgression of systematicity, i.e. a transgression of the unity proper to the transcendental ego. The subject of the practice cannot be the transcendental subject, who lacks the shift, the split in logical unity brought about by language which separates out, within the signifying body, the symbolic order from the workings of the libido (this last revealing itself by the semiotic disposition). Identifying the semiotic disposition means, in fact, identifying the shift in the speaking subject, his capacity for renewing the order in which he is inescapably caught up; and that capacity is, for the subject, the capacity of enjoyment. (P. 217fn)
While Kristeva's description of the kenotic practice, since it affirms the capacity of “pleasure” in the process, may sound much like a merely sensory kenosis (as opposed to the transposed aesthetic kenosis of Chapter Two), a kind of kenosis evident in the bar room conversations of people who persist in outwitting themselves as evidence of their drunkenness, this is not the case. Rather than a merely sensory kenosis, we should describe her account of “sense as a trial” and the “speaking subject on trial” as the “semiotic kenosis”, in that it is the return of the semiotic that evidences the transgression of the systematic. But the return of the semiotic, along with its evidence in language, announces the “afflux of drive”. Kristeva offers this concise description of the process of semiotic kenosis:

In these circumstances [the transgression and manifestation of the semiotic], the speaking subject undergoes a transition to a void, to zero: loss of identity, afflux of drive and a return of symbolic capacities, but this time in order to take control of drive itself. This is precisely what expands the limits of the signifiable: a new aspect of the displacement between the referent/signifiable, a new aspect of the body, has thus found its significance. (pp. 217-18)\(^1\)

\(^1\) This is very reminiscent of Hegel's views and Kristeva allows that her views “permit a new conception of praxis, a renewal of the Hegelian-Marxist dialectic”; but Kristeva opposes her dialectic to what she sees as the “homogeneous direction of Hegel's Absolute Idea, because this idea, even while negating itself, never negates itself in and of itself, in its identity. It remains enclosed in the totality of logical knowledge” (p. 218).
Kristeva's speaking subject, while gaining pleasure through its vulnerability, also gains its right to a place in the trial of sense and its place on trial “as practice and process”. Without a subject there is no kenosis; and Kristeva postulates that the failure of “These most profound crises of rationality” to become “semiotic-symbolic” results in their being “accompanied by a rigid investiture of other archaic and repressive structures”, including “order, the family, normalcy, normative classical psychological-tending discourse, all of which are just so many characteristics of fascist ideology” (p. 220).

As we have seen from notion of “hailing” earlier in this chapter, ideology takes over the function of semiotic kenosis when the subject of the ideological kenosis “undergoes a transition to a void, zero: loss of identity” (or loss of individuality). In undergoing this kenosis, the subject experiences, not the afflux of the drive, but the “rigid investiture of other archaic and repressive structures”. Becoming Althusser's “concrete subject” means primarily the appropriation by others of the identity of the individual: it means in effect the loss of the power to acquire identity through that kenotic process which enables Kristeva's “speaking subject” to participate in the interaction of the semiotic and the symbolic.

It was suggested earlier that, for victims of this ideological kenosis, the answer lies in style: individuality is preserved within the ideological hailing by entering the semiotic kenosis. The relocation of the fluid subject, or the hiding of the subject in process (the subject on trial),
allows that the afflux of drive occurs in possibly its primitive form: the drive occurs autistically! Equally this desperate situation can be viewed through existentialist ethics or the anti-psychology of R.D. Laing. I can retain my subjectivity on trial only through my freedom to negate the other.¹ This negation would go unnoticed at the symbolic level. Alternatively, along with Barthes, I can go sideways: answer at a tangent; dislocate the identity crisis; perform a role and preserve identity through the distance achieved by the function of the role within the discourse. All such answers would be an avoidance of the possibilities opened up by the hailing.

All these strategies (and there are many more) reflect the power of the ideological kenosis: a subject on trial has been exchanged for a concrete subject defined by the discourse. As we have seen from the Zen examples from Chapter Five, this method can be used as therapy, reflexively to show itself in its own operation. But this Zen method is so common to Zen teaching as to amount to a major cultural heuristic device. Every question-and-answer situation, indeed the very agon itself, reflects this pattern. Called out by the discourse, the subject on trial is concretized in the structure, just as the bullfighter is concretized as a subject by virtue of his standing against the bull in the ring.

¹ A more usual situation is as follows: "'You are worthless', 'You are good'. There is no way the recipient of such attributions can disconfirm them by himself, unless he controls the position from which the person is empowered to arbitrate in such matters. What others attribute to Peter implicitly or explicitly necessarily plays a decisive part in forming Peter's sense of his own agency, perceptions, motives, intentions: his identity" (Laing, Self and Others, p. 151).
Here then we see the dilemma hidden by the answers proposed above. To deny the bull is to die on its horns just as much as to avoid the bull is to metaphorically die in, or to, the situation. Called out, the subject must, as it were, of himself, transgress the law and allow the afflux of drive, in spite of the transformational conditions being not only absent but actually prohibited by the discourse: the bull must be engaged to take the situation seriously.

In transgressing the law, the subject, which denied its fluidity within the discourse with the other, has to give up its identity as it is found in opposition with the other. While the subject holds itself separate as the self called by the other, the subject is denied its possibilities. This situation can be compared to a sword fight in which there is an other as an obvious opponent. The threat to identity is coterminous with the threat to life. To support the identity of self in opposition is to risk losing the battle. D.T. Suzuki expounds on Zen in Japanese swordfighting:

As long as he is conscious of holding the sword and standing opposed to an object and is trying to make use of all the technique of swordplay he has learned, he is not the perfect player. He must forget that he has an individual body known as “Takano” [a famous swordsman] and that a part of it holds the sword, which he is to employ against another individuated body. He now has no sword, no body. But this does not mean that all has vanished into a state of nothingness, for there is most decidedly a something that
is moving, acting, and thinking. This is what Mr. Takano and other swordsmen, the Taoist and Buddhist philosophers, designate as “the original mind” (honshin), or “the mind of an infant” (akago no kokoro), or “the true man” (shinjin; chen-jen in Chinese), or “the perfect man” (shijin; chin-jen), or “the original face” (honrai no memmoku; pen-lai mien-mu).²

Here “original mind” can be equated with Kristeva’s “zero”. The “afflux of drive” is experienced as that state in which there is “a something that is moving, acting, and thinking” minus the identity of combatant. The “new aspect of the body” is either culturally recognized or else it is culturally ignored. The range of names available to Suzuki to describe this complex kenotic-experience-in-action-with-the-other reflects a major cultural awareness of loss of identity. In place of statements of the technical quality of the combatant there is a recognition of the vital need to allow afflux of drive in situations where the calling locates the identity of the one called as a concrete subject, and therefore a subject not on trial, but under threat.

Difficult as it might be to answer the call of the bull or the challenge of the swordsman, such situations may be envisaged as aesthetic objects: distance is achieved through the expectable structure and the outcome that can be anticipated. This aesthetic quality in no way lessens the value of the achieved physical knowledge.

While the call of the bullfight and the call of the swordfight are uncommon, and while the hailing of the policeman is usually infrequent, there is an everyday event that calls the individual into the arena of identity: the calling out by name. This calling would appear to be a different situation as it involves the self or personality as a totem. Here the ideology is more that of family than that of State though such boundaries are not clearly drawn in the sense that tribal assumptions stand behind all ideologies: to be called out as “you” is to be recognised as a citizen even if only as an outsider. When the person is called by name, however, he is recognised as a particular member of a particular totemic group. As Claude Lévi-Strauss has pointed out: “Everything takes place as if in our civilization every individual’s own personality were his totem: it is the signifier of his signified being”. The calling out by name of this totemic personality is a discourse that Lacan describes as “the universal movement in which his [the subject’s] place is already inscribed at birth, if only by virtue of his proper name”.

This name obviously exists within power relationships that are well outside the purpose and scope of this thesis. The point to be made here is the peculiar value that such calling out by name has within the family. Within the family, which is here taken to be constituted by that group of

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individuals that gave and sustain the name, the name serves both to concretize the subject and to secure the subject's identity through a guarantee of maintaining this identity: “You'll always be Sonny to me!” This familial kenosis has its apotheosis in R.D. Lang's notions of family madness, where the identity of a particular member is held in special awe, so much so that it is destroyed and revived in replication of the dying gods of old. The ability of an individual to sustain, survive and transform such a structure is testament not to the strength of individuality (for many do not survive) but rather to the availability of the same structure within the semiotic kenosis. The value of the symbolic name as an identity marker finds its semiotic equivalent in the “zero state, characterized by the afflux of unconscious logic alone even from drives or from affects” (Kristeva, p. 214fn). Having lost the totemic name and with it the secured identity, the subject “gains”, through this loss, the experience of the “zero state" or void which, as Kristeva points out, is free from the contamination of either drives or affects.

Such a state is from some accounts a rather pleasant one; in Kristeva's terms the pleasure arises ultimately from the speaking subject's “capacity for renewing the order in which he is inescapably caught up" (Kristeva, p. 217fn). Such a pleasure in the renewal is also a pleasure in declaring the renewal as a culturally available alternative. Lacan stresses the tying of the elementary cultural structures to the “permutations authorized by language". Within these authorized permutations is revealed the “ordering of possible exchanges" (Lacan, p. 148).
The experience of the individual of the zero state is then an experience that is culturally authorized by and in language.

Sylvia Plath’s poetry abounds with examples of experiences of the “zero state” and of the processes of entry and exit. In part one of “Poem for a Birthday” the void is named “Mother of otherness” and the speaker invites this Mother to:

Eat me. Wastebasket gaper, shadow of doorways.

I said: I must remember this, being small.
There were such enormous flowers,
Purple and red mouths, utterly lovely.

The hoops of blackberry stems made me cry.
Now they light me up like an electric bulb.
For weeks I can remember nothing at all.

Here the re-entry to the totemic self is effected by the agency of shock therapy; the speaker of the poem having expressed (perhaps to her own detriment) her “pleasure” in “the beauty of usage!” But note how she seeks to preserve the memory of the moment of void, the zero state: “I must remember this”.1 The return of the subject, brutal as it is, would nonetheless seem to support Kristeva’s idea that “a new aspect of the body . . . has thus found its significance”. From a different vantage

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point, in Emily Dickinson's “I'm Nobody! Who are you?” the pleasure is in the challenge to answer the call into the discourse minus totem.  

From these examples can be seen not only the availability of the semiotic kenosis for ideological manipulation but the persistence of this kenotic structure within the ideological manipulation. The Zen master does not exclude an answer from the discourse precisely because every answer is made available within the structure of the discourse. In cases of authoritarian interpellation the ideological kenosis is subverted by its very structure, which perhaps accounts for the lack of humour and also the aura of brutality that surrounds the calling or hailing. This is equally true of the parent/child, teacher/student, and police/suspect situations: the pragmatics of authority can only be balanced by a tolerance of subversion. Such tolerance makes for marriages where the “Hey, you there” is answered with “Hey, you there” and exposes the ludic quality: who will get the old maid?

For Lacan this pattern needs to be viewed a little differently. Rather than the subjectivity being trapped or concretized within the

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3 This hailing structure is also open to other forms of social subversion. In the film *Beverly Hills Cop*, the hero, Axel Foley, is caught by a security guard in a customs bond store. By appropriating the language of hailing, Foley is able to reverse roles and make a concrete subject of the authority figure. Foley calls the guard: “You come here for a second please.” By becoming the “you” the guard becomes the subject of Foley's appellation. (Screenplay by Daniel Petrie (Paramount, 1984).)
power structures of the calling out, subjectivity is defined within the actual patterns of interpersonal language. He writes:

The form in which language is expressed itself defines subjectivity. Language says: “You will go here, and when you see this, you will turn off there.” In other words, it refers itself to the discourse of the other. As such it is enveloped in the highest function of speech, in as much as speech commits its author by investing the person to whom it is addressed with a new reality, as for example, when by “You are my wife”, a subject marks himself with the seal of wedlock.

This form of speech Lacan sees as being “the essential form from which all human speech derives rather than the form at which it arrives” (Lacan, p. 84).

For Lacan identity is not only lost and found in the kenotic trials of the speaking subject through his inescapably being caught up in the symbolic order, but further, his initial identity is determined within the dialectic of the semiotic and the symbolic. Within the structure of initial identity, as put forward by Lacan, the kenotic pattern revealed through Kristeva's analysis of poetic language is relocated by Lacan in what can only be called the “incarnation” or “creation” of the subject.

For Lacan language is fundamental; it is there at the birth of the individual and is ever present in the experience of identity:
The psychoanalytic experience has rediscovered in man the imperative of the Word as the law that has formed him in its image. It manipulates the poetic function of language to give to his desire its symbolic mediation. May that experience enable you to understand at last that it is in the gift of speech that all the reality of its effects resides; for it is by way of this gift that all reality has come to man and it is by his continued act that he maintains it. (Lacan, p. 106)

Here the manipulations of the “poetic function of language” amount to Kristeva's return or “emergence of the semiotic in the symbolic”; without the manipulation of this function the existence of the subject in Lacan's psychology would be misery incarnate. As Anika Lemaire points out in her book *Jacques Lacan*:

> The history of the subject, who is de-centred from himself, is an endless dialectic of the vain search for the self. The ego is its construction and each stone in the edifice sacrifices part of the truth of the essence. Like the philosopher, the analyst should demystify this being by means of a radical subversion.4

Without this subversion, without the manipulation of the poetic functions, language becomes “the means used by the subject to repress his

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insufficiencies, his failures and the repeated frustrations which mark his history” (Lemaire, p. 182). The analyst subverts the discourse of the patient precisely by “not attending to the content of this discourse itself, but to the rents in it, the ‘formations of the unconscious' which establish a new content” (Lemaire, p. 216). At the same time, in analysis, the subject is, through frustration of demand, provoked into a regression. In this regression “from one signifier of his demand to another”, the “analysand is progressively dispossessed of all the forms of his ego in which he has constructed himself in the imaginary through successive identifications with mirror images of his being” (Lemaire, p. 218).

Antoine Vergote (in his Foreword to Lemaire's *Jacques Lacan*) locates Lacan's analytic process in a history of ideas that is of immediate interest here:

“What is the ego?” Pascal asked himself. Lacan tells us that in wishing to grasp it, we identify it with the ideal image, a reflection in our desire of the form designed for it by the gaze of the other who judges or seduces. Emerging to itself in a mirror relationship in which it risks being swallowed up, the ego is called upon by Lacan for the cathartic denuding of full listening and full speech. The somewhat abrupt critique of the Imaginary and of “ego psychology” has the austere accents of a mystical theology of language. Completely removed from any mysticism of affectivity and of imaginary reciprocity, it recalls the negative theology that broke idolatrous images. An iconoclast of the mirrors of
Narcissus, Lacan awakens an anthropology trapped in the snare of specular reduplication.¹

We see here evidence of the absence from informed thought of the very concept of “kenosis”. Vergote's notion of “cathartic denuding” is a perfect “street definition” of kenosis, especially in that what is being removed is images of and by the self. Vergote goes on in his Foreword to say “We are summoned to the never-ending labour of a catharsis in the movement of the truths which speak in us and which spread to infinity the network of their significance” (p. xx). This reads very much like Hegel's kenotic process, except that for Lacan and Vergote there is no end, however distant, to be contemplated. This concept of an unending kenosis obviously makes for a very efficient image-breaking methodology; if the outcome of any “denuding” is an anticipation of a further “denuding”, then the process is conceptually prejudiced towards de-construction.

Iconoclastic as Lacan's approach may be, one can be disappointed with his vagueness about the contents of the mirrors he smashes. Given that his aim, in the subversive process, is the disclosure of the “rent”, this outcome is not surprising, but one could wish for a more Eastern calm that preserves, through attentive neglect, the images it avows as illusion. The image of the image-breaker has no special privilege and, no

less than the hero with many faces and many adventures, the iconoclast has his own reflection to meet.

Indeed, taking up Vergote's disquiet about Lacan's abrupt treatment of the imaginary, we can go so far as to say that Lacan's treatment is so abrupt as almost to resist critique. His treatment of the mirror stage, while removing the mystical reciprocity of Jung's anticipated stage of the achievement of wholeness, nonetheless institutes the image of wholeness in a position that gives it far greater importance for the post-Jungian analyst, if not for the patient. Where Jung would see dreams of dismemberment as the violation of an original or unconscious wholeness (a prelude to therapy), Lacan treats such information as evidence of a movement from “insufficiency to anticipation” during the drama of the “mirror stage”. The mirror stage “manufactures for the subject, caught up in the lure of spatial identification, the succession of phantasies that extends from a fragmented body-image to a form of its totality that I shall call orthopaedic — and, lastly, to the assumption of the armour of an alienating identity, which will mark with its rigid structure the subject's entire mental development”. While Lacan notes that such dreams of the fragmented body are usually manifest “when the movement of the analysis encounters a certain level of aggressive disintegration in the individual”, their existence refers back to the “primordial Discord” resulting from “the anatomical incompleteness of the pyramidal system”, evidence of which confirms for Lacan his view of “a real specific prematurity of birth in man” (Lacan, p. 4).
One might suggest that the phantasy of “orthopaedic” totality that Lacan marks as the initial “Ideal-I” could serve as the initial source of the archetype of wholeness attributed by the ego, in Jung’s theories, to the unconscious, especially as Lacan elaborates:

This jubilant assumption of his specular image by the child at the infans stage, still sunk in his motor incapacity and nursling dependence, would seem to exhibit in an exemplary situation the symbolic matrix in which the I is precipitated in a primordial form, before it is objectified in the dialectic of identification with the other, and before language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject. (p. 37)

The anticipated fall is indeed a fall into anticipation: a fall from the Ideal-I to an alienated and armoured “identification with the other”; a fall into “an endless quest for a lost paradise”. In this quest, desire must be channelled like an underground river through the subterranean passageways of the symbolic order, which makes it possible that things be present in their absence in some way through words — passageways whose labyrinthine involution resembles in its complexity the “rings of a necklace that is a ring in another necklace made of rings”.¹

This fall is itself anticipated in the actual structure of this Ideal-I. The “total form of the body by which the subject anticipates in a mirage the maturation of his power is given to him only as a Gestalt”; the Gestalt, “in which the form is more constituent than constituted”, reveals on inspection “two aspects” that “symbolize the mental permanence of the I” and “at the same time . . . [prefigure] its alienating destination”. These two aspects are: “a contrasting size that fixes” [the Gestalt]; and “a symmetry that inverts” it. This structural prefiguration of the subject's alienation through identification and the fixing forever of the Ideal-I have the effect of situating

the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone, or rather, which will only rejoin the coming-into-being (le devenir) of the subject asymptotically, whatever the success of the dialectical syntheses by which he must resolve as I his discordance with his own reality. (Lacan, p. 2)

It should be understood that Lacan includes in “the virtual complex” of the mirror image “the child's own body, and the persons and things, around him” (Lacan, p. 1). As Muller and Richardson point out:

The essential here apparently is that a human form be the external image in which the infant discovers both himself and the “reality” around him, but presumably that human
form could also be — and in the concrete is more likely to be —
the mothering figure. (p. 30)

This last consideration would seem to account for Lacan's aspect of *un relief de stature*. Presumably the average mirror would reflect an image of 100% or some value so close to 100% as to make the size variation of no account, thus making the self-image of a child no different in size to itself. If it were, how would the child know? Contrasting size could equally only be arrived at from a contrast of images which necessarily implies more than one image. This need for a contrasting image seems to relate to the “virtual complex" especially of “the child's body, and the persons . . . around him". Through the inclusion of this mechanism of contrast the *méconnaissance* is called into question.²

This means that for Lacan, rather than start from propositions that regard “the ego as centred on the perception-consciousness system, or as organized by the `reality principle' — a principle that is the expression of a scientific prejudice most hostile to the dialectic of knowledge" — we should start “instead from the function of *méconnaissance* that characterizes the ego in all its structures" (Lacan, p. 6). Having started with an Ideal-I that is the result of *méconnaissance*, the ego is necessarily on trial. While on trial, this primary identification

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² Such specific questions are not the end of the matter. For example, how does Lacan account for the ego formation in a child born blind or a child with no interest in their image in mirrors? These questions are interesting, but peripheral to this thesis.
Lacan does not deny the “central” position of the ego. He writes:

I am quite willing to accept that the ego, and not the desk, is the seat of perception, but in being so it reflects the essence of the objects it perceives and not its own, in so far as consciousness is its privilege, since these perceptions are very largely unconscious. (Lacan, p. 134)

While Lacan's Ideal-I is, on the surface, nothing like Jung's archetype of the Self, with further investigation the differences decrease. Similarities become apparent in the operation of these two Gestalts. Both appear to have wholeness and promise wholeness; both have permanence; both differ from the ego and are defined by and through that difference; both haunt man and become evident in his externality; both generate or operate as major players in the drama of the ego that constitutes the ego's history; both come from sources deeper than the ego;¹ both cannot

¹ Lacan evidences formative effects of Gestalts from other sources, such as from the gonad maturation in female pigeons (see Écrits, p. 3).
be, in any total sense, recovered or attained or expressed exhaustively; and, most importantly here, both are seen as the source of desire. In the case of Lacan the desire is for a primordial wholeness that cannot be achieved; in Jung's case the desire is for self-realization. As the source and/or cause of desire, both Gestalts implicate man in a dialectical process of identification and alienation that amounts to a kenotic discourse of identity.

The most significant differences are that for Lacan this experience of wholeness is firstly formative of an Ideal-I, and this Ideal-I is formed on the basis of mis-cognition: error is in from the start. For Jung, the ego is still the centre of consciousness, the Cartesian ego, the ego that Lacan opposes; and while error is a property of the ego in its relationship with the unconscious, the evidence argues for a genuine apprehension of wholeness. Such evidence is reinforced ontologically: the world we experience is the world we live in.

The purpose of this chapter is not to debate the relative merits of these two views. Jung, as was seen in the previous chapter, is able to bring to our understanding of kenosis a mythological and literary background that evidences the major cultural significance of kenosis as the process of identity. This background has importance for literary criticism. Lacan has been engaged here, not to critique Jung (or vice versa), but because his approach to the kenotic process allows us to inspect the process at work in the formation of identity through language.
In direct opposition to Jung, Lacan argues that “interpretation is based on no assumption of divine archetypes, but on the fact that the unconscious is structured in the most radical way like a language, that a material operates in it according to certain laws, which are the same laws as those discovered in the study of actual languages, languages that are or were actually spoken” (Lacan, p. 234). The operations of the unconscious are stressed over the contents especially as these contents themselves have structure. Lacan avoids the structure of the contents in favour of the structure of the formal operations.

As we have seen from Kristeva's account of a “semiotic” kenosis, the rewards of this approach are a recuperated subject, a speaking subject on trial, a subject therefore able and/or required to account for his own formation as subject within language. The subject evidences the discourse of identity. As Lacan says:

I identify myself in language, but only by losing myself in it like an object. What is realized in my history is not the past definite of what was, since it is no more, or even the present perfect of what has been in what I am, but the future anterior of what I shall have been for what I am in the process of becoming. (p. 86)

Being lost here, like an object in language, does not produce the static qualities, of identity as history, that one might expect. Lacan, denying the
past definite, also denies the present perfect because both produce a static or fixed object as identity. Identity becomes the future before of the past that will be for what “I am in the process of becoming”. This kenotic identity operates for Lacan in language when language is seen as evoking rather than informing. He writes:

What I seek in speech is the response of the other. What constitutes me as a subject is my question. In order to be recognized by the other, I utter what was only in view of what will be. In order to find him, I call him by a name that he must assume or refuse in order to reply to me. (p. 86)

Such views of speech and the subject's relationship, through language, with the other are among the conditions that Lacan prescribes for what he calls “true speech”: “Analysis can have for its goal only the advent of a true speech and the realization by the subject of his history in his relation to a future” (p. 88). In this process of calling the other, through question, the function of the analyst's reply is not “simply to be received by the subject as acceptance or rejection of his discourse, but really to recognize him or to abolish him as subject” (p. 87). Here then is the therapeutic or analytic version of the ideological kenosis. What places speech in this privileged place in the discourse of identity is what we must now go on to investigate.
Before proceeding, we might consider the similarities between Lacan's “mirror stage” and Milton's description of Adam's incarnation in *Paradise Lost.* While Adam is born as a fully fledged man, he is also born without language (*infans*). His naturalization begins with speech: “But who I was, or where, or from what cause,/ Knew not. To speak I tried, and forthwith spake” (VIII, 271-72). The formation of an “Ideal-I” comes after this and occurs in dream:

> I then was passing to my former state  
> Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve;  
> When suddenly stood at my head a dream . . . .

(VIII, 290-93)

It is desire for the image of a world that he sees in this dream that causes him to wake and seek that world:

> Each tree  
> Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to the eye  
> Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite  
> To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found  
> Before mine eyes all real, as the dream  
> Had lively shadowed . . . .

(VIII, 306-11)

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This pattern is repeated with the birth of Eve. Adam pre-figures Eve in dream and wakes to find her. His description of his desire to have a helpmate is an account of his understanding of his own deficiency:

Thou [the Angel] in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficiency found; not so in man,
But in degree, the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help
Or solace his defects.

(VIII, 415-19)

Here Adam expresses the hope that language will become, as conversation between himself and his other, a solace and help in his situation of being incomplete within himself. Such conversation would be in parallel with the conversations he is able to have with the Angel (the Self). It is also interesting that within the dream of Eve, Adam does not wake to find her at hand. In fact she disappears and he is left “dark”. It is following this departure that he wakes: “To find her, or for ever to deplore/ Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure” (VIII, 478-480).

This shock, this negation, needs to be compared with Lacan's account of the Fort! Da! experience of desire as a humanizing:¹

¹ The Fort! Da! game is recounted by Freud in Beyond the Pleasure Principle. Lemaire offers the following brief account: “The child, whose favourite game is recounted by Freud, had a cotton-reel with a piece of string tied around it. Holding the string, he would throw the reel over the edge of his curtained cot. While doing so he uttered a prolonged 'ooh', which was easily interpreted as being an attempt at the German fort, meaning 'gone' or 'away'. He would then pull the reel back into his field of vision, greeting its reappearance with a joyful da ('there'). It should be noted that the child's mother, busy outside, was in the habit of leaving her son alone for long periods. The game thus had the signification of a renunciation” (pp. 51-52).
What Lacan means by the expression “desire becomes human''

is hard to say with certainty. It may mean in strictly Hegelian

terms that up to the moment of the Fort! Da! experience, when

absence becomes present through language, the infant's so-called

“desire'' is not different from the appetition of an animal

seeking the satisfaction of its bodily needs. Such gratification

yields at best what Hegel calls a “sentiment'' of self, but not

consciousness of self as an “I'' that is enunciated in speech. For

his part, Lacan would describe this strictly biological appetition

not as “desire'', but only as “need''. Desire, as he uses the term,

could be said to “become human'' at the birth of speech in the

sense that for him desire in its specifically human sense emerges

then for the first time in the initial experience of “want''.

It is clear that for Lacan this is a crucial moment in human

development. Up to that time the infant has been engaged with

the mother in an essentially dual relationship — a quasi-
symbiotic tie that psychologically prolongs the physical

symbiosis in the womb, in terms of which the mother is the

infant's All. But with the Fort! Da! experience that tie is

ruptured. Ruptured, too is the infant's illusion of totality, its

presumption of infinity. It experiences for the first time the

catastrophe of negation (it is not the mother), the trauma of

limitation, the tragedy of its finitude — in other words, its own

ineluctable manqué à être (to use Lacan's expression). (Muller

& Richardson, pp. 21-22)
In Milton's *Paradise Lost* Eve appears to Adam in dream:

Man-like, but different sex, so lovely fair
That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained . . . .

(VIII, 471-73)

While Adam's dream promises a woman as an image of his All, the realization of this image is precisely through the advent of desire, through the loss of the image and the recovery of Eve. When he sees her he is transported and she, through her loveliness, appears “absolute” “And in herself complete” (VIII, 547-48). As the other, she wears the aspect of the “Ideal-I”; her dream image haunts her “real” image.

Let us return to Lacan's account of the infant's rebirth: “the moment in which desire becomes human is also that in which the child is born into language” (p. 103). This is the moment after the ego “is objectified in the dialectic of identification”, the moment when “language restores to it, in the universal, its function as subject” (p. 2). Thus we move, from the “mirror stage”, which is “the first stage of the dialectic of identifications”, through the process of the individual fixing “upon himself an image that alienates him from himself” (pp. 18, 19). Lacan stresses the erotic aspect of this identification and talks of the “endless circularity of the dialectical process that is produced when the subject brings his solitude to realization, be it in the vital ambiguity of immediate desire or in the full assumption of his being-for-death” (p. 105).
This series of identifications “determines the formal structure of man's ego” and can be seen to correspond to what Lacan calls “paranoiac knowledge”. Following Janet, “who demonstrates so admirably the significance of feelings of persecution as phenomenological moments in social behaviour”, Lacan isolates what he calls the “common character” of these moments, “which is precisely that they are constituted by a stagnation of one of those moments, similar in their strangeness to the faces of actors when a film is suddenly stopped in mid-action”. This “formal stagnation” Lacan finds to be “akin to the most general structures of human knowledge: that which constitutes the ego and its objects with attributes of permanence, identity, and substantiality, in short, with entities or `things' that are very different from the Gestalten that experience enables us to isolate in the shifting field . . .”. In this way paranoiac knowledge is the result of the suspension of the “ego/object dialectic” (pp. 16, 17).

The re-establishing of this dialectic is a formidable task, not only because “the ego represents the centre of all the resistances to the treatment of symptoms", but also because of the “antidialectical mentality" of our culture “which, in order to be dominated by objectifying ends, tends to reduce all subjective activity to the being of the ego'. This mentality is manifested in “the astonishment of Van Den Steinen when confronted by a Bororo who says: `I'm an ara [a macaw bird]' ". Here the response of the sociologist of the “`primitive mind' "
is to “busy themselves around this profession of identity, which, on reflection, is no more surprising than declaring, ‘I'm a doctor' " (p. 23).

The stability of the “grammatical subject of the first person in our language" Lacan sees as the result of an “historical evolution peculiar to our culture"; this stability leads to a confusion of this grammatical “I" with the subject. “This anomaly" is manifested “in its particular effects on every level of language". The example Lacan provides is: “the ‘I love' that hypostasizes the tendency of a subject who denies it" (p. 23). To this situation might be added that of the passive transformation of the “She loves me" to “I am loved by her". This transformed grammatical subject has undergone a psychological “transformation" so that as the object of a subject it has now become the subject of an object. It is “trapped" (here one might say “grammatically imaged" or “photographed in language") in the verb's shift from the active present to the passive present absolute.¹

Lacan, in following these thoughts through, argues that it is more difficult to say “I'm a man" than it is to say “I'm a citizen of the French Republic". The cause of this added difficulty is that by saying “I'm a man" the speaker “at most can mean no more than, ‘I'm like he

¹ Aiding this grammatical spectacle is the overall drift of self-other desire. Lacan, dealing with transference, writes: “... man's desire finds its meaning in the desire of the other, not so much because the other holds the key to the object desired, as because the first object of desire is to be recognized by the other" (p. 58). Lacking such recognition, the passive shift allows the self the opportunity to “impose" the looked for recognition.
whom I recognize to be a man, and so recognize myself as being such’. All these identity statements “are to be understood only in reference to the truth of ‘I is an other’, an observation that is less astonishing to the intuition of the poet than obvious to the gaze of the psychoanalyst” (p. 23).

In *King Lear* we find the faithful Kent “razed . . . [his] likeness” (I. iv. 4) in order to serve Lear even where he “dost stand condemned”.

In response to Lear's question “How now, what art thou?” the physically altered Kent replies: “A man sir”. The challenge in Kent's reply is a foreshadowing of the identity crisis that Lear will later undergo. In many ways Kent's answer here is the birth of the “existential subject”. For the grammatical and dramatic instant, the subject is revealed in the other: Kent, minus his social identity that would locate him in a social relationship with a social other, becomes the alien subject as the original subject requiring affirmation in the response of the other.

An essential part of the irony here is that later, in meeting the Fool, Kent first enquires “Who's there?” and then, on seeing the Fool, Kent asks the “what” question of the other: “What art thou that dost grumble here i' th' straw?” (III. iv. 41, 43). Lear reveals that the “who” question belongs only to the other that one serves (“Who would'st thou

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serve" (I. v. 25)) but twice he asks of Kent “What art thou?” The fixed subject, the subject that is self-defining, is a “who” subject, a subject with a clear social standing that includes in its fixity the power structure that supports its fixity. The subject in need of an other, the subject that finds itself as an other, is a “what” subject, a subject at the mercy of its own desire to be recognized by the other.

This description of the self-other relationship is sufficient as an account from the perspective of a individual, that is, while the relationship is looked at from the perspective of an individual: how I relate with an other. Such an understanding of the self-other relationship does not account for the sense of the other that Lacan finds within the actual formal structures of identity in language, as these appear in the analyst-and-patient relationship. “I is an other”; here the other one might take to be what Lemaire calls the site of the intersubjectivity of patient and analyst, and hence the analytic dialogue. “The Other is the locus in which is constituted the I who speaks with him who hears”. (Lemaire, p. 157)

Here the “him who hears” is not identical with the Other, but is rather a participant in the relationship in which there is the speaker, the listener, the I of the speaker located in the Other and the I of the listener located in the Other. The Other thus becomes, as a focus, a
point distant to both participants and a point with more than one possible focal length and point of viewing. Both speaker and listener are able to find an I constituted in the relationship. Both are able to find an I in the Other through the distance.

As with Jung's notions of a larger Self, there is a need to distinguish the other from the Other. Lacan writes:

if . . . we must establish the notion of the Other with a capital O as being the locus of the deployment of speech (the other scene, *ein andere Schauplatz*, of which Freud speaks in “The Interpretation of Dreams”) . . . it must be posited that, produced as it is by an animal at the mercy of language, man's desire is the desire of the Other.

This concerns a quite different function from that of the primary identification [of self and other], for it does not involve the assumption by the subject of the insignia of the other, but rather the condition that the subject has to find the constituting structure of his desire in the same gap opened up by the effect of the signifiers in those who come to represent the Other for him, in so far as his demand is subject to them. (p. 264)

Here intersubjectivity is mediated through the Other. This mediation is a reflection of the relationship in language between the self and others who represent, for the self, the Other. While reflecting and allowing an intersubjectivity, this Other, that provides the focus for the constitution
of the I, in no sense validates what might be considered to be the traditional correspondences that surround the concept of intersubjectivity. The subject has not been restored in any simple sense by the recognition of the other in language. The aspects of simplicity that have been forgone include those aspects of Romantic poetry that perhaps most typified the self-Self relationship described in the previous chapter, the aspects that Coleridge takes for granted in “Dejection”.

Hans Robert Jauss, in his *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, provides a background to the exposure of these superficial identity correspondences in the poetry of Baudelaire. He writes:

If we now ask which expectations on the part of a reader educated in romantic poetry would have allowed one to reject a poem like our “Spleen” poem, then the norms of the “lyrics of experience” [*Erlebnislyrik*] stand wholly in the foreground: the correspondences between nature and soul, the communication of general human feelings, and the transparence of self-expression in the medium of poetry. On the other hand, in the continual inversions of outer and inner reality, Baudelaire's poem no longer allows one to recognize the harmony of nature, landscape, and psyche. In the unforeseeable changes of shape of the lyric “I”, the continuity of a meaningful experience can no longer be recognized. And in the worlds projected by consciousness, the expressions of an integral self are no longer recognizable. Here the poet no longer presupposes the most familiar feelings and moods, in which the reader could find himself confirmed; rather, he demands that the
“hypocrite lecteur, mon semblable, mon frère” recognize himself in everything that his poetic alter ego knows how to bring to light in the unfamiliar, terrifying, or shameful from out of the “deepest and ultimate hell of the soul”.

Equally, the poet no longer presupposes a fixed reader, a reader to be confirmed by familiarity. Now that interiority has been rendered asubjective, the recognition by both reader and poet is of a domain that is common to both but belongs to neither. The domain of the poem is its own: a series of perceptions, a series of receptions that remain intrinsically asubjective. The subject that is constituted in this process is the subject of the poem, the subject of the Other. Here the question of dominance shifts from the consciousness of the reader/writer to the process of consciousness itself.

Within the domain of the subject of the poem, experience of facing an interiority that has been rendered asubjective is rendered by Baudelaire as unpleasant. In order to deal with Jauss' extended criticism of the “Spleen” poems, the text is given in full:

Spleen [II]

I have more memories than if I were a thousand years old.

A large chest of drawers cluttered with accounts,
With poems, love letters, legal briefs, songs,

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With thick locks of hair wrapped in receipts,
Conceals fewer secrets than my sad brain.
It's a pyramid, an immense vault,
That contains more dead than a communal grave.
— I am a cemetery abhorred by the moon,
Where, like remorse, long worms crawl
Who always work on my dearest dead.
I am an old boudoir full of faded roses,
Where a whole jumble of outmoded fashion lies,
Where plaintive pastels and wan Bouchers,
Alone, breathe in the scent of an uncorked bottle.

Nothing equals the halting days in length,
When, under the heavy flakes of the snowy years,
Boredom, fruit of gloomy incuriosity,
Takes the proportions of immortality.
— Henceforth you are no more, O living matter!
Than a block of granite surrounded by a vague terror,
Slumbering in the depths of a hazy Sahara!
An old sphinx ignored by a careless world,
Forgotten on the maps, and whose ill humor
Sings only to the rays of a sun that sets.¹

In his treatment of this poem, Jauss explores “The Poetic Text within the Change of Horizons of Reading . . .”. His aim is an “attempt to distinguish methodologically into three stages of interpretation that which normally remains undistinguished in the interpretive practice of philological commentary as well as textual analysis.” For Jauss:

¹ Translation as given by Jauss, pp. 149-50.
If it is the case there that understanding and interpretation as well as immediate reception and reflective exegesis of a literary text are at once blended in the course of interpretation, then here the horizon of a first, aesthetically perceptual reading will be distinguished from that of a second, retrospectively interpretive reading. To this I will add a third, historical reading that begins with the reconstruction of the horizon of expectations in which the poem “Spleen" inscribed itself with the appearance of the *Fleurs du mal*, and that then will follow the history of its reception or “readings” up to the most recent one, that is, my own. (p. 139)

While this present thesis is substantially in agreement with Jauss's experiment and with his larger aim of exploring the aesthetics of reception, in dealing with the various readings of the Baudelaire poem the aim will be to reveal aspects of the poem of immediate interest to our theme of the self and the other. At the same time, taking general account of Jauss's terms, this present reading will view itself as “the most recent one".

In establishing our own “horizon of expectations”, we can include the various readings presented by Jauss, but as well we can include the larger textual horizon of the surrounding series of spleen poems. The poem chosen by Jauss is poem two of a series of four spleen poems.¹

¹ The context of the “Spleen” poems needs to include a further series of spleen poems; several other poems were given this title in different versions, and several more, through specific references become involved in the spleen context.
While there is no way to establish whether the speaker in “Spleen [II]” is the same as the speaker in “Spleen [I]’, there is also no reason to assume another voice. The moods in the four poems vary as do the settings and content. It is therefore questionable whether the speaker in “Spleen [I]” should be allowed a dominance over the series. Equally, the four voices do not require four speakers to account for the variations between poems. There is sufficient continuity of material from the first poem to allow that material from one poem is anticipated by the other poems.

Spleen [I]

Pluviose, irritated by life in its entirety pours a dark cold in big drops from its urn onto the pale inhabitants of the neighbouring cemetery and [pours] mortality on the misty suburbs.

My cat on the tiles looking for a bed moves restlessly its thin and scabrous body. The soul of an old poet wanders in the gutter with the sad voice of a ghost sensitive to the cold.

The great bell complains and the smoky log accompanies in a high pitch the clock which has a cold, while in a game full of dirty perfumes, fatal inheritance from an old dropsical woman, the handsome jack of hearts and the queen of spades chat sinisterly of their defunct loves.¹

¹ Translation provided by Dr C.W.F. McKenna.
Here the cat-owning poet, alone in his rather traditional, if decadent, Romantic room, is faced with the traditional wet weather of isolation. Present is the theme of death in the form of the nearby cemetery; present too is normality, the fog-bound suburbs. As the opening to a series of mood poems, this piece is well set for a major statement of life triumphing over death, of energy winning out, of hope springing eternal, of the poet, faced with doubt about his own abilities, again in the present finding his muse in language. Even a slight physical hope resides in “the handsome jack of hearts and the queen of spades”, or might reside, were it not for the sinister tone, the dominating atmosphere of spleen.

In this series the word “spleen” may present difficulties for modern readers. Jauss provides an explanation, part of which reads:

For the reader of our present time, the title “Spleen” discloses the horizon of an open, largely still-indeterminate expectation and, with this, initiates the suspense of a word's meaning that can only be clarified through the reading of the poem. For in today's German usage (and in French as well), “spleen” has sunk to the trivial significance of a “tick”, a “fixed idea”; it scarcely still allows one to suspect what sort of aura of singularity could be fitting for a person who presented his “spleen” as an attitude of wanting to be different in the face of his world. (p. 150)
In “Spleen [I]” the speaker feels that “Pluviose”, the god of rain, is out of spirits with life; the mouth of god is raining as an act of irritation; such is the state of mind of the speaker suffering “spleen”. Here the objective external reality, the other of nature, has become sinister. Jauss quotes Walter Benjamin: “Spleen exhibits experience in its bare essentials. With terror, the melancholic sees the world fallen back into a bare state of nature. No breath of pre-history surrounds it. No aura” (Jauss, p. 178). Without aura the rain is pouring down on those in graves and those in the suburbs alike. The other as nature can only be seen as malevolent, since there is no positive connection between the poet and that nature.

“The soul of an old poet wanders in the gutter with the sad voice of a ghost”; this ghost haunts the poet with the knowledge of a former power. To understand the full significance of this ghostly presence we need to look to an earlier spleen poem: “La Cloche Fêlée”. This poem was published with the title “Le Spleen” in April 1851. In “La Cloche Fêlée” the setting is almost identical to that of “Spleen [I]”.

The Cracked Bell

It is bitter-sweet, of a winter's night, sitting by the crackling, smoking fire, to listen to distant memories slowly rising to the sound of the chiming angelus singing through the fog.

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1 Benjamin's comments reflect the circumstances of the poet-speaker across the four poems rather than just in “Spleen [II]”. 
Happy is the strong-throated bell which despite its great age is still alert and hale, and faithfully voices its pious call, like some old veteran keeping watch in his tent.

But, as for me, my soul is flawed, and when, with all its cares, it would fain fill the night's chill air with its hymns, most often its faded voice sounds like the thick death-rattle of a wounded soldier, who lies there forgotten near a pool of blood, beneath a great pile of dead, and who dies, without stirring, despite his tremendous efforts.²

It is the ghost of this poem that haunts, in “Spleen [I]”, the now hopeless poet. No longer are there even the structural possibilities of comparison. Where in “The Cracked Bell” it was possible for memories to be called by the chiming angelus, in “Spleen [I]” all that remains is the complaint of the bell, the droning. As a former inhabitant of a world in which nature was a reciprocal other, the poet in the gutter is an outcast. Inside the presumably warm room the poet suffering spleen keeps no watch, nor does he die like a wounded soldier. His bell is not cracked; something more fundamental has occurred to deprive him of his imaginative powers.

The extent of this loss is made evident when we compare the earlier (and famous) poem “Correspondances” with “Spleen [I]”. In “Correspondances” the temple of nature includes amongst its delights

“perfumes fresh and cool as the bodies of children”. These aspects of nature
“chant the ecstasies of the mind and sense” (Scarfe, pp. 36-7). In “Spleen [I]"
the perfumes have become dirty and the correlatives exclude the poet from the
temple of nature. In happier days, in the poem “Le Chat”, the cat featured as a
prompt for “the image of the woman I love”. This cat was handsome and had
an “electric body”. The poet invited it to “stretch on my loving heart” (Scarfe,
p. 50). In “Spleen [I]” the cat, like the ghost of the poet, is alienated. Because
of this knowledge of alienation the poet's emotion of spleen is an emotion that
implicates identity. Knowing that his present relationship with nature differs
from a former relationship inclines the speaker, in his spleen, to “an attitude of
wanting to be different in the face of his world”. Like Hamlet, though, his time
is out of joint; the clock is bronchial (infected by the mood). In “La Béatrice"
the poet-figure, while wandering through “ashen fields, burnt to a cinder” and
“lamenting to Nature”, hears the voices of “depraved demons” “chuckling and
whispering”:

Let us gaze our fill on this mockery of a man, this Hamlet's
understudy, imitating his poses, with his distraught gaze and
unkempt hair. Isn't it an awful shame to see this epicure, this
pauper, this unemployed actor, this oddfellow, just because he
knows how to play his part like a professional, trying to
interest the eagles, crickets, streams, and flowers in his song of
woe, and even bellowing his public tirades at us, who invented
all that mumbo-jumbo ourselves? (Scarfe, pp. 52-3)

The “mumbo-jumbo” has become reflexive.
In “Spleen [I]” the “old dropsical" woman has handed her “fatal inheritance" onto the poet. The poses are all now part of a catalogue that is tainted by the affect of spleen. There is no real investigation of the sources of this affect. The theme is outlined in such an excessive way that the reader too is external to the speaker's world. The allegoric aspect appears as an adornment on the part of the poet, as a reflection of his excessive emotions and as an attempt, through the estranging language of hyperbole, to regain a dominance over his state of mind. Being able to attribute irritation to the rain, he is relieved, to some extent, of the necessity of investigating the source of the emotion. Equally, being able to invest the tatty set of cards with a history that is internal to the allegorized card-characters puts the poet in a position of power. His imagination, as evidenced by the rhetoric, is still present.

The price of this shift to the allegoric is well known by Baudelaire. As Benjamin points out, “The allegorical mode of intuition is always built upon a devalued world of appearances. The specific devaluation of the world of things that lies in the commodity is the foundation of the allegorical intention in Baudelaire” (Jauss, p. 178). In expanding on Benjamin's insights, Jauss writes:

What has radically changed between the baroque and the modern because of the social and economic process may be read out of the transformed experience of nature: whereas the melancholy of the baroque allegorist responds
to an experience of transience, “which values history as natural history or, more precisely, as the ‘Passion story of the world’", the spleen of the modern allegorist responds to a condition of the commodity-producing society that — in a view of a ceaseless technical development — no longer allows one to still experience the thoroughly reified world as nature. What distinguishes Baudelaire’s spleen from the age-old taedium vitae is the consciousness of this self-alienation that has appeared, a feeling “that corresponds to a permanent catastrophe”, a “naked terror” wholly different from Victor Hugo’s “cosmic horror”. (Jauss, p. 178)

Spleen discloses the world as thing but a thing that owes no reciprocal relation to man or to man’s perception. This is an anti-haiku thing, an existential confrontation that negates the historical relationship with nature but provides no renewal experience. The voice the speaker hears is of another man, in another time and place: it is a ghost; it haunts. There is nothing natural about the thing experienced; even the cat’s normal behaviour is an affect rather than an effect. The opening in the allegorical pose is both an admission of the failure of the original relationship and an acknowledgement of the responsibility of the poet for the original reification in which the rainy season could be treated in some poetic way that saw human experience as part of a natural system. The other has become an-other — a thing, like all things.
In this state of mind, the speaker in “Spleen [II]” sets out to explore the other of this an-other, the world of his memories: “I have more memories than if I were a thousand years old”. This “I”, contrary to Jauss’s reading (Jauss, p. 150), is known to the reader of the “Spleen” series. As “Spleen [I]” opened with the allegorical figure of “Pluviose”, so “Spleen [II]” opens with the allegorical “I”. Like Pluviose, the speaker is to be seen as larger than life, as specifically larger than a person with a thousand years of memory. But this larger “I” is already known to us as the affected character from “Spleen [I]”, the figure isolated by rain, contemplating “a game full of dirty perfumes”. Freed, by spleen, from his immediate environment, the lyric “I” of the poem “Spleen [II]” is freed from the personal objects of that world: the “large chest of drawers cluttered with accounts,/ With poems, love letters, legal briefs, songs”. These now are like the players in the card game, they are distant, as things they are sinister.

What the lyric “I” in “Spleen [II]” can identify with is the ownership of memories. He turns his attention away from an external reality that might confirm his epic identity, his sense of himself as a person moving through time, one thing after another, and coming, through kairosis, to the fulfilment in time of himself as an achieved self. This achievement lies before him in its stasis as a series of objects, one thing upon another cluttered in a large chest of drawers.
The cabinet metaphor is then opposed to the metaphor of the pyramid. His “sad brain” is “a pyramid, an immense vault”. Having been alienated by spleen from a personal epic identity, he takes on a larger, impossible epic identity as the supreme metaphor of stasis, the pyramid. Filled with dead, like the cemetery of “Spleen [I]”, the poet's mind contains even “more dead than a communal grave”. As the keeper of memories that now own no externality, no sensible dimension that reciprocates, he suffers his memories as an object freed and thus limitless. There is nothing he cannot remember in the sense that his memories are not tied to the identity of their holder. His dearest dead are especially worked on by remorse, but there is no part of his memory that is not attacked. Equally all that he can remember is clouded by the image of death. As Jauss puts it:

. . . the far-reaching movement of memory can evidently grasp only what is dead. It culminates in the past-become-stone of the pyramid, and in the heap of bones of the mass grave. Does the decay of memory into a remembrance that contains only what is dead accordingly allow us to understand what “spleen" can mean for the lyric “I”?

. . . . .

The lyrical “I” undertakes again and again the attempt to identify itself, in that it poses one comparison after another and then takes them back. Will this movement come to an end, and will the “I” perhaps arrive at itself? (Jauss, pp. 154, 155)
Anticipating that the attempt to assert the “I” of identification in “I am a cemetery abhorred by the moon” will succeed, the reader might expect that this is the end of the quest. Jauss writes:

this expectation is not fulfilled. The unrest that, even in that imagery, had not been thoroughly pacified . . . takes the upper hand once again. As if this ‘I’, driven by an inexplicable motivation — is it doubt, anxiety, or a certain unnamed suffering? — must always seek its identity in a different realm of used-up time, it now reaches out toward a space that conjures up a new parade of memories. It is an old boudoir, with decor within it that allows one to recall the old bureau . . . .

(Jauss, p. 156)

One more attempt is made to re-identify the “I”: “I am an old boudoir full of faded roses”. Now the speaker has achieved an identification with the room of “Spleen [I]”; he has internalized the affect. Following this internalization there is no further “I” in the poem: the lyric subject has become fixed. But in place of the “I” there appears the “you”. With the fixing of the “I” there is a consequential fixing of the other: “Henceforth you are no more, O living matter!/ Than a block of granite surrounded by a vague terror”. Who exactly is this “you”? Jauss offers this account:

Is it a matter of a self-address in the pathetic “you”-form, or does this “you” mean another person? What does
“matière vivant” mean? Is it man as a living being, opposed to matter; is it a figure in the still unrecognized metamorphoses of the lyric subject; or is it the part of his corporeal appearance that stands opposed to the “I” in its spiritual existence? (Jauss, p. 159)

While this other, whatever its relation to the self, is turned to stone, it is turned to an object of contemplation and an object of curiosity. The block of granite is no sooner laid down in the sand of the Sahara than it turns to “An old sphinx”. This sphinx, while out of the way and in ill humor, nonetheless is able to sing, if only to a setting sun.

Having achieved some kind of ending that appears to promise a positive outcome, the reader might be forgiven for not wishing to re-enter the poem. The inability of the lyric “I” to establish an identity that could be sustained in the “Spleen [II]” poem is disturbing. If the lyric “I” is to be finally re-constellated as the other in the form of the sphinx, the lyric “I” is, as an identity, a fearful burden. Unable to be any object that is contemplated, the consciousness of the lyric “I” rejects the objects of its contemplation. There is no one object that is able to establish a self-sustaining subject, no object to guarantee the identity of the observer. Jauss comments:

Through its being set off like a preamble, the first verse awakens the expectation that memory could constitute the principle that establishes the unity of all the evocations, and further, that it could prove to be the origin of the spleen,
of that enigmatic state of mind of the “I" who is speaking. At first the type and manner of the evocations does in fact seem to correspond to this expectation. For remembering here leads neither to the happiness of time refound nor to the melancholy suffering of the “no longer”. Remembering evidently begins here with a gesture of self-transcendence, which then unquestioningly turns into doubt as the various and always fruitless attempts of the lyric “I" to refind himself in a past then only present him with the view of a world of things that is emptied of meaning. Within this process, the lyric “I" as well can no longer remain self-integral in the mode of a self-certain subject. . . . when the vanished “I" is finally apostrophised once again in the grammatical person of the _tu_, the lost identity is also apparent in the fact that the “I" that no longer has or is anything has one last and enduring identification imposed upon it by the anonymous and unrecognizable authority of this apostrophe — the identification with an _il_, the sphinx as third person. Accordingly we can no longer consider memory as the principle that establishes unity; it already succumbs to an obscure power against which the lyric subject as well evidently cannot maintain the integrity of its consciousness of itself as an “I" — so that both memory and autonomous subject are at once destroyed. (Jauss, pp. 163-64)

Although Jauss conjoins the epic and lyric aspects of identity in this poem, it is evident that, with regard to the approach to identity taken in the present thesis, the lyric subject of “Spleen [II]" is really an epic subject. Faced with time in its two identity aspects, the subject is unable
to maintain an ego-centre in the world of its contemplation. Memory, as the
object of its attention, comes in the form of an accumulation of objects and in
the form of the monotony of “the halting days in length”.

Unable to “rebuild the collapsed world within the imaginary” (Jauss, p.
165), the ego is faced with an anxiety that Jauss compares to “the
phenomenologically oriented psychiatry of anxiety-psychoses”:

Anxiety is described there as the collapse of the primordial
situation, that is, of the construction of the world from out of
the “I''-body centre; the consequence of this collapse is the
destruction of the certainty our senses derive from our spatial
and temporal experience. After the body has lost its anchoring
in the world in the catastrophe of anxiety, the following
symptoms appear: one's own space and alienated space
collapse together; proximity and distance can invert themselves;
in the middle of the world available for experience, a locus of
corporeal emptiness can delimit itself that can no longer be
disclosed by one's own body, but rather is experienced as the
vertex of an infinite vanishing line; the fragmentation of the
natural experience of time manifests itself in an emptied “time
without forgetfulness”; and finally, the loss of orientation that
is heightened to the point of world-catastrophe tends to be
compensated for by the psychotic in seeking to rebuild his lost
world in the imaginary, in producing delusive spatial images
among which the prison has predominant significance. (Jauss,
pp. 166-7)
The lyric “I” fails to engage in any way a substantial self apart from memory, and it is this failure that leads to the final fixing of the ego in the position of sphinx. In place of the subject there is a block of stone that can only sing to time passing, to the ending of things. Remembering Kermode's distinctions between the fulfilled epic identity that is evident when time is seen as kairos (fulfilment in time), and the unfulfilled epic identity when time is seen as chronos (one thing following another), we can say that the subject in “Spleen [II]” is an unfulfilled epic subject. With the collapse of time and space, the unfulfilled epic subject has been imprisoned in this identity.

Jauss points out the failure of the sphinx to function as “the last in the series of `metamorphoses' of the lyric `I'”:

Talk of “metamorphoses” presupposes the representation of an organic transformation of a preserved, substantial identity of the subject, and it is therefore not appropriate to the experience of the lyric “I” in this “Spleen” poem, an “I” that precisely loses its substantial identity as a subject step by step. Its path of experience is therefore also not defined through a continuous transformation of forms of the alien world and of one's own person that, even in its fall, would leave the suffering self with the final refuge of

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1 See Chapter Two.
2 The list of enclosed spaces in the “Spleen” series is instructive. Beginning with images of the final prison, the grave (in “Spleen [I]”), and ending (in “Spleen [IV]”) with the skull, the poet-speaker is continuously disclosing both imprisoning spaces and imprisoning times to account for the affect of spleen. The sphinx, as an example of an historical and cultural enormity, reflects the enormity of the affect.
an opposing or otherwise excluded standpoint. The path of experience under the spell of spleen is much more conditioned through a discontinuous reversal of the “I” into a non-”I”, of the most proper into the most alien; the boundary between inside and outside collapses, and what was internally sublated can now return from outside as a foreign power in which the “I” can no longer recognize the alienation of itself. (Jauss, pp. 167-68)

Counting on memory, the power of more than a thousand years, counting on the wealth of recollections, counting on simply counting, the subject is absorbed by the memories rather than sustained or substantiated. The anxiety, the affect of spleen, reverses both the biographic updating and the attempt to assert memory itself as a creative force able to reconstitute the subject in its own image. The failure of the organic transformational project is a failure of the identity rhetoric of the epic subject. No amount of evidence provided by memory as content or structure will redeem the epic subject in this mood. The further creative powers of the imagination are driven away from the failed subject towards the objects, towards the other. The foreign quality attained is the result of the affect.

In the next spleen poem, “Spleen [III]”, the dramatic subject is treated in a similar way. Here the speaker sees himself as “like the king of a rainy country”, an image that surely takes us back to the weather of “Spleen [I]”: 
Spleen [III]

I am like the king of a rainy country,
Rich, but powerless (impotent), young and nevertheless very old,
Who, scorning the bows of his tutors,
Gets bored with his dogs as with other animals.
Nothing can make him gay, neither game nor falcon,
Nor his people dying in front of the balcony.
The grotesque ballad of the favourite fool
Doesn't entertain any longer the forehead of this cruel ill person;
His bed with the *fleurs-de-lis* turns into a tomb,
And the ladies, for whom every prince is handsome,
Don't know how to find a sexy dress
To provoke a reaction from this young skeleton.
The knowledgeable man who makes his gold
Has never been able to extirpate the corrupted element from his being.
And in these baths of blood which come to us from the Romans
And which in their old days the powerful remember,
He has not known how to warm up this stupid corpse
Where runs instead of blood the green water of Lethe.³

This time the identity structure that is tested is that of the dramatic subject.
The atmosphere is pictorial, set on a painterly stage with action frames highlighting the various projects of the subject in his attempt to

³ Translation provided by Dr C.W.F. McKenna.
regain social identity that requires action to prove its continued existence. Unless he can rise from his bed and function as the king of his country, he will lose this identity. The various rituals he engages in are historical in their origins; such methods have been tried, or are recorded as having been tried, through history. None of the physical qualities he possesses are of use to him. He is negated in his action-based identity. The collection of activities that previously lent him character are now excluded by the affect of spleen. The position of the subject in this poem, in relation to the other members of his world, is a clear example of the traditional theme of *taedium vitae* and therefore appears to fall outside of the questions being raised by Jauss. Why, next to a poem that treats the romantic subject in such startlingly new ways (“Spleen [II]”), should Baudelaire return to a traditional approach (“Spleen [III]? Equally, why should “Spleen [I]” and “Spleen [IV]” be traditional in most respects?

The question is inappropriate. The approach taken by Jauss is what should be questioned. Simply treating the theme of identity in one poem out a series of four, all of which deal with the theme of identity, is to distort what is new in Baudelaire's treatment of the lyric subject. Within all the contortions of identity in the “Spleen” series, the lyric speaker may be seen to outline a distinctive lyric identity within each poem. This series of identities falls within the reflexive programme as laid down by the demons in “La Béatrice”. In the series the poet is attempting to empty these various programmed poses and achieve a new
lyric identity. What forestalls Jauss's appreciation of the full series, and skews what he selects for discussion from the series, is his preference for a memory-based model of identity. The action-based model of identity is the specific theme of “Spleen [III]”. In “Spleen [IV]”, as we shall see, the specific theme is the lyric subject as a constellation.

In “Spleen [II]” the memory-based identity fails to be sustained. In “Spleen [III]” the dramatic identity fails to be recovered through the various cause-and-effect methods normally used to revive those suffering deep depression. Had Baudelaire lived longer, Sylvia Plath's image of shock therapy would no doubt have been added to the list of remedies for an affect that disables the most obvious of our identities. Here, suffering the loss of dramatic identity, the other members of his world aggressively set out to restore him, through various katharttic processes, to his former self. The alchemist, if he were to succeed, would not transform the king, but merely remove the corrupted element, the thrust of his remedy being to preserve the original identity.

In “Spleen [II]” the kairosis was sought through an attempt to rearrange the relationship between the subject and his accidents, between the substantial self and a series of events. When the events in this series arise as unattached memories, they amount to “a pyramid, an immense vault,/ That contains more dead than a communal grave”. At the end of “Spleen [II]” the subject, the would-be-substantial self, has become the accident of its own objects of attention; the roles have been swapped;
the causal chain has been snapped. Substantial identity now appears as an accident, a non-defining aspect of the sphinx. Whatever memory chooses the subject becomes; the affect rules.

The following is a literal translation of “Spleen [IV].”

When the low and heavy sky weighs like a lid
On the groaning spirit, a prey to long tedium,
When, embracing all the horizon,
It pours upon us black day, far gloomier than nights;

When earth is changed into a humid dungeon,
In which Hope, like a bat,
Flits to and fro, beating the walls with its timid wing
And knocking its head against the rotted beams;

When the rain deploying its immense shafts
Mimics [imitates, has the look of] the bars of a vast prison,
While a silent race of loathsome (heinous) spiders
Comes and stretches their meshes into the depths of our brains,
Bells suddenly leap in frenzy
And hurl a ghastly howl toward the sky,
As would [a host of] wandering homeless spirits
Who stubbornly start their wailing.

— And long hearses, without drums or music,
Slowly file through my soul; Hope,
Vanquished, weeps, and fierce, despotic Anguish
Plants his black banner upon my drooping skull.¹

The speaker appears to inhabit the same physical as well as emotional world as in the first three poems. What is immediately apparent is the inclusion of a listener in the dramatic structure: the heavy sky “pours upon us”. The plural pronouns can be initially treated as part of the grand metaphysical and elemental substructure of the poem.

The imagery of “Spleen [IV]” is stark when compared with the other three poems in the series. Where they supply a wealth of images, even if the wealth is decadent, in “Spleen [IV]” the world of the speaker is reduced from the particular to the universal. The embroidered medieval tableau of “Spleen [III]” is replaced by the stark imagery of the skull as prison. The inclusion of others in this world can be evaluated as an attempt on the part of the speaker to gain the agreement of his audience; his approach has the quality of uncertainty; the rhetoric urges towards conviction through the repeated insistence of “when”. It is in the speaker's interest to gain agreement from his listener about the qualities of the world he is describing. Unless the reader, as acknowledging other, agrees to the reality of the landscape brought on by spleen, then the speaker's case is at risk. The speaker's substantiation is conditional on the reader as the one who represents, for the speaker-poet, “the Other

for him''. There is recognized in the reader (“in the gap opened up by the effect of the signifiers”) an aspect of the Other.

The reader functions as part of Lacan's other, as part of “the site of the intersubjectivity of patient and analyst, and hence the analytic dialogue. `The Other is the locus in which is constituted the I who speaks with him who hears' " (Lemaire, p. 157). While there are very real differences between the dialogue of analysis and the “monologue" of the lyric poem, the presumptions of a participating other are found in both structures. Within analysis the dialogue exists only when the locus is attended to by both participants. When the analysand speaks as the analysand, it is into the gap. When the analysand speaks as an individual, it is into the referential domain of language and, while he may seek the attention of another, his speech act does not require an other. The same is true in the case of the lyric “monologue" established in “Spleen [IV]". The inability of the reader to reply to the “monologue" is not a crucial factor for the reader's perception of the locus. The dominant position of the speaker in the speech act is revealed in “Spleen [IV]" as being secondary in the relationship. It is the speaker's role to initiate the implied dialogue; it is his responsibility to direct the passage of the communication. Within the exchange, the desire of the self (speaker) is recognized by the other (listener) through a recognition of the Other (as found in the “gap opened up”). Without this recognition by the reader there is no locus and the poem amounts to a referential statement of emotions.
Through an implication of the reader's imagination, the speaker involves the reader in the central concerns of the poem. The speaker moves the focus of the poem from the broad horizon, first to the interior of a humid dungeon in which a bat beats its head against the rotting timbers, then to the falling rain. The rain visually completes the prison. By the time the plural pronoun is repeated the reader is imaginatively part of the world being described; he is part of the Other formed as locus of the poem. It now is in “the depths of our brains” rather than the depths of the speaker's brain that the experience of spleen is taking place.

While all the “Spleen” poems implicate a reader, only “Spleen [IV]” draws the reader, as other, into the poetic plane and requires the reader to function as part of the Lacanian Other of language. The identity of the speaker is established as part of a relationship with the reader within the experience being described. Identity is lyric, in that there is no assumed substantial identity with a series of accidents, as in the case of the epic identity, and no reality that is the effect of a cause as is the case in dramatic identity. The experience of the poem, as a thing in itself, accounts for the identity complex of speaker and listener. The speaker offers no historical account beyond the statement that the spirit has been “prey to long tedium”. The affect of the heavy, imprisoning sky is part of the speaker's reciprocal relationship with the external world. His mood is not brought on by the rain; the rain provides
him with the correlative which, far from releasing him, drives him further into the affect.

The psychological location of the poem is the “soul”; the physical location is the skull. The metaphoric equivalent is of a person locked indoors by rain. Within this metaphoric prison there is great activity, in stark contrast to the slumbering imagery of the other “Spleen” poems. In “Spleen [I]” no action is performed by the speaker, the only real action being that of the restless cat. In “Spleen [II]” the only action is metaphoric: “long worms” that crawl “like remorse”. In “Spleen [III]”, while there are plenty of actions alluded to, the whole point of the poem is the inability of the speaker to leave the tomb of his bed. In “Spleen [IV]” the bat beats the walls and knocks “its head against the rotted beams”. Here the action, while remaining metaphoric, is nonetheless in strong contrast to the previous “Spleen” poems.

“Bells suddenly leap in frenzy/ And hurl a ghastly howl toward the sky”. These opening lines to stanza four of “Spleen [IV]” establish a sharp division in the poem. Following the first three stanzas, that lulled the reader with the repeated opening of “quand”, we suddenly are confronted with “des cloches”. Immediately after the webs of the “loathsome spiders” have been stretched “into the depths of our brains”, and as if in response to this horrifying image, we are shaken awake by the startling announcement of the howling bells.
The status of this howling of bells needs to be questioned. Common to all the “Spleen” poems is the presence of a cemetery nearby. The silent procession of “long hearse” that ends “Spleen [IV]” reminds us again of the speaker's proximity, in the physical world that surrounds the metaphysical world described in the poem, to a “real” cemetery. The sudden shock of bells could belong to either world, and both worlds. We see this doubleness in the way the speaker-listener relationship is developed from this point on. No longer is the speaker concerned with the locus of the dialogue. His language, from the announcement of the bells, violates the otherwise uniform normality of the earlier stanzas. We move from the controlled imagery of shafts of rain mimicking “the bars of a vast prison” to the shock of frenzied bells howling. In the fourth stanza the listener is presented with a display of the affect in language, with what Kristeva terms a semiotic excess.

The poem, following the speaker, falls into the semiotic dimension of language rather than falling out into the real world surrounding the speaker. There are frequent accounts from Zen Buddhism of students lost in despair (or simply meditation) being suddenly called back to reality by the ringing of the monastery bell. This shock from an external sensory source re-establishes the relationship of the subject to his world and thus re-constellates the subject as a subject in world of subjects and objects. The speaker in “Spleen [IV]” is hurled further into the affect, further away from any external reality, and further away from the reality of the Other as locus and the other as focus.
Stanza five, the final stanza, sees the announcement of the subject through personal possessive pronouns: “my soul”; “my drooping skull”. The speaker, as it were, owns up to his own madness. He separates himself from the listener and announces his fate rather than implicating the listener in this fate. The bat of Hope has been defeated by “despotic Anguish”. Anguish, the victorious general, is metaphorically identified with the “race of loathsome spiders”. These spiders, as the troops of Anguish, are part of the system of neurotic knowledge (to use Lacan’s terms) that inhabits the speaker's mind and inhibits any alternative outcome. To follow Kristeva's model, no zero state is reached. There is no return of the subject with new knowledge. The kenosis is avoided or fails, the affect dominates and the lyric subject is trapped within the meshes of a constellation ruled over by Anguish.

Are there other possible outcomes? Again the question of differences between art and therapy arises. It is not the business of aesthetics or literary theory to re-organise the consequences within literary works. “Spleen [IV]” ends as it ends. In doing so it raises the issue of the value of the aesthetic experience as an experience separate to the content of the work or object actually experienced. Can the value of the experience of a work of art be judged independently of the content of the work of art? Can a poem that portrays an outcome of anguish leave the reader with a different aesthetic experience?
Because of its obviously constructed form and the attention it draws to its form, the work of art acquires aesthetic distance. In being able to produce a poem about spleen, the poet must, of necessity, have been in some other state at the time of writing. The distance required to construct the poem is essential to and constitutive of the poem. In dealing with this aspect of “Spleen [II]” Jauss writes:

If this biographic-psychological excursus [provided by Jauss] serves to identify world-anxiety as a possible latent origin of “Spleen”, then now it is a matter of pursuing the poetic objectification of such world-anxiety in the course of which — as is to be expected — the poem increasingly transcends its psychopathological substratum. In its literary representation, anxiety is always anxiety that has already been mastered in the achievement of form through aesthetic sublimation. Just as Baudelaire's poem knows how to bring into language the most extreme alienation of the consciousness that has been overpowered by anxiety, it in fact brings about its own catharsis. (Jauss, p. 167)

In “Spleen [IV]” the anguish has already been mastered in the sense of having been brought within a form. The pattern that is then established by the poet is the pattern of most obvious concern to aesthetics and literary theory. The failed kenosis is a feature of this pattern that reveals further information for the reader as it establishes a pattern of involvement and exclusion that more deeply defines the anguish than otherwise would be possible. It is not a fault of the poem that some
external theoretical model of therapy or art has not been matched. Rather, through attention to the structure of the poem, we are able to uncover more about both the poem and possible theoretical models than if we were to propose an expected outcome.

Drawn into the locus of the Other, through involvement, the reader becomes the focus as the other of an “us” and an “our”. Excluded from this focus by the swing away by the speaker, the reader is relocated at a different focus. Now the reader becomes the other as an alien, but an alien with insight, an alien other who still features in the locus. Language continues and the locus, having been established, remains in spite of the distance instigated by the speaker. The reader is called to attend differently.

Within this dialogue the distance between speaker and listener is firstly confirmed in the common pronouns as a distance that can lyrically be altered through identification (a “we” is achieved). Following this illustration of identification the listener is confirmed in his separateness through the shift of the speaker into a subjectivity that requires witnessing rather than identification (“my soul” as opposed to “your soul”). The excessive language informs the listener of this asserted subjectivity without denying the locus. Now at the centre of the constellation between listener and speaker is the subjectivity of the speaker. Drawn into a circle of his own describing, the speaker hails his other as guarantor of the identity. As an informed observer, as a
qualified and identified other, the listener provides a support for the alienated subjectivity of the speaker. There is recognition of the gesture.

In the case of “Spleen [IV]" the self of the speaker is not kenotically lost and recovered in the complex self-other relationship. This very failure is what the poem is about, not in the sense of illustrating the speaker's failure, but in the sense of the listener's coming to see the failure as implicating him in the process. This implication is not a moral one but rather an implication of identification: the speaker and the listener are seen as caught in the kenotic process as participants in the self-other relationship of the lyric identity. The cost of such a possible relationship is the seeing of the lyric subject through the perspective of the Other as the focus. It is the listener who is offered the kenotic possibility of seeing the speaker differently: thus the listener is transformed within his identity through the participation of the identity processes of the other, whether these processes succeed or fail. A larger subjective space is opened which is the space of Lacan's Other as the locus. Within this space or gap, the Other becomes the focus as well as the locus.

It is only to another that this reality of the lyric subject can be shown, not as a confession but as the portrayal of the lyric subject in one of its fundamental modes of being. It is only in this enlarged space that the subject can experience this aspect of its identity which is to be for another.
The significance of Lacan's views to this thesis now become obvious. All language is a relationship with the other and through this relationship a relationship with the Other. The special instances of language illustrated by psychotherapy and lyric poetry point to the relationship of the subject with the other as being one of the subject's three ways of knowing himself as a subject. These three ways (self-object, self-Self, self-other) have been investigated in the last three chapters. While no one of these ways is given priority, the special linguistic features of the self-other relationship, looked at in this chapter, imply a more difficult area of concern, an area that refuses to remain within the bounds of any one field of study.

Kenosis looked at as the loss of the self is perhaps the most approachable aspect of the kenotic process in current literary and psychological theory. The subject has been lost with great fanfare from the modern stage. The transformational aspects of kenosis are perhaps less fashionable. However, the recuperated subject is a project that is carried on daily without any need for academic research. Within language are found both the ideological and the kenotic aspects of the loss of the subject. We are constantly being called, as subjects, into the opening that language forms as a locus for the identity of both the self and the other. The special opportunities afforded by lyric poetry amount to a celebration of the fundamental significance of language to identity.
Within “Spleen [IV]” we, as readers, participate in the recognition of self, other, and Other, through the identity possibilities offered by the lyric. The disclosure of the reader, as the representative of the Other and as the focus of the speaking subject, is a disclosure allowed only through the doubleness of the lyric identification. The focus of identification is a focus that shifts around the centre of a disclosed Other. The business of aesthetic kenosis is the disclosure of the Other. The gap opened up through language remains in the lyric while ever the lyric identity is found as a constellation. The speaker neither draws close nor recedes; inside the identification is found the constellation which is, of necessity, disjunctive.

How this disclosure of the Other in language may be employed by the poet to directly implicate the reader as the subject of the poem is what we must now investigate. The cognitive value of kenosis is elucidated only when the reader becomes, through the identity structure of the poem, the subject within the poem. It is within this pattern of reception that the responsibility for realizing the locus of the Other falls to the reader.
CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The present academic fascination with semiotics has left literary studies, in many instances, with a material object and a set of operations that offer an all but addictive activity. This is both an advantage and a disadvantage to an affective approach to literature. In the work of Jan Mukarovsky, as outlined by Robert C. Holub, the work of art is treated as a complex sign or “semiotic fact”. Through this approach Mukarovsky “is able to dismiss both the psychologizing theories that identified art with the artist’s or the perceiving subject's state of mind as well as theories that treat art merely as a reflection of social reality.” Holub writes:

And with these two hindrances removed, the work of art is placed in a propitious context for examining aesthetic response. Mukarovsky initiates such an investigation by looking more closely at the semiotic character of the artwork, which according to him functions in two ways: both as a communicative sign and as an autonomous structure. In its communicative aspect it is likened to parole (i.e. the actual manifestation of speech in a given language system). Mukarovsky cautions, however, that the entire work should be understood as the “message”; it should not be seen as a “content” enclosed in a meaningless container or “form”. ¹

Within this semiotic shift, Mukarovsky establishes what might best be described as the “sociological subject”, a subject that approaches the artwork through a series of social structures rather than through a series of psychological or phenomenological structures. Holub writes:

In Mukarovsky's theory the perceiving subject is not seen as an autonomous, idealized individual; he is neither an abstract phenomenological subject nor an ideal perceiver thoroughly acquainted with literary theory. Rather, the recipient is him/herself a product of social relations. Although Mukarovsky continues to use the singular form of “viewer” or “perceiver” in his writings, he stresses the collective process involved in the reception of art. (Holub, p. 32)

Through this approach, Mukarovsky seeks to shift the burden of intentionality from the stage of production to the stage of perception. The artist has no peculiar insight into intent and the producer, while concerned with the problems of making the artwork, is explicitly marked in his reading of intention in the work. Only as a perceiver, as an unmarked reader of the artwork, can the artist grasp intentionality.

Such a shift towards a “sociological subject” is not beyond the subject in process as described by Kristeva and the subject found in the locus of the other as described by Lacan. The sociological subject, while drawing attention away from the problems of the individual to the
problem of the group, is nonetheless drawn into the process of intention of the artwork. Shifting the ground of the subject away from the lyric aspects to the dramatic does not avoid the questions raised by the lyric subject. The collective subject is the Aristotelian subject, the audience conscious, in perception of the artwork, of the collective approach to the sign of art as sign.

The collective reception is a reception designated under the collective system of perception of signs. This is most apparent in the relative weight given to the perception of volatile signs in public and private art forms: different societies deal with the appropriate contents of each kind of art in different ways. Thus, what falls within the responsibility of an individual as subject-in-process may differ from one society to another.

What we can borrow from Mukarovsky is the notion of a sociology of the subject that defines the dimensions of the appropriate response to differing artworks. This allows that our lyric subject is able to engage, as a collective-subject-of-one (sociological subject), in the identity struggles that typify lyric poetry. Such a subject is perhaps a radically transformed subject, a subject that has found its centre shifted from an ego-focus of attention to a centre that is located at some indeterminate point in a text. Such a post-structuralist subject appears to be beyond the subject found in reception theory. As Holub points out:
The recourse to a reader almost inevitably involves a centring of critical focus on a human subject. This subject is then confronted with an object called the literary text, which is supposed to be read or interpreted in the reading process. As both a historical entity and a textual function, the reliance on a reader thus introduces the very subject-object dichotomy that has been recently decried for its metaphysical foundation. (Holub, p. 153)

But our search in this thesis has not been for some subject anterior to the text, some simple historical entity. The precise interest in this thesis has been in the identity structures that are structurally implicated by the various affects of literature. In the reader's relationship with the work of art the identity structure formed in each of the three genres has been treated as an aspect of the relationship and not as a presupposition of the relationship. The identity of the lyric subject is an identity that is found only in the reception of the lyric work. Such a subject is complex.

The response of such a reader, as subject in the process of reading, involves us here in the question of the so-called affective fallacy. As Stanley E. Fish in his *Self-Consuming Artifacts* points out the affective fallacy is, itself, a fallacy. When the stress falls on the apparent objectivity of the work then again the subject-object dichotomy is raised. The static nature of the object has provided literary criticism in particular with a field that invites the objectivity of the physical sciences. When we
look, as Fish does, at kinetic art, we are forced to take account of what he calls “the actualizing role of the observer”.\(^1\) Parallel with this forgetting goes the forgetting of the temporal nature of the reading experience. Reading as an activity implicates the reader in the process of the work as a work of art.

Fish stresses his concern “with the response that is the act of perception, the moment to moment experience of adjusting to the sequential demands of prose and poetry” (*Artifacts*, p. 427). In *The Living Temple* Fish attacks approaches to literature that avoid the reader's response as part of the work:

It is here that we run up against the limits of formalism, its inability to accommodate change as a genuine (that is independent) value. This is not to say that formalist critics cannot talk about change, but they can talk about it only as the property of a formal structure, and to talk about it in that way is to make it disappear. That is, if a poem is regarded as the unified realization of a single (and therefore stable) intention, then any changes in attitude or point of view can only be seen as the product of pre-planning, and are therefore not real changes at all. (If there is a change of mind, it can only be a character's in which case it is literally a fiction.) On the other side, change can only be given legitimacy by denying the reality of planning, that is, by asserting the absence of design.\(^2\)

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Unless identity within the work of art is considered as a process then these difficulties will remain. If any intention is deemed to lie outside the work then such an intention is a problem of the author, and of limited interest to a literary historian. In formulating the Lacanian Other as a locus of identity, the focus of which can shift, change as an intention of the work can be included within the response of a reader. It is precisely because, in the lyric, the reader is implicated as part of the Other that the changes within the focus of the lyric text can be seen to implicate the identity of the reader as subject within the shifts of focus. It was with some understanding of such a complex identity structure that we finished the last chapter.

Baudelaire might be said to have stumbled on a structure where the attention specifically shifts, within the locus of language as the Other, from the speaker as subject to the listener/reader as subject. In the work of George Herbert we can see the specific working-through of a consciousness of the listener as the subject. Such an intentional structure requires a response approach to illuminate the identity possibilities of a body of poetry founded on kenotic principles.

Much of this thesis has dealt with notions of the dialectic and the direct relationship between dialectical processes and kenosis has been pointed out. In the work of Stanley Fish these ideas are forcefully
related. In his opening chapter to *Self-Consuming Artifacts* ("The Aesthetic of the Good Physician"), the following thesis (his third) is outlined:

It follows then . . . that a dialectical presentation succeeds at its own expense; for by conveying those who experience it to a point where they are beyond the aid that discursive or rational forms can offer, it becomes the vehicle of its own abandonment. Hence, the title of this study, *Self-Consuming Artifacts*, which is intended in two senses: the reader's self (or at least his inferior self) is consumed as he responds to the medicinal purging of the dialectician's art, and that art, like other medicines, is consumed in the workings of its own best effects. The good-physician aesthetic, then, is finally an anti-aesthetic, for it dis-allows to its productions the claims usually made for verbal art — that they reflect, or contain or express Truth — and transfers the pressure and attention from the work to its effects, from what is happening on the page to what is happening in the reader. A self-consuming artifact signifies most successfully when it fails, when it points *away* from itself to something its forms cannot capture. (*Artifacts*, pp. 3-4.)

Fish's fourth thesis is a bold claim for the "affective reality of the reading experience". Such an affective reality, he claims, means that "the work as object tends to disappear". If, in the disappearing of the object, it is assumed that the simple subject also disappears as subject, then the affective approach to literary criticism offers a reinterpretation of both sides of the dichotomy within the dialectic of reading.
With attention directed to the reader, what becomes apparent is the nature of the locus that constitutes the Other of language. In this sense Fish's claim for reading is a larger claim for language itself. The reader, as the dialectical subject of the lyric, reveals language as the conveyor of identity, as the supreme caller in the appellation of concrete subjects. The lyric then is not the utterance of a subject: rather it is the place where, through language, the kenotic identity of the reader as subject is constellated. Formed within the dialectic, the lyric subject is itself a self-constructed and self-consuming subject. The self that is consumed is the constructed self of the poem, a self that comes into existence only in the process of reading. The effect that this construction and consumption has on any self other than the self constructed is most appropriately the business of religion or psychology.

The fact that some such relationship exists, between constructed lyric selves and selves exterior (anterior and/or posterior) to the process of reading, is still the possible business of the poem as process. Caught within the socially defined techniques of self, the reader of the lyric may be assumed, by a sociological approach, to be directly implicated in a future redressing of selves. Such a view is not required in order to acknowledge the dialectical and kenotic process of the lyric.

In his criticism of Fish's approach to Herbert's kenosis, John L. Klause seeks to re-establish, in Herbert's poetry, the priority of a
consistent and substantial self. Such a self, says Klause, has “its own value and rights, which he [Herbert] cannot believe God wishes to see dissolved”. While Herbert may wish to see false selves dissolved, true selves are to be preserved.

According to Fish, the aim and outcome of Herbert's poetic kenosis is “the undoing of the perceptual framework in which we live and move and have our separate beings”. This process involves:

the denying of the usual distinctions between “this” and “that” — a “making of one place everywhere” — and the affirmation of a universe where God is all. An inevitable consequence of this undoing is the gradual narrowing (to nothing) of the distance between the individual consciousness (of both speaker and reader) and God; that is, . . . the undoing of the self as an independent entity, a “making of no thine and mine” [“Clasping of Hands”] by making it all thine, a surrender not only of a way of seeing, but of initiative, will, and finally of being (to say “I am’’ is to say amiss). To the extent that this surrender is also the poet’s, it requires the silencing of his voice and the relinquishing of the claims of authorship, and therefore . . . an undoing of the poem as the product of a mind distinct from the mind of God. This undoing, or letting go, is an instance of what it means, in Herbert’s own words, to “make the action fine” [“The Elixir”] (by making it not mine). And finally, and inevitably, Herbert's poems are

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undone in still another sense when . . . the insight they yield ("thy word is all") renders superfluous the mode of discourse and knowing of which they themselves are example. (Artifacts, pp. 157-8)

This approach, surely, is not out of alignment with Klause's assertion that Herbert "had to accommodate to the ideal of kenosis two of his most basic instincts: that value is created by building rather than destroying and that 'there is a Justice in the least things', so that 'everything' is to be given 'its end'" (Klause, pp. 218-19). Along with this view goes the assumption that "When we forget ourselves, he [Herbert] believes, a God who cannot fail 'remembers for [us]', insuring that our true interests will be realized in spite of our inattention to them" (Klause, p. 221).

What is being contested by Klause is the anti-method put forward by Fish. If the kenotic process amounts to a renunciation of methodology then Herbert, says Klause, surely does not see it this way. According to Klause:

one cannot really unknow the truths or unappreciate the goods that are winked away. More significant, Herbert's understanding of truth as a process emphasizes the tentativeness, the incompleteness of any given moment in its realization. "Call me not an olive, till thou see me gathered", his proverb says. Call nothing truth, either, or renunciation, until its whole story has been told. Fulfilment will come for the individual only at the end of time . . . ,

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when that realization of potential will be *the whole truth*, the culmination of discrete moments of which *kenosis* has been only a transient one. Time is a gardener, not an executioner, his scythe a pruning knife, not an axe (“Time”). (Klause, p. 222)

Recognizable in this view is the Christian technology of the self described by Foucault in the previous chapter. There needs to be a substantial self at the end of time to accept the fulfilment. Without the ticket of identity the whole meaning of personal time cannot be redeemed. If the self has been eroded then this presentation cannot be made.

While the identity being talked of (by both Fish and Klause) remains as a conglomerate of the three generic identities outlined in this thesis, their debate remains a muddle. Klause attacks Fish's notion that perceptual and conceptual aesthetic structures are intended to function as “ladders to be dispensed with after being used to climb to a *moment* of insight and conversion” (Klause, p. 223). With no notion of a lyric self to account for the *moments* of time that are experienced as *moments of identity*, Klause's views on identity compel him either to argue for a *whole* self at some future point in time, or for no *whole* self at any point in time. With absolute assumptions about identity, identity becomes a problem of absolutes.
The parallel subversion of the self of the poet that Fish proposes running alongside the self-subversion of the poetic structure is not difficult to understand if we assume that the poet as self being talked about is the poet as poet within the structure of the poem. Fish writes:

How does one avoid saying amiss if language is itself a vehicle for the making of invidious distinctions? How can God's prerogatives be preserved if one produces sentences which automatically arrange persons and objects in hierarchical relationships of cause and effect? . . . we can begin by noting that Herbert baptizes language by making it subversive of its usual functions. In his poetry words tend to lose their referential fixity, and syntactical patterns often obscure the relationships they pretend to establish. In short, Herbert avoids saying amiss in an ultimate context by deliberately saying amiss in the context of a perspective he would have us transcend. *(Artifacts, p. 159)*

But, just as one instance of the subversion of syntax evidences the subversive power of poetry, so too it evidences the ability of language to contain its own subversion. Fish, in arguing for the “undoing of the self”, is arguing for the “undoing of the self as an independent entity”. Such a project is in alignment with Jung's view of a de-centred ego, and in alignment with Lacan's Other, where it is language that forms, in relation with an other, the locus of the Other, a locus in which the self is realised as other. Equally, within the process as described by Fish, we can see the semiotic project of Kristeva for a recuperated subject, for a subject in
process and on trial, such a subject being approached via the subversive aspects of language called on by Herbert.

What is evident in the work of Herbert is the necessity for the poet, within the poem, to be involved in the building of a place or space (through subversion of syntax) for the appearance of Lacan's Other; for language to become the *agon*. In becoming the *agon*, language does not acquire the ability to consume itself. Fish acknowledges “the difficulty, if not impossibility, of the self-consuming enterprise of Herbert's art” (*Artifacts*, p. 223). Subverted in and through its content, the lyric structure remains a positive. Subverted in and through its appearance, the lyric subject becomes a subject on trial, a trial that has no end in time. Unlike the epic identity that may experience fulfilment in time (or the experience of failure), the lyric identity remains, by definition, an experience of disjunction, an experience of being emptied and filled but remaining unfulfilled. Unlike the dramatic identity that may experience the transformation of the effect of a cause, the lyric identity remains provisional within its disjunctions; it remains humble before a centre that shifts; it remains conscious of the other as the focus of a space in which the self is other (and part of the Other as locus); it remains in awe of the object that at any time can, through identification, existentially confront the lyric subject with the preposterous proof of being.
Kenosis, as a transposed term, allows literary theory and criticism to approach the effervescent identity found in the lyric. Allowing that affects are part of the proper study of art, and allowing that affects have an objectivity equal to that of perception in general, the critic is required to include in his study the intentionality associated with affects. Locating this intentionality within the aesthetic object, the questions of the reception of a work become problems of identity.

While the three affects defined in this thesis, kenosis, katharsis, and kairosis, may be used in an inverted way to define the three broad genres, the aim of this thesis has not been to provide a defence for the three traditional broad genres. Readers, rightly or wrongly, bring expectations of affective experiences to works of art. There is a veil of intention, no matter how thin, in seeking any and every experience, especially aesthetic experiences. Knowing the distance inherent in the experience, the person setting out to see a play is establishing an intention that goes beyond simply wanting an experience. The more mature an audience, the more likely it is that the audience is able to formulate a lengthy series of distinctions between the kind of affects they expect. While these will tend to be comparative of narrative or stylistic aspects, it is equally not uncommon for audiences to have detailed genre expectations that evidence a knowledge of identity structures. The reader of the lyric engages in reading knowing the range of identity expectations that might be at issue in reading. According to Fish, the experienced
reader entering, as a reader, into the world of Herbert's poetry expects to be confronted with the issues of a knowing poet and a self-subversive poem.

To arrive at this point of knowledge, expectation and intention, the reader has had to acquire knowledge, through aesthetic experience. Such knowledge has been acquired, not in spite of the affect of the work but, it is argued, precisely through the experience of the affect. Here Aristotle answers Plato! If the work of art has no affect, then it is not a work of art, it is not an aesthetic object. Unless the aesthetic experience engages the questions of identity it is not an aesthetic experience but simply a sensory experience. Sensory experience, minus affect, is not the business of art. In its structure of distances, art manipulates affects to reveal the cognitive aspects of affects. In bringing to consciousness, through the affect, the burden of identity that adheres to all experience, the work of art reveals its full heuristic aspect. It is not through its message that it instructs, but through its affect that the knowledge is transmitted.
APPENDIX

BRECHT AND KATHARSIS

Amongst many important theories of literary katharsis which have been passed over without mention in this thesis, the views of Bertolt Brecht deserve some retrospective comment. Brecht set out to construct a theatre in contrast to what he conceived of as traditional Aristotelian theatre. For Brecht the consequences of traditional katharsis were counterproductive to the economy of revolutionary drama.

The fixed character at the centre of Aristotelian drama was locked into an identity that had its source and end in causes beyond its control. Such a view of the world specifically contradicts the Marxist views of process that lie behind Brecht's transformational theatre. For Brecht the world is material and separate to the individual but available to man's consciousness. In this world there is not only the possibility of change being brought about through human action: there is the revolutionary responsibility to bring about such change as is made possible through consciousness of the world. Katharsis, in asserting a causality that is

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1 The theories of Eisenstein might also have been mentioned. His views on the techniques for producing the affect are a direct commentary on the affect. By requiring an audience to shift attention, on the visual and psychological plains, between thesis and the anti-thesis, he looked for katharsis as a resolving final leap into another dimension. An excellent account of Eisenstein's approach in comparison with the epic tradition is given in John Kevin Newman's *The Classical Epic Tradition* (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986).
beyond the individual's control, is premised on the need for a balance that includes the social. Katharsis is the method by which equilibrium is established, re-established and maintained. It is the method by which a confirming action (involving emotions) replaces (or confuses) the questions of a substantial and independent identity (epic character).²

Built into such a kathartic system of balance is both a world view and a notion that causality (if not the causal sequence) is a reflection of some kind of tragic metaphysic (fate), a metaphysic underpinned by such absolute concepts as “Justice” or “Reason”. For Brecht such concepts are “infantile” in that they leave the audience in an infantile state of satisfaction. The power of the theatre to produce this sense of satisfaction with a world-order is most socially useful in times of social decay, when katharsis can be employed to disguise the true state of affairs and produce in a mass audience a feeling of harmony.

While Brecht argues against “the grotesque emphasis on the emotional” found in fascism, his arguments are not against emotions in drama. Rather, Brecht argues for a drama that locates emotions in the

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² It is interesting that Brecht's theatre does not really establish epic characters. What it does is attempt to establish an epic audience, an audience of responsible and substantial characters, each capable of bringing consciousness to bear on disclosed action.

³ “Über die Theatralik des Faschismus” (Der Messingkauf, Schriften V, p. 92). All Brecht translations are from Frederic Ewen, Bertolt Brecht: His Life, his Art and his Times (London: Calder & Boyars, 1967). Ewen's views are generally followed in this brief look at Brecht's theories.
same dialectical order as ideas. Emotions are to be subjected to questioning and correction.

Brecht's “non-Aristotelian” poetic was an attempt to purge katharsis of its socially reconciling aspects. To achieve the desired transformation of the audience's reception of emotions, Brecht called on a concept of estrangement. In his revision of Marxist “alienation” Brecht's aim was to alter the estranged audience's fundamental pattern of reception of social reality. Ewen writes:

. . . there is positive alienation: that necessary early stage in man's development from a creature and slave of nature to its partial master — that self-division which occurs when man separates himself from nature, as its product, and through consciousness and work makes himself its potential ruler. It is his natural advance from “magic”, “myth”, and “anthropomorphism” — that is, slavery to the inscrutable forces, into a determinate of those forces. Chance gives way to order and predictability; the gods are at first humanized, then “naturalized” and Prometheus surrenders to the lightning-rod. Man becomes capable of looking objectively not only on Nature but into himself, and of analyzing his own thought processes. This, too, is positive “alienation”. (p. 220)

From the treatment of Hegel's notions of “alienation” in the present thesis, it should be obvious that the kind of positive alienation looked for by Brecht is already to be found inside Hegel's philosophy. What Brecht
as a dramatist is seeking to do in his revision of the concept is to establish a
dramatic method to secure the desired positive alienation. The very function of
katharsis, as seen by Brecht, is to sustain the alienation and to leave the viewer
happy with a world that alienates him from himself, nature and the others of
his social world. The complex dialectic of knowledge established by Hegel
includes this possibility: it allows for a kenotic transformation of the
individual in which emotions are “corrected” within by aesthetic experience of
those emotions.

The failure of the dramatic form, using katharsis as its affect, to achieve
the kind of transformation desired by Brecht, is a failure analyzed in this
thesis.¹ Brecht's revisions of the drama confirm the centrality of the terms
evolved this thesis. Brecht writes:

Estrangement means to historicize, that is consider people and
incidents as historically conditioned and transitory . . . The
spectator will no longer see the characters on the stage as
unalterable, uninfluenceable, helplessly delivered over to their
fate. He will see that this man is such and such, because
circumstances are such. And circumstances are such, because
the man is such. But he in turn is conceivable not only as he is
now, but also as he might be — that is, otherwise — and the
same holds true for circumstances. Hence, the spectator obtains
a new attitude in the theatre,

¹ There is a certain amount of confusion about the terms dealing with alienation. As seen in Chapter One, Hegel uses the word Entausserung
to describe a kind of kenotic alienation; it reflects his concept of the dialectic in which the original terms are preserved in the process. The
stronger Marxist term Entfremdung, which Hegel also uses, has about it a more negative quality; it has the sense of removal. Brecht's
Verfremdung is stronger still; there is a real sense of loss.
the same attitude that a man of the twentieth century has with respect to Nature. He will be received in the theatre as the great “transformer”, who can intervene in the natural processes and the social processes, and who no longer accepts the world but masters it.²

A theatre in which such possibilities are realized is described by Brecht as an “Epic” theatre, epic because the qualities of the epic genre, as distinct from the dramatic genre, allow for change within characters and allow for a more significant alteration of the audience through a different relationship of distance. Within this process view of man and his identity, Brecht's epic theatre seeks to revise the affects of all three genres. In attempting to deny the “comforts” of katharsis, his epic drama also denies the satisfactions of kairosis and kenosis. Character is denied its substantiality and fulfilment achieved through continuity (kairos); and the lyric identity is denied its reciprocity (its identity with the other) through being confronted by the action and by character at a distance. The affect of estrangement, as a thing in itself, sets out to gain maximum potential by estranging the audience from all three forms of identity. In this way Brecht's theatre is truly radical and disturbing. While invoking the affects of the three genres it negates the identity structures of each genre. (On the facing page is a table of terms that Brecht offers as a comparison between the two types of theatre as he saw them.)

² “Über experimentelles Theater” (Schriften III, pp. 101-102). Quoted here from Ewen, p. 222.
In order to achieve this radical theatre, Brecht employs techniques that offer interesting parallels with the redaction processes of therapy. By locating the actual “estrangement” in the structure of the play, Brecht clearly announces the aesthetic or transposed value of his estrangement; such estrangement is possible only in the world of literary experience. In the case of Brecht's methods, such effects are possible only within the “delayed” interpretation of the drama. By the replication of events and the duplication of characters, Brecht is able to provide the audience with the space for critical withdrawal. As Ronald Gray writes:

_He who said No_ repeats almost identically the plot and situations of _He who said Yes_ (much as the second act of Beckett's _Waiting for Godot_ repeats the first act — a surely not fortuitous coincidence); seeing much the same events enacted a second time, the audience can afford to sit back and think, rather than allow itself to be carried away by the action. . . . the repetition serves as an occasion for critical withdrawal. (p. 66)

Such repetition locates action within a structure of distance and difference. In this process the drama takes on the aspect of disjunction; things might be other than as they are; action loses any aspect of originality that it might have and any claim it might have had to a fixed symbolic value. In a sense the action is de-centred. What takes the place of the central action is now the audience's awareness of the dialectical possibilities inherent in the action. The outcome of this awareness is
essentially aesthetic: the causal chain is shaken and rattled within the consciousness of the audience.

Action then becomes the interpretation of action made conscious by the audience's attention to the differences made apparent in the estrangement. Such a Brechtian katharsis, through questioning the relationship of cause and effect, shifts the affect from the dimension of space to the dimension of time. Without the ability to identify with the characters as substantial epic identities, this shift leaves the audience bereft of the affect of kairosis.

The hybrid affect that results from Brecht's epic drama suggests that within the categories of kenosis, katharsis and kairosis there is room for a more flexible account of the affects of literary experience. While such hybrid affects might appear to be like the offspring of couplings between tigers and lions, the distinguishing features of each affect, as described in this thesis, provide a terminology wide enough to make comparisons between varieties into significant qualifications.


Table 1  
KANT'S CATEGORIES  
AS APPLIED TO THE THREE GENRES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EPIC</th>
<th>DRAMATIC</th>
<th>LYRIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUDGEMENTS</strong></td>
<td>Categorical</td>
<td>Hypothetical</td>
<td>Disjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Inherence &amp;</td>
<td>Causality &amp;</td>
<td>Community</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subsistence</td>
<td>Dependence</td>
<td>(Commercium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Substance / Accident</td>
<td>Cause / effect</td>
<td>Reciprocity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEMPORAL ASPECT</strong></td>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Succession</td>
<td>Co-Existence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>METAPHYSICAL TOPIC</strong></td>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>Cosmology</td>
<td>Theology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>METAPHYSICAL PROBLEM</strong></td>
<td>Immortality</td>
<td>Freedom / Necessity</td>
<td>God</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  
ROGERS' MODEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>METHOD OF PRESENTATION</th>
<th>FUNDAMENTAL ASPECT</th>
<th>LITERARY TECHNIQUE</th>
<th>CENTRAL CONCERN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tells</td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Point of View</td>
<td>Whatness</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Shows</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td>Structure</td>
<td>Howness</td>
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<td>[Sees]</td>
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<td>[Theme]</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[Suchness]</td>
</tr>
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</table>

(Facing page 125)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EPIC</th>
<th>DRAMATIC</th>
<th>LYRIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFFECTIVE RELATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Kairosis</td>
<td>Katharsis</td>
<td>Kenosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISTANCE</strong></td>
<td>Bi-Focal</td>
<td>Distance</td>
<td>Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IDENTITY RELATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Causal</td>
<td>Constellated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MODEL OF MATTER</strong></td>
<td>Substance / Accident</td>
<td>Form / Content</td>
<td>Unity of Manifold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISCOURSE</strong></td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Self</td>
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</table>

*(Facing page 204)*
Table 4
BRECHT'S COMPARATIVE TERMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dramatic Form of the Theatre</th>
<th>Epic Form of the Theatre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>active</td>
<td>narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>involves the spectator in a stage-action</td>
<td>makes the spectator an observer, but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consumes his capacity to act</td>
<td>awakens his capacity to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>allows him to have feelings experience</td>
<td>demands decision from him</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spectator drawn into something suggestion feelings are preserved</td>
<td>view of the world he is confronted with something argument feelings driven into becoming realisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the spectator stands inside, experiences with the characters</td>
<td>the spectator confronts and studies what he sees man is an object of investigation man is alterable and altering suspense at the process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man is assumed to be known</td>
<td>each scene for itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man is unalterable</td>
<td>growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>suspense in awaiting the outcome</td>
<td>one scene exists for another</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Quoted here from Ronald Gray, Brecht (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1961) pp. 61-62.)